



OT 3PO3/6PO6 OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY

Winter 2011

Class Schedule: Tuesdays @ 7:00-9:00pm
Location: Compass Point Bible Church, Burlington, ON
Professor: Dr. Paul S. Evans
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Office: 236

Course Description:

- An introductory study of Old Testament prophecy through a focus on the historical setting, literary form, content and message of the prophetic books of Amos and Isaiah. This course examines the meaning of these books in their ancient context as foundational for understanding their message and theological significance for the Church and society today.

Course Objectives:

Knowing

- To have an introductory knowledge of the contents and message of the prophetic books of the Old Testament
- To gain in-depth knowledge of the contents and message of the books of Amos and Isaiah
- To gain familiarity with the assumptions, methods and conclusions of modern critical scholarship on the prophetic books

Being

- To embrace the contemporary relevance of the prophetic books for the Church today
- To grow closer to God through study of the prophetic books

Doing

- To be able to interpret Amos and Isaiah in their original contexts
- Be able to describe key OT historical events, tracing them chronologically and geographically and to understand their significance for interpreting the prophetic books
- To be able to apply the message of the prophets to contemporary audiences

Required Texts:

- Rodney R. Hutton. *Fortress Introduction to the Prophets*. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004).
- Walter Brueggemann. *The Prophetic Imagination* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001).
- J.A. Motyer, *The Message of Amos: The Day of the Lion*. The Bible Speaks Today. Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter-Varsity Press, 1974.
- John Goldingay. *Isaiah*. New International Biblical Commentary. Hendrickson Publishers.
- A Bible in a modern critical translation (e.g., NRSV, TNIV, NIV, NLT, NASB). The *Tanakh: The New JPS Translation According to the Traditional Hebrew Text* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1985) is recommended.

Textbook Purchase:

All required textbooks for this class are available from the College's book service, READ On Bookstore, Room 218, McMaster Divinity College. Texts may be purchased on the first day of class. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstores, 304 The East Mall, Suite 100, Etobicoke, ON M9C 5K1: phone 416-620-2934; fax 416-622-2308; e-mail books@readon.ca. Other book services may also carry the texts.

Course Evaluation

The assignments and their weights are as follows:

- 10% -- Preparatory Reading:** Students must read the textbooks in their entirety as well as other assigned readings. These readings must be done according to the timeline of the reading schedule available on the course website. Students will account for their timely reading on a hand-in sheet on the course website at the end of the semester.
- 20% - Book Review** of Walter Brueggemann's *The Prophetic Imagination*. Due January 25, 2011. Papers must be 6 pgs, double-spaced, using 12pt Times New Roman font throughout (footnotes should be 10pt Times New Roman font. Page setup: Top & Bottom 2.54cm; Left & Right 3.17cm. Gutter 0cm; Gutter position Left). See "Book Review Guidelines" below.
- 40% - Major Research or Exegetical Paper:** 5% for summary and **annotated bibliography** due February 22, 2011; 35% for **final paper** Due March 15, 2011. Papers must be 15 pgs, double-spaced, using 12pt Times New Roman font throughout (footnotes should be 10pt Times New Roman font. Page setup: Top & Bottom 2.54cm; Left & Right 3.17cm. Gutter 0cm; Gutter position Left). The bibliography must contain at least 12 items of varied secondary sources (commentaries, theological dictionaries, specialized books and at least 3 articles from peer reviewed / refereed journals or edited volumes). *By way of supplement* to these 10 sources, a *maximum* of 2 internet resources may be used. Students must avoid too informal language. See "Paper Evaluation" below.

