

OT411 Old Testament Praise and Wisdom Literature  
Eugene Bible College  
Fall 2009

Mon., Wed., and Fri. 2:00-2:50 pm

**Instructor:** Brad Copp, [bradcopp@ebc.edu](mailto:bradcopp@ebc.edu) , (541) 510-4768

Office hours in the Doris Hunt Music Building.

**College Mission Statement:**

The mission of Eugene Bible College is to glorify God through Biblically based college education that disciples and equips servants of Jesus Christ to become life-long learners who offer effective and relevant Spirit-filled ministry and leadership in the Church and the world.

To fulfill its mission Eugene Bible College is committed to these [partial] goals:

- provide a quality education that complements intellectual challenge and stimulation with practical application.
- develop students with personal integrity and Christian character while they acquire ministry and leadership skills
- produce graduates who will go forth from their college experience equipped and committed to a lifetime of taking the person and message of Jesus Christ to the world.

**College Academic Outcomes**

The College academic programs exist to encourage and facilitate students in the development of:

- Leadership potential and effectiveness
- Mental discipline and intellectual capacity that will shape and guide their life and work
- Tools and attitudes conducive to Spirit-filled ministry
- Effective communication tools for life and ministry
- Awareness of the world in which evangelism and ministry will occur
- Clarity regarding the philosophical foundations of ministry

**Bible/Theology Mission Statement and Objectives:**

Because Eugene Bible College understands the Bible to be the ultimate authority for judging doctrine, experience and practice, the Bible and Theology courses are designed to equip students with a functional knowledge of the Bible and to provide the basis for development of a Biblical worldview that is integrated with other areas of study and with personal life.

Students fulfilling the course requirements in Bible and Theology should achieve the following:

- Gain a basic understanding of the content and nature of the Old and New Testaments
- Ability to apply Bible study skills to better understand and interpret the Bible
- Ability to articulate a biblical position in major areas of theology
- Ability to reason clearly and biblically about the Christian faith
- Integrate biblical study with personal spiritual growth and effective ministry

## Course Objectives:

Upon completing this course, the student should be able to:

1. understand the distinctives and techniques of Hebrew poetry and how the author used these techniques to communicate meaning.
2. perform the art of interpreting Hebrew poetic literature through instruction, worked examples and practice.
3. demonstrate a knowledge of the overall themes, theology, structure, and message of the books of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon.
4. apply Hebrew poetic literature to their own practice of prayer, worship, and devotion and lead others in so using these books.
5. understand the techniques and meaning of Hebrew Wisdom literature and make application of this meaning to contemporary situations.
6. continue to research, interpret, teach, preach, and interact with these five books throughout their personal lives and ministries.
7. appreciate and even love these often neglected portions of Scripture.

## Course Description:

A study of the Biblical books of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon. The literary structure of each book is analyzed with emphasis upon the characteristics of Hebrew poetry.

## Textbooks and Suggested readings:

### Required reading-

Holy Bible in a literal or dynamic equivalent translation (no paraphrase)

Bullock, C. Hassell, An Introduction to the Old Testament Poetic Books- Revised Edition, Chicago, Moody Press, 1988. **223.06 B938i**

### Recommended Reading- relevant sections in the following

Dillard, Raymond B. and Tremper Longman III, An Introduction to the Old Testament, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1994. **221.61 D578i**

Fee, Gordon D. and Douglas Stuart, How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 2003 [1981, 1993]. **220.61 F295h**

Fee, Gordon D. and Douglas Stuart, How to Read the Bible Book by Book, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 2002. **220.61 F295hb**

Lasor, William Sanford, David Allan Hubbard and Frederic William Bush, Old Testament Survey, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1982. **221.61 L345o**

Stuart, Douglas, Old Testament Exegesis, Louisville, Westminster John Knox, 2001 [1980, 1984]. **221.6 S929o**

Zogbo, Lynell, "Features of Hebrew Poetry" in Zogbo, Lynell and Ernst R. Wendland, Hebrew Poetry in the Bible, New York, United Bible Societies, 2000, pp. 19-60.

## Course Requirements:

1. **Class attendance-** Student is to be present, to be on time, and to actively participate in class discussion. See EBC attendance policy below.
2. **Bible Reading-** Students will read the Bible books in their entirety in a literal or dynamic equivalent translation (no paraphrases). As part of the midterm and final exams, students will report the approximate percentage of the assigned readings completed. This percentage will have bearing on the mark of the exam. For the midterm, students are to have read Psalms; for the final, students are to have read Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon.
3. **Scripture Memorization-** Students will memorize four Scriptures over the term, two for the midterm and two for the final exam. The students will choose two passages from each of the following lists and memorize them verbatim from the NIV translation (including punctuation). Students will then write out from memory the passages on the respective exams.

