



ST ANDREW'S GREEK ORTHODOX THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE
A Member Institution of the Sydney College of Divinity

B9231A Interpreting the Prophets of Israel



Semester Two, 2022

Teaching Staff:

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Consultation times:	by appointment; first contact by email preferred

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Unit Weighting:	9 credit points
Type of Unit:	Intermediate
Mode of Study:	Face-to-Face and online
Prerequisites:	9 cp of Level 8100 B units
Corequisites:	Nil
Exclusions:	B7231 Prophetic Literature

Teaching Staff:	Name:	Lydia Gore-Jones (PhD Macquarie)
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Consultations available by appointment; first contact by email preferred.

Workload:	Weeks in Teaching Session:	12 weeks
	Timetabled hours/week:	3 hours
	Study & assignments:	9 hours
	Total Workload:	144 hours

Curriculum Objectives

This course unit critically engages with specific texts and theological themes in the Old Testament prophetic literature within its historical, social and religious contexts. It contributes towards a Specialisation in the Discipline of Biblical Studies.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the unit students will be able to

1. Analyse the connection of the various prophetic literary forms with the theological themes they convey;
2. Engage with critical issues associated with the study of prophetic literature;
3. Exegete selected passages from the prophetic books, using an accepted critical methodology;
4. Integrate significant secondary literature into a formal critical essay on prophetic texts;
5. Apply insights of prophetic literature to various aspects of Christian life and ministry.

Content

1. Prophecy as a phenomenon in Ancient Near East and Israel
2. Historical, social and religious contexts of the prophetic books

3. Contents and their associated literary forms of the prophetic books
4. Theological themes in the prophetic books, as well as their reception and application
5. Methodologies and approaches in the study of prophetic literature
6. Exegetical skills in the interpretation of prophetic texts

Weekly Program

Topic 1	Prophetic literature in historical and literary contexts
Topic 2	“The Twelve”; Hosea
Topic 3	Amos; Micah
Topic 4	Great Isaiah part 1
Topic 5	Jeremiah
Topic 6	Lamentations and Baruch
Topic 7	Nahum, Zephaniah, Habakkuk and Obadiah
Topic 8	Ezekiel
Topic 9	Great Isaiah part 2
Topic 10	Joel and Jonah
Topic 11	Zechariah, Haggai, Malachi
Topic 12	Daniel

Learning Resources

Required text:

Bullock, C. Hassell. *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophetic Books*. Updated edition. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2007.

The preferred Biblical texts for study through English is the Orthodox Study Bible translated from the Septuagint text, and the ESV, NKJV, NRSV translations from the Masoretic text. Short weekly readings will be posted on Moodle.

This is not an exhaustive bibliography, but good introductory readings. Check the library catalogue for commentaries on specific prophetic books and online databases.

Blenkinsopp, J. *A History of Prophecy in Israel*. (2nd ed.). Louisville: John Knox Press, 1996.

Block, Daniel I. *By the River Chebar: Historical, Literary, and Theological Studies in the Book of Ezekiel*. Cambridge: James Clarke, 2014.

Brueggemann, W. *The Prophetic Imagination*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001.

Brueggemann, W. *The Theology of the Book of Jeremiah*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Childs, B. S. *Isaiah*. Old Testament Library. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001.

Chisholm, R. B. *Handbook on the Prophets*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002.

