

Though they are not poems, we will also investigate the books of Daniel and Ruth.

Required Books

Robert Alter, The Art of Biblical Poetry

Adele Berlin, Marc Zvi Brettler, Michael Fishbane (eds.), The Jewish Study Bible

Joseph Blenkinsopp, A History of Prophecy in Israel

Margaret Ferguson, Mary Jo Salter, Jon Stallworth (eds.), The Norton Anthology of Poetry (Shorter Fourth Edition)

Henry Jackson Flanders, Robert W. Crapps, David A. Smith, People of the Covenant: An Introduction to the Hebrew Bible

James L. Kugel, The Great Poems of the Bible

Roland E. Murphy, The Tree of Life

Nahum Sarna, On the Book of Psalms: Exploring the Prayers of Ancient Israel

All students should also possess one of the two following study bibles:

- 1) Wayne Meeks (gen. ed.), The HarperCollins Study Bible: New Revised Version with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books
- 2) Michael D. Coogan (ed.), The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books: New Revised Standard Version (3rd ed.)

Please bring two bibles to every class: an NRSV Study Bible and the Jewish Study Bible. Please also bring the Norton Anthology of Poetry.

Recommended Books

Debora Core, The Seminary Student Writes

James L. Mays (ed.), HarperCollins Bible Commentary (2nd ed.)

Jacqueline Osherow, Dead Men's Praise

James Bennett Pritchard, The Ancient Near East: A New Anthology of Texts and Pictures (2 vols)--the two volumes of Pritchard are books that every minister ought to possess

Some may wish to purchase the following two books (on reserve at the library): 1) Ariel and Chana Bloch, The Song of Songs; 2. Lawrence Hoffman, P'sukei D'zimrah (My Peoples Prayer Book, vol. 3).

Requirements:

1) **Attendance and informed class participation** are required. **Exemplary attendance and class participation can increase your grade by as much as 5%.** Thoughtful questions and discussion are encouraged. In every class, a student will read one or two poems out loud.

At the beginning of each class, everyone will sign an attendance sheet. Unexcused absences will result in automatic lowering of the student's grade at the discretion of the instructor. Excused absences (which do not include circumstances over which one does not have personal control) are allowed, but three or more absences may lead to lowering of the grade at the discretion of the instructor. Please do not telephone the instructor about an impending class absence or a prior class absence, but send an email describing the situation.

2) The **Mid-Term Exam** on March 11 will account for **25%** of your total grade. This exam will consist of i) identifications, quotations, and concepts from your reading and classroom discussion; and ii) knowledge of the Hebrew alphabet.

3) Students will write a **Mid-Term Paper (due March 30)** of approximately ten pages that examines a modern writer as a prophet and compares her/him to one of the biblical prophets (**20% of your total grade**). We will choose by lot which book a student reads. The five books are: i) Black Elk, Black Elk Speaks; ii) Rachel Carson, Silent Spring; iii) Mary Daly, Gyn/Ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism; iv) Malcom X, Autobiography of Malcom X; and v) Thomas Sugrue, Story of Edgar Cayce: There is a River. Students may trade book titles, but by class on February 5, all original selections will stand unless clearly indicated to the instructor. You may obtain these books from a bookstore. I will put those owned by the library on reserve.

4) On February 5, students will form groups based on their selection of books in #3 immediately above, each group focusing on one book. These groups will have at least two out-of-class meetings and will make brief in-class presentations on the relationship between these modern prophets and the biblical prophets on April 1 and April 8. This section accounts for **10%** of your total grade.

5) During the semester, all students should keep a **Journal** where they write at least two reflections (one to two pages) per week on a particular Psalm of their choice. These should involve some substantive consideration of the literary qualities of the

relevant Psalm. These journals will not be graded, but they will be checked for completion (a total of twenty-eight entries). Incomplete journals, or failure to submit a journal at all, may result in the lowering of the grade by up to **30%**.

6) Each student will write an **Exegesis Paper** of approximately fifteen to twenty pages on one of the Psalms (due May 12, except for those planning to graduate). Students may form teams of up to three individuals and submit a paper of approximately twenty-five pages. When forming a team, students should recognize that they are making a commitment to one another, which they should uphold even in trying circumstances. Teams must submit a very brief proposal in writing to the instructor. More detailed information about the requirements of this paper will come later. This paper will constitute **45% of your total grade**.

*For papers and exams, please adhere to the rules of honesty and integrity as outlined in the Student Handbook policies on cheating and plagiarism. Serious breaches of ethics (also including forging of signatures on attendance sheets) may result in class failure and/or suspension or expulsion from the seminary. Needless to say, as potential pastors and religious leaders, LTS expects students to adhere the highest ethical and moral standards.

In classroom discussion, participants should show respect to one another by listening and paying attention before speaking. **Informed participation means that students have read the material, thought about it before coming to class, and brought both their Bibles to class (as well as the Norton Anthology of Poetry).

