

WISDOM AND DEUTEROCANONICAL BOOKS

OT 2604
Spring 2007
Tu and Fri, 2:00–3:30
JSTB # 216

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Course description

This course surveys “Wisdom Literature” (a Christian theological term)/ “The Writings” (the third section of the Jewish Scriptures), and the Apocryphal/ Deuterocanonical Books. Most of this literature is post-exilic, and affords an entry into post-exilic and early Jewish literature.

Students who take this course will demonstrate a knowledge of these biblical books sufficient for intelligent, mature recourse to these Scriptures in ministerial settings. They will demonstrate an appreciation of texts in their original setting, benefitting from knowledge of the historical and social location, literary appreciation and a grasp of the book's theology. Recourse to these Scriptures in ministry requires an ability to interpret these texts in contemporary ecclesial settings, such as preaching (lectionary), liturgical prayer, and song.

Requirements

Reading: assigned texts will average 90-150 pages per week. Students will read the biblical texts indicated in the syllabus, plus the assigned sections of the required books and articles. Additional readings, articles will be assigned and made available. Highly recommended texts of the Bible are the *Harper Collins Study Bible* and *The New Interpreters' Study Bible*, especially their introductions and notes.

Student presentations/ seminars are a regular part of the course, frequently on Fridays. All students will lead one of these sessions; choice of sessions to be made in the second class session. Students will consult with the instructor (usually beginning 3-4 weeks in advance) in the preparation of these sessions. Students are encouraged to use electronic technology in the presentation. Students may choose to link their major papers for the course to the topic of their seminar. Students are expected to come prepared to participate in the seminar sessions led by their classmates. Many of the materials for the course can be found on the *Blackboard* site.

Writing: 3 shorter papers (an exposition, reflection, homily on a text) [each, 2 pages, double-spaced] (1) “God in Job or Proverbs”, due 2/27; (2) Wisdom/ Sophia {in text of your choice}, due 3/23; (3) Theological Anthropology: on Song of Songs, Tobit, Wisdom of Solomon or Esther, due 4/13 ; (4) **One term paper** [12-14 pages], due 5/4. It may consist of an exegesis of a text of your choosing or a topical paper (approved by prof.). (5) A **final 3-4 page essay** on the topic: “The Significance of Wisdom & Deuterocanonical Books in my Ministerial/ Professional Life.” [to be posted on *Blackboard* site by noon, May 14, for discussion at the final class session].

Evaluation

Will be based on the four papers (66%), seminar participation & presentation (33%).

Required Texts

Ceresko, Anthony. *Introduction to Old Testament Wisdom*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1999. [C]
Harrington, Daniel J., S.J., *Invitation to the Apocrypha*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm.B. Eerdmans, 1999. [DH]

Murphy, Roland. *The Tree of Life: An Exploration of Biblical Wisdom Literature*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1999. [M]

Topics for Class Sessions (and preliminary list of readings)

- Tu, 1/30 Introduction to Course: Historical and Canonical Overview
- F, 2/2 Traces of Wisdom in the Hebrew Bible Exodus 1; 2 Samuel 14, 20; 1 Kings 3-5, 10; Psalms 112, 127, 128. M: 1-14, 191-193, 231-234.. C: 1-46.
- Tu, 2/6 Introduction to the Book of Proverbs *Proverbs 10-29*.
M: 15-32, 193-201, 234-241. C: 47-53, 59-65. Rec: William P. Brown, "The Pedagogy of Proverbs 10:1-31:9" in *Character and Scripture : Moral Formation, Community, and Biblical Interpretation* (ed. William P. Brown; Grand Rapids, Mich. : W.B. Eerdmans Pub., 2002), 150-182..
- F, 2/9 *Proverbs 1-9, 31*. ["seminar"] C: 54-59. WBC: 153-160. Rec: Jon L. Berquist, "The Social Context of Postexilic Judaism," in *Luker*, pp. 20-54.
- Tu, 2/13 Introduction to the Book of Job *Job 1-22*
M: 33-48, 202-209, 241-247. C: 66-80. Rec: O'Connor 86-113.
- F, 2/16 Job's Friends: Job 22-42:6 ["seminar"] C:81-90. WBC: 138-144.
- Tu, 2/20 Introduction to the Book of Qoheleth/ Ecclesiastes *Qoheleth 1-6*
M: 49-64, 209-214, 248-258. C: 91-110. Rec: O'Connor 114-133.
- F, 2/23 Qoheleth's Paradoxes: Qoheleth 6:10-12:14 ["seminar"] C: 110-114. WBC: 161-163.
- Tu, 2/27 Introduction to the Book of Sirach *Ben Sira: Prologue and 1- 23*.
M: 65-82, 214-217, 259-264. C: 115-128. H: 78-91.
- F, 3/2 *Ben Sira: 26-51*. ["seminar"] C: 129-138. WBC: 298-304.
- Tu, 3/6 Introduction to the Book of Wisdom *Wisdom of Solomon 1-9*
M: 83-96, 217-220, 265-270. C: 139-159. H: 55-77. WBC" 293-297. Rec: J. S. Kloppenborg, "Isis and Sophia in the Book of Wisdom," HTR 75:1(1982)57-84.
- F, 3/9 Wisdom and Theodicy, particular in Job ["seminar"]. Also in Pss 37, 49, 73.
- Tu, 3/13 Wisdom Theology: Anthropology and Creation
M: 111-131, 223-227, 273-277. C: 181-185. Terence E. Fretheim, *God and World in the Old Testament: A Relational Theology of Creation*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2005, pp. 199-248, "Wisdom and Creation." Leo G. Perdue, "The Vitality of Wisdom in Second Temple Judaism during the Persian Period," pp. 119-154. Rec: James L. Crenshaw, "The Concept of God in Old Testament Wisdom," *In Search of Wisdom*, 1-18.
- F, 3/16 Lady Wisdom [*Proverbs 8, 31; Job 28; Sirach 24; Wisdom of Solomon 7-9;*

Baruch 3:9-4:4 [“seminar”] M: 133-149, 227-229, 278-281. Rec: O’Connor 59-85*; Elizabeth Johnson, “Wisdom/ Sophia” in: *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroad, 1992) pp. 86-100.