- Clements, R. E. *Old Testament Prophecy from Oracles to Canon*. Louisville: John Knox Press, 1996.
- Davies, P. R. *The Prophets*. The Biblical Seminar 42. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996.
- de Jonge, H. J., and Tromp Johannes. *The Book of Ezekiel and Its Influence*. London: Routledge, 2016.
- Dempsey, C. J. *The Prophets*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000.
- Goldingay, John. *The Theology of the Book of Isaiah*. Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 2014.
- Lundborn, Jack R. *Jeremiah*. 2 Vols. Anchor Bible. New York: Doubleday, 1999, 2004.
- Lundborn, Jack R. *The Book of Jeremiah Composition, Reception, and Interpretation*. Leiden: Brill, 2018.
- Matthews, V. H. *Social World of the Hebrew Prophets*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 2001.
- McEntire, Mark Harold. *A Chorus of Prophetic Voices: Introducing the Prophetic Literature of Ancient Israel*. First edition. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015.
- Nogalski, James. *Interpreting Prophetic Literature: Historical and Exegetical Tools for Reading the Prophets*. First edition. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015.
- Sweeney, M. A. *The Prophetic Literature*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005.
- Tiemeyer, Lena-Sofia. "Recent Currents in Research on the Prophetic Literature." *The Expository Times* 119.4 (2008): 161–169.
- Westermann, C. *Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech*. London: Lutterworth Press, 1967.

Assessment Profile

Assessment tasks are designed both to help students attain the unit outcomes and to enable teachers to assess student attainment. In this unit, the required assessment tasks will enable students to demonstrate how successfully they can:

1. evaluate and critique a scholarly work on issues and purposes of prophetic literature [outcomes 2, 4]
2. write a formal exegetical essay on prophetic passages using an accepted critical methodology [outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4]
3. produce a thematic analysis of key theological messages in a prophetic book, with application to the contemporary Christian life and society [outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5]

Assessment Schedule

Type of Assessment Task	Value (%)	Date due	Unit Learning Outcome(s) assessed
Critical review (1,800 words)	30%	26 August	Outcome 1, 2
Thematic essay (2,400 words)	40%	30 September	Outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Take home exam (1,800 words)	30%	9 November	Outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4

Assignments should be submitted as one file with a signed coversheet on Moodle.

Detailed information on assessment tasks and assessment standards

1. Critical review (1,800 words – 30%)

Write a critical review on Bullock, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophetic Books* (Moody: 2007), with special attention to his introductory chapter. In your review, address the following questions in particular:

- What are the purposes, scope and important issues in the scholarship of prophetic literature, according to Bullock?
- What method and approach does he adopt in this book?
- What are the benefits and/or inadequacies of his approach in your own view?

Support your argument with specific references to Bullock's text.

2. Thematic essay (2,400 words – 40%)

According to Moses, the Lord is “a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for the thousandth generation, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, yet by no means clearing the guilty” (Exod 34:6). The same message is repeatedly told throughout the Bible (see also Num 14:18; Pss 86:15, 103:8; 145:8; Micah 7:18; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2).

Examine how **one** of the major prophetic books –Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel or Daniel – portrays divine attributes. Focus on **one or two** of the following themes:

- Mercy
- Justice
- Faithfulness
- Judgment
- Another aspect of divine attributes of your choice (communicate with your lecturer before-hand)

In what way is the message conveyed to ancient Israel still relevant to us today?

Support your argument with detailed text analysis and show engagements with at least five scholarly works.

3. Take Home Exam (1,800 words – 30%)

You will asked to present short exegesis to biblical passages, including their historical and literary contexts, theological themes and significance in the faith and life of the Church. Questions will be released closer to date.

General Criteria for Allocation of Grades

The general description of each of the grades in the table below is the overarching statement of the principles that discriminate between each of the grades.

The subsidiary descriptions (*Reading, Knowledge of topic, Articulation of argument, Analytical and evaluative skills, Problem solving, Expression and presentation appropriate to the discipline, Oral presentation skills, Tutorial preparation, Participation and interaction with others*) amplify the general description. The subsidiary descriptions are guides to the general description. Student work at any grade will satisfy some of the subsidiary descriptions without necessarily satisfying all subsidiary descriptions.

