

OT POETIC AND WISDOM LITERATURE
—COURSE REQUIREMENTS—
Spring 2017

COURSE Overview

Survey of Job through Song of Songs. Special attention is given to the structure and interpretation of Hebrew poetry; special introduction to the individual books; doctrinal and practical emphasis.

COURSE Objectives

1. To introduce the nature, style, and content of Hebrew wisdom and poetic literature, and to recognize which Bible books/portions fall into these two broader categories.
2. To understand the distinctives of OT poetic and wisdom literature and its place in the development of the Hebrew canon.
3. To survey the themes, theology, and internal structure of each of the five books of OT poetic literature.

COURSE Outcomes

1. The student will master principles for recognizing and interpreting sections of Hebrew poetry
2. The student will be able to identify key messianic Psalms and their corresponding NT references.
3. The student will know the general outlines and content of Job through Song of Songs for preaching/teaching purposes.

READINGS

—Main Text: C.H. Bullock. *An Introduction to the Old Testament Poetic Books*

—Reading One: A **Commentary on Job** of your choice

OR Read **10 Essays** in *Sitting with Job* (edited by Zuck) —completed by February 23

—Reading Two: A **Commentary on Ecclesiastes OR Song of Songs** of your choice

OR **10 Essays** in *Learning from the Sages* (=essays on Proverbs edited by Zuck) OR Tremper Longman's *How to Read Proverbs* —completed by April 13

You may otherwise substitute Kidner, *The Wisdom of Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes*, for either of the above commentary assignments

—Reading Three

—Book of Job; by February 9

—Book of Psalms; by March 9

—Book of Proverbs; by April 6

—Book of Ecclesiastes; by April 20

—Book of Song of Songs; by May 4

Try reading this poetic portion of the Bible in a modern version that emphasizes literary style: e.g., NIV or NKJV

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

You will get to do a brief RESEARCH REPORT on each of the five poetic books. This may be an exposition of a passage, a thematic study, or a comparative word study focusing mainly on how the word (or phrase) is used within that particular book (or by that author).

Recommended topics of investigation include:

- Wisdom: Its overall meaning in ancient Hebrew culture to God's revelation (Law) and to life (both personal and sociological)
- The Date of Job's authorship: survey the arguments for the patriarchal and for the Solomonic era dates
- A survey of the Theology of Job
- Progressive revelation in Job: its relation and contribution to the flow of OT doctrine; e.g., Satan, mediation between God and man, and the resurrection
- The Psalms Titles: their purpose, classifications, and authenticity (viz., are they inspired?)
- Imprecations in the Psalms (and comparative sacred lit.): survey the history of their interpretation, and, on the basis of the analogy of faith, come up with a reasonable understanding of their place in the holy writ
- Messianic Psalms: pick one of the following for an exegetical study: 2,8,[16,89,132],22,40,[45,102],[69,109],72,110; be sure to reference NT usage
- A Thematic study in the Book of Proverbs; catalog and synthesize a major theme in Proverbs; show the teaching's importance in that day and in ours
- Ecclesiastes and Canonicity; survey the question and its time of discussion that surrounded the recognition of this oracle.

- The History of Interpretation of the Song of Solomon
- YOU choose a topic; check with instructor

Plan on about two pages of double-spaced material, either in written or outline form. Include a list of works cited. Time permitting, you will be able to present your findings during a class session.

ORAL REPORTS

Plan on presenting one of your reports as an expanded, 5-10 minute oral report sometime during the semester. Produce an outline for class distribution. Ideally, the report should be given in relation to the book or topic (introductory section to the course) that is currently being discussed in class.

MEMORIZATION

Job 19:25,26	Psalm 100:2,4	Ecclesiastes 12:13,14
Proverbs 1:7 and 9:10	Song 8:7	

EXAMS

There will be three closed-book **EXAMS** over the notes.

Test I over Intro-Job on February 24 Test II over Psalms on April 7 Test III on May 12

There will be seven open-book, take-home **QUIZZES** covering each chapter of Bullock.

GRADING

Exams - 55%	Oral Report - 1%
Reading - 15%	Memorization - 5%
Research Reports - 15%	Attendance - 4%
Take-home quizzes - 5%	

SCHEDULE

- 1/26 Introduction; Hebrew poetry and wisdom literature
- 2/2 Wisdom literature & wisdom theology; Job Introduction; Job 19:25,26 memory work; Quiz I due
- 2/9 Job Intro; Job Analysis; do Psalm 100:2,4 memory work; Quiz II
- 2/16 Job content; Finish reading Job
- 2/23 Psalms Introduction: title and authorship; finish reading Job Commentary; Job report due; Quiz III
- 3/2 EXAM I (Take-home) due; Psalms: authorship and arrangement
- 3/9 Psalm types; recite Proverbs 1:7 & 9:10; Quiz IV
- 3/16 Psalms theology; Historic use of Psalms; Finish reading Psalms; recite Eccl. 12:13,14
- 3/23 Imprecations in the Psalms; Messianic Psalms; Psalms report due
- 3/30 SPRING BREAK
- 4/6 EXAM II (Take-Home) Due; Proverbs Introduction: authorship and background; recite Song 8:7; finish reading Proverbs; Quiz V
- 4/13 Finish commentary on Eccl. or Canticles; Proverbs content
- 4/20 NO CLASS: Presbytery Travel Day
- 4/27 Ecclesiastes: Introduction and content; Proverbs report due; read Ecclesiastes; Quiz VI; Oral Reports?; Eccl. Report
- 5/4 Canticles Intro and content; read Canticles & submit report; Wrap-up; last Oral Reports; Quiz VII
- 5/11 FINAL EXAM in class