

The Eighth Century Prophets and Their Message for Today
OT 4350f—Course Syllabus, Fall 2017
Austin Graduate School of Theology

Dr. R. Mark Shipp
7640 Guadalupe Street
Austin, TX 78752
(512) 476-2772
shipp@austingrad.edu

Office Hours: Mon. 11:00–12:00; Tues., 9:00-12:00; Wed., 1:00-3:00 PM; Thurs., 10:00–12:00; Fri., 10:00-12:00.

Class Meeting Time: Thurs. 7:00–9:40 PM.

BA Course Goals:

The student will show mastery of the biblical story and familiarity with various genres of biblical literature (law, wisdom, prophecy, poetry, etc.) and basic methods and principles of biblical exegesis.

Course Objectives:

- 1) The student will acquire knowledge of the literature of the eighth century prophetic books of the Old Testament (i.e., Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, and Jonah).
- 2) The student will be able to locate in Israel's history names, dates, and events important to a grasp of the text and significance of these books.
- 3) The student will be able to distinguish between various literary styles of these prophetic books and be able to articulate important theological themes of each.
- 4) The student will be able to relate the themes of these prophetic books to the life of faith and practical ministry today.

Nature and Scope of the Course:

In this course we will be concerned primarily with the books of Amos, Hosea, Isaiah 1–39, Micah, and Jonah, prophets who prophesied during the critical eighth century B.C. in Israel and Judah. The literature and theology of these books will be the primary focus of the course, but we will also be looking at historical questions and concerns as we move through the course.

Required Texts:

The New Oxford Annotated Bible of the New Revised Standard Version, or another good study Bible.

Bernhard Anderson. *The Eighth Century Prophets: Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah*. Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2003.

Terence Fretheim. *The Message of Jonah: A Theological Commentary*. Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2000.

John Miller. *Meet the Prophets: A Beginner's Guide to the Books of the Biblical Prophets*. New York: Paulist, 1987.

Also, various photocopied readings.

ATLA Database and Book Reviews:

The American Theological Library Association (ATLA) maintains a massive bibliographic database of theological journals and books. Please use this resource to find previously published reviews of the book on which you wish to write a book review. See the librarian for training and access to this database.

Course Requirements and Means of Assessment:

Regular class attendance and participation is required. All students should come prepared to discuss the particular section of scripture assigned for the day. This involves reading the relevant sections in the textbook and the Bible. Students should be in class and ready to begin promptly at the beginning of class. Tardiness and absences will lower your letter grade for the course. See student handbook for unexcused absences/tardiness policy.

Exams: There will be three exams in the course of the semester: one after a survey of Amos and Hosea, one after Isaiah 1–39, and the final exam after a study of Micah and Jonah.

Book Review: Each student will read and prepare a 3 page critical book review of an important book dealing with Old Testament studies. These reviews are due no later than Thursday, December 7. The following are a few samples, but you may wish to do a review of another book. You will need to clear alternative suggestions through me. These books are on the reserve shelf in the library.

T. Miles Bennett. *The Book of Micah: A Study Manual*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1968.

B. A. Copass and E. L. Carlson. *A Study of the Prophet Micah*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1950.

Carol Dempsey. *Hope Amid the Ruins: The Ethics of Israel's Prophets*. St. Louis: Chalice, 2000.

William Doorly. *Isaiah of Jerusalem: An Introduction*. New York: Paulist, 1992.

Abraham Heschel. *The Prophets*. Volume One. New York: Harper and Row, 1962.

Derek Kidner. *Love to the Loveless: The Message of Hosea*. *The Bible Speaks Today* series. Downers Grove: IVP, 1981.

Philip King. *Amos, Hosea, Micah—An Archaeological Commentary*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1988

Cecil Staton, Jr. *Interpreting Hosea for Teaching and Preaching*. *Kerygma and Church* series. Macon: Smyth and Helwys, 1993.

You will need to find one or two published reviews on the *ATLA* database and refer to these in your own book review (see above on *ATLA* database).

Also, see “Guide for Written Work” under section III, “The Book Review” On the http://austingrad.edu/images/Resources/student/guide_for_written_work.htm website. You will

follow the format indicated in the preparation of your review.

Three Exams: 75% (25% each)
Book Review: 25%

See the student handbook or course catalog for the grading scale.

AGST Plagiarism Policy:

Plagiarism and citation of sources: Plagiarism is the representation of another person's work as your own and is a form of theft. This includes material composed by other students, purchased from an online paper service, or copied from published books and articles or from the Internet. If in any assignment you employ material written by someone else, you must give the author proper credit, documenting the source with an appropriate citation and marking any words directly quoted with quotation marks (or with indentation if four or more lines are quoted). Failure to appropriately credit the sources you use will result in a reduction in your grade for the assignment in question and/or the requirement that you revise the assignment. Intentionally representing another person's work as your own will be grounds for academic discipline, including your possible dismissal from the School. For more information on how to acknowledge sources properly and avoid plagiarism, refer to the School's "Guide to Written Work" (http://www.austingrad.edu/images/Resources/student/guide_for_written_work.htm).

Schedule of Classes.

8/31: Syllabus and Introduction to the Eighth Century Prophets: Historical Setting and Theological Themes.

Readings:

Anderson, pp. 1–10.

Miller, pp. 1–38.

9/7: Amos.

Readings:

Amos 1–4.

Anderson, pp. 11–22.

Miller, pp. 39–64.

9/14: Amos (cont.).

Readings:

Amos 5–9.

9/21: Hosea.

Readings:

Hosea 1–7.

Anderson, pp. 23–58.

Miller, pp. 65–89.

9/28: Hosea (cont.).

Readings:

Hosea 8–14.

10/5: Introduction to Isaiah and Isaiah 1–4; Exam #2, covering Introduction, Amos, and Hosea.

Readings:

Isaiah 1–4.

Anderson, pp. 73–98.

Miller, pp. 90–121.

10/12: Isaiah chaps. 5–8.

Readings:

Isaiah 5–8.

10/19: No class; AGST 100th anniversary celebration.

10/26: Isaiah chaps. 9–12.

Readings:

Isaiah 9–12.

11/2: Isaiah chaps. 13–27.

Readings:

Isaiah 13–27.

11/9: Isaiah chaps. 28–39.

Readings:

Isaiah 28–39; 40–55.

Miller, pp. 204–225.

11/16: Micah; Exam #2, covering Isaiah 1–39.

Readings:

Micah 1–3.

Anderson, pp. 59–72.

Miller, pp. 122–138.

11/23: No class; Thanksgiving Holiday.

11/30: Micah (cont.).

Readings:

Micah 4–7.

12/7: Jonah; book reviews due.

Readings:

Jonah.

Fretheim, *The Message of Jonah*.

12/14: Exam. #3, covering Micah and Jonah.