	High Distinction (H)	Distinction (D)	Credit (C)	Pass (P)	Fail (N)
Percentage score	85-100%	75-84%	65-74%	50-64%	0-49%
General Description	Outstanding work that comprehensively attains the required outcome(s) showing superior knowledge, understanding, analysis, critical interpretation, presentation, and originality	Excellent work that substantially attains the required outcome(s) showing a high level of knowledge, understanding, analysis, critical interpretation, presentation, and some originality.	Work that soundly attains the required outcome(s) showing a good level of knowledge, understanding, analysis, presentation, and some evidence of critical interpretation.	Work that satisfactorily attains the required outcome(s), with adequate knowledge, understanding, analysis, and presentation.	Work that fails to attain the required outcome(s), lacking in basic knowledge, understanding, analysis, and presentation.

Subsidiary Descriptions					
Reading	Evidence of wide, relevant, and independent reading beyond core texts and materials	Evidence of relevant reading beyond core texts and materials	Evidence of sound understanding of core texts and materials	Evidence of having read core texts and materials	Inadequate evidence of having read any of the core texts and materials
Knowledge of topic	Outstanding factual and conceptual knowledge incorporating highly distinctive insight into deeper and more subtle aspects of the topic	Substantial factual and conceptual knowledge incorporating distinctive insight into deeper and more subtle aspects of the topic	Extensive factual and conceptual knowledge	Satisfactory factual and conceptual knowledge to serve as a basis for further study	Inadequate factual and conceptual knowledge
Articulation of argument	Sustained evidence of imagination, originality, and independent thought	Evidence of imagination, originality, and independent thought	Ability to construct well-reasoned and coherent argument based on discriminating use of evidence	Ability to construct sound argument based on evidence	Inability to construct coherent argument
Analytical and evaluative skills	Evidence of highly developed analytical and evaluative skills	Evidence of well-developed of analytical and evaluative skills	Evidence of developed analytical and evaluative skills	Evidence of analytical and evaluative skills	Insufficient evidence of analytical and evaluative skills
Problem solving	Ability to solve or resolve non-routine or very challenging problems	Ability to solve or resolve routine or challenging problems	Ability to use and apply fundamental concepts and skills to basic problems	Evidence of problem-solving skills	Insufficient evidence of problem-solving skills <i>(Continued on next page)</i>
Expression and presentation appropriate to the discipline	Highly developed skills in expression, presentation, and documentation appropriate to wider audiences	Well developed skills in expression, presentation, and documentation appropriate to the discipline and audience	Good skills in expression, presentation, and documentation.	Adequate skills in expression, presentation, and documentation.	Inadequate skills in expression, presentation, and documentation
Oral presentation skills	Highly developed skills in Delivery; Content; Structure; Use of Visual Aids Response to Questions	Well developed skills in Delivery, Content, Structure, Use of Visual Aids, and Response to Questions	Good skills in Delivery, Content, Structure, Use of Visual Aids, and Response to Questions	Adequate skills in Delivery, Content, Structure, Use of Visual Aids, and Response to Questions	Inadequate skills in Delivery, Content, Structure, Use of Visual Aids, and Response to Questions
Tutorial preparation, participation and interaction with others	Evidence of outstanding preparation, highly developed skills in making focused and constructive contributions to discussion, in listening to and responding to the contributions of fellow members of the group.	Evidence of thorough preparation, well developed skills in making a constructive contribution to discussion, in working well with other members of the group and in valuing their contributions	Evidence of sound preparation, good skills in actively contribution to discussion and in responding positively to the views of others	Evidence of adequate preparation, adequate skills in participating and in listening to others while relying on others to do most of the work.	Insufficient evidence of preparation, participation, and interaction with others

Course Unit Revision

The material for this course unit was last revised on 18 July 2022.

Extension Policy

Students must submit all assignments by the due dates set by the lecturer and published in the course unit profiles.

Late Penalty

Late assignments without an approved extension will attract an automatic penalty deduction of 5% of the marks available for the item of assessment for every day (including weekends and holidays), or part thereof, beyond the date and time of submission (or any extension granted).

Assignments submitted without an approved extension beyond 10 days after the due date will receive a zero mark and NOT be annotated by the lecturer.