### For the Midterm- choose 2

Psalms	1:6	4:1	8:1	19:13
	24:3-4	25:1-2	33:1	42:11
	51:1-2	56:3-4	57:1	86:11
	90:13-14	91:1-2	93:1	95:1
	115:1	116:1-2	117:1-2	121:1-4
	123:1-2	128:1-2	130:1-2	135:5-6
	143:8	146:5-6		

### For the Final Exam- choose 2

Prov.	1:7	2:5-6	3:1-2	3:11-12
	3:13-14	4:5-7	4:23-24	5:18-19
	8:12-13	9:10	12:1-2	30:5-6
	30:7-8	31:8-9		
Job	1:20-21	2:10	6:10	9:19-20
	9:32-33	11:7-8	12:12-13	19:25-27
	28:28	37:23-24		
Ecccl.	1:2	2:13-14	2:24-25	2:26
	3:11-12	3:17	5:2	5:10-11
	6:12	7:13-14	7:23-4	9:11
	11:5	11:9	12:1	12:13-14
SoS	5:8	8:4		

4. **Reading of Course Textbook-** Student is to complete scheduled reading before class every Friday. A quiz will be given most weeks (usually first thing every Friday) on the assigned reading. See course schedule for assigned pages and quiz schedule.
5. **Weekly exegesis exercises-** Student will complete none exegesis exercises throughout the term. These assignments are found in the course pack. These short assignments will lead a student through examining a Scripture passage according to principles learned during the week. Each assignment will have a due date given with the assignment (usually the following Monday). Students will complete each assignment according to instructions and turn in first thing on the date due. See course schedule for due dates.
6. **Term project-** Student will prepare an exegesis paper on a Scripture passage of their choice from the books covered in this course (excluding the passages covered in class). The passage should be long enough to fulfill the particulars of the assignment, but short enough to allow for sufficient depth of study. The optimum length of the passage is around 10-15 verses (many Psalms are the perfect length). **Students will submit their passage for approval by Monday October 19<sup>th</sup>.** Paper should cover the following areas:
  - a. *Historical context-* what can be known about the time and historical situation of the author and what caused this passage to be written.
  - b. *Literary context-* how the passage fits into the surrounding passages and in the book as a whole.
  - c. *Poetic devices-* a description of any poetic devices used in the passage, including parallelism, imagery, symbol and metaphor, allusions, etc.
  - d. *Structure-* a description of the structure of the passage, delimiting stanzas or paragraphs and their relation to one another- describing the flow of thought and argument throughout

the passage. If the passage is a Psalm, a description of the Psalm type and any typical features of this type.

- e. *Interpretive challenges*- a description of anything that is obscure, ambiguous, or subject to divergent interpretations. This should include a brief list of options, which option the student prefers and reasons for doing so. It is not necessary in this paper to solve any problems, but rather to identify the problem and where more intense investigation is necessary.
- f. *Theological contribution*- what this passage contributes to the total Bible message- what is unique about this passage, and also how it reinforces or qualifies the larger themes of the book and the Bible as a whole (such as God, man, redemption, wisdom, etc.).
- g. *Application*- a description of how this passage can/should be applied. (for example, how could it be applied to the life of the student, the family, the local church, and larger society?)
- h. *Teaching plan*- a thumbnail sketch of how the student would use the passage in a ministry of preaching, teaching, counseling, worship, etc. This should include a sermon/teaching outline and a brief description of the approach taken in the sermon/teaching.

This is an exegesis paper, not a research paper. Therefore, the primary resource should be the text of the passage itself. Students should work with the text to discover the text's meaning. Secondary resources such as commentaries, historical studies and word studies may/should be used, but as a supplement/aid and not as a substitute for primary work with the text. Any resources used should be properly documented. The paper must be typewritten according to MLA standards. Paper will be marked on content and not necessarily on length, but a good, thorough yet concise coverage of the text should be around 3000-4000 words (10-14 pages).

**Due Fri. Dec. 4, 2 PM.**

7. **Midterm Exam**- A 45 minute exam covering reading assigned up to that point, Scripture memory passages, Hebrew poetic devices and Psalms. **Fri. Oct. 30<sup>th</sup>, 2PM.**
8. **Final Exam**- A 100 minute exam covering remaining reading, Scripture memory passages, Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon. **Wed. Dec. 9<sup>th</sup>, 1PM**
9. **Extra Credit for leading Scripture song or Psalmic prayer.**- Student may earn 1 percent extra credit point (max. 5) for each time they teach and lead the class in a worship song or prayer- the lyrics/words of which are based (almost) exclusively on the text of a passage from the Hebrew poetic books. Student must schedule with the instructor beforehand on a first come- first served basis. However, a student who has yet to do so will be given preference over a student who has already done so.

