

**Hebrew Scriptures: STMM 526** 

Instructor: Kathryn Rickert, Ph.D. Thursdays 9 –11:50 am Hunthausen 110 Fall, 2012, Section 2, <u>Kathryn.rickert@gmail.com</u> <u>rickertk@seattleu.edu</u> Office Hour – 1-2 pm, Thursdays (STM Offices, upstairs, room TBA)

# **Course Description**

By reading and responding to representative texts of the Hebrew Bible, students will become informed, attentive listeners to the multiple voices and traditions found in Torah, Prophets and Writings. Through a dialogical engagement of listening and talking back to biblical texts -- seeking to sort out the worlds behind and within from those in front of the biblical texts -- students will gain experience in practices of deep reading that honor both head *and* heart and lead to embodied applications for Christian (or other) faith and practice.

# **Course Objectives**

- 1.) To engage in an aware & dynamic reader-to-text dialogical exchange with the three sections of the Hebrew Bible; Torah, Prophets and Writings
- 2.) To acquire enhanced biblical reading skills through close, aware, daring reading which balances head & heart; to read so as to be able to live out of the text
- 3.) To keep in mind four-wayness: to read from one's own identified orientation, yet also to acknowledge other directions, orientations, interpretations, and applications of the biblical texts
- 5.) To begin a "profound theological reading" of the Hebrew Scriptures necessary for reading Christian Scriptures, (beyond predicting the coming of Jesus Christ)
- 6.) To gain biblical research skills which allow the learner to efficiently identify, locate and use scholarly resources to address the reader's questions and practical needs for using the texts in ministry

Criteria: Basis for evaluation in this course:

Class attendance & participation Weekly Work (500 Words+) Final Project

1. <u>Class attendance and participation</u>: Since we learn both with and from each other, you must be here to participate in that exchange and to make *your* contribution to the learning. Come to each class prepared to make a contribution of your most pressing/ challenging/ interesting/ perplexing observations, questions and comments on the week's reading and your assessment of the most "helpful" approaches to those observations and questions. Be specific! Cite the text.

Note: If for any reason, you miss a class, you must propose, conduct and document a three-hour interactive learning event for yourself and at least one other human person. The proposal for this event should be submitted to the instructor via email before the class following the one missed. This one page proposal will describe the planned event, and lead to (at the most) three pages of written reflection documenting what you learned from the event. (If you need ideas for the vent, talk to me.) The documentation of the event may be submitted with your final project.

PLEASE BRING A COPY OF THIS SYLLABUS TO EVERY CLASS

Hebrew Scriptures: STMM 526 (Section 2) Syllabus: pg 2

2. Course Sessions: Themes and Topics (may be adjusted as needed & substitutions considered)

Session 1: 9/20 Introduction: Methods, Reading From Here & There, Where is "Here "?

& Initial Preparation for the Final Project

Session 2: 9/27 Genesis: Beginnings, Myth & Narrative Genesis 1-2 & Gen 12

Session 3: 10/4 Exodus: Journey & Law Exodus 1-3 & 19-24

Session 4: 10/11 Leviticus & Numbers: Torah & Grace Numbers 10:11-12:16 & Leviticus 11

Session 5: 10/18 Deuteronomy: Theological Reflection, Preaching & Liturgy Deuteronomy 4-6

Session 6: 10/25 Prophets: Covenant, Call & Identity I Samuel 1-4:1 & Jeremiah 22:24-23:8

Session 7: 11/1 The Book of the Twelve: Oracle & Riv Micah, Zephaniah OR Malachi

**Session 8: 11/8** The Writings: Poetry, Prayer & Wisdom

A Psalm New to you, Psalm 77 & Book of Lamentations

Session 9: 11/15 Apocalyptic: Endings & Hope Isaiah 65-66 & Daniel 7

Session 10: 11/29 Final Projects, Presentations & Reflective Evaluations

## 3. Weekly Work:

Each week (2-9) we will be reading appointed pericopes in the Hebrew Bible. (They are listed above.) It is imperative that you first read the text aloud as it is on the page without consulting the footnotes or commentaries (at first) and allow your heart and head to "read, feel, question, and react" to the text. This method of reading is designed to bring out your questions, before you consult scholarly resources for their contributions to your exploration of the text, including your questions. (The detailed reading method is explained below and is based upon Tiffany and Ringe's Biblical Interpretation.)

