

Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary
BIBLICAL THEOLOGY I: Tentative Syllabus

OT-640
3 Units
Spring 2009
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Tuesday 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

COURSE CONTENT

Students will be challenged to come to grips with the central message of the OT. The class will explore the viability of one particular synthesis of the OT as presented in *God's Design* and compare it to other approaches taken. The course will present an introduction to the history of the discipline and to current trends in theological research.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To gain greater familiarity with OT Scripture, especially its theological themes, relating those to the Reign of God and the church.
2. To understand the issues, proposed solutions and methodological questions that surround the task of biblical theology, and to discuss those with sharp analysis while maintaining healthy interpersonal relationships.
3. To become acquainted with and to assess past attempts at synthesizing the OT.
4. To reflect theologically on personal, social and philosophical issues.
5. To learn the skills of "doing biblical theology" by working with a biblical book.
6. To appreciate the importance of biblical theology for ministry: preaching, teaching, and mission.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

2. Articulate commitment to a biblical theological Christian perspective
 - 2.1 Exegete biblical texts within a design that includes the descriptive, synthetic, hermeneutical, and pragmatic analytical tasks
 - 2.4 Analyze, synthesize, and engage contemporary church and world issues from a biblical theological perspective
 - 2.4.1 Describe the church as a body of people called to represent God's reign as its community, servant, and messenger in the world
 - 2.4.2 Identify ways in which the institutional church has both shaped and been shaped by society
 - 2.4.3 Analyze contemporary issues including nationalism, social justice, reconciliation, interpersonal relationships, environment and medical questions using a biblical theological paradigm that includes justice, peace, covenant community, and holiness
- 3.1 Describe the *missio Dei* view of church as a people called and sent to represent God's reign as community, servant, and messenger in dialogue with personal and denominational theology/history/sociology of church
- 3.3 Apply biblical theological perspectives in serving and leading in culturally and religiously diverse ministry contexts

TEXT MATERIALS

Required texts:

Brueggemann, W. *Theology of the Old Testament*. Fortress, 1997. 0-8006-3765-8 [B]
Martens, E.A. *God's Design: A Focus on OT Theology*. 3rd ed. Bibal, 1998. 0-941037-51-7 [M]

ASSIGNMENTS/LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1. Attendance/participation/interaction in class sessions

There is a grade reduction of 2% for each hour of missed class that is not made up. Students missing more than 12 hours of class risk course failure. Participation will require brief written assignments due at classtime as assigned. Missed classes may be made up with assigned work within 7 days of absence.

2. Reading (10%)

10% of total grade

Martens	300 pages	35 hours + Bible reading
Brueggemann	700 pages	
Other	400 pages (monograph and research)	
Bible	300 chapters (21 chapters/week)	
Extra credit	150 pages (add up to 10% to your reading grade)	
Additional extra	200 Bible chapters (add up to 10% more to your reading grade)	

Reading is to aid informed class participation. Students are encouraged to stay current with assigned reading. **An in-progress reading list is due March 9** with a minimum of 600 pages. Comprehensive reading list with annotated bibliography is **due May 11** (includes prior report).

Reading list should include author, title, and pages read with summative and comprehensive totals and academic annotation of 25-50 words per item—a bit more for longer readings is permitted.

3. Quiz of Theologians

5%; 2 hours study time

Martens, Brueggemann, Eichrodt, von Rad, Terrien, Gottwald, Childs, Scobey, Goldingay, Gerstengberger to be taken on May 11

4. Monograph report

20%; 5 hours

Written one-page summary	10%
8-11-minute presentation	10%

Students may choose a monograph title before Feb. 2; assignments will be made by the professor on Feb. 5. The student will present the book in a careful 8-11 minute lecture. Presentations should answer the following questions:

1. What is the thesis of the book?
2. What is the theological perspective of the author?
3. How does the structure of the book contribute to its message?
4. Does this monograph support, complement and/or criticize *God's Design*? If so, how does it do this?

5. What insights from the book are most helpful for developing your OT theology and for nurturing the church? Provide sufficient detail so that your audience can use this material in their own settings.

