

## 11-603 Prophetic Books: The Book of Amos Summer Session 2014

June 16-June 27, 2014  
8:00 am to 12:30 pm

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### Course objectives:

- \* greater knowledge of the book of Amos and its canonical and historical setting
- \* development of exegetical skills and the application of those skills to sermon preparation and scholarly writing
- \* ability to recognize, understand, and act towards contemporary issues of social justice
- \* familiarity with a bible study resource on Amos and ability to use it in church settings

### Required texts:

*The HarperCollins Study Bible* (2006), ISBN-13: 9780060786847, Price: \$16.33 at barnesandnoble.com. **OR**  
*The New Oxford Annotated Bible* (2010), ISBN-13: 9780195289602, Price: \$14.66 at barnesandnoble.com.

Bruce C. Birch, Hosea, Joel, and Amos (Westminster Bible Companion series), Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997. **ISBN-13** 978-0664252717, available at barnesandnoble.com for \$18.22.

Steven L. McKenzie and John Kaltner, eds., New Meanings for Ancient Texts: Recent Approaches to Biblical Criticisms and their Applications, (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2013). **ISBN-13**: 978-0664238162, available at barnesandnoble.com for \$26.01.

John Barton, The Theology of the Book of Amos (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012). **ISBN-13**: 978-0521671750, available at barnesandnoble.com for \$26.99.

**Required texts (con't)**

Carolyn J. Sharp, Old Testament Prophets for Today (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009), ISBN-13, 978-0-664-231781, available at [barnesandnoble.com](http://barnesandnoble.com) for \$11.38.

Additional required readings will be posted on the course Moodle site.

**Course expectations:**

- completion of reading assignments before each class
- active and informed participation in class sessions
- punctual and regular attendance at all class sessions

Attendance at all class sessions is mandatory. It is expected that you will give your full attention to the lectures and discussions in the class. To facilitate your engagement with the class, cellphones and earpieces must be turned off and put away, and your laptops should be used only for taking notes.

Our class discussions will supplement and integrate the readings rather than repeat that material. For this reason, missing a class damages the learning process. Consequently, one absence will result in a lowering of your final grade. According to our academic guidelines, two absences will mean that you cannot pass the class. If you have to miss a class for any reason, please inform me in advance by telephone or email.

**Furthermore, before the class starts, students should read through the book of Amos at least once and think about choosing a pericope that will be the basis for the exegetical assignment and a sermon or a theme to be presented in a lecture.**

**Grading:**

Consistent and active participation in class discussions (including leading discussions on books, articles, bible study, and exegetical methods)	30%
Lectionary assignment	20%
Sermon/lecture and written report	20%
Exegesis paper	30%

All assignments must be submitted to receive a final grade in the course. Furthermore, all assignments must be submitted on the date specified. Requests

for extensions are strongly discouraged. Any extension granted for any assignment may result in the lowering of grade for that assignment.

### **Sermon/Lecture assignment**

Sermon delivery takes place in class and has two components. One component is an oral report that includes information about the research conducted, actual or intended audience, and any reflections you may have about the process of developing the presentation. The second component is delivering your message. The content should be about 10-15 minutes in length. With the oral report, the delivery should take about 20 minutes altogether and there will be about 10 minutes of discussion afterwards. In other words, each person will have about 30 minutes for the presentation. Ideally, all sermons/lectures will be given during the second week of class and, if possible, on the day that the pericope is covered in the Birch commentary (if applicable).

At the end of the course, a written report on the assignment must be submitted. That report includes the lecture notes or sermon manuscript and a discussion of insights gained based on subsequent exegetical work and class discussion. Sermon/lecture assignments are to be handed in during the last class.

As part of your sermon/lecture preparation, you will write a brief exegesis paper on the text (not more than 4 pages double-spaced). Any issues concerning textual variances, translations, redactions, and so forth are to be covered. In addition, the final section of your exegesis should include possible preaching themes based on your research. The assignment is to be presented in class and a copy given to each student and the professor. By the end of the course, each student will have a collection of the basic exegetical work for a number of the Amos passages. The assignment can be submitted during any class session, but preferably on the day that the text is covered in the readings from Bruce Birch's commentary. If you want to work specifically on a text from Amos that is included in the common lectionary, this is the list of texts from which to choose: 5:6-7, 10-15; 5:18-24, 6:1a, 4-7; 7:7-15; 7:7-17; 8:1-12; 8:4-7.

### **Exegesis paper**

The paper should analyze the message of Amos and that of another 8<sup>th</sup> century BCE prophet: Hosea, Micah, or Isaiah of Jerusalem. A comparison can be based on a theme that appears in both (for example, references to women) or on a particular word (for example, transgression). An attempt should be made to relate the texts to their probable socio-historical contexts. A proposed paper topic must be submitted in writing before the end of the summer term. Due date: Friday, July 18, 2014. Length: 12-15 pages double spaced for MDiv students and 18-20 pages for MTS students.

