

HB 600.01 Exegesis of the Hebrew Bible:  
8<sup>th</sup> Century Prophets & Justice (2 weekends)  
Spring 2016

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**Prerequisites:** HB 500 Intro to the Hebrew Bible or PC 500 Interpretation Matters

**Course Description:** This course is intended to help students in all Masters programs “act as responsible biblical interpreters critically informed by current historical, literary and theological scholarship in the field of biblical studies.” As an exegetical course in the area of Biblical Studies, the course is designed to help students “be fluent in biblical interpretation . . . pay attention to interpretive concerns (e.g., historical context, literary character, etc.) . . . [and] use the Bible with an awareness of scholarly understandings as a resource for thinking about the issues and concerns of everyday life.” To this end, the course will include an introduction to exegesis and the variety of methods utilized in interpreting a biblical text (e.g., form criticism, rhetorical criticism, ideological criticism, etc.), along with opportunities to practice these methods on a variety of texts from the Hebrew Bible. Special attention will be given to the role of the prophet in Ancient Israel, the texts of the 8<sup>th</sup> century prophets of the Hebrew Bible (i.e., Amos, Hosea, Micah, & Isa 1-39), and the concept of “justice” at work in these biblical voices. By the end of the semester, students will be able to:

1. *Employ* different exegetical methods when working with texts of the Hebrew Bible.
2. *Identify* the characteristics of the prophetic literature of the Hebrew Bible.
3. *Define* what it means to call someone a “prophet”.
4. *Name* and briefly *describe* the 8<sup>th</sup> Century Prophets (i.e., Amos, Hosea, Micah & Isa 1-39) of the Hebrew Bible.
5. *Provide* an explanation of “justice” as understood by the 8<sup>th</sup> Century Prophets of the Hebrew Bible and their own definition of “justice”.
6. *Write* an exegesis of a text from one of the 8<sup>th</sup> century prophets utilizing at 3 different exegetical methods.
7. *Demonstrate* how the fruits from their exegesis of a biblical text can be applied to different ministerial contexts.

**Approach:** This is an upper level seminar course; therefore, a foundational knowledge of the Hebrew Bible will be assumed (i.e., historical/cultural background, literary genres, etc.). The class sessions will entail both lecture by the professor and class discussion. Class discussions will be open, honest, and respectful; all opinions will be respected and derogatory language toward another person will not be tolerated. [Behavior or attitudes that are disrespectful of another person, professor or student, will result in significant lowering of the offender's grade.] All participants will covenant together to agree to disagree without hostility.

**Class Schedule:** The class will meet over two weekends on this schedule. 2/18 2:30-6:30 pm; 2/19 8:30 am-5 pm; 2/20 8:30 a-5 pm; 4/14 2:30-6:30 pm; 4/15 8:30 am-5 pm; and 4/16 8:30 am-5 pm.

**Required Texts:** In addition to these books, readings from other sources will be assigned and made available to the students, either on Moodle or in class. [The reading assignments are indicated in the course schedule using the abbreviations provided for each text.]

Berlin, Adele & Marc Zvi Brettler, eds. *The Jewish Study Bible*. Oxford, 2004. ISBN 0-19-529754-7 [JSB]

Hayes, John & Carl Holladay. *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition*. Westminster/John Knox, 2007. ISBN 0-664-22775-9 [HH]

Heschel, Abraham. *The Prophets*. HarperCollins Publishers, 2001. ISBN 0-06-093699-1 [Heschel]

O'Brien, Julia M. *Challenging Prophetic Metaphor: Theology & Ideology in the Prophets*. WJK Press, 2008. ISBN 9780664229641 [Metaphor]

Premnath, D. N. *Eighth Century Prophets: A Social Analysis*. Chalice Press, 2003. ISBN 0-8272-0817-0 [Premnath]

**Assignments:** The requirements of the course are listed below, along with their respective values for the final course grade and (where appropriate) the dates on which the assignment is due. All students are expected to turn in assignments on (or before) the provided dates. Late assignments will not be accepted, unless prior permission has been granted by the professor. Such extensions will only be approved for emergency situations.

1. Class Participation [15% of final grade]: Every student is expected to attend all scheduled class sessions. Attendance implies more than just being present during the class period. All students are expected to complete

reading/writing assignments (as appropriate) and to participate in class discussions. To be counted “present”, students must have a bible with them in class.