Example:

Student submits an assignment worth 50 marks 4 days late.

Total mark available=50

Penalty: 4 days late = 5% of 50×4 = 10 mark penalty

The student's original mark is 40.

Final mark =40-10=30

Grounds for Extension

An extension of an assessment task due date may be granted on the following grounds: (a) medical illness (certified by medical certificate); (b) extreme hardship, and/or (c) compassionate grounds.

In such cases (which are generally understood to be beyond the student's control) an extension of up to 28 days may be granted without penalty but only if requested prior to the assessment due date. The student should send a sufficiently worded email or letter with the title "Application for Extension" including supporting documentation to the lecturer for authorising prior to the due date. The student's full contact details must be included. The Registrar must be provided a copy of this correspondence also, either by email CC or copy of the written letter. The student will then be informed of the result of the request by the lecturer.

In extreme cases, extensions beyond 28 days may be granted. Such extensions must be applied for in writing, including supporting documentation, and addressed to the Faculty of St Andrew's Greek Orthodox Theological College setting out the extreme circumstances. Faculty, or a Subcommittee of Faculty, will consider such an unusual extension and notify the student of the outcome in writing.

If the unit's assessment includes an examination and an extension is granted then arrangements will be made for an alternative examination to be given to the student within the extension period.

At the end of a semester, no grade other than a 'Fail' will be ascribed by Faculty to any unit where none of the assessment tasks have been completed.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the representation of another's works or ideas as one's own; it includes the unacknowledged word for word use or paraphrasing of another person's work, and the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person's ideas. For more information on plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct refer to section 6.1 in the Handbook.

Library

For any student/researcher, the library is an essential part of study and research. Identifying and locating relevant information is a crucial skill. There is a basic bibliography provided herein and you are expected to go to the library and find and read additional material. Browsing the shelves is strongly recommended, downloading undigested information from the internet only results in plagiarism.

Students from St Andrew's Greek Orthodox Theological College may access the catalogue when visiting the library or online at <http://www.sagotc.edu.au/library>.

Also you may access resources from the libraries of other theological institutions in Sydney and interstate. However, borrowing privileges may vary. Please ask the College Librarian for advice.

Demand Hours, Grading System and Attendance

The student workload is 144 hours per 9 credit point unit, typically comprised of 12 teaching weeks with 3 hours contact per week in class (except for distance education units) and 9 hours per week of private study (including assessment preparation).

As a general suggestion, regular 2-3 hour study periods are better than isolated bursts of 5-6 hours. Students are therefore encouraged to:

- a. set aside an appropriate number of private study periods in the week of 2-3 hours duration
- b. select study times when you are not likely to be tired or interrupted
- c. space your study out over the week
- d. aim for 8-9 hours of private study per week per unit (if also attending classes) or 10-12 hours of study per week per unit (if studying via distance education)
- e. plan some rest from study during the mid-semester recess
- f. maintain church, social, and recreational activities at a reasonable level since you are more likely to study effectively if you maintain other interests and commitments, even if you may have to reduce them.

Some online units may have a compulsory residential component that includes classroom contact. Please consult your Course Unit Booklet handout.

Typically, undergraduate students should expect to devote 4 hours per week to actual assessment preparation (approx. 13 hours preparation per 1,000 words of written assessment or almost 20 hours preparation for a 1.5 hour examination).

Typically, postgraduate students should expect to devote 5 hours per week to actual assessment preparation (approx. 16 hours preparation per 1,000 words of written assessment or 25 hours preparation for a 1.5 hour examination).

All students should allocate sufficient time to visit the College's Library or another library with useful resources. Please contact the College Librarian for assistance with inter-library loans and research needs.

Please see Section 6 of the College's Handbook, available online at www.sagotc.edu.au for information about the grading system.

To complete a course unit a student must have been present for at least 80% of all prescribed face-to-face contact hours, field work, residential school programs and other activities. In the case that a student cannot attend a lecture, he or she must inform the lecturer.