

OT 606E Writings Book Study: Psalms

February 26 – March 26, 2019

Tuesdays 6:30 – 10:00 p.m. (and Saturday, March 9, 8:30-4:30)

Last revised: 24 October 2018

MISSIO'S MISSION

To prepare missional leaders who incarnate the story of Jesus with humility and authenticity and who communicate the story with fidelity to Scripture, appreciation of the Christian tradition, and sensitivity to the needs and aspirations of postmodern culture.

PROFESSOR

Michael Kelly, 215.990.3499 (c). mbkelly123@gmail.com. Office hours by appointment before class, or Thursdays by phone or videoconference.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The general topic for this course is the OT Writings. Much of this portion of the OT is written in the form of poetry, and as such we will discuss poetry in general, and biblical Hebrew poetry in particular. One course evening we will devote to the wisdom literature of the Old Testament. The focus of the course will be on the Psalms, building on our initial work on poetry. We will look at both individual psalms and the genres in the Psalter, and spend time on the more recent and very important question of the “shape and shaping” of the Psalter. Finally, we will spend time in class and through assignments exploring the impact of this literature on our own lives and in our ministries.

PERSONAL NOTE FROM THE PROFESSOR

Some of the most widely-known and cherished passages in all of Scripture are from the Psalms. For good reason. We find in the collection of these poems expressions of great delight and rapture, unwavering faith and worship. And also the dark side of human experiences, doubts and emotions. The poems are placed side-by-side in what seems to be a random and chaotic way. I have come to love the Psalms not only for the individual poems – which are wonderful! – but for the way the entire book of poetry is put together. I want us to see in a profound way how these poems can change us, and our communities.

GOAL OF THE COURSE

The primary goal for this course is to deepen your understanding of and appreciation for biblical poetry and the Psalms, allowing you to articulate winsomely, accurately and in a Christian way, the message of the Psalter in its various genres.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

PROGRAM GOALS	COURSE OBJECTIVES
Goal 1: Students will cultivate grace-based missional lives increasingly characterized by the fruit of the Spirit, and love for God and others.	1) Students will demonstrate engagement with the pathos of the Psalms in their various genres, drawing the student in to intimacy with the Triune God and empowering them to minister the pathos of the Psalms to the world.
Goal 3: Students will cultivate knowledge of the Bible and ability to humbly interpret and apply it in light of history, culture and genre.	2) Students will exegete the Psalms and interpret them missionally and Christotelically, with sensitivity to the genres within the Psalter. 3) Students will articulate the major themes of the Psalms, including the rhetorical strategies used in the poems, and discuss their relationship canonically to the rest of Scripture. 4) Students will teach from poetic texts in a manner that engages contemporary audiences—including the non-churched.

ASSESSMENTS AND METHOD OF EVALUATION

ASSIGNMENT OR ASSESSMENT	RELATED COURSE OBJECTIVES	PERCENT OF GRADE	ESTIMATED TIME IN HOURS
1. Attendance, participation, preparation	1, 2, 3, 4	10%	5
2. Reading psalms and required texts	1, 2, 3, 4	30%	30
3. Final paper	1, 2, 3, 4	30%	30
4. Response papers	1, 3, 4, 5	30%	15
Totals		100%	80 hours
INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY IN ADDITION TO CLASS SESSIONS FOR A 3 CREDIT COURSE*		RELATED COURSE OBJECTIVES	ESTIMATED TIME IN CLOCK HOURS
7a) Videos and Audio Lectures		1, 2, 3, 4	5.5
7b) Online forum		1, 2, 3, 4	5.75
Total			11.25 hours
*These assignments involve instruction comparable to what occurs in the classroom (lectures, presentations, and instructor-led activities such as discussions, debates, and collaborative work).			
Note: All assignments must be submitted by the due date listed in the syllabus and no later than the final due date for the course listed in this syllabus. After the final due date, faculty cannot grant students permission to submit late work. See “Completion of Course Work” below.			

