



# INDIANAPOLIS THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

BT 513

## Poets

January 2018

Saturday, January 6<sup>th</sup>, 9am–5pm

Weeknights, January 2<sup>nd</sup>–5<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup>, 7pm–10

Saturday, January 13<sup>th</sup>, 9am–5pm

2 credits

### **PROFESSOR INFORMATION**

Name: Dieudonné Tamfu

Email: d.tamfu@gmail.com

Office hours by appointment

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

A detailed study of the poetic and wisdom books of the Old Testament: Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes. Focus will be on introductory material, salient literary features, theology, canonical contribution, and contemporary debates.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Through lectures, class interaction, reading assignments and writing project, upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Demonstrate a good understanding of the current state of study and major issues in Wisdom research in Biblical Studies;
2. Grasp the key interpretive issues, theology, distinct literary structures, characteristics, and genres of each book as well as the collective message of Old Testament Wisdom Literature (Wisdom Theology);
3. Grasp the key contribution of Old Testament Wisdom Literature to the overarching story of the Scriptures;
4. Comprehend the depth, complexity, and ambiguity of Wisdom Literature and to appropriate its collective message to the contemporary Christian and life in the church;

5. Grasp how the Old Testament Wisdom Literature points to Christ and reveals Christ in ways that are relevant for the church;
6. Develop skills for interpreting, preaching, and teaching from the Old Testament Wisdom Literature in ways that show that all of Scripture is about Christ, our Wisdom.

## **COURSE OUTCOMES**

Within the ITS Learning Outcomes, this course contributes to shaping students' aptitude in:

### Hermeneutics & Biblical Theology

proficient at reading and interpreting biblical Hebrew and Greek, appreciating the rhetorical functions of the biblical books in their original social contexts, comprehending the contours of redemptive history within a covenantal framework, and possessing a very high biblical literacy and trenchant understanding of the gospel.

### Practical Integration

able to powerfully articulate the gospel both in conversation and preaching, skilled at clear written and oral communication, understanding the central role of the local church in missions and evangelism, effective at personal discipleship, and committed to the sufficiency of scripture.

### Spiritual Transformation

continually growing in Christ-likeness and bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit, having been transformed by the gospel, and living by grace, applying the gospel to all of life.

## **TEACHING METHOD**

This course is premised on the conviction that the Bible is the inspired word of Almighty God and contains everything necessary for salvation, life, godliness and fruitful ministry. Right handling of this unique collection of texts is a matter of Christian faithfulness to our Lord. Therefore, we will examine the Bible itself for the hermeneutical approaches it calls for on its own terms. These approaches will be examined in light of current philosophical and epistemological trends.

Class time will be divided between theory and praxis: Lecture, discussion, colloquium formats. Bring your Bible (ESV or NASB95 [you may bring other versions along with either the ESV or NASB, but every student must own one of these versions for the class]) and the textbooks to every class.

## **COURSE READINGS:**

### Required:

Robertson, O. Palmer. *The Christ of Wisdom: A Redemptive-Historical Exploration of the Wisdom Books of the Old Testament*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2017. [abbreviation: *CW*]

Longman, Tremper Longman, and Peter Enns, eds. *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Wisdom, Poetry & Writings*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2008. [abbreviation: *DOTWPW*]<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>This dictionary is a very important resource. I recommend that you also purchase copies of the other dictionaries in the series; what follows is a list of all of them: Rosner, Brian S., T. Desmond Alexander, Graeme Goldsworthy, and D. A. Carson, eds. *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology: Exploring the Unity & Diversity of Scripture*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2000; Boda, Mark J., and J. Gordon McConville, eds. *Dictionary of the Old*

