



BIHB9402 Interpreting the Former Prophets PhD. Seminar - Biblical Interpretation New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary Division of Biblical Studies

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Mission Statement

The mission of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries.

Core Value Focus

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary has five core values: Doctrinal Integrity, Spiritual Vitality, Mission Focus, Characteristic Excellence, and Servant Leadership. The core value focus for 2018-19 is *Doctrinal Integrity*: “Knowing that the Bible is the Word of God, we believe it, teach it, proclaim it, and submit to it.”

Curriculum Competencies

All graduates of NOBTS are expected to have at least minimal competency in the areas of: Biblical Exposition, Christian and Theological Heritage, Discipleship Making, Interpersonal Skills, Servant Leadership, Spiritual and Character Formation. The curriculum competency specifically addressed in this course is Biblical Exposition.

Course Description

This seminar is an intense study of select portions of the Former Prophets, which cover the Books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings. The seminar includes introductory and background issues related to the development of Old Testament historiography in the context of the Ancient Near East. The study includes narrative analysis, social and cultural anthropological study, and historical geography. The study intersects with the current critical scholarly literature in historical narrative study.

Student Learning Outcomes

In order to interpret and communicate the Bible accurately, the student, by the end of the course should:

1. Understand the meaning of books of the Former Prophets in their original context.
2. Demonstrate advanced skills in conducting exegetical research.
3. Understand the state of research and historical meaning of the material of the Former Prophets.
4. Appreciate the relevance of exegetical study of the Former Prophets based on the Hebrew text.
5. Demonstrate skill in using the Hebrew text of the Former Prophets and applying sound interpretive principles toward solid exegesis of the text.

Course Teaching Methodology

This course will use a combination of pedagogical methods, including the following:

1. The professor will employ the lecture method to introduce the seminar.
2. The student will prepare and present critical reviews of books and/or journal articles related to the history and themes of the Former Prophets.
3. The student will prepare and present an interpretive issue paper related to the study of the Former Prophets.
4. The student will prepare and present a major seminar paper that includes a thorough exegesis of a selected passage in the Former Prophets. The paper must demonstrate in-depth research and appropriate methodologies as well as the use of Hebrew, Greek, or other language applicable to the particular subject.
5. The student will serve as the major critic for a fellow student's major seminar paper, focusing on form, style, and content.
6. The student will serve as a minor critic for all seminar papers of fellow students (excluding the critique of the fellow student in # 5 above), focusing on form, style, and content.
7. The student will complete a final examination.

Resources

Each student should consult standard historical and theological works as well as standard contemporary commentary series, such as the following:

Works on Israel's history

Rainer Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period, Vol 1: From the Beginnings to the End of the Monarchy*

John Bright, *A History of Israel* (4th edition)

John Hayes and Maxwell Miller, *Israelite and Judean History*

Siegfried Herrmann, *A History of Israel in Old Testament Times*

Eugene Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests* (2d ed.)

Iain Provan, V. Philips Long, and Tremper Longman III, *A Biblical History of Israel*

Theological Works

Alberto Soggin, *A History of Ancient Israel*

Walther Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament* (2 vols)

Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology* (2 vols)

