

OT 5030 – Exegesis of Job
Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

Summer Quarter 2018

Prof. Cherney

Course objectives

By the end of this course you will have:

- 1) **Articulated** your own thoughtful and defensible position on the book's meaning, including its role in your own life of faith and in pastoral practice.
- 2) **Identified** unique features of the book's Hebrew and **surveyed** some attempts to account for them.
- 3) **Compared** the book with other Ancient Near Eastern texts of similar genre.
- 4) **Positioned** your own view of the book's meaning within the history of the book's interpretation, and in the light of some issues surrounding it in current scholarship.

Tools:

- 1) The standard tools for OT exegesis. See the OT department's recommended list ("Tools for the Study of the Old Testament" posted separately). **Please note:**
 - Your Hebrew text must have the Masoretic accents, K-Q, and the critical apparatus. You do not have this in Logos unless you purchased the SESB add-on.
 - You will need an Old Greek (LXX) text. Brenton is OK; Rahlfs adequate; Goettingen is for hard-core Old Greek scholarship.

- 2) *The SBL Handbook of Style*, 2nd edition. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014. Use this for your papers (see below). The library has copies on the reference shelf.

3) Commentary recommendations:

Clines, David J. *Job*. Word Biblical Commentary vols. 17, 18a, & 18b. Word and Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1989, 2006, & 2011. **Currently the best commentary on Job (philologically; theologically—not so much) and a basic resource for this course.**

Dhorme, Édouard. Harold Knight, transl. *A Commentary on the Book of Job*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1984. Originally published in 1926. Dated, but very thorough and still useful.

Gordis, R. *The Book of Job*. NY: Moreshet, 1978.

Habel, Norman. *The Book of Job*. Old Testament Library. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1985. Author is former LCMS. Very useful form-critical approach.

Pope, Marvin H. *Job*. The Anchor Bible vol. 18. Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., 1965, 1973.

Seow, C. L. *Job 1-21: Interpretation and Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans,

2013.

Tur-Sinai, N. H. H. Torcynier, transl. *The Book of Job: A New Commentary*. Jerusalem: Kiryat-Sefer, 1981.

Copies will be placed on the reserve or reference shelves. Purchase of Clines (and maybe Glatzer, see below) is recommended. As part of your preparation for class, consult Clines regularly and the others as you have opportunity. Try to get a bit of a feel for each commentary over the course of the three weeks. Read critically.

- 5) Other secondary literature (Provided on the course website, with the exception of Glatzer's and Newsom's books):

"The Babylonian Theodicy." In *Before the Muses: An Anthology of Akkadian Literature*, vol. II, edited by Benjamin R. Foster, 790-798. Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, 1996.

Cherney, K. A., Jr. "Exegetical Brief: Did Job Repent?" *WLQ* 109(2): 132-137.

Glatzer, Nahum. *The Dimensions of Job*. NY: Schocken, 1969. Republished by Wipf & Stock in 2002. An anthology of readings of Job by various thinkers. Pp 1-48 are required reading.

Nederhof, Mark-Jan, transliterator and translator. "Dispute of a Man with his Ba."
<http://www.cs.st-andrews.ac.uk/~mjn/egyptian/texts/corpus/pdf/Dispute.pdf>

Newsom, Carol. *The Book of Job: A Contest of Moral Imaginations*. Oxford, 2009.

_____. "The Book of Job as Polyphonic Text." *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 97, (2002): 87-108. Read either her book, or her article, or both.

Patrick, D. "The Translation of Job XLII 6." *Vetus Testamentum* 26, (1976): 369-371.

Pieper, August. "The Book of Job in its Significance for Preaching and the Cure of Souls."
<http://www.wlsessays.net/files/PieperJob.pdf>

Seow, C. L. "Orthography, Textual Criticism, and the Poetry of Job." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 130, (2011): 63-85.

Your responsibilities:

- 1) Careful **daily exegesis** of the Hebrew text. Pay special attention to:
 - a) Vocabulary, forms, verb analysis, etc.
 - b) Text-critical issues. Note that the BHS notes occasionally go beyond TC and offer you help with interpretation. Decide for yourself whether you want it.
 - c) Syntax. Use the disjunctive accents to break the verse into units of thought. Were the Masoretes right?
 - d) Structure. Where do units begin and end, and how do you know? What is the pattern

- and where are there deviations? How is the whole put together? What is the structure saying?
- e) Genre. What kind of literature is this? How does it compare to other examples?
 - f) Poetics. What figures of speech do the speakers use and how do they function? Where do you see literary beauty in the book? Note also its rhetorical features—*i.e.*, of what the characters are trying to persuade one another, how they proceed, whether or not they are successful, and how you know.
 - g) Intra- and inter-texts. Watch especially for when the debaters re-use each other's words, how, and to accomplish what.
 - h) Message. Of the many voices in the book, which voice is the author's? ***What does this book mean?***

To be read in Hebrew—at least:

Chapters 1-7, 19, 28, 29, 31, 32, 38, 39, 41, 42. We may add more once we get a feel for our pace.

- 2) **Read in English** (or your other language of choice) **everything that we don't read in Hebrew.** Be prepared to discuss it.
- 3) **Read and react to** Glatzer pp 1-48 and assigned articles. Come to class prepared to discuss them intelligently.
- 4) Two **papers**, submitted either as hard copy or electronically.
 - a) Title: "Three Commentators On (*a section from Job*)."
Chose a section of at least 5 verses (prose) or 5 bi- or tri-cola (poetry). One pair of parallel statements is a "bi-colon," e.g., "The LORD is my shepherd/ /I shall not be in want." Be aware that it is much easier to write a good paper on a hard section than an easy one. Identify significant exegetical issues in your section. Compare the treatments of these issues in 3 commentaries, at least 2 of which should come from the list above. 7500 words maximum including everything. 12 pt type (16 pt for any Hebrew), line spacing "Exactly" at "16 pt" (solves spacing problems with Hebrew), 1" margins, no title page necessary. Your implied reader is committed to the authority of Scripture and knows the biblical languages but has not necessarily taken this course. Use *The SBL Handbook of Style* 2nd edition. Consult the Chicago Manual of Style (16th edition) for anything SBL doesn't cover. Any Hebrew must be either in SBL Hebrew/Times New Roman font, or transliterated. If you choose to transliterate, use SBL "Academic Style" (SBL Handbook., p 56f). For Greek, use Times New Roman with the language changed to "Greek" on your computer. **Due date: July 2, 2018.**
 - b) Title: "The Meaning of the Book of Job." See Course Objective #1 above. You may certainly use secondary literature—when you do, please attribute—but this is not primarily a research paper in which you engage in dialogue with other scholarship. Mostly I want to know what YOU think. 10,000 words maximum. **Due date: July 13, 2018** (last day).

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