The 500 Words + is a written reflection in demonstration of your deep reading of biblical texts. The depth is to include both that of the head and the heart. Each week (2-9), once you have done the reading, exploration, research, and reflection upon the texts, you are to submit 500 Words + as a Word Document (using .doc) attached to an email (Kathryn.rickert@gmail.com) by 8 PM of the evening before class. That way I will be able to adjust our use of the class time to most fully respond to the current state of learning, pondering, etc. I will respond only to those emails which arrive on time.

#### Preparation for Writing the 500 Words +

The **500 Words+** is to be a condensed slice of your reading, research, and reflection each week. You will read, think and write much more than can be included in the **500 Words+**. So, please write as much as you wish; the more the better!! But sift through what you write, and send me the best 500 words.

Syllabus: pg

Since this course employs an adult learning model, you are in charge of determining the exact reading that you do. And you will determine what to read based upon two things:

- 1. Your location/ who you are as a reader and identified goals for ministry
- 2. The questions that you generate from <u>repeated reading</u> aloud of the pericope of the week in both the Jewish and Christian study bibles.

The steps to be followed for this process are spelled out in *Biblical Interpretation* by Tiffany & Ringe, pp 25-125.

Once you have your own set of responses to and questions about the text, then and only then, you may turn to some combination of the following in order to *consult* with these scholars to see what they have to say:

- > the pertinent introductions, footnotes, and articles in the study bibles (Always read <u>both</u> the Jewish and the Christian resources in order to compare them.)
- > recommended texts at the end of the syllabus
- > on-line resources as suggested at the end of the syllabus
- > articles and books in the Seattle University (Lemieux) Library, including those on 3 hour reserve

Simply because a scholar writes something does not mean that *your* questions have been answered. Once you find a scholar's input, keep going and determine *how* the scholar's contribution is useful for addressing *your* questions. (Your questions may not be the same ones that scholar is using for her work.) The point of this work is to arrive at your own answers <u>based upon your reading of the text</u> and with the insights from other scholars as they are useful to *your* questions.

In addition to seeking out resources to help with your exploration of the pericope of the week, <u>each</u> <u>week</u> you will also locate at least one resource that will be used in your final project. DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE END OF THE QUARTER. These sources do not include anything listed in the required reading in the syllabus; these are to be <u>additional</u> articles, chapters, etc.

The **500 Words** + are a reflection and summation of your work; not every detail of your work. (That will take many more words. I will only be able to read **500** of them.)

The important points for the 500 Words:

- 1.) Where are you located (i.e. who are you) as a reader of this text?
- 2.) What kind of text is this? Who is it for? What does it do for the first readers? How does it do that?
- 3.) What are your questions of and responses to this text? (What kinds of questions are these?)
- 4.) Which resources from biblical scholars are helpful to you for your questions? How so?
- 5.) So, what difference does this reading and reflection make to your learning, work, life & faith?

Most of the 500 Words should address #2 - #3. And #4 needs to be a "thick", distilled reflection on what you have found and experienced in the week's work.

After the **500 Words**, please add in the (+) in the briefest form possible: (words not sentences)

- 1.) How many hours you have spent on the work (8-10 hours is about right)
- 2.) List the one resource that you have chosen for this week <u>in support of your final</u> <u>project</u>. (See below.)
- 3.) The verse of Hebrew Scripture that you wish to embody, e.g. to memorize for this week

## 3. Final Project:

This project will collect and demonstrate what you have learned about Hebrew Scripture in relation to some specific aspect of your location as a reader of biblical texts. In the first session we will begin planning for your final projects. You may revise your initial proposal, but you need to begin your planning now so that you will have the opportunity to use the weekly work in support of your longer term goals.

<u>Format(s)</u>: Written work is to observe the STM Guidelines as found in the Handbook. Papers are not to exceed **seven double-spaced pages**, plus back mater, (i.e. endnotes and bibliography). Each project should also include an additional one paragraph abstract describing the work. Each person must arrive at the final session ready to offer a <u>2-3-minute</u> verbal summation of the learning. Visuals (or audios if very brief, I min.) in the form of images, photos, artwork, etc. are most welcome accompaniments to final projects!

<u>Topics:</u> Identify a proposed future ministry in which your reading of Hebrew Biblical texts will play a role. Describe that role. Briefly, list five specific features of that ministry and then select one Hebrew Bible text, six to sixteen verses in length that you deem pertinent to that ministry. (*This text must not be one that is already listed in the course readings.*)

<u>Methods</u>: Using "The Modern Study of the Bible", pp 2084-2096 of the *Jewish Study Bible* select one additional method (in addition to the literary method we have been using in class) that interests you as potentially valuable for your exploration of your chosen pericope. Include a one paragraph example of what could be learned about your pericope using this other method. E.g. a canonical comparison between your text and some other part of the Hebrew Bible, or an ideological reading, (e.g. feminist, liberation theology) that differs radically from your own reading.