2. In Class Presentation [20%]: Every student will present an exegetical examination of an 8<sup>th</sup> century prophetic text for the class. Instructions for this assignment will be provided in class. Presentations are due on the appropriate date in the semester (to be determined by the professor).
3. Contemporary Application [25%]: Every student will choose one from the following options to compose: a Sermon based on an 8<sup>th</sup> century prophetic text; a Worship Service utilizing/focusing upon an 8<sup>th</sup> century prophetic text/s; or an Educational Experience/Lecture based on a text (or texts) from an 8<sup>th</sup> century prophet. Instructions for this assignment will be provided in class. Applications are due to the professor no later than **4 pm [Central] on May 6, 2016. Students planning to graduate at the semester’s end must turn in papers on April 29, 2016 by 5 pm [Central]. Late applications will not be accepted.**
4. Exegesis Paper [40% of final grade]: Students will choose a text from one of the 8<sup>th</sup> century prophets (i.e., Amos, Hosea, Micah, & Isaiah 1-39) and write a 15-20 page exegesis paper on that passage. Further instructions will be given in class by the professor. Papers are due to the professor no later than **5 pm on May 6, 2016 [Central]. Students planning to graduate at the semester’s end must turn in papers on April 29, 2016 by 5 pm [Central]. Late papers will not be accepted.** *This is the paper you should include in your Student Portfolio.*



*Please* let me know right away if you are having difficulties of any sort (academic or otherwise) that are interfering with your work in class. It is much easier to work out difficulties early on than it is to deal with weeks of fuzzy understanding, accumulated missed assignments, missed classes, etc.

**Grading:** Letter grades will be determined based on the following scale. Students should also consult their *Student Handbook* for information on what constitutes “A work”; “B work”; “C work”; “D work”; and “F work”.

“A” range = 90-100	A+ = 98-100	A = 94-97	A- = 90-93
“B” range = 80-89	B+ = 87-89	B = 84-86	B- = 80-83
“C” range = 70-79	C+ = 77-79	C = 74-76	C- = 70-73
“D” range = 60-69	D+ = 67-69	D = 64-66	D- = 60-63
F = 59 and below			

**Helpful Hints:** Extra credit does not exist in the course. Make use of the credit available. "Trying hard" is usually necessary, but not sufficient, to create good work. In short, the professor cannot base a grade on "effort"; the grade is based on the submitted product.

**Academic Honesty:** Integrity is a basic principle of academic work. All students are required to be familiar with the PTS policies regarding "Academic Misconduct". Dishonesty in student work (including, but not limited to: cheating and plagiarism) will not be tolerated in this course. Students who are found guilty of academic misconduct will receive at least a grade of "F" on the assignment in question and have a letter sent to the Dean explaining the situation. Other, more serious consequences are possible as described in the Student Handbook ([www.ptstulsa.edu](http://www.ptstulsa.edu)).

**Seminary Policies:** Seminary Policies (e.g., attendance, credit hour, etc.) can be found the "Syllabus & Other Important Documents" folder on the Moodle course site.

**Other Policies:** All written work should follow Turabian formatting for footnotes & bibliography, as well as the guidelines found in the PTS Assignments may NOT be faxed to the seminary. Students are required to use "Just Language" (as covered in class) for all written work. Out of respect for the class, all cell phones must be turned-off during the session. In emergency situations, phones may be left on vibrate, but students must notify the professor before class.

**Course Schedule:** The professor reserves the right to alter this schedule if pedagogical concerns necessitate such a change. This includes, but is not limited to: adding/deleting assignments, rearranging topics, and changing due dates for assignments (only if it is to the students' benefit).

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic(s)</u>	<u>Assignments</u>
2/18 pm	Introductions Reading Location What is exegesis?	H&H Ch 1; Lapsley, "Am I Able"; Yee, "The Author/Text/Reader and Power"
2/19 am	The Text as Propaganda Cultural Hermeneutics	H&H Ch 11; Following {Moodle} "Canaanites, Cowboys, & Indians"; "Ethics, Bible, Reading As If"; "Reading the OT from a Nigerian Perspective"; "When the Text Is The Problem"
2/19 pm	Who is a Prophet?  Establishing the Text	Heschel "Intro", Part I Ch 1 & Part II Chs 1-4 & pp 627-32 H&H Chs 2-3; JSB pp 2062-2076

	History In/Behind the Text 8 <sup>th</sup> Century BCE Israel & Judah	Premnath "Intro" & Chs 1-3
2/20 am	Oral Stages of the Text Sources Behind the Text The Text as Literature Other Methods Putting It All Together	H&H Ch 6-7; TBA  H&H Chs 5, 8, & 10; H&H Chs 12-13
2/20 pm	What is "justice"?	Heschel Part I, Ch 11
4/14 pm	Amos & Hosea	Heschel I Chs 2-3; Premnath Ch 4; TBA
4/15 am	Micah  Isaiah of Jerusalem	Heschel I Ch 5; Premnath "Conclusion"; TBA Heschel I Ch 4; TBA
4/15 pm	Student Presentations	TBA
4/16 am	Student Presentations	TBA
4/16 pm	Contemporary Prophets  New Insights & Future Directions	Heschel Part II Chs 5-7 & 11-16; <i>Daring to Speak in God's Name</i> , pp 116-171 {Moodle}