## Course Evaluation

Weekly Textbook Quizzes	10%
Weekly Exegesis assignments	15%
Term Project	30%
Midterm Exam (including Scripture Reading and Memory)	20%
Final Exam (including Scripture Reading and Memory)	<u>25%</u>
	100%

## Course Schedule

Date	Monday	Wednesday	Friday	Assignment
Wk. 1 Sept. 21-25		Registration	Intro: Syllabus, Requirements, Overview	
Wk. 2 Sept. 28- Oct. 2	Heb. Poetry, Introduction, Parallelism	Parallelism and Stanza cont.	<b>Quiz</b> Poetic Devices, Chiasm, Refrains	Bullock 19-42
Wk. 3 Oct. 5-9	<b>Exeg. Exer. 1 Due</b> Symbolism and Poetic Imagery	Allusions/Quotes Intro to Psalms	<b>Quiz</b> Historical context Literary contexts Life contexts	Bullock 130-158
Wk. 4 Oct. 12-16	<b>Exeg. Exer. 2 Due</b> Theology and Themes	Theology and Themes (cont.) Forms	<b>Quiz</b> Forms (cont.)	Bullock 158-171
Wk. 5 Oct. 19-23	<b>Exeg. Exer. 3 Due</b> <b>Proj. Passage Due</b> Wisdom Intro Psalms 1&2	Laments 42&43 Confession 51, 32	<b>Quiz</b> Thanksgiving 30 History 78 Prayer 25 Trust 23 Hymns 96, 150	Bullock 60-78 <b>Project Passage due Monday 2 p.m.</b>
Wk. 6 Oct. 26-30	<b>Exeg. Exer. 4 Due</b> Praying and Singing the Psalms	Spiritual Growth Conference <b>NO CLASS</b>	<b>Midterm Exam</b>	Bullock 172-209
Wk. 7 Nov. 2-6	<b>Quiz</b> Intro To Wisdom Literature Introduction to Proverbs	<b>Exeg. Exer. 5 Due</b> Purpose of Proverbs 1:1-7	<b>Quiz</b> Wisdom and Folly 1:8-33	Bullock 79-103
Wk. 8 Nov. 9-13	<b>Exeg. Exer. 6 Due</b> The Life of Wisdom Prov. 2-3	Themes of Prov. Final Collections Prov. 30-31	<b>Quiz</b> Job- Introduction and outline	Bullock 103-129
Wk. 9 Nov. 16-20	<b>Exeg. Exer. 7 Due</b> Viewpoint of Job Viewpoint of 'friends'	Theodicy, Pastoral care to the hurting and doubting	<b>Quiz</b> Theodicy Viewpoint of God	Bullock 210-243
Wk 10 Nov. 23-27	<b>Exeg. Exer. 8 Due</b> Where is Wisdom? Job 28	<b>Quiz</b> Ecclesiastes Introduction and overview	<b>Thanksgiving NO CLASS</b>	Bullock 244-278
Wk. 11 Nov. 30 - Dec.4	<b>Exeg. Exer. 9 Due</b> Ecclesiastes Themes	Epilogue and Fear of the Lord	<b>Term Project Due</b> Song of Solomon Intro, Overview and Themes	<b>Term Project Due Friday 2 p.m.</b>
Final Exam- Wed. Dec. 9 <sup>th</sup> , 1:00-2:50pm				