6. How do you wish to challenge the author?

The book summary (using the sample Monograph from course website) is **due on course website at 5:30 p.m. Sunday before the assigned class.**

5. Threaded conversation regarding reading of textbooks

10%; part of class time;
no extra hours

- Assign textbook pages
- Write a 200-500 word essay
- At least 2 responses of 75+ words
- Groups meet (physically or electronically) to identify one issue for conversation in class
- 10 graded conversations (eliminate worst score [6 Brueggemann/4 Martens; marked by asterisk]) (Equivalent to 20 minutes of class)

The student is to post 11 reading analyses in the "Forum" on the course website. In **Part I** of the Reading

Analysis the student is to (1) summarize key insights. **Part II** is for identifying at least **two issues** on which the student would like further discussion. The issues are to be raised in the form of questions with a brief rationale for each question. The reports are due at 5:00 p.m. on the Friday before class. The schedule indicates which pages are to be read for those dates.

Students are required to engage/respond to at least two other learners' postings each week. The response is meant to further discussion and prepare for class conversation. Each response is to be at least 75 words. The responses are due Mondays at 5:00 p.m. Group conversation choosing issues for class conversation must be completed before class begins.

Assignments that do not include word counts or do not fit the word limits will lose a minimum of 5%.

Assignments submitted after the deadlines will not be graded.

Rubric for grading essays (for detail see descriptions in final essay rubric)

10% Format/Style: length, documentation, follows rubric, grammar, spelling, clarity, conciseness

90% Content

10% Thesis statement

40% Supporting evidence (documented by page number)

20% Issues the reading assignment (clear, concise, insightful)

20% Responses to other learners' postings are insightful and advance the dialogue; group selects one issue for class conversation

6. Research paper (3000+ words)

35%; 30 hours

Write a paper on a theological topic (word study) based on exegetical (biblical theological) study and informed by OT scholarship. The approach to and boundaries of the topical research should be defined (e.g., *synchronic study of rest in the Pentateuch* or *diachronic study of justice in the Deuteronomistic History*). The textual boundaries of the topic should be narrow enough to allow a thorough treatment and might well be anchored in a primary biblical text. Topic suggestions include: fear, anger, divine emotions, divine jealousy, war, creation, Israel/Judah, the nations, judgment, salvation, ethics, worship, evil, sin, righteousness, justice, shalom. The writer of an "A" paper will make explicit reference to the way in which the theology of the paper engages, assumes, accepts, refutes, integrates and/or amends the perspectives of Martens and Brueggemann.

A 300-word proposal outlining the project is due Feb. 23. The proposal must include a definition of the topic and the paper's thesis (expressed as a defensible proposition or statement of objective), identification of primary biblical text(s) to be studied, preliminary description of how the paper will correspond to Martens and Brueggemann, and a brief outline of the paper. At least five primary scholarly references must be included in the preliminary bibliography.

The paper should

- define the theological theme (assessment based on significance, clarity and focus of the topic or issue)
- state the thesis (succinctly described, defensible proposition for study)
- document supporting evidence based on a study of the biblical text(s) which includes
 - the context into/from which the biblical text speaks,
 - the basic structure of the text(s),
 - related texts significant for laying out the biblical theology,
 - analysis of rhetorical strategies of the text(s), and
 - analysis of the relationship to/place within OT theology,
 - at least 5 printed academic sources
 - Assessment criteria: The argument is made conclusively and in a compelling manner based on clear evidence and clear thinking; appropriate use of secondary resources

- synthesize a theological analysis of the topic (including reference to textbooks; weighs theological arguments or positions fairly; produces new information, organizes information in a new way, or draws important conclusions from existing knowledge)
- describe and evaluate contemporary relevance (what this means for church/world)
- offer a brief summary conclusion (Succinct style, clear organization, force and persuasive)

Grading Criteria

10% Format/Style: length, documentation using MLA or Chicago-style citations of quotations and ideas, follows rubric, contains conclusion, grammar, spelling, clarity, conciseness

90% Content

- 10% Proposal meets criterion and quality expectations
- 10% Thesis (Succinctly described, defensible proposition to be studied)
- 40% Supporting evidence, etc.
 - 15% Synthesis
 - 10% Application
 - 5% Conclusion

Penalty for late work (15% minimum) or failure to meet the objective criteria of the Paper 3000 words minimum; due on May 4; to be submitted electronically in Rich Text Format to ljost@mbseminary.edu; late work will not receive instructor's comments

7. Oral class presentation

5%; 2 hours

Students will present a summary of the final papers (supported by Power Point) to the class on May 11.

