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OT 631 Book of Jeremiah

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OT 631 The Book of Jeremiah

Fall 2002—A Three Hour Course Instructor: Lawson G. Stone

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Appointments are Also Available

1. Course description

This course explores selected exegetical issues in the Book of Jeremiah, and provides students with opportunities to apply original-language tools to the book's strategic passages.

2. Course objectives

Students in this course will:

- 2.1. confirm and refine by recourse to the Hebrew text of Jeremiah literary analysis of longer units previously studied in translation,
- 2.2. assess the state of preservation of shorter passages of Jeremiah employing the BHS text and apparatus and basic text-critical methodology,
- 2.3 analyze the semantic import of the morphology, sentence structure, and prosodic form, where appropriate, of brief passages using the Hebrew text,
- 2.4. present the significance of key terms in a given brief passage by using basic original language word-study tools and techniques,
- 2.5. identify the function of a given, brief passage of Jeremiah in the framework of its immediate context, its function in the literary flow of the book and in the section of the canon within which it appears,
- 2.6. situate the thematic emphases of specific passages of Jeremiah in the context of the Old Testament's unfolding message and in the context of the Bible as a whole,
- 2.7. demonstrate the impact of representative exegetical methods on the study of Jeremiah, employing relevant scholarly literature, and situating one's own interpretation in the ongoing discussion of biblical interpretation,
- 2.8. illustrate the contribution of exegetical study of the Hebrew text to biblical exposition, instruction, theological reflection, and spiritual formation in order to construct an appropriation of the passage that is integrative and coherent.

3. Course procedures and requirements

3.1. Class presentations will hope to model direct study of Jeremiah, relying primarily on exegetical skills introduced in OT 501. After an introduction overviewing the contents of the books as a wholes, class sessions will walk systematically through the units of Jeremiah, highlighting specific passages that make notable contributions to the meaning of each unit. Grammatical and linguistic details of selected passages will be highlighted in order to illustrate the chosen pericope's contribution to the message of the larger unit. Students will be required to read selected sections of Jeremiah in preparation for each class period. Attendance at all class sessions is expected, and no passing grade will be granted for students missing more than three sessions.

- 3.2. Students will write **four exegetical papers** on assigned texts from Jeremiah, utilizing the skills acquired in OT 501. These papers should be single-spaced, typed, and no more than three pages (i.e., approximately 1200-1300 words) in length. No secondary resources are to be consulted for these papers, since the student will be encouraged to rely on his or her own reading of the text. The paper should present the student's observations of the text's components, including causal and temporal particles, connotations of the verbal derived stems and aspects, significance of word order, and where appropriate, implications of a specific word's usage elsewhere in the Old Testament. Also where appropriate to the specific pericope, students should show sensitivity to sociohistorical, canonical, and theological issues arising from the text itself. The four passages will be announced early in the term after the professor has had a chance to assess students' abilities.
- 3.3. Students will write a **final paper** on a passage to be chosen from a list to be announced using the methods and skills acquired in the course. Secondary sources may be consulted, beginning with the preliminary bibliography provided below. The paper should also conclude in a brief sermon outline or lesson plan based on the specific observations raised in the paper. These papers should be double-spaced, typed, and no more than ten pages (i.e., approximately 2200 words) in length.

4. Course texts

- 4.1. Required specifically for OT 631.
- 4.2. Required in previous courses (OT 501).
 Arnold/Choi Xerox Manuscript on Hebrew Syntax
 Brown, Francis, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs. *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Oxford: Oxford, 1907. Repr., Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1979.
 Elliger, K., and W. Rudolph, eds. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1967-77.
 Scott, William R. *A Simplified Guide to BHS*. Berkley, Calif.: BIBAL, 1987.
 Seow, C. L. *A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew*. Rev. ed. Nashville: Abingdon, 1995.
- 4.3. Recommended
 Köhler-Baumgartner, *Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Brill: Multiple Volumes through late 1990's, also on CDROM)
 Holladay, W. L. *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon*. Employs K-B and HALAT, but abridges the articles.
 Waltke, Bruce and M. O'Connor, *Hebrew Syntax*. Eisenbrauns.
 Wurthwein, Ernst, *The Text of the Old Testament*, 4th ed., tr. E. F. Rhodes, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979.
- 4.4. General Reference (consult FIRST)
The Anchor Bible Encyclopedia. New York: Doubleday, 1992. 6 Volumes. Also available on CD-ROM for Windoze or PowerPC Macs running a Wintel emulation program.
The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Revised Edition. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979-1988. 4 Volumes.
New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis, 5 vols; ed. W. Van Gemeren, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000. Also CD

