



Nazarene Theological Seminary

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PRH660 — Preaching from the Old Testament Module
Spring 2012

Essential Information

Please refer to the following resources for information essential for the successful completion of courses and degree programs at Nazarene Theological Seminary. Links to these resources are available in the Essential Information section at <http://support.nts.edu>.

- NTS Mission Statement & Purpose Degree Objectives
- Tips for online learning success
- NTS library services
- NTS textbook information
- Online technical requirements and Moodle support information
- NTS Student Handbook including statements on quality of work, plagiarism, and academic probation
- *Handbook for Inclusive Language*

Instructor Information

Professor: Dr. Stephen Green

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Catalog Description

A study of the preaching values in the Old Testament. Attention will be given to the rich variety of literary genres that can and should inform Christian preaching. A basic assumption of the course is that the Old Testament is Christian Scripture, and without it the Gospel is not complete.

Course Narrative & Rationale

Many Christian preachers will acknowledge a deep sense of bewilderment and theological uncertainty as they encounter an Old Testament text. What is one to preach from these texts: principles to live by, history to insist upon, allegory which allows an escape from? Many preachers find that they are positioned between the naïve Biblicism and sneering skepticism when it comes to preaching from an Old Testament text. What should Christian preachers say and do when entering the sometimes strange and unfamiliar world of the Old Testament canon? This course will seek to locate a truly

pastoral approach to the hermeneutical issues and homiletically potent possibilities raised by our ongoing commitment to read the Old Testament within the context of the Christian community. Therefore, this course will give attention to the development of a theologically faithful model for Biblical preaching that aims to extend the function of the text within the experience of a congregation.

Degree Objectives

While this course may be of interest to students pursuing any of the degrees granted by NTS, it is specifically designed to address learning objectives central to the Master of Divinity preparations for ministry by persons called to provide pastoral and spiritual leadership in congregations and/or similar vocational settings. Of those M.Div. Degree Program Objectives listed in the NTS catalog, the following are considered central to the purpose and design of this course:

☐☐The articulation of the knowledge of this [Triune] God through prayerful, scholarly study and a deepening understanding of the Christian Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments;

☐☐The development of wisdom and discernment through engagement with the intellectual challenge of the literature of the Christian faith, by the critical, scholarly study of the history and theology of Christianity, and of the literature and practices of Christian spirituality, ethics and ministry;

☐☐The cultivation of gifts for ministry into competent skills and practices in worship and preaching, teaching and discipleship, care and counseling, evangelism and missions, administration and servant-leadership.

Course Outcomes

By the end of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Articulate and demonstrate the continuing relevance, implicit theological commitments and spiritual value of preaching from the Old Testament in a manner that is both responsibly and coherently Christian (see Pre-Module Assignment 1);
2. Identify and illustrate the major distinguishing theological characteristics and themes of the theological traditions as reflected in the canonical shaping of the Old Testament materials, developing this interpretive model to establish a strong and balanced approach to lifelong preaching from the Old Testament (see Pre-Module Assignments 2 & 3);
3. Identify and describe the basic literary forms of the Old Testament and their

rhetorical effects, locating examples of these forms in their characteristic scriptural context (see face to face work in the week Module);

4. Describe and demonstrate effective homiletical methods of approach that will be congenial to the rhetorical strategies of significant and familiar literary forms in the Old Testament (see Pre-Module Assignment 4);
5. Plan, develop and deliver sermons from an Old Testament passage with confidence that the process and final outcome reflects theologically responsible engagement with a biblical text and a faithfulness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. (see Module Assignment 1 , Post-Module Assignment 1);
6. Identify, refine and practice an approach to Old Testament exegesis and exposition that provides effective theological guidelines for a consistently close reading of the text which informs imagination in the development of evocative, pastoral preaching (see Pre-Module Assignment 5 & Post-Module Assignment 2).

Church of the Nazarene COSAC Competencies

☐☐Ability to identify the literary structure and the main story line of the Old Testament (CN1).

☐☐Ability to identify the books of the Old Testament by genre (CN2).

☐☐Ability to identify the basic thrust of each major section of the Old Testament (CN3).

☐☐Ability to describe the major theological concepts of the Old Testament (CN7).

☐☐Ability to identify the steps of historical, literary, and theological analysis used in exegesis (CN16).

☐☐Ability to exegete a passage of Scripture using the steps listed above (CN17).

☐☐Ability to demonstrate understanding of the sources of theological reflection, its historical development, and its contemporary expressions (CN21).

☐☐Ability to communicate publicly through oral and written mediums with clarity and creativity for the sake of fostering meaning (CN24).

Required Texts & Course Materials

The foundational text will be the Old Testament. While direct reliance upon the text in its original languages will certainly be beneficial for those students whose proficiency in

reading and translation affords this possibility, the instructor will use the NRSV (1989) for all classroom instruction and examples. Those students for whom English is a second language are encouraged to consult with the instructor if the NRSV translation poses an additional challenge.

Brueggemann, Walter. *An Unsettling God: The Heart of the Hebrew Bible*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009.

