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OT 650 Tutorial in the Old Testament

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OT 650 Tutorial in the Old Testament (Focus: Exegesis of Psalms)

Spring 2008, W/F 1:00–2:15, M 307
Office hours: T/Th 9:30–10:30; W 2:30–3:30

Instructor: John A. Cook
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BC 336; 859–858–2292

3 credit hours
enrollment limit: 30
prerequisites: IBS-1, OT520, OT501

Description

This course explores exegetical issues in the book of Psalms, and provides students with opportunities to apply original-language tools to select poems in the book. Particular attention is given to poetic analysis, theological themes in the book, and the history of theological interpretation and the liturgical role of the Psalms in the life of the Church.

Goals

1. Learn the literary characteristics of Hebrew poetry and analyze the poetry in the book of Psalms.
2. Become familiar with the major theological themes in the book of Psalms and the theological character of the book as a whole.
3. Understand the hermeneutical challenges to theological reflection and appropriate of the psalms in the Christian church.

Procedures

1. Studying extensive portions of the book of Psalms in Hebrew and/or English.
2. Practicing historical and theological exegesis on selected passages in the book of Psalms.
3. Reading relevant secondary literature (especially early commentaries) and discussing the interpretive issues and theology of the book of Psalms.

Requirements

1. Resources:
 - a) Hebrew Bible and lexicon required (as in OT 501)
 - b) Required textbooks:
 - Holladay, William L. *The Psalms through Three Thousand Years: Prayerbook of a Cloud of Witnesses*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996. (Holl.)
 - Kraus, Hans –Joachim. *Theology of the Psalms*. Trans. Keith Crim. A Continental Commentary. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992. (Kr.)
 - c) Access to commentaries and supplementary readings (Info Commons)
2. Assignments and evaluation:
 - a) Study and discussion of psalms in class (10%)
 - b) Praying through the book of Psalms (10%)

- c) Midterm and final exam: April 11 and May 22, 1pm (25% ea.)
- d) Paper on topic of choice (30%); sample paper topics include (topics must be approved by instructor by Feb. 27; paper is due on May 2):
- the enemy in Psalms
 - the poor in Psalms
 - the Psalms and the cult
 - violence in the psalms
 - kingship and messiah in the psalms
 - the enthronement psalms
 - wisdom ideas in Psalms
 - historical recital in the psalms

Expectations

1. Read through the book of Psalms devotionally *twice* during the semester in language of your choice.
2. Prepare for class discussion as per the schedule:
 - a) By studying the psalm in Hebrew (using whatever exegetical aids are necessary)
 - b) By reading Augustine's exposition on the psalm and consulting a modern commentary where necessary (see bibliography)
 - c) By being ready to give an oral recitation of a psalm of your choice (once during the semester, to be scheduled)
 - d) By reading the assigned secondary literature and being prepared to discuss the ideas therein.

Schedule (tentative)

Date	Topic	Reading Due
Week 1-3		Backgrounds
02/13	Course introduction	Holladay 1-14, 359-71
02/15	Reception history—Part 1	Holladay 95-190; Williams 2004
02/20	Reception history—Part 2	Holladay 191-284; Aurelius 2000
02/22	Reception history—Part 3	Holladay 17-91; Williams 2006; Brueggemann 1980
02/27	Praying the Psalms	Holladay 287-303, 330-58
02/29	Singing the psalms — Guest lecturer: Prof. Bill Goold	
Week 4-14		Interpreting the Psalms
03/05	Biblical poetry of Psalms	Holladay 304-29; Alter 1987; Berlin 1992
03/07	Psalm 1-2	Augustine 1.1-8
03/12	Psalms of prayer - תפלה	Kraus 125-76; Brueggemann 1986

03/14	Psalm 22	Augustine 1.149-66
03/19	Psalm 51	Augustine 2.366-87
03/21	<i>Good Friday — No Class</i>	
03/26	Psalms of praise - תהלה	Kraus 11-49; Brueggemann 1992
03/28	Psalm 103	Augustine 5.34-64
Week 8	<i>Spring Break — No Class</i>	
04/09	Psalm 40	Augustine 2.126-62
04/11	<i>Midterm exam</i>	
04/16	People of God - בני-ישראל, קהל-הסידים	Kraus 51-71
04/18	Psalm 78	Augustine 4.42-82
04/23	Zion psalms - הר-ציון, יהודה מלך	Kraus 73-106
04/25	Psalm 47	Augustine 2.275-86
04/30	Psalm 48	Augustine 2.286-301
05/02	Royal psalms - יהודה, משיח, דוד, ציון	Kraus 107-23
05/07	Psalm 89	Augustine 4.240-70
05/09	Didactic psalms - תורה, משל, חידה	Kraus 168-75; Brueggemann 1991
05/14	Psalm 73	Augustine (to be provided)
05/16	Psalm 119:1-32	Augustine 5.312-53

Supplementary readings (additional resources on virtual campus class site)

Alter, Robert

1987 Characteristics of Ancient Hebrew Poetry. Pp. 611-24 in *Literary Guide to the Bible*, ed. Robert Alter and Frank Kermode. Cambridge, MA: Belknap.3

Augustine, St.

1847-57 *Expositions on the Book of Psalms*. A Library of Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church. Oxford: John Henry Parker.

{vol. 1: <http://tiny.cc/zsWDF>; vol. 2: <http://tiny.cc/udzpZ>; vol. 4: <http://tiny.cc/Ye6Ub>; vol. 5: <http://tiny.cc/sGspX>; vol. 6: <http://tiny.cc/SbulZ>}

Berlin, Adele

1992 Parallelism. Pp. 155-62 in vol. 5 of *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman. New York: Doubleday. {available info commons reference BS440 A54 and <http://www.asburyseminary.edu/TempLibrary/resources/prolepsis.htm>}

Braulik, Georg P.

2004 Psalter and Messiah. Towards a Christological Understanding of the Psalms in the Old Testament and the Church Fathers. Pp. 15-40 in *Psalms and Liturgy*, ed. Dirk J. Human and Cas J. A. Vos. London: T & T Clark.

Brueggemann, Walter

1980 Psalms and the Life of Faith: A Suggested Typology of Function. *Journal for the*

- Study of Old Testament* 17: 3-32. {available from ATLA via Asbury Scholar:
<http://tiny.cc/mKXFb>}
- 1986 The Costly Loss of Lament. *Journal for the Study of Old Testament* 36: 57-71.
{available from ATLA via Asbury Scholar: <http://tiny.cc/mKXFb>}
- 1991 Bounded by Obedience and Praise: The Psalms as Canon. *Journal for the Study of
Old Testament* 50: 63-92. {available from ATLA via Asbury Scholar:
<http://tiny.cc/mKXFb>}
- Williams, Rowan
2004 Augustine and the Psalms. *Interpretation* 58: 17-27. {available from ATLA via
Asbury Scholar: <http://tiny.cc/mKXFb>}
- Williams, Tyler F.
n.d. A Form-Critical Classification of the Psalms according to Hermann Gunkel.
{<http://tiny.cc/R4Q79>}