***Grades follow the standard numerical breakdowns (93-100 = A; 90-92 = A-; 87-89 = B+; 83-86 = B; 80-82 = B-; 77-79 = C+; 73-76 = C; 70-72 = C-; 67-69 = D+; 63-66 = D; 60-62 = D=; 0-59 = F). “A” means work of the highest quality and is a very difficult grade to achieve. “B” means good work. “C” means satisfactory work. “D” means passable work, but of low quality. “F” indicates that the student did not meet the requirements of the course by not attending a sufficient number of classes, by not submitting passable work, and/or by failing to submit all work. Grades are based on work at a graduate level.

The ability to write with clarity, correct grammar and syntax, correct spelling and punctuation, good communication skills, some style, and in an organized fashion, is essential. In written assignments, students must also demonstrate

the capacity to think on their own and generate their own coherent and convincing arguments. Where appropriate, students must further display research skills such as the following: intelligent use of secondary literature, thoughtful sifting of data, and deft handling of footnotes. There are no excuses for bad writing. Grades in part will reflect student writing skills. If students are uncertain about their writing, I strongly encourage them to see Anne Gregory for assistance. Those who see her will receive a small grade benefit for their effort. Finally, everyone should read (or should have already read) Deborah Core, The Seminary Student Writes.

PLEASE NOTE: EARLY READING IS RATHER LIGHT. PREPARE FOR LATER SECTIONS BY READING AHEAD.

January 29: Syllabus Review, Mid-Term Paper Assignments, Metaphor

February 3: Poetry 1, Psalms 1

Alter, chaps. 1-2

Psalms 23 (read Kugel, chap. 11), 42 (read Kugel, chap. 2),

February 5: Poetry 2, Psalms 2

Alter, chap. 3

Psalms 1, 8 (read Sarna, chaps. 1-2)

February 10: Poetry 3, Psalms 3

Psalms 19 (read Sarna, chap. 3), 29 (Kugel, chap. 3)

Alter, chap. 5

February 12: Poetry 4, Psalms 4

Psalms 15, 24 (read Sarna, chap. 4)

Read Pritchard, vol. 2, chap. 9

Read Osherow

February 17: Prophets 1: Former Prophets

Flanders, Crapps, chapters 9-10

Blenkinsopp, chapters 1-2

Read Pritchard, vol. 2, chap. 12

Read relevant sections of 1 and 2 Kings

February 19: Prophets 2, Prophets of the Eighth Century

Flanders, Crapps, chapter 10

Blenkinsopp, chapter 3

Read Kugel, chaps. 4, 16

Read Amos, Hosea, Micah

February 24: Prophets 3, Prophets of the Eighth Century

Flanders, Crapps, chap. 11

Read Kugel, chap. 10

Read Isaiah 1-39

February 26: Prophets 4, Prophets at the end of Judah's Independence

Flanders, Crapps, chap. 12

Blenkinsopp, chap. 4

Read Kugel, chap. 12

Read Nahum, Habbakuk, Zephaniah, Obadiah, Jeremiah

March 2: Prophets 5, Prophets of the Exile

Flanders, Crapps, chap. 13

Blenkinsopp, chap. 5

Read Kugel, chap. 17

Read Ezekiel, Isaiah 40-66

March 4: Prophets 6, Prophets After the Return

Flanders, Crapps, chap. 14

Blenkinsopp, chap. 6

Read Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Joel, Jonah

March 9: Daniel and Lamentations

Read Flanders, Crapps, chap. 15

Read Daniel and Lamentations

March 11: **MID-TERM EXAM**

March 16: NO CLASS (Break)

March 18: NO CLASS (Break)

March 23: Song of Songs, Ruth

Alter, chapter 8

Read Bloch and Bloch, Introduction (on library reserve)

Read Book of Ruth

March 25: Song of Songs

Read Kugel, chap. 15

Skim Bloch and Bloch, Translation and Commentary (on library reserve)

March 30: **MID-TERM PAPER DUE**

April 1: Student Paper Presentations

April 6: NO LECTURE (Passover)--SPECIAL TOPIC TBA

April 8: **Student Paper Presentations**

April 13: Job

Read Murphy, 3

Read Pritchard, vol. 2, chaps. 10-11

Read Job

April 15: Job

Read Alter, chap. 4

Read Kugel, chap. 6

April 20: Ecclesiastes, Proverbs

Read Murphy, chaps 2, 4, 9

Read Pritchard, vol. 1, chap. 11

April 22 Psalms 5

Psalms 30 (read Sarna, chap. 5), Psalm 119 (read Kugel, chap. 114)

April 27 Psalms 6

Psalms 48 (read Sarna, chap. 6), Psalm 104 (chap. 1)

April 29 Psalms 7

Psalm 51 (Kugel, chap. 8), Psalm 82 (Sarna, chap. 7)

**FINAL EXEGESIS PAPER DUE FOR THOSE PLANNING TO
GRADUATE**

May 4 Psalms 8

Psalm 94 (read Sarna, chap. 8), Psalm 137 (chap. 13)

May 6 Psalms 9

Psalms 84, 145 (read L.A. Hoffmann, P'sukei D'Zimrah, pp. 31-39,
107-124: On reserve at the library)

Read Pritchard, vol. 1, chap. 10

May 11 Psalms 11

Psalms 84, 145 (cont.)

May 12: **FINAL EXEGESIS PAPER DUE** (except for those planning to graduate)