# Bibliography

## Hebrew Poetry and Interpretation

- Alter, Robert, The Art of Biblical Poetry, New York, Basic Books, 1985.
- Berlin, Adele, The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1985.
- Berry, Donald K., Introduction to Wisdom and Poetry of the Old Testament, Nashville, Broadman & Holman, 1995.
- Broyles, Craig C., "Traditions, Intertextuality, and Canon", in Interpreting the Old Testament- A Guide for Exegesis, Grand Rapids, Baker Academic, 2001.
- Cotterell, Peter, "Linguistics, Meaning, Semantics, and Discourse Analysis", in Willem A. VanGemeren ed., A Guide to Old Testament Theology and Exegesis, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1999.
- Dillard, Raymond B. and Tremper Longman III, An Introduction to the Old Testament, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1994.
- Fee, Gordon D. and Douglas Stuart, How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth, especially ch. 10 "The Prophets[contains their discussion of Hebrew Parallelism]", ch. 10 "The Psalms", and ch 12 "Wisdom", Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 2003 [1981, 1993].
- Klein, William W., Craig L. Blomberg and Robert L. Hubbard Jr., Introduction to Biblical Interpretation- Revised ed., especially, ch. 8 "General Rules of Hermeneutics: Biblical Poetry", Nashville, Thomas Nelson, 1993, 2005.
- Lasor, William Sanford, David Allan Hubbard and Frederic William Bush, Old Testament Survey, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1982.
- Longman, Tremper III, "Poetry: Take a New Look" and "Poetry: Language of the Heart" in Reading the Bible With Heart & Mind, Colorado Springs, NavPress, 1997.
- Osborne, Grant R., The Hermeneutical Spiral, especially ch. 7 "Poetry" and ch. 8 "Wisdom", Downers Grove IL, InterVarsity Press, 1991.
- Petersen, David L., and Kent Harold Richards, Interpreting Hebrew Poetry, Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 1992.
- Schultz, Samuel J., The Old Testament Speaks, especially ch. 17 "Interpretation of Life", San Francisco, Harper Collins, 1990.
- Stuart, Douglas, Old Testament Exegesis, Louisville, Westminster John Knox, 2001 [1980, 1984].
- Zogbo, Lynell, and Ernst R. Wendland, Hebrew Poetry in the Bible- A Guide for Understanding and for Translating, New York, United Bible Societies, 2000.

## Psalms

- Allen, Leslie C., Psalms 101-150- Word Biblical Commentary, Waco TX Word Books, 1983.
- , Word Biblical Themes- Psalms, Waco TX, Word Books, 1987.
- Anderson, Bernhard W., Out of the Depths: the Psalms Speak For Us Today, Louisville, Westminster John Knox, 2000.
- Bullock, C. Hassell, Encountering the Book of Psalms, Grand Rapids, Baker Academic, 2001.
- Bruggemann, Walter, Spirituality of the Psalms, Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 2002.
- Craigie, Peter C., Psalms 1-50- Word Biblical Commentary, Waco TX Word Books, 1983.
- Howard, Evan B., Praying the Scriptures, especially ch. 3 "Praying the Psalms", Downers Grove IL, InterVarsity Press, 1999.
- Longman, Tremper III, How to Read the Psalms, Downers Grove IL, InterVarsity Press, 1988.
- Mays, James L., The Lord Reigns- A Theological Handbook to the Psalms, Louisville, Westminster John Knox, 1994.
- Merton, Thomas, Praying the Psalms, Collegeville MN, The Liturgical Press, 1956.
- Peterson, Eugene H., A Long Obedience in the Same Direction, Downers Grove IL, InterVarsity Press, 1980.
- , Answering God- The Psalms As Tools for Prayer, San Francisco, Harper Collins, 1989.
- Tate, Marvin E., Psalms 51-100- Word Biblical Commentary, Waco TX, Word Books, 1990.

## **Wisdom Literature**

- Berry, Donald K., Introduction to Wisdom and Poetry of the Old Testament, Nashville, Broadman & Holman, 1995.
- Crenshaw, James L., Old Testament Wisdom, an Introduction, Philadelphia, Westminster John Knox, 1998.
- Kidner, Derek, The Wisdom of Proverbs, Job & Ecclesiastes, Downers Grove IL, InterVarsity Press, 1985. Von Rad, Gerhard, Wisdom in Israel, Nashville, Abingdon, 1972.
- Smith, James E., The Wisdom Literature and Psalms, Joplin MO, College Press, 1996.
- Wilson, Jonathan R., "Biblical Wisdom, Spiritual Formation, and the Virtues", in Packer, J.I. and Sven K. Soderlund eds., The Way of Wisdom, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 2000.

## **Proverbs**

- Cohen, A., Proverbs, The Soncino Press, 1946.
- Kidner, Derek, Proverbs, Downers Grove, InterVarsity Press, 1975
- Longman, Tremper III, How to Read Proverbs, Downers Grove IL, InterVarsity Press, 2002.
- Walke, Bruce A., Book of Proverbs: Chapters 1-15 NICOT, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 2004.

## **Job**

- Clines, David J.A., Job- Word Biblical Commentary, Waco TX, Word Books, 1992.
- Dumbrell, William J., "The Purpose of the Book of Job", in Packer, J.I. and Sven K. Soderlund eds., The Way of Wisdom, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 2000.
- Piper, John, The Misery of Job and the Mercy of God, Wheaton IL, Crossway Books, 2002.
- Zuck, Roy B., ed., Sitting With Job- Selected Studies on the Book of Job, Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 1992.