4.5. Specific Bibliography on Jeremiah

Bauer, *Biblical Resources for Ministry*.

Thompson, Henry O. *The book of Jeremiah: An Annotated Bibliography*. Scarecrow, 1996.

Select Bibliography Available in Powerpoint Folder for this class

Assignment Schedule

Date	Wednesdays	Fridays
Sept 4, 6	Organization and Introduction to Prophecy	Introduction to Prophecy/Method
Sept 11, 13	Jeremiah Survey	Background (1:1-3)
Sept 18, 20	Jer 1,	2:1-4:4
Sept 25, 27	Jer 4:5-6:30,	7-10
Oct 2, 4	Jer 11-13,	14-17
Oct 9, 11	Jer 18-20,	Confessions
Oct 16, 18	Jer 21-24	True/False Prophecy
Oct 23, 25	25	Jer 26-29,
Oct 30, Nov. 1	30-33	30-33 (cont'd)
Nov 6, 8	New Covenant	New Covenant
Nov 13, 15	Jer 34-36	Cont'd
Nov 20, 22	Jer 37-45	Con'td
Nov 27, 29	Reading Week	Reading Week
Dec 4, 6	Jer 46-51	Jer 52/Catch-Up
Dec 10, 1:00-3:00 PM WED	Final Exam Period	

Initial Assignments:

Due Sept. 11: Read the book of Jeremiah and:

1. Title Each Chapter
2. Identify the major types of materials in the book (see handout in Powerpoint folder)
3. Identify the major divisions and subdivisions of the book
4. Describe the thought-flow of the book
5. Identify The Major Themes and Issues addressed by the book
6. You will be turning this in for inspection (notes, not a finished paper)

For Sept. 13: Background

1. Read in the *Anchor Bible Dictionary* or the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (Revised Edition)* the articles on the Book of Jeremiah, and on Jeremiah (person)
2. Ponder Jeremiah 1:1-3 and other places where the book identifies concrete historical events, persons, controversies, etc in the light of your reading.
3. You will be asked to turn in a reading report on this material.

For Sept. 18 and subsequent days where a passage is assigned, see below, you'll do a kind of general study. For each passage there are four basic process you will need to engage in. You will not always, not even usually, be able to reach closure on these, but some attempt needs to be made with each.

- I. Do A General Overview of this Unit (See instructions below)
- II. Identify passages, words, or other items you think are worthy of closer inspection in the original (suggestions below)

- III. Consult a major commentary or do Bible dictionary research on topics of your own choosing arising from your own analysis
- IV. Identify what you consider to be the major themes and issues of the passage, both in the speaker's context and in the larger context of the OT and Bible as a whole

For your final paper you will write a full exegesis of a brief passage. There are several basic components of a serious exegesis paper:

1. Preliminary Translation of the passage
2. Assessment of the Text's State of preservation (textual criticism)
3. Evaluation of the passage's structure, form, and genre, which will involve analysis of grammar, syntax, and style
4. Analysis of key terms in the text (word study)
5. Situation of the passage in its successive literary contexts
6. Situation of the passage in its various contexts of history and tradition
7. Discussion of the theological themes, issues, and questions engaged by the text
8. Assessment of the role of the text for Christian theology, spiritual formation, and ministry
9. In all of these steps, students' own direct study needs to be accompanied by interaction with a range of scholarly materials: commentaries, research tools, articles, etc.