Commentary Series

Anchor Bible

International Theological Commentary

Interpreter's Bible

New American Commentary

New Century Bible

New International Commentary on the Old Testament

NIV Application Commentary

Old Testament Library

Tyndale Old Testament Commentary

Word Biblical Commentary

Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary

Requirements of the Seminar

1. Book/Journal Article Review: The student will review either a book or 3 journal articles (selected by the student) related to the study of the Former Prophets (see instructions below).
2. Interpretive Issue Paper: The student will prepare a paper examining an interpretive issue related to the study of the Former Prophets. The paper can consist of a genre related issue or an interpretive difficulty arising from a particular passage within the Former Prophets. The paper should be 6-8 pages, single spaced.
3. Major Research Paper: The student will prepare a major research paper that includes a thorough exegesis of a passage from the Former Prophets. The exegesis should demonstrate appropriate interpretive principles, knowledge and use of the Hebrew language, understanding of the cultural, social, and theological backgrounds, and appropriate research into the subject. The research papers are to be from 25-35 pages in length. The paper must be written according to the rubric below and posted on Blackboard no later than one week before the class session in which it is presented. Papers will be presented, evaluated, and defended in the class session.
4. Major Critique of an assigned classmate's research paper: The student will respond to an assigned fellow classmate's paper in writing and to the class orally. Like the paper, the response will be defended in class. The major critique should be three pages in length and address grammar, form, style, and content.
5. Minor Critique of all fellow classmates' research papers: The student will respond to all fellow classmates' research papers (except when serving as the major critic for one student's paper). The minor critique should be one page in length and address grammar, form, style, and content.

Major Research Papers Guidelines

1. Grammar and Style: spelling; sentence and paragraph development; punctuation; conformity to SBL style/formatting; use of quotations (use quotations sparingly to clarify analysis and interpretation)
2. Clarity and Coherence: organization; logical development; overall sense of the paper
3. Research: bibliography; type and variety of sources (primary, secondary monographs, journal articles, etc.)
4. Interpretive awareness and insight: factual accuracy; awareness of context and connection to other material (i.e., continuity/discontinuity; cause/effect; relationships/comparisons; sensitivity to context; awareness of persons, movements, or forces, historical and otherwise)
5. Analysis and Evaluation: includes explanation, interpretation, analysis of material; evaluation of the material at hand; demonstration of a thorough critique of the material being researched

Book/Journal Articles Review Guidelines

1. Grammar and Style: spelling, sentence/paragraph development; punctuation; conformity to SBL style/formatting
2. Summary: A fair, concise presentation of the content of the book or journal article
3. Evaluation: A balanced, critical assessment of the journal article's strengths and weaknesses
4. Research Insight: Awareness of the journal article's interpretive significance and place in the study of the Former Prophets

Course Evaluation

The student's grade will be computed as follows:

Class participation	15%
Book/Journal Articles Review	20%
Interpretive Issue Paper	20%
Major Research Paper	25%
Critique Assignments	10%
Final Examination	10%

Course Schedule

Aug 23 Introduction to the Course; Distribution of the Work of the Seminar

Aug 30 Issues of History, Historiography, Theology, and Interpretation - For example:

Baruch Halpern, *The First Historians* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1988).
V. Philips Long, "The Art of Biblical History," *Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation*, edited by Moises Silva (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996).
_____, "Historiography of the Old Testament," *The Face of the Old Testament*, edited by David W. Baker and Bill T. Arnold (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999).
_____, "Old Testament History: A Hermeneutical Perspective," *A Guide to Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, edited by Willem A VanGemeren (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997),
Eugene H. Merrill, "Old Testament History: A Theological Perspective," *A Guide to Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, edited by Willem A VanGemeren (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997).
John Bright, *A History of Israel* (4th ed.)
John Hayes and Maxwell Miller, *Israelite and Judean History*
Eugene Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests* (2d ed.)
Iain Provan, V. Philips Long, and Tremper Longman III, *A Biblical History of Israel*

Sep 6 Critical Book/Journal Articles Review

Sep 13 Critical Book/Journal Articles Review

Sep 20 Critical Book/Journal Articles Review

Sep 27 Interpretive Issue Paper

Oct 4 Interpretive Issue Paper

Oct 11 Interpretive Issue Paper

October 15-19 Fall Break

Oct 25 Group Review/Discussion of Assigned Books/Journal Articles

Nov 1 Seminar Paper Presentation

(Major Critic _____)

(Major Critic _____)

Nov 8 Seminar Paper Presentation

(Major Critic _____)

(Major Critic _____)

November 19-23 Thanksgiving Break

Nov 29 Seminar Paper Presentation

(Major Critic _____)

(Major Critic _____)

Dec 6 FINAL EXAMINATION

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Judges

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