Brueggemann, Walter. *The Word Militant: Preaching a Decentering Word*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007.

Buttrick, David. *Homiletic: Moves and Structures*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1987.

Jenson, Robert. *Canon and Creed*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2010.

Recommended Texts & Course Materials

The student must read at least five different commentaries for each biblical passage that is being interpreted for the sermons being written. The student must document the commentaries used. At least four of the commentaries, for each passage, should be selected from the following commentary series:

Anchor

Continental

Hermeneia

International Critical Commentary

Interpretation

New International

Old Testament Library

Word Biblical

Course Outline

See Course Calendar below for the full module. The outline for the week of class sessions is as follows:

- I. Introduction to Preaching from the Old Testament
 - a. Preaching the gospel, the power of salvation
 - b. The “rule of faith” and Christian preaching

- c. The Word and the powers
 - d. Genre and the intentionality of the text
- II. Homiletic strategies
- a. Image Grid
 - b. Congregational blocks
 - c. Congregations, Genres and Strategies
- III. Old Testament Traditions: Pictures, Stories & Practices
- a. Narrative, Event, and World Views in Israel's history
 - b. Resisting
 - i. Chaos
 - ii. Conformity
 - c. Ministers and other Servants
 - i. Priests
 - ii. Prophets
 - iii. Sages
 - iv. Singers
 - v. Seers
- IV. Putting it all together
- V. Preaching the gospel from the Old Testament

Course Assignments & Requirements

Pre-Module Assignments

The Pre-Module reading assignments will prepare students to engage in the classroom discussion and lectures scheduled for the module.

1. Textbook reading and paper on Robert Jenson's *Canon and Creed*. The purpose of this text is to provide the students with a broad overview of issues in the Christian use of scripture, especially the scripture of ancient Israel. In order to arrive at the desired goal of the class, the student will write a summary Jenson's book. This should be at least a 500-word paper. The student will then write a 750-word paper over an Old Testament passage using the "rule of faith" as articulated by Jenson's work. Examples of this kind of work can be found in Jenson's book itself. (Course Outcome 1)
2. Textbook readings and papers on both of Brueggemann's books. The student should read *An Unsettling God: The Heart of the Hebrew Bible* first, and then *The Word Militant: Preaching a Decentering Word*. Both of these books should each have a 500 word summary paper written over them. (See Course Outcome 2)

3. The student should then write a 750-word essay over the theological vision of the Old Testament. This should be written in light of the work of Bruggemenn, but also in light of other work over the Old Testament. (See Course Outcome 2)
4. Textbook reading and summary paper over Buttrick's text. Each chapter should be summarized in two to three paragraphs. This paper will most likely be 2000 + words. (See Course Outcome 4)
5. An Old Testament passage is to be selected and an exegetical/expositional paper is to be written. This paper will become the heart of the work for the sermon to be preached in class. The paper will cover the following:
 - a. Contexts
 - i. Historical
 - ii. Literary
 - b. Outline of the passage
 - c. Key concepts and words used in the passage
 - d. The vision of God that is witnessed to in the passage
 - e. The unique dilemma or quandary that is being addressed within its historical situation of the passage.
 - f. The response that the passage is calling the hearer or reader to make.

(See Course Outcome 6)

Module Assignment

1. Preaching Oral Sermon in Class. Every student will preach a sermon from an Old Testament text. Knowing that factors related to the size of the class may impinge upon the length and scheduling of these sermons, the instructor will provide further details regarding expectations and evaluative criteria early in the week of the Module. Students will submit a manuscript to the instructor and each member of the class prior to preaching the sermon in class. Sermons will be subject to evaluation by classmates as well as the instructor, and key criteria for assessment will include an evaluation regarding the congeniality of the sermon to the form of the Biblical text, the degree to which the sermon demonstrates a commitment to the Christian Gospel while showing fidelity to its Old Testament context, and the effectiveness of the communication as a "live performance" of the Gospel. (See Course Outcome 3 & 5)
2. Papers, which have been submitted during the pre-module period, will be read in class to stimulate discussion. (See Course Outcome 3)

Post-Module Assignments

1. Written Sermons. In addition to the sermon preached in class during the module, two additional sermons from an Old Testament text assigned by the instructor will be submitted electronically in manuscript form by 11:55 PM PST on Friday, April 13, 2012 The sermon manuscripts should be written for oral performance assuming a "typical" Sunday worship context for the preacher. These sermons

- should be no longer than 22 minutes each. (See Course Outcome 5)
2. In addition to the sermons, the student will write an expositional paper over each passage. These expositions will include additional material discussed in class plus: These papers will cover the following:
 - g. Context
 - i. Historical
 - ii. Literary
 - h. Outline of the passage
 - i. Key concepts and words used in the passage
 - j. The vision of God that is witnessed to in the passage
 - k. The unique dilemma or quandary that is being addressed within its historical situation of the passage.
 - l. The response that the passage is calling the hearer or reader to make.