Tu, 3/20 Introduction to the Book of Psalms, especially Laments (Pss 6, 57, 137) and Wisdom Psalms: Pss 37, 49, 73, 112, 128. M: 99-104, 221-222, 270-272. C: 160-164. Rec. Rdg: James Limburg, “Psalms, Book of.” ABD 5:522-536.

F, 3/23 *Song of Songs* [“seminar”] C: 164-170; M: 106-108. R. Murphy, “Book of Song of Songs,” ABD 6:150-155. WBC: 164-168.

Tu & F, 3/27 and 3/30 Spring Vacation

Tu, 4/3 *Book of Lamentations* and Communal Laments: Psalms 44, 74, 79 and the *Tenebrae* service [“seminar”]. D. Hillers, “Lamentations, Book of.” ABD 4:137-141 (Blackboard). J. Endres, “Cry Out to God in Our Need: Psalms of Lament,” *The Way Supplement* 87(1996)34-44 (Blackboard).

F, 4/6 **Good Friday; no class**

Tu, 4/10 Messianic, Christological Interpretation of Psalms: *Psalms* 2, 22, 72, 110, 118.

F, 4/13 *Esther* (with Additions): Novella of Diaspora Life [“seminar”] H: 1-9, 44-54. Reginald C. Fuller, “The Deuterocanonical Writings,” *The International Biblical Commentary (IBC)*: 179-192}.

Tu, 4/17 *The Book of Daniel*, cc. 1-6.

F, 4/20 *The Book of Tobit*. A Novella of Diaspora Life. [“seminar”] H: 10-26. Will Soll, “The Book of Tobit as a Window on the Hellenistic Jewish Family,” pp. 242-275 in Luker.

Tu, 4/24 Introduction to the Maccabean Era: *I Maccabees*. H: 122-136.

F, 4/27 *2 Maccabees* [“seminar”] H: 137-151.

Tu, 5/1 Wisdom and Israel and Chinese Wisdom: A Comparative View

F, 5/4 *Additions to Daniel* (*Susannah; Bel and the Dragon; Prayer of Azariah*), [“seminar”] H: 109-112, 173-184. Rec: John C. Endres, “Daniel, Additions to,” in: David Noel Freedman, et al., edd., *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), pp. 312-314.

Tu, 5/8 Daniel and Apocalyptic *Daniel* 7-12. Paul D. Hanson, “The Intertestamental Period and the Rise of Apocalyptic,” *IBC* 1206-1219}.

F, 5/11 *The Book of Judith* [“seminar”] H: 27-43. Toni Craven, “Tradition and

Convention in the Book of Judith", *Semeia* 28(1983) 49-61. Toni Craven, "Women as Teachers of Torah in the Apocryphal/ Deuterocanonical Books," pp. 275-289.

Tu, 5/15 Final Gathering; evaluation C: 171-185.

A Selection of Recommended Titles

- Brown, William P. *Character in Crisis: A Fresh Approach to the Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1996.
- Crenshaw, James L. *Old Testament Wisdom: An Introduction*. Revised and enlarged. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox, 1998.
- DeSilva, David A. *Introducing the Apocrypha: Message, Context, and Significance*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic Books, 2002.
- Farmer, William R., ed. *The International Bible Commentary : a Catholic and Ecumenical Commentary for the Twenty-first Century*. Collegeville, Minn: Liturgical Press, 1998.
- Gammie, John G. and Leo G. Perdue. *The Sage in Israel and the Ancient Near East*. Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1990. [excellent collection of essays].
- Gutiérrez, Gustavo. *On Job: God-Talk and the Suffering of the Innocent*. Translated by Matthew J. O'Connell. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1987.
- Harrington, *Jesus Ben Sira of Jerusalem: A Biblical Guide to Living Wisely*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2005.
- Luker, Lamonte M., editor. *Passion, Vitality, and Foment: The Dynamics of Second Temple Judaism*. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2001.
- Meeks, Wayne, A., ed. and Jouette M. Bassler, et al . . . *The Harper Collins Study Bible*. New Revised Standard Version. New York: Harper Collins, 1993.
- Morgan, Donn F. *The Making of Sages: Biblical Wisdom and Contemporary Culture*. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2002.
- Newsom, Carol., and Sharon Ringe, editors. *Women's Bible Commentary: Expanded Edition*. [GTU Ref; **WBC**].
- O'Connor, Kathleen M. *The Wisdom Literature*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1988.
- O'Connor, Kathleen M. *Lamentations & The Tears of the World*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 2002..
- Perdue, Leo G. *Wisdom & Creation: The Theology of Wisdom Literature*. Nashville: Abington, 1994.
- Perdue, Leo G, Brandon Scott, William Johnston Wiseman. *In Search of Wisdom : Essays in Memory of John G. Gammie*. Louisville : Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993.
- Schroer, Silvia. *Wisdom Has Built Her House: Studies on the Figure of Sophia in the Bible*. Translated by Linda M. Maloney and William McDonough. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000.