

**BSCM4316-30 OLD TESTAMENT INTERPRETATION:
WISDOM LITERATURE—JOB and PROVERBS**

NEW ORLEANS BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
LEAVELL COLLEGE--SOUTH FLORIDA EXTENSION CENTER

Professor: Dr. Todd S. Buck

Spring Term 2013

Monday 6:00--8:00 PM

Office: 863-983-5555

Cell: 270-293-3848

toddbucksr@gmail.com

Course Description

This purpose of this course is to examine selected passages from the Book of Job and the Book of Proverbs, through the exegesis and exposition of the biblical texts. Theological issues will be examined and their implications for contemporary life will also be explored.

Course Textbooks

The Bible: NASB, KJV/NKJV, ESV, NIV, or HCSB.

Alden, Robert L. *Job*. The New American Commentary, vol. 11. Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1993.

Estes, Daniel J. *Handbook on the Wisdom Books and Psalms*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005.

Garrett, Duane A. *Proverbs*. The New American Commentary, vol. 14. Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1993.

Student Objectives

The student will:

1. Examine the background and setting of wisdom literature;
2. Recognize the forms of wisdom literature;
3. Examine selected prose and poetic passages in Job and Proverbs to determine their meaning for Israel and modern humanity; and
4. explore the theological implications and applications of Job and Proverbs for the contemporary church and society.

Course Methodology

The principal means of instruction will be through lecture and discussion. Additionally, the students will evaluate the biblical texts and interpret them using valid hermeneutical principles. Reading assignments and a research paper on an assigned topic by the student will provide an integral part of the learning environment for the classroom.

Course Requirements

1. Attendance and Discussion.
Students will attend class and participate in the class discussion. Students will actively participate in the weekly forum discussion for each unit. The forum for each unit will

be active beginning at 7am on Tuesday of the unit, and closing at 11pm Sunday of the unit. See Forum Participation Guidelines Handout on Blackboard.

2. Required Readings.

- a. Read the books of Job and Proverbs in three translations of your choice. On the first reading, the entire book should be read through in one sitting to comprehend the thematic and literary flow.
- b. Read the assigned textbooks *prior* to each scheduled class.
- c. Choose an additional scholarly commentary on Job and Proverbs from the attached bibliography. Commentary choices will be brought to class on February 4th for approval.
- d. For the required readings, complete the attached Reading Log indicating: (1) the biblical text read (including translation); (2) the assigned reading in the textbooks; and (3) the appropriate readings from the additional commentary.

3. Research Paper.

Students will write a Research Paper to be completed in three steps:

- a. Passage. First, students must select their passage which will be one of the following texts: Job 8:1-10; 9:1-13; or 29:7-17; or Proverbs 2:1-11; 2:12-22; or 25:16-27. The passage selection is due in class on February 18th.
- b. Proposal. Students will submit a Proposal on their assigned passage. The Proposal will contain the following components: Cover Page, Working Thesis Statement, Need for the study, Procedure of the study, and a Working Bibliography. The Working Bibliography must include at least 12 sources [5-6 peer-reviewed scholarly journals and 5-7 book/text]. The thesis statement, need, and procedure should be 1–2 double-spaced pages. The procedure must be written in the paragraph form--it is not a table of contents. The Proposal must be written in proper Turabian 7th edition form, and is due on April 1st.
- c. Submission. Students must write their Exegetical Paper using the corrected Proposal they submitted. The paper will be 12-15 pages (Intro to Conclusion) and must include seven sections [Cover, Table of Contents, Introduction (including thesis statement as the first sentence), Body (including footnotes), Conclusion, Bibliography, and Appendix (sentence flow/diagram)]. Paper must include: a suggested translation, results of key word study, literary/background study, and a sentence flow or diagram in the appendix. The bibliography must include at least 12 sources [5-6 peer-reviewed scholarly journals and 5-7 book/text]. It must be written in proper Turabian 7th edition form, and is due on May 6th. See Exegetical Paper Guidelines Handout on Blackboard.

4. Course Notebook.

Students will complete a typed, double-spaced notebook containing the following information. These notes also should be designed in such a way that the reader is able to discern the passage being referred to as well as the source of the material.

- a. Personal notes. After the biblical texts of Job and Proverbs are read but *before* any textbooks or commentaries are read, the student will write down their own personal observations/ insights/questions/comments/theological insights, etc. discerned from private reading.
- b. Class lecture/discussion notes from the professor and/or outlines/notes from class members.
- c. Notes from the textbooks on the biblical passages studied in class.
 - i. This should include Alden, Estes, and Garrett.
 - ii. Photocopied pages are not acceptable for notes from any commentary.
- d. Notes from one additional approved commentary on each of the biblical passages studied in class. Each student will select one scholarly commentary either from the bibliography or additional resources. This will not include the Introduction section from this additional commentary.
- e. Completed Reading Log detailing the chapters of the assigned biblical books, the pages of Alden, Estes, and Garrett, the additional commentary, and the respective dates on which the pages were read.

Each of the notebook requirements should be clearly delineated in the notebook. The notebook must be well-organized, easy-to-read, and easy-to-use. The notebook will be due in class at 6 pm on Monday, May 13th, 2013. Late work will be penalized 5 points for each day late!

5. Course Exams.

A Mid-Term and Final Exam will be given, consisting of mostly objective and some subjective questions over the course lecture and reading materials covered. An exam review will be made available to guide the student's preparation in the "Handout" section of the course web page.