(See Course Outcome 6)

Distribution of Student Learning Hours

	Pre-module hours	Module hours	Post-module hours
Face-to-face Class Sessions		35	
Online Participation in forums, groups, etc.	0		0
Reading	35	0	5
Writing	20	15	30
Other Assignments and Learning Activities	0	0	0
Exams & Quizzes	0	0	0
TOTAL	55	50	35

Method for Submitting Assignments

The student should submit all written assignments in Moodle following the directions in the Course Assignments and Requirements section above. The sermon should be downloaded and sent directly to the instructor's e-mail or downloaded to social media such as YouTube or the instructor's Facebook.

Form and Style Expectations

All formal work, including citations, etc., should follow the Turabian style. For appropriate abbreviations and other forms in biblical studies, the student should consult the [SBL Handbook of Style](#).

Inclusive Language

NTS is committed to the equality of women and men. Recognizing that people have often used the English language in ways that imply the exclusion or inferiority of women, NTS urges students, faculty, and staff to avoid sexist language in public discourse, in classroom discussions, and in their writings. All written work presented to meet course requirements must use gender inclusive language.

Policy Regarding Late Work & Missed Exams

All assignments must be submitted on time. Late assignments will be reduced by a letter grade for the first week and two letter grades for the second week. No assignment will be received after two weeks following the due date. If a student is experiencing an emergency, s/he should consult with the instructor immediately.

Course Grading

Each assignment will be graded on a scale of 100; however, the final grade will be calculated according to the following weighting:

Jenson reading and book review...5%
Bruggemann reading and book review...5%
Bruggemann reading and book review...5%
Buttrick reading and book review...10%
Paper over "rule of faith" and reading an Old Testament passage...5%
Paper over theological vision of the Old Testament...10%
Paper over Old Testament passage...5%
Oral sermon preached in class...15%
Sermons submitted following class...30% (15% each)
Papers submitted following class...10% (5% each)

In accordance with the provisions of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, NTS is committed to providing students with disabilities the opportunity to participate and benefit from its programs and activities. Accordingly, NTS will make reasonable modifications to its programs and activities to accommodate otherwise qualified students with disabilities, unless such modifications would impose an undue burden on the operation of the particular program or activity or would fundamentally alter the nature or purpose of the program or activity. Students needing accommodations should contact the Office of the Registrar. They also should contact the instructor no later than the end of the first class session to discuss learning needs and adaptive strategies that have been beneficial for the student in the past.

Class Attendance

Attendance at classes is essential for realizing the maximum benefit of your education. The value of the learning community established during the course of this module will

be greatly diminished by student absences and lack of meaningful preparation for full participation in classroom interaction. If you must be absent because of extenuating circumstances, please contact the instructor as soon as possible to discuss the challenge of your particular circumstances so that an appropriate and mutually acceptable remedy may be identified. At present, NTS standards reflect the understanding that “if a student is absent for 9 hours of a two-week module . . . the professor may automatically fail the student.”

Daily attendance records must be reported for those obtaining V.A. and Department of Education benefits. Students must make the professor aware if their attendance must be recorded.

Course Calendar

Date	Week	Assignment
Feb 6	1 Pre-Module Begins	Textbook reading and paper on Robert Jenson’s <i>Canon and Creed</i> . (See Pre-Module assignments #1) This is due by Friday 11:50 P.M.
Feb 13	2	750-word paper over an Old Testament passage using the “rule of faith” as articulated by Jenson’s work. (See Pre-Module assignments #1) This is due by Friday 11:50 P.M.
Feb 20	3	Write a 500 word summary paper over Brueggemann’s book: <i>An Unsettling God: The Heart of the Hebrew</i> and then. (See Pre-Module assignments #2) This is due by Friday 11:50 P.M.
Feb 27	4	Write a 500 word summary paper over Brueggemann’s book: <i>The Word Militant: Preaching a Decentering Word</i> . (See Pre-Module assignments #2) This is due by Friday 11:50 P.M.
Mar 5	5	750-word essay over the theological vision of the Old Testament. (See Pre-Module assignments #3) This is due by Friday 11:50 P.M.
Mar 12	6	2000 + word essay over Buttrick’s: <i>Homiletic: Moves and Structures</i> . (See Pre-Module assignments #4) This is due by Friday 11:50 P.M.
Mar 19	7 Module Face to Face Begins	Bring to class an exegetical/expositional paper over an Old Testament passage. (See Pre-Module assignments See Pre-Module assignments #5) This is due at the start of face-to-face class session. Develop a grid for the chosen biblical passage, due Tuesday by start of class. Write full manuscript sermon, due Thursday by the start of class.
Mar 26	8 Post-Module Begins	
Apr 2	9	

Apr 9	10	Two expository papers over each passage chosen for the second and third sermons. (See Post-Module Assignments#2) This is due by Friday 11:50 P.M.
Apr 16	11	
Apr 23	12	Two Written Sermons. (See Post-Module Assignments#2) These will be submitted electronically in manuscript form by 11:55 PM PST on Friday, April 13, 2012
Apr 20	13	Course Evaluations (approximate release time by the Dean's Office)
May 7	14	