Seven-minute oral class presentation of research paper with one-page summary

The oral presentation should use audience-appropriate(creatively academic) communication including good eye contact (75% free of notes), good diction, and a clear presentation of findings, including succinct summary of theological topic, thesis statement, exegetical discoveries, and theological synthesis of the topic, including a suggestion for the lived experience of this theme in today's church and/or world. The written summary should include all of the elements of the findings presentation. Reports on May 13

8. Discovery Bible Study

15%; 8 hours

Lead a discovery exegetical Bible study for college or adult group based on research

A. Design and teach one exegetical Bible study (40-60 minutes) from an OT text that applies the **Final Paper** for use in a congregational setting. The Bible study should be complete with

- lesson objectives
- outline of the lesson plan
- instructions/report about how much time was to be spent on each part of the lesson
- report what instructions were given and what questions were asked to stimulate discovery by participants
- report spoken responses (content) of participants. Theological insight within the presentation should be explicit but not intrusively awkward.

B. Analyze the Bible study. The critique should include

- review of the theological themes developed
- response to the critique of at least 2 listeners/participants
- analysis of the presentation of the study—strengths, areas for improvement, future goals for the presenter.

Due May 4 at classtime

Note: A penalty of 15% will apply to all late papers & book reviews. A penalty of 20% will apply to late class presentations. An additional 10% penalty will accrue with each additional week of tardiness.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

1. MBBS academic policies (as well as other school policies) are described at <http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies/>. These policies provide guidance on academic integrity and plagiarism, accommodations for disability, incomplete course work, extensions, dates for changing registration, non-discriminatory and inclusive language, appeals, grading templates, etc. Students are expected to be familiar with these policies and will be held responsible for adhering to them. If you have questions about how these policies relate to you or to a situation that you face in your studies, please speak to your professor or consult the Registrar.
2. Course evaluations are to be completed online and are due one week after the completion of the course. Official grades will not be posted until the student's evaluation of the course is completed.
3. Student work will be evaluated by two standards: a) by what is considered the appropriate level of graduate performance, and b) by comparison with work submitted in a given class (see the Academic Handbook, p. 10). The letter grade conversions follow the MBBS Grading Template: A (100-94%), A- (93-90%), B+ (89-87%) B (86-83%), B (82-80%), C+ (79-77%), C (76-73%), C- (72-70%), and F (69-0%). The performance expectations are as follows: "B" is the baseline that means the student is doing satisfactory work. "B+" or higher grades indicate the student has exceeded the baseline performance standard. "C" grade indicates that the student has not achieved the baseline level.
4. Formatting Specifications. On questions of style and citation form, consult Carole Slade, Form and Style: Research papers, Reports, Theses, 11th Edition. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2000. The preferred documentation format is parenthetical citation style, either the MLA or APA.

PROPOSED COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Theme	Assignments	Monographs
Jan. 26	God's Design (Exod 6) What is OT Theology?	M. 3-19 B. 1-114	
Feb. 2	Creation (Gen 1-3) Humanity, Sex, Ecology Gen 1-11	M. 317-40* B. 528-51	Fretheim, Terence. <i>God and World in the OT</i> . Abingdon, 2005. Trible, Phyllis. <i>God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality</i> . Fortress, 1978.
Feb. 9	God will provide (Gen 22) Primeval and Ancestors Gen 12-50	M. 21-33 B. 117-266*	Bird, Phyllis. <i>Missing Persons and Mistaken Identities</i> . Fortress, 1997. Moberly, R.W.L. <i>The Old Testament of the Old Testament</i> . Fortress Press, 1992. Trible, Phyllis. <i>Texts of Terror</i> . Fortress, 1984.
Feb. 16	Covenant (Exod 19-24) OT Theology by Eichrodt & von Rad Exodus, Deuteronomy	M. 71-90* B. 267-313	McKenzie, Steven L. <i>Covenant</i> . Chalice, 2000. Rendtorff, Rolf. <i>The Covenant Formula</i> . T. & T. Clark, 1998. Sakenfeld, Katharine. <i>Faithfulness in Action</i> . 1985.