## **Ecclesiastes**

- Longman, Tremper III, The Book of Ecclesiastes, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1998.
- Murphy, Roland, Ecclesiastes- Word Biblical Commentary, Waco TX, Word Books, 1992.

## **Song of Solomon**

- Murphy, Roland, Song of Songs- Hermeneia, Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 1990.
- Provan, Iain W., "The Terrors of the Night: Love, Sex, and Power in Song of Songs 3" in Packer, J.I. and Sven K. Soderlund eds., The Way of Wisdom, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 2000.

See the course website for some links to web-based material

## **EBC Absence Policy:**

- Regular punctual attendance is required in all classes and assembly periods. Students should not miss classes except for illness or unavoidable emergency situations. To accommodate such cases, a student may have one absence for each credit hour of the course without penalty. However, if absences for any class exceed twice the number of credit hours, the student automatically fails the class.
- A student entering the class within fifteen minutes after attendance check is recorded as tardy. Every three tardy entries are counted as one absence. Work situations and other campus schedules must be held as secondary to class attendance. Students are not permitted to arrive late for class or leave early to accommodate other schedules.
- A student will not be penalized by grade reduction when absences have prior approval by the administration and the student has given prior written notification to instructors; however, total absences in any course (including those excused) can not exceed two times the number of credit hours represented by that course (e.g. 6 in a 3-hour course) without failure.

## Class Policies

In order to be fair to all students, to organize my workweek, and to be prompt with marking, the following policies will be adhered to. It is also an important aspect of preparation for life after EBC that students should learn to plan and use their time effectively so as to meet deadlines, and learn also to work within the parameters set for assignments.

- All assignments must be submitted in class on the date they are due. If class will be missed because of illness, assignments may be submitted via e-mail *before* scheduled class time. Any assignment not submitted at the requested time will be considered late.
- Late work will receive a deduction of 10% per day late (excluding weekends) up to 50% deduction. You may submit a late assignment either in class, via e-mail or via the receptionist.
- Extensions for late work may be given for a short period when circumstances arise which in my view could not reasonably have been foreseen and which are sufficiently serious to warrant an exception to the rule.
- All work must be neat and legible. All work must be typewritten (excluding quizzes and exams).
- All assignments must be your own work. Work sharing and plagiarism are not acceptable.
- Because of the limited number of exegesis tools in the library, I ask that you be considerate of others and not monopolize the resources. I would also ask that dorm students give priority to off campus students or those with more limited schedules.
- Because of the uneven quality of the information, Wikipedia and other similar information sharing resources are not acceptable reference for this class.
- I expect all students to think critically and be willing to disagree with the texts, teacher, or each other. I am confident that all of you will do so in manner fitting upper-division students and Christian disciples.

## Helpful Information

- Your best resource for this course is the people around you. The instructor is willing and available to help you as much as my very busy schedule will allow. Please see the sign up sheet on my office door (in the Doris Hunt Music Center) for available office hours. However, your peers are an invaluable source of insight. And you will be wise to share with other students outside of class and help each other explore and develop, meditate upon and apply the concepts of this course.
- I cannot read minds. If you don't understand something or are struggling, I want to help. But in many cases I won't become aware of the problem until it is too late. Please feel encouraged to take the initiative and approach me with questions or problems and I will do my best to help.
- In addition, I will put course material including study guides, reviews, and practice quizzes on my website. Go to my homepage and follow the appropriate link. The address is [www.bradcopp.com](http://www.bradcopp.com). Please check back often as the website will be updated on a regular basis.
- Please realize that, at best, this course can only be an introduction to these Biblical books. It is hoped that this course will give you a foundation upon which to launch a lifetime of study, devotion, teaching and preaching from these books. Be encouraged to continue in these books even after the course. The more you look at the details, the better you will see the big picture, and the better you see the big picture, the better you will see the details.
- Finally, do not lose God in the process of education. Take advantage of the College Student Ministry and Discipleship. Take time to interact with Jesus about every part of your life. Specifically, invite the Lord to teach and lead you in the course material. These books were written as acts of prayer, worship, devotion and wisdom's wrestling with everyday life. It would be a tragedy and violation of the books if you treated this course as only an intellectual exercise. I also hope that you learn to rely on Him for the strength to learn and grow and fulfill all of the expectations placed on you at EBC. "Do not pray for easy lives; pray to be stronger people! Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers; pray for powers equal to your tasks. Then the doing of your work shall be no miracle, but you shall be a miracle. Every day you shall wonder at yourself, at the richness of life which has come to you by the grace of God." Phillips Brooks.