For your **annotated bibliography** each item should have a couple sentences explaining the author's thesis and what evidence or arguments she / he uses to

support it. Make sure you show that you have read and understood the article or book. ALL TOPICS MUST BE APPROVED BY YOUR PROFESSOR

30% - Thematic Paper on Isaiah. Due April 5, 2011. Papers must be 10 pgs, double-spaced, using 12pt Times New Roman font throughout (footnotes should be 10pt Times New Roman font. Page setup: Top & Bottom 2.54cm; Left & Right 3.17cm. Gutter 0cm; Gutter position Left). After reading the book of Isaiah and Goldingay's Isaiah commentary students will write a paper that identifies at least two prominent themes that run through the entire book of Isaiah and brings out the relevance of these themes for the contemporary Church. The paper will have two major sections 1) The themes (65%). This will explain how these themes were identified, including exegetical analysis of relevant sections of Isaiah in order to better understand and appreciate the themes and their development in the book; and 2) Contemporary Relevance (35%). This section will highlight the potential impact of these themes on the contemporary Church. N.B. The themes covered in the paper must interact with each of the sections of Isaiah (1-39, 40-55, 55-66) and the corresponding secondary literature. The bibliography must contain at least 10 items of varied secondary sources (commentaries, theological dictionaries, specialized books and at least 2 articles from peer reviewed / refereed journals or edited volumes). *By way of supplement* to these 10 sources, a student may use a *maximum* of 2 internet resources. The paper must avoid too informal language. See "Paper Evaluation" below.

Reserved Books

Many important works on Isaiah and Amos are on two-hour reserve at the Mills Library so that all students can access these resources. It is expected that you will employ these books in both your research and thematic papers.

College Style for Submission of Written Work

All written work is to be submitted in accordance with the McMaster Divinity College Style Guide for Essays and Theses, available on the McMaster Divinity College website.

All papers to be submitted in electronic format only (a pdf file)—no hardcopies! Email to pevans@mcmaster.ca. If you need a program for creating pdfs go to <http://primopdf.com> or <http://www.pdf995.com> for a free pdf maker. Include your last name in the file name of your attachment (e.g., evans.researchpaper.pdf). To avoid late marks papers must be received before the end of the calendar day on which they are due (i.e., before midnight Eastern Standard Time).

Policy concerning late papers

Extensions for papers will not be given except in very exceptional circumstances. (serious illness, family crises, etc.). Busy-ness, computer problems etc. are not legitimate reasons to grant extensions and in the interests of fairness any request for extensions will take into account the entire class. Late assignments will be docked at the rate of 1% per day for the first 7 days (including weekends) and 4% per day after that. All assignments must be received by the last day of class (April 9) in order to

avoid a failing grade in the class.

Academic dishonesty:

Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College.

Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty ~ www.madciv.ca/regis/honesty.php.

Inclusive language:

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all of its publications. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. The NRSV and TNIV are examples of the use of inclusive language for human beings. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.

**For journal articles to assist paper preparation and research, do a subject search of the [ATLA Religion database](#)

Useful Internet Sites

- *Bible Gateway* (<http://www.biblegateway.com/>). Online Bibles with search engines.
- *itanakh* ([www.itanakh.org.](http://www.itanakh.org/)) Includes links to many full text articles and useful webpages.
- <http://www.sbl-site.org/educational/sitesofinterest.aspx> From the website of the Society of Biblical Literature. Contains links to many useful sites categorized according to subject areas.
- *Dinur Centre for Research in Jewish History* (http://www.hum.huji.ac.il/dinur/internetresources/historyresources/biblical_studies.htm) Includes links on creation, flood, patriarchs
- *Internet Ancient History Sourcebook* (<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/asbook.html>). The sections on Human Origins and Mesopotamia include some useful comparative material for Genesis.
- *Links related to Bible & ANE:* (<http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/%7Ehumm/Resources/Texts/index.html>)

Disclaimer

This syllabus is for information only and remains the property of the respective professor. This syllabus has been prepared with the best information available, but the professor reserves the right to change the content and format of the course.

Students are advised to retain this syllabus for their records.

Paper Evaluation

Name: _____ Topic: _____

I. The next items are rated according to this scale: 1 = inadequate; 2 = adequate; 3 = good; 4 = very good; 5 = superior.