Feb. 23	Holiness and Cult (Num 12) Leviticus-Numbers OT Theology by Terrien	M. 37-70, 91-111 B. 407-34, 567-99, 650-79*	Anderson, Gary. <i>Sacrifices and Offerings in Ancient Israel</i> . Scholars Press, 1987. Gammie, John. <i>Holiness in Israel</i> . Fortress, 1989. Wright, C.J.H. <i>OT Ethics for the People of God</i> . IVP, 2004.
Mar. 2	Yahweh War (Josh 6) Joshua-Judges OT Theology by Gottwald	M. 37-47, 65-69*	Brueggemann, Walter. <i>Interpretation and Obedience</i> . Fortress, 1991. Lind, Millard. <i>Yahweh is a Warrior</i> . Herald, 1980.
Mar. 9	Land (Lev. 25) Deuteronomy	M. 113-37, 217-36, 299-313*	Habel, Norman. <i>The Land is Mine</i> . Fortress, 1995. Lowery, Richard. <i>Sabbath and Jubilee</i> . Chalice, 2000.
Mar. 16	Module Week		
Mar. 23	Early Monarchy (1 Kgs 4) justice, power, united kingdom 1 Samuel 1-1 Kings 11 (1 Kgs 21) social justice, judgment, law 1 Kings 12-2 Kings 17	M. 169-80 B. 359-72, 600-21*	Baloian, Bruce. <i>Anger in the OT</i> . P. Lang, 1992. Janzen, Waldemar. <i>Old Testament Ethics: A Paradigmatic Approach</i> . WJK, 1994.
Mar. 30	Worship Yahweh (Pss 1, 13, 73, 136) Psalms	M. 193-204 B. 317-32, 373-85, 450-91*	Brettler, Marc. <i>God is King</i> . JSOT, 1989. Creach, Jerome F. D. <i>The Destiny of the Righteous in the Psalms</i> . Chalice, 2008. Mettinger, T.N.D. <i>In Search of God: The Meaning and Message of the Everlasting Names</i> . Fortress, 1988. Ollenburger, Ben. <i>Zion, the City of the Great King</i> . JSOT, 1987.
Apr. 6	Wisdom (Job 28) Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Job OT Theology by Childs	M. 204-11, 217-27 B. 333-58, 385-403, 680-694*	Von Rad, Gerhard. <i>Wisdom in Israel</i> . Abingdon, 1972.
Apr. 13	Prophets (Isa 5:1-7) Amos/Hosea/Isaiah 1-39 OT Theology by Scobey	M. 141-91, 211-16 B. 622-49	Fretheim, Terrence. <i>The Suffering of God</i> . Fortress, 1984. Wright, C.J.H. <i>Knowing God the Father through the OT</i> . IVP, 2007.
Apr. 20	Prophets (Jer 7) Jeremiah/Habakkuk/Zephaniah	B. 434-49	Balantine, Samuel. <i>Prayer in the Hebrew Bible</i> . Fortress, 1993.
Apr. 27	Exile (Esther 4) Ezra-Esther, Isaiah 40-66, Haggai- Malachi OT Theology by Goldingay	M. 239-97 B. 492-527, 695-704*	Smith-Christopher, Daniel. <i>A Biblical Theology of Exile</i> . Fortress: 2002. Wright, C.J.H. <i>Knowing the HS through the OT</i> . IVP, 2006.
May 4	OT & NT OT Theology by Gerstenberger	M. 341-69 B. 552-64, 707-50*	Enns, Peter. <i>Inspiration and Incarnation</i> . Baker Academic, 2005. Wright, C.J.H. <i>Knowing Jesus Through the OT</i> . IVP, 1992.
May 11	Review of Final Papers; Exam		