**Recommended:**

- Alter, Robert. *The Wisdom Books: Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes: A Translation with Commentary*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company, 2010.
- Bartholomew, Craig G., and Ryan P. O'Dowd. *Old Testament Wisdom Literature: A Theological Introduction*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2011.
- Bergant, Dianne. *Israel's Wisdom Literature: A Liberation-Critical Reading*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1997.
- Bland, Dave. *Proverbs and the Formation of Character*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2015.
- Brown, William P. *Character in Crisis: A Fresh Approach to the Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1996.
- \*Bullock, C. Hassell. *An Introduction to the Old Testament Poetic Books*. Revised, Expanded Edition. Chicago, IL: Moody, 2007.
- \*Clifford, Richard J. *The Wisdom Literature*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1998.
- \*Crenshaw, James L. *Old Testament Wisdom: An Introduction*. 3rd Ed. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2010.
- Crenshaw, James L., and Mercer University. *Urgent Advice and Probing Questions: Collected Writings on Old Testament Wisdom*. Macon, GA: Mercer, 1995.
- Curtis, Edward M. *Interpreting the Wisdom Books: An Exegetical Handbook*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2017.
- \*DeRouchie, Jason S. *How to Understand and Apply the Old Testament: Twelve Steps from Exegesis to Theology*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2017.
- Estes, Daniel J. *Handbook on the Wisdom Books and Psalms*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010.
- \*Kidner, Derek. *The Wisdom of Proverbs, Job & Ecclesiastes*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1985.
- \*Longman III, Tremper. *The Fear of the Lord Is Wisdom: A Theological Introduction to Wisdom in Israel*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2017.
- Lucas, Ernest C. *Exploring the Old Testament: A Guide to the Psalms & Wisdom Literature*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2003.
- Murphy, Roland E. *The Tree of Life: An Exploration of Biblical Wisdom Literature*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002.

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*Testament: Prophets*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2012. Arnold, Bill T., and H. G. M. Williamson. *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Historical Books*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2005. Alexander, T. Desmond, and David W. Baker, eds. *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2003. Martin, Ralph P., and Peter H. Davids, eds. *Dictionary of the Later New Testament and Its Developments*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1997. Hawthorne, Gerald F., Ralph P. Martin, and Daniel G. Reid, eds. *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1993. Porter, Stanley E., and Craig A. Evans. *Dictionary of New Testament Background: A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2000. Green, Joel B., Jeannine K. Brown, and Nicholas Perrin, eds. *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels, Second Edition*. Downers Grove, IL; Nottingham, England: IVP, 2013. Evans, Craig A., and Stanley E. Porter Jr, eds. *Dictionary of New Testament Background*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2000.

———. *Wisdom Literature: Job, Proverbs, Ruth, Canticles, Ecclesiastes, and Esther*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1981.

O'Connor, Kathleen M. *The Wisdom Literature*. Message of Biblical Spirituality 5. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1988.

Perdue, Leo G. *The Sword and the Stylus: An Introduction to Wisdom in the Age of Empires*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2008.

———. *Wisdom & Creation: The Theology of Wisdom Literature*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2009.

———. *Wisdom Literature: A Theological History*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2007.

Perdue, Leo G., Bernard Brandon Scott, and William Johnston Wiseman, eds. *In Search of Wisdom: Essays in Memory of John G. Gammie*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1993.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

DATE	TOPICS	REQUIRED READING
Tuesday, 01/2/18 7pm-10	Intro to the OT Canon, Intro to OT Poetry, Intro Psalms	<i>DOTWPW</i> "Terminology of Poetics," 520-25
Wednesday, 01/3/18 7pm-10	Psalms: Book 1	Pss 1-41; <i>DOTWPW</i> "Psalms," 578- 63.
Thursday, 01/4/18 7pm-10pm	Psalms Book 2	Pss 42-72; <i>DOTWPW</i> "Wisdom and Biblical Theology," 853-59
Friday, 01/5/18 7pm-10pm	Psalms Book 3	Pss 73-89; "Wisdom and Covenant," 858-63 "Wisdom and History," 863-76
Saturday, 01/6/18 9am-5pm	Psalms Book 4	Pss 90-106
Monday, 01/8/18 7pm-10pm	Psalms Book 5	Pss 107-150; "Wisdom and Prophecy," 876-84
Tuesday, 01/9/18 7pm-10pm	Intro to OT Wisdom; Job	Job 1-42; <i>CW</i> ix-28, 118-96; "Wisdom Theology," 901-12;
Wednesday, 01/10/18 7pm-10pm	Proverbs	Proverbs 1-31; <i>CW</i> 29-117; <i>DOTWPW</i> "Proverbs," 528-78;
Thursday, 01/11/18 7pm-10pm	Song of Songs	<i>S&amp;S</i> 1-8; <i>CW</i> 321-80; <i>DOTWPW</i> "Solomon," 733-37, "Song of Songs," 737-69;
Friday, 01/12/18 7pm-10pm	Ecclesiastes	<i>Eccl</i> 1-12; <i>DOTWPW</i> "Ecclesiastes," 121-49; <i>CW</i> 197-274
Saturday, 01/13/18 9am-5pm	<b>Final Exam</b>	<b>Final Exam</b>

## COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

### ***Class Participation (10%)***

Attendance at every session is mandatory. Students must come having done ALL the required reading and ready to interact with the material.

### ***Reading (25%)***

Students must read the sections of the Old Testament from the ESV or NASB in one sitting. I encourage you to use an audio Bible, listen to it, *and* follow it in your print Bible. Write a single sentence summary of the Book or section of the Book. **Reading Summaries Due: January 20<sup>th</sup> at 6PM.**

All the other required reading must be done before each class session on the day assigned. You must read the material carefully, reading every footnote. Write a short paragraph summary of each section of *DOTWPW* and a single page summary of Robertson's *The Christ of Wisdom*. **Reading Summaries Due: January 20<sup>th</sup> at 6PM.**

### ***Writing Project (50%)***

Each student will craft a sermon series outline on one of the following books or section of a book: Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes, and Proverbs 1–9. Each sermon in the sermon series **MUST** include: 1) the passage, 2) the sermon title, 3) literary context (describe in a short paragraph how the passage fits in its literary context), 4) the main point and sub-points with supporting cross-references, 5) A short paragraph on how the passage points to Christ, 5) and a list of application points. **Due January 27<sup>th</sup> at 6PM.**

Each student will write a full sermon (3,000–6,000 words) on a psalm of his or her choice showing how the message of the specific Psalm helps one to understand and worship Jesus better. The Psalm chosen must *not* be quoted in the New Testament. The aim of this exercise is to learn to use the hermeneutics of Jesus and the apostles in interpreting the Old Testament. **Due January 27<sup>th</sup> at 6PM.**

### ***Final Exam (15%)***

The final exam will be based on the outline of the Old Testament books covered in this course. You should memorize the outline provided on pages 8–9 of this syllabus and be ready to reproduce any of them for the final exam.

### ***Grading Scale***

Letter	Percent	Points	C	74–76	2.00
A	96–100	4.00	C-	71–73	1.67
A-	92–95	3.67	D+	69–70	1.33
B+	88–91	3.33	D	67–68	1.00
B	84–87	3.00	D-	65–66	0.66
B-	80–83	2.67	F	< 65	0.00
C+	77–79	2.33	I	Incomplete	0.00

## COURSE POLICIES

### 1. Academic Honesty

- a. Indianapolis Theological Seminary is committed to personal integrity and honesty. All instances of dishonesty or distorting of truth to avoid negative academic or social consequences are grounds for a disciplinary response.
- b. Students cheating in course work or examinations are subject to discipline. Cheating includes the act of copying another student's work and presenting it as one's own (or allowing another person to copy one's own work) and the use of dishonest or prohibited methods to complete a requirement (or helping another person to cheat).
- c. Plagiarism and cheating will be grounds for an immediate F in any given course. A second occurrence will result in expulsion from the school.

### 2. Attendance

- a. Attendance is critical for learning the necessary material. Students are, therefore, expected to attend every class session. If an unexpected and an unavoidable emergency occurs, the student must contact the professor immediately. Because of the nature of this course, however, any absence will significantly affect the student's final grade. If a student misses more than two class sessions, he will get an "F."
- b. Incompletes can be granted at the professor's discretion based on the likelihood that the student can complete the necessary coursework with no more than one month of extra time, and given that the student is currently passing the course at the time of the request. The regular attendance policy still applies. Students are, therefore, encouraged to withdraw if more than one class session will need to be missed.