<u>Each week for six weeks</u>, weeks #2-#7 explore the resources listed for articles and chapters of interest to you as they pertain to <u>your questions</u> about the selected text.

As we move through the quarter we will seek out appropriate resources in support of your project. These resources -- what they are, where they are and how you come to use them -- are a major aspect of the learning we do in this course.

Hebrew Scriptures: STMM 526 (Section 2) Syllabus: pg 5

Texts: The Hebrew Scriptures (both a Jewish and a Christian Study Bible are required)

# Required:

**TWO** Study Bibles: One Jewish and One Christian:

- 1) HarperCollins Study Bible: ISBN-10: 0060786841 | ISBN-13: 978-0060786847 (paper) | Edition: August 22, 2006 | 006078685X: 978-0060786854 ISBN: 9780061228407; ISBN10: 0061228400;
- 2) The Jewish Study Bible Adele Berlin; Marc Zvi Brettler; Michael A Fishbane. New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004. ISBN 0195297512 (hardcover) 0195297547Pocket/paper) 0195297512

**One Textbook**: *Biblical interpretation : a roadmap / Frederick C. Tiffany and Sharon H. Ringe.* Nashville : Abingdon Press, c1996 ISBN 0687016088

#### STRONGLY RECOMMENDED:

John W. Rogerson A Theology of the Old Testament: Cultural Memory, Communication, and Being Human. Fortress Press (2010) ISBN: 9780800697150

## Recommended:

- Musa W. Dube, editor. Other ways of Reading: African women and the Bible. Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature; Geneva: WCC Publications, c2001. BS521.4.084 2001
- James A. Sanders. Torah and Canon. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972, reprinted.

#### On Three-Hour Reserve at the Seattle University Library:

- A.K.M. Adam, editor. Postmodern Interpretations of the Bible—A Reader. St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2001.
- Ellen F. Davis, and Richard B. Hays. *The Art of Reading Scripture*. Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmanns, 2003.
- Musa W. Dube, editor. Other ways of Reading: African women and the Bible. Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature; Geneva: WCC Publications, c2001. BS521.4.084 2001
- Steven L. McKenzie & Stephen R. Haynes, editors. *To Each Its Own Meaning: Biblical Criticisms and their Applications.* (Revised editions).Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1999.
- Fernando F. Segovia and Mary Ann Tolbert, editors. Reading from this Place: Social Location and Biblical Interpretation in the United States, Vol. I. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995.
- -----. Social Location and Biblical Perspective in Global Perspective, Vol. 2.Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995.
- R.S. Sugirtharajah, editor. Voices from the Margin: Interpreting the Bible in the Third World Vol. 1 & 2. London: SPCK, 1991.
- Gail A. Yee, editor. *Judges & Methods: New Approaches in Biblical Studies.* Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995, 2007.

Hebrew Scriptures: STMM 526 (Section 2) Syllabus: pg 6

## On-Line Resources:

1. Lemieux Library Web Page → Data Bases → Theology & Religious Studies Databases Start here: See also:

- Academic Search Premier 1
- ATLA Religion
- Religious Periodicals
- <u>Catholic Periodical and Literature Index</u>
- New Testament Abstracts
- Old Testament Abstracts
- Routledge Religion Resource Online

- <u>Theology & Religious Studies Subject</u> Resource Guide
- <u>Theology/Religion and Ecology</u>
   <u>Subject Resource Guide</u>

## Other useful databases:

- Humanities Abstracts
- JSTOR ①
- POIESIS 🕕
- Project Muse Journals

## 2. Google Scholar

http://scholar.google.com/scholar?q=Hebrew+Scriptures&btnG=&hl=en&as\_sdt=0%2C48
http://scholar.google.com/scholar?q=Old+Testament&btnG=&hl=en&as\_sdt=0%2C48

3. An on-line resource for determining your denomination's use of various biblical texts:

http://divinity.library.vanderbilt.edu/lectionary/ Follow the useful links at the bottom of first page to find out which texts are used when in the Revised Common Lectionary

If your denomination is not addressed by this web page, please consult with your denominational mentor as to how Hebrew Biblical texts are chosen and used in your tradition. Be prepared to share this with the class by the third week of the course. If you do not have a denominational mentor yet, find one! (If your tradition is not yet clear to you, then select one *provisionally* for the purposes of this course.)