Bibliographic consciousness	1	2	3	4	5
Range and Use of Sources	1	2	3	4	5
Clarity in Defining Issues	1	2	3	4	5
Strength of Argument	1	2	3	4	5
Awareness of Exegetical Issues	1	2	3	4	5
Accuracy of Data and Assertions	1	2	3	4	5
Analysis /Critical Thinking	1	2	3	4	5
Introduction (Thesis Statement /Clear Issue)	1	2	3	4	5
Development of Thesis (focus)	1	2	3	4	5
Literary Style (awkward, wordy, repetitive)	1	2	3	4	5
Organization/coherence of ideas	1	2	3	4	5
Grammar/Spelling	1	2	3	4	5
Neatness/Presentation	1	2	3	4	5

§ Note: this is a simple evaluation tool to assist in paper assessment. The categories are not weighted equally, and thus are not added together or averaged to calculate your grade.

II. The following need attention if so indicated

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use inclusive language | <input type="checkbox"/> The paper is too long/too short |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Write a unified essay | <input type="checkbox"/> Edit your paper more thoroughly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Line spacing, Font size, Margins, Page numbers etc. need attention | <input type="checkbox"/> The paper needs balance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cite primary resources correctly/consistently (e.g., Gen 1:26; Genesis 1; etc) | <input type="checkbox"/> Cite secondary resources correctly/consistently |

III. Comments

Book Review Guideline

Name: _____

I. The Book Review of Walter Brueggemann. *The Prophetic Imagination* should roughly follow this format:

Summary of Content: 2-3 Pages

Critique of chapter 1-2 Pages

Personal Reflection 1-2 Pages

Total=*no more* than 6 pages! Pages 7ff *will not* be read

The following items are rated according to the following scale:

1 = poor/inadequate; 2 = adequate; 3 = good/more than adequate; 4 = very good;

5 = excellent/superior.

Summary of Content (noted key concepts etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
Quality of Critique (evidence of critical thought)	1	2	3	4	5
Reflective Thought (theological depth, sensitivity)	1	2	3	4	5
Literary Style (awkward, wordy, repetitive)	1	2	3	4	5
Grammar/Spelling	1	2	3	4	5
Neatness/Presentation	1	2	3	4	5

§ Note: this is a simple evaluation tool to assist in paper assessment. The categories are not weighted equally, and thus are not added together or averaged to calculate your grade.

II. The following need attention if checked

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use inclusive language
<input type="checkbox"/> Write a unified review
<input type="checkbox"/> Line spacing, Font size, Margins, Page numbers etc. need attention
<input type="checkbox"/> Cite primary resources correctly/consistently (e.g., Gen 1:26; Genesis 1; etc) | <input type="checkbox"/> The paper is too long/too short
<input type="checkbox"/> Edit your paper more thoroughly
<input type="checkbox"/> The paper needs balance
<input type="checkbox"/> Cite secondary resources correctly/consistently |
|--|--|

III. Comments

*** Addendum re: PhD and MA Students**

In addition to the assignments outlined above, PhD and MA students are responsible for additional reading and writing.

A. Reading

In addition to reading the textbooks and other assigned readings, PhD and MA students must give a written account of the number of additional pages read. These additional pages may include readings done in research paper preparation. Additional readings must total at least **5,000** pages *beyond* the other assigned readings. Students will give an account of their completed readings via a hand in sheet on **April 5**

These additional readings will comprise another **10%** value for the course for PhD and MA students (10% for assigned readings, another 10% for additional readings).

B. Writing

Regarding the written assignments outlined above, the requirements for PhD and MA students are as followed.

10% - Book Review of Walter Brueggemann's *The Prophetic Imagination*. Due January 25, 2011. Papers must be 6 pages in length.

40% - Major Research Paper. 5% for summary and annotated bibliography due February 22, 2011. 35% for final paper Due March 15, 2011. This research paper must be 25-30 pages in length (instead of 15 pages) and show significantly more research than the requirements outlined above.

30% - Thematic Paper on Isaiah. Due April 5, 2011. This thematic paper must be 20-25 pages in length (instead of 10 pages) and show significantly more research than the requirements outlined above.