### 3. Use of Technology During Class

- a. Students may use technology in class (computer, tablet, or phone) **only** to access relevant information in Bible programs (like Accordance, Bibleworks, or Logos), to refer to electronic versions of required readings (on applications like Kindle, iBooks, PDF Readers etc.) for that class period, or to take notes.
- b. Students are **not permitted** to use technology to access the Internet to send or receive texts, send or receive email, access Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.
- c. During class either *turn off your phone* or *put it on airplane mode*. (You may request permission to keep it on vibrate in extraordinary circumstances. Otherwise if there is some sort of unforeseen emergency that requires your immediate attention, your family and friends can get a hold of you by calling the school office.)
- d. During class make sure that you have *shut down any programs on your computer for email and social media*.
- e. During class **disable all notifications** on your devices. Seeing notifications flash on your screen every time someone emails you, texts you, or mentions you on social media will derail your thinking and tempt you to click on the notification.

#### **4. Special Needs**

- a. Because we are created in God's image and each one of us is inherently valuable, it is my desire to work with each student to the fullest degree possible, regardless of physical or mental challenges.
- b. Students with disabilities should contact me as soon as possible and no later than January 1 for accommodation. Special needs must be documented with ITS.

#### ***DISCLAIMER***

*This syllabus is intended to reflect as best as possible the learning objectives, instructional format, readings, learning activities, evaluation criteria, policies and procedures, and other essential information for students to complete this course. I, however, reserve the right to amend any portion of this syllabus as I deem necessary to maintain the integrity of the learning experience as a result of events and situations that may arise during the course.*

## OUTLINES

### **Macro Outline/Structure of the Book of Psalms**

- Book 1: Psalms 1–41,            Messiah Enthroned through Affliction
- Book 2: Psalms 42–72,        Messiah’s Reign to Solomon
- Book 3: Psalms 73–89,        Messianic Throne in the Dust: from Solomon to the Exile
- Book 4: Psalms 90–106,       Musing on Yahweh’s Past Deliverance Longing for Deliverance
- Book 5: Psalms 107–150,     Yahweh’s Future Deliverance through the Messiah

### **Macro Outline/Structure of the Book of Job**

- Job 1:1–5 Prologue: Job’s Reverence of Yahweh
- Job 1:6–2:13 Yahweh’s Challenge to Satan about Job
- Job 3–31 Circles of Speeches Between Job and Friends
- Job 32–37 Circles of Speeches: Elihu Speaks to Job
- Job 38–42:6 Yahweh’s Challenge to Job
- Job 42:7–11 Epilogue: Job Restored by Yahweh

### **Macro Outline/Structure of the Book of Proverbs**

- Proverbs 1–9,            Proverbs of Solomon: Lady Wisdom and Madame Folly
- Proverbs 10–22:16,     Proverbs of Solomon: The Way the World Works
- Proverbs 22:17–24:22, Thirty Sayings of the Wise: How to Relate to Other People
- Proverbs 24:23–34,     More Sayings of the Wise: Justice and Home Economics
- Proverbs 25–29,        Proverbs of Solomon Copied by Hezekiah’s Men: Wise Conduct
- Proverbs 30,            The Words of Agur: Humble Descriptions of the World
- Proverbs 31,            The Words of King Lemuel: Nobility and the Virtuous Wife



### **Macro Outline/Structure of the Book of Song of Songs**

1:1 Title: Song of the King

1:2–2:7 Prologue: The First Coming Together and Intimacy of the King and His Bride

2:8–3:5        The King and His Bride Joined and Separated

3:6–5:1        The King and His Bride in Love and Marriage

5:2–6:3        The Bride's Search for the King and Their Reunion

6:4–8:4        The King's Praise, the Desire for the Bride, and Love in the Country

8:5–14 Epilogue: The Power of Love of the King and His Bride

### **Macro Outline/Structure of the Book of Ecclesiastes**

1:1–11 Prologue: The Messianic Wisdom of the Son of David and The Enigma of Life

1:12–12:7 Exploration of the Meaning of Life

12:8–14 Epilogue: The Messianic Wisdom of the One Shepherd: Fear God and Keep His Law