## Assignment Schedule

### Monday, June 16

Birch, Introduction, 165-172.

McKenzie and Kaltner, Chapter 1: Cultural-Historical Criticism of Bible, 1-20.

Sharp, Chapter 1: What is a Prophet, 1-18.

Barton, Theology of Amos, Chapter 1

Ngan, "Amos" in the Global Bible Commentary, edited by Daniel Patte (Nashville: Abingdon, 2004), 277-285.

Erickson, "Amos" in the Women's Bible Commentary, 3rd edition, edited by Carol Newsom, Sharon Ringe, and Jacqueline Lapsley. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2012, 312-318.

Robertson, "Amos," in the Africana Bible, edited by Hugh Page, Jr., and others (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 172-179.

### Tuesday, June 17

Birch, Amos 1:1-2

McKenzie and Kaltner, Chapter 2: Disability Studies, 21-38.

Sharp, Chapter 2: Early Prophets, 19-32.

Barton, Theology of Amos, Chapter 2

Houston, "Was there a Social Crisis in the Eighth Century?" in In Search of Pre-exilic Israel, edited by John Day (JSOTSupp 406, London: T&T Clark, 2004), 130-149.

### Wednesday, June 18

Birch, Amos 1:3-2:16

McKenzie and Kaltner, Chapter 3: Ecological Criticism, 39-58.

Sharp, Chapter 3: Amos, 33-40.

Barton, Theology of Amos, Chapter 3

Carroll R., "For So You Love To Do': Probing Popular Religion in the Book of Amos," in Rethinking Contexts, Rereading Texts: Contributions from the Social Sciences to Biblical Interpretation, edited by M. Daniel Carroll R. (JSOTSupp 299: London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 168-189.

Bird, "The Place of Women in the Israelite Cultus," in Missing Persons and Mistaken Identities: Women and Gender in Ancient Israel (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 81-102.

**Thursday, June 19**

Birch, Amos 3:1-5:27

McKenzie and Kaltner, Chapter 4: New Historicism, 59-76.

Sharp, Chapter 4: Hosea, 41-48.

Barton, Theology of Amos, Chapter 4

Ackerman, "Amos 5:18-24," *Interpretation* 57 (April 2003):190-193.

Romero, "Amos 5:21-24: Religion, Politics, and the Latino Experience," *Journal of Hispanic/Latino Theology* 4 (1997): 21-41.

**Friday, June 20**

Birch, Amos 6:1-14

McKenzie and Kaltner, Chapter 5: Bible and Popular Culture, 77-96.

Sharp, Chapter 5: Micah, 49-56.

Barton, Theology of Amos, Chapter 5

Isasi-Diaz, *Mujerista Theology*, Chapter 6, "Un Poquito de Justicia/A Little Bit of Justice" (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996), pages 105-127.

**Monday, June 23**

Birch, Amos 7:1-9; 8:1-3

McKenzie and Kaltner, Chapter 6: Postcolonial Criticism, 97-116.

Sharp, Chapter 6: Isaiah, 57-69.

Barton, Theology of Amos, Chapter 6

Holmgren, "Priests and Prophets: Spirituality and Social Conscience," *Worship* 79 (July 2005): 304-316.

Michael Carden, "The Book of the Twelve Minor Prophets," and "Amos" in *The Queer Bible Commentary*, edited by Deryn Guest and others (London: SCM Press, 2006), 432-443, 459-461.

**Tuesday, June 24**

Birch, Amos 7:10-17

McKenzie and Kaltner, Chapter 7: Postmodern Criticism, 117-136.

Sharp, Chapter 7: Jeremiah, 70-78.

Barton, Theology of Amos, Chapter 7

Johanna Stiebert, "Women's Sexuality and Stigma in Genesis and the Prophets," in *Grant Me Justice: HIV/AIDS and Gender Readings of the Bible*, edited by Musa Dube and Musimbi Kanyoro (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004), 80-96.

**Wednesday, June 25**

Birch, 8:4-14

McKenzie and Kaltner, Chapter 8: Psychological Criticism, 137-154.

Sharp, Chapter 8: Ezekiel, 79-88.

**Thursday, June 26**

Birch, 9:1-10

McKenzie and Kaltner, Chapter 9: Queer Criticism, 155-176.

Sharp, Chapter 9: Other Minor Prophets, 89-104.

Smith, A New Perspective on Amos 9:7a: "To me, O Israel, you are just like the Kushites," *Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center* 22 (1994): 36-47.

**Friday, June 27**

Birch, 9:11-15

**\*\*Final sermon/lecture assignments are due\*\***