REQUIRED TEXTS & MATERIALS

deClaisse-Walford, N. L. (2004). *Introduction to the Psalms: A Song from Ancient Israel*. St. Louis: Chalice.

Matthews, H. V. and Benjamin, D. C. (2006, revised 3rd edition). *Old Testament Parallels: Laws and Stories from the Ancient Near East*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press.

Longman, T. and Enns, P. (2008). *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Wisdom, Poetry & Writings*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS & MATERIALS

These references give helpful background on the poetic books (you do not need to purchase them):

- Alter, R.** (1985). *The Art of Biblical Poetry*. New York: Basic Books.
- Alter, R.** (2007). *The Book of Psalms*. New York: Norton.
- Bullock, C. H.** (1988). *An Introduction to the Old Testament Poetic Books*. Chicago: Moody Press.
- Crenshaw, J. L.** (1998). *Old Testament Wisdom*. (Revised ed.). Louisville: Westminster John Knox.
- Gillingham, S. E.** (1994). *The Poems and Psalms of the Hebrew Bible*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Kidner, D.** (1973, 1973). *Psalms 1-72; Psalms 73-150*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity.
- Kidner, D.** (1983). *The Wisdom of Proverbs, Job, & Ecclesiastes: An Introduction*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity.
- Lewis, C. S.** (1958). *Reflections on the Psalms*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- Lucas, E. C.** (2003). *Exploring the Old Testament: A Guide to the Psalms & Wisdom Literature*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity.
- Murphy, R. G.** (2002). *The Tree of Life: An Exploration of Biblical Wisdom Literature*. (3rd ed.). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Peterson, D. & Richards, K.** (1992). *Interpreting Hebrew Poetry*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press.
- Wenham, G.** (2012). *Psalms as Torah*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic.
- Wenham, G.** (2013). *The Psalter Reclaimed: Praying and Praising with the Psalms*. Wheaton: Crossway.
- Wright, N. T.** (2013). *The Case for the Psalms: Why They are Essential*. HarperOne.

COURSE PROCEDURES & COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- 1) **Attendance, participation and preparation.** The Psalms are a communal book, even if often written in the first person. As such, much of our time each class period will be spent in discussion around particular psalms. We will break in to small groups, then join together for discussion as a whole class around seven particular psalms, which I will choose and announce the week before. Come prepared with your own notes and thoughts, written on 8.5x11 paper. You do not need to submit this paper, but will use it for effective in-class discussion.
- 2) **Reading.** Read the book of Psalms and the required readings, according to the “Assignment Checklist” on the e-campus site. It will be important to do this reading on time, to track with the lectures and in-class discussions.

For the Dictionary readings, you’ll have two types of reading (I’ve taken this assignment directly from Dave Lamb’s syllabus).

- 1) Six **required** articles: Psalms 1: Book of; Psalms 2: ANE Background; Psalms 3: History of Interpretation; Psalms 4: Titles; David; Parallelism.
- 2) Four **additional** articles from the following list: Acrostic; Asaph and the Sons of Korah; Chiasm; Confidence, Psalms of; Creation Theology; Cult, Worship: Psalms; Hymns; Imprecation; Kingship Psalms; Lament Psalms of; Solomon; Messiah; Music, Song; Psalms 5: Iconography; Thanksgiving, Psalms of; Wisdom and Biblical Theology; Wisdom Theology and Worship; Women; Worship; Zion. Read articles relevant to your exegetical paper, particularly the genre (lament, hymn, etc.).

- 3) **Final paper.** For this paper (1700-2000 words) choose a passage to focus on within the book of Psalms. I recommend not using one of the Psalms we discuss in class, to give yourself an opportunity to be creative and explore the use of the methods explored in the class in a fresh biblical setting. A more detailed explanation of the paper expectations will be available on the e-campus site.
- 4) **Response Papers.** Research has shown that a significant element in adult learning is ongoing interaction and reflection with material being covered in class. As such, three response papers are due, on the dates specified in the “assignment checklist.” These papers are relatively short (300-500 words), and simply give you an opportunity to reflect on and discuss what has been significant to you in the course to that date. You can focus on Bible reading, class lectures/discussions, or secondary reading. Anything you like. The response paper should have a very clear thesis statement, “In this response paper I will discuss...because it has impacted me by....”