A NOTE ABOUT PLAGIARISM: All written assignments must be the student's own work. If an author's exact words are used, they must be placed inside quotation marks and a footnote must follow. If the ideas are paraphrased, a footnote must follow. Any information included that did not originate in the student's own mind must be footnoted because the information came from someone else. If this process is not followed, plagiarism (theft) has occurred. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense, and the penalties can include (1) a failing grade in the course, and/or (2) dismissal from seminary!

Course Evaluation

Attendance, Quizzes, and Online/In-Class Discussion	10%
Reading Log	5%
Research paper	20%
Course Notebook	25%
Mid-Term Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%

Grading System

93 – 100 A
85 – 92 B
77 – 84 C
70 – 76 D
Below 70 F

Attendance and Makeup Policy

The class will adhere to the attendance policy as stated in the Catalog. Any student missing more than nine hours will receive an automatic grade of F for the course, unless excused by the Dr. David Lema. Three tardies will count as one absence. Remember that each Monday missed counts as three absences.

Course Schedule

Course reading in Alden, Estes, and Garrett will correspond to the passage(s) studied for that week.

Week	Dates	Topic	Assignment
1	Jan 28	Intro to Course; Wisdom Literature I	
2	Feb 4	Wisdom Literature II	Commentary Choice
3	Feb 11	Intro to Job; Prologue; Job's Curse (ch. 1-3)	
4	Feb 18	Three Cycles of Dialogue; Selected verses in 4:1--27:23	Passage Selection Due
5	Feb 25	Wisdom Poem (ch. 28) ; Elihu (ch. 32-27)	
6	Mar 4	Yahweh Speaks (ch. 38-42); Epilogue (42:7-17); Theology of Book of Job	
7	Mar 11	Mid-Term Exam	
8	Mar 18	SPRING BREAK—No Class	
9	Mar 25	Intro to Proverbs; Purpose of Book (1:1-7)	
10	Apr 1	Wisdom's Appeals (Selected passages chs. 1, 8, 9)	Proposal Due
11	Apr 8	Wisdom's Appeals cont.	
12	Apr 15	Selected Portraits: Fool (25), Sluggard (26), Busybody (26), Liar (26)	
13	Apr 22	What Yahweh Abhors (11)	
14	Apr 29	Use of the Mouth (12); The Good Wife (31)	

15	May 6	Conclusion; Theology of Book of Proverbs	Research Paper Due
16	May 13	Final Exam	Course Notebook Due

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Wisdom Literature

- Alter, Robert. *The Art of Biblical Poetry*. New York: Basic, 1985.
- Barton, Stephen C. *Where Shall Wisdom Be Found? Wisdom in the Bible, the Church and the Contemporary World*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999.
- Berlin, Adele. *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008.
- Charlesworth, James H. and Michael A. Daise (eds). *Light in a Spotless Mirror: Reflections on Wisdom Traditions in Judaism and Early Christianity*. New York: Trinity Press International, 2003.
- Day, John, Robert P. Gordon and H.G.M. Williamson, eds. *Wisdom in Ancient Israel*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- Ebert, Daniel J. *Wisdom Christology: How Jesus Becomes God's Wisdom for Us*. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 2011.
- Fokkelman, J. P. *Reading Biblical Poetry: An Introductory Guide*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001.
- Ford, David and Graham Stanton (eds). *Reading Texts, Seeking Wisdom: Scripture and Theology*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004.
- Guthrie, Nancy. *The Wisdom of God: Seeing Jesus in the Psalms and Wisdom Books*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2012.
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- von Rad, Gerhard. *Wisdom in Israel*, trans. James D. Martin. London: SCM, 1970.

Job

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- Andersen, Francis I. *Job: An Introduction and Commentary*. Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries. Leicester, England: InterVarsity Press, 1974.

- Atkinson, David J. *The Message of Job: Suffering and Grace*. The Bible Speaks Today. Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1991.
- Eaton, J. H. *Job*. Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1985.
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- Hartley, John E. *The Book of Job*. New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988.
- McKenna, David. *Job*. Mastering the Old Testament, vol. 12. Dallas: Word Publishing, 1986.
- Murphy, Roland E. *Job*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977.
- Pope, Marvin H. *Job: Introduction, Translation, and Notes*. Anchor Bible. Garden City: Doubleday, 1965.
- Rowley, H. H. *Job*. New Century Bible Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976.
- Wilson, Gerald. *Job*. New International Biblical Commentary. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007.

Proverbs

- Alden, Robert L. *Proverbs: A Commentary on an Ancient Book of Timeless Advice*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1983.
- Bartholomew, Craig. *Reading Proverbs with Integrity*. Cambridge, Grove, 2001.
- Clifford, Richard J. *Proverbs: A Commentary*. Old Testament Library. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999.
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- Fox, Michael V. *Proverbs 1-9: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible. New York: Doubleday, 2000.
- Davis, Ellen F. *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs*. Westminster Bible Companion. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000.

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- Farmer, Kathleen A. *Who Knows What Is Good?: A Commentary on the Books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes*. International Theological Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991.
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- Waltke, Bruce K. *The Book of Proverbs Chapters 1-15 and The Book of Proverbs Chapters 15-31*. New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004 and 2005.
- Whybray, R. N. *The Book of Proverbs*. The Cambridge Bible Commentary. Cambridge: University Press, 1972.