COURSE SCHEDULE (SEE “ASSIGNMENT CHECKLIST” – SEPARATE DOCUMENT)

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY AND ACADEMIC POLICIES

Academic Policies: Students are fully responsible to know and follow all seminary rules, regulations, and deadlines published in Missio Seminary’s Academic Catalog, and all requirements concerning their degree programs. The catalog is found on Missio’s website. www.missio.edu.

Course Syllabus: Students are fully responsible to know and fulfill the requirements stated in the course syllabus. Students should speak with the professor about issues related to course work and deadlines during the course. See “Completion of Course Work” below for policies on course extensions.

E-campus Course Site: Students are fully responsible for course content and materials that are posted on the course site. Students are encouraged to check the course site frequently during the course. Student usage of the course site is tracked by the software and monitored by the professor of the course. Students who experience difficulty accessing or using the E-campus should email helpdesk@biblical.edu and include their student ID# in their correspondence.

Academic and General Integrity: As followers of Jesus Christ, we are called to integrity and Christ-likeness in all areas of life. What this means in the academic realm is that the completion of all assignments and assessments are to reflect your own work. Students found guilty of cheating or plagiarism will receive a grade of zero on the assessment and will follow the process outlined in the Student Handbook. See Missio’s catalog for more information on plagiarism and Missio’s policies related to cheating and plagiarism.

Student PC Security Statement: Missio Seminary recognizes the need for computer use throughout the entire educational process today. Computers equipped with Internet access and applications that help deliver information and knowledge are vital. Students are encouraged to bring their electronic computing devices to campus to facilitate their course work and supplemental activities. Given the current climate of online dangers such as viruses, malware, phishing scams, and other related risks it



is critical to secure all such devices regardless if they're being used on campus or not. Please take the appropriate steps to safeguard the security of your own electronic devices to protect the integrity of the student network on campus and provide a safe computing environment for everyone to use.

ATTENDANCE POLICY AND GRADES

Students are expected to arrive on time and attend all class sessions. Attendance is especially crucial in courses formatted in block scheduling with evening or all day Saturday class sessions. If you know you are going to miss a class or arrive late, contact the course instructor in advance via email. Nevertheless, your grade may be lowered for absences or lateness at the discretion of the instructor.

COMPLETION OF COURSE WORK – VARIANCE FORMS

All course work is to be completed by the last day of classes for the term or by the date posted in the course syllabus. Extensions to this time limit will be made only by the academic affairs committee. The individual faculty member does not have the authority to grant any extensions of time beyond the last class of the term. Requests for extensions must be made in writing to the committee at least one week prior to the last day of classes. Variance forms for this purpose are available in the academic office or on Missio’s website. All requests should specify the reasons for the extension and the length of the extension desired. Requests are not automatically granted.

STUDENT COURSE EVALUATIONS

Student course evaluations are an important part of Missio’s commitment to continuous improvement. Students are required to complete the course evaluation within one week of the final due date of the course. See Missio’s catalog for more information.

GRADING SYSTEM

To remain in good academic standing, a student must maintain the grade point average designated for his or her program (see Missio’s catalog for details).

MISSIO SEMINARY GRADING SYSTEM			
A	4.00	93.0 -100	Superior
A-	3.67	90.0 – 92.9	
B+	3.33	87.0 – 89.9	
B	3.00	83.0 – 86.9	Good
B-	2.67	80.0 – 82.9	
C+	2.33	77.0 – 79.9	
C	2.00	73.0 – 76.9	Fair
C-	1.70	70.0 – 72.9	
D+	1.30	67.0 – 69.9	Poor
D	1.00	63.0 – 66.9	
D-	.70	60.0 – 62.9	
F	0.00	00. - 59.9	Failing