

Birmingham Theological Seminary  
2200 Briarwood Way  
Birmingham, Alabama 35243  
Huntsville Extension Course

**Fall Semester 2019**  
**Classroom: A201 / VC**  
**Saturdays, 9am – 3pm**

**OT1023 Old Testament III (Wisdom Books & Psalms)**  
**Instructors: Dr. Thad James & Prof. Kuna Griggs**  
**Dates: Sep 28<sup>th</sup>, Oct 19<sup>th</sup>, Nov 9<sup>th</sup>, and Dec 7<sup>th</sup>**

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

An overview of the historical, literary, thematic, and theological dimensions of the Wisdom Books (Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon) and the Psalms intended to enhance appreciation of Hebrew poetry, delineate how these books contribute to the overall purpose and message of the Old Testament, and guide interpretation and application for Christian faith and practice.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- Discuss the historical settings of the Wisdom Books and the Psalms and issues in determining their historical settings.
- Compare the function of wisdom literature and liturgical poetry in the ancient Near East to the function of the Wisdom Books and Psalms in Israel.
- Identify literary features of the Wisdom Books and the Psalms and discuss their interpretive value.
- Recognize major themes and theological emphases of the Wisdom Books and the Psalms.
- Relate the content of the Wisdom Books and the Psalms to other Old Testament books and persons, especially the Pentateuch, David, and the Messiah.
- Assess the contribution of the Wisdom Books and the Psalms to the overall purpose and message of the Old Testament and their value to Christian faith and practice.

### **COURSE TEXTS**

Required Texts: *Holy Bible*. Course discussions will highlight details of the biblical text. Therefore students will need a word-for-word/thought-for-thought translation such as: the English Standard Version (ESV), Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB), King James Version (KJV), New American Bible (NAB), New American Standard Bible (NASB), New English Translation (NET), New International Version (NIV), New Jerusalem Bible (NJB), New King James Version (NKJV), New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), or Revised Standard Version (RSV).

Schultz, Samuel J. *The Old Testament Speaks: A Complete Survey of Old Testament History and Literature*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: HarperCollins, 2000.

Recommended Texts: Andersen, Francis I. *Job* (TOTC, 14). Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity, 1976.

Estes, Daniel J. *Handbook on the Wisdom Books and Psalms*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010.

Garrett, Duane A. *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*. Nashville: Holman Reference, 1993.

Kidner, Derek. *Psalms 1 – 72 (Kidner Classic Commentaries)*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2014.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Psalms 73 – 150 (Kidner Classic Commentaries)*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2014.

## COURSE METHOD OF INSTRUCTION

Although this is a Huntsville Extension course, participants who are able will meet in Room A201 at the BTS Main Campus (2200 Briarwood Way) on the four class dates. Long distance participants will join the class through Video Conference. A link for joining via Video Conference will be emailed before each scheduled class date. All enrolled should send a “verification” email to ensure Instructors have the email address that will be used for submitting assignments, communicating changes or issues, and distributing course materials.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Four (4) Journal Article Critiques: Each Article Critique is to be a **critique**, not a mere summary of the content. Critiques should respond to the following critical assessments:
  - a) Write a brief **summary** of the **thesis** and any **major secondary points** of the article. The summary should show your comprehension of the author’s argument.
  - b) **Analyze** the claims or arguments of the author. Your analysis should focus primarily on how faithfully **you think** the author has interpreted and applied Scripture.
  - c) **Evaluate** whether the Article takes into account all of Scripture (is Scripture taken into account as a whole or are there instances of isolated proof-texting?). Cite page numbers in parenthesis to support your evaluation.
  - d) **Explain** why you agree or disagree with the conclusions of the author, using Scripture to support your conclusions. Also discuss the Article’s strengths and weaknesses.
  - e) **Conclude** with a paragraph stating what you have gained from the Article for life and ministry.
  - f) Article Critique **Due Dates** are “Cosmic Bully or God of Grace” **September 28<sup>th</sup>**, “Reading the Song of Songs through Proverbs 1-9” **October 19<sup>th</sup>**, “God and Man in Ecclesiastes” **October 19<sup>th</sup>**, and “Creation Theology in Psalm 148” **November 9<sup>th</sup>**. Instructors will email Articles as PDF files. Journal Article Critiques **must be 4-6 pages** in length.
  - g) **Certificate students** are responsible for only two of the four Journal Article Critiques.
- Class Paper: Students will select a paper topic from the list provided. Masters student papers must be 8-10 pages. Certificate student papers must be 5-10 pages. Page length **does not** include the Cover Page or the Bibliography and **must not** be longer or shorter than the allotted page range. A Paper Grading Rubric is attached. BTS has adopted Turabian as the standard for form and style in writing; a Quick Guide of Turabian is attached. If further details of Turabian form and style are needed, the student should refer to:
 

Turabian, Kate L., et al. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, 9th ed.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018.

Paper **Due Date** is **December 7<sup>th</sup>**.
- Reading Completion & Video View Record (attached): a Record will be used to verify and give credit for reading assignment completion and Thirdmill video viewing. The Reading Completion & Video View Record is **Due December 7<sup>th</sup>**.
- All assignments must be submitted as a Word document to tjames@briarwood.org and kunagriggs@yahoo.com no later than 11:59pm on the due date.

**GRADING WEIGHT**

Article Critiques: 60% of final grade

Reading &amp; Video Record: 10% of final grade

Class Paper: 30% of final grade

**COURSE SCHEDULE & ASSIGNMENTS**

Below is the course schedule. Discussion topics are in regular font. Due course requirements are in **bold**, and reading to be completed and videos to be viewed by the next class date are in *italics*.

- September 3 –  
September 27**      Reading:  
                           Old Testament Speaks: *Job—The Problem of Suffering (279- 286)*  
                           Journal Article: “*Proverbs and Wisdom Books of the Ancient Near East*”  
                           Journal Article: *Cosmic Bully or God of Grace*
- Thirdmill Video:  
                           Lesson 2: *Two Paths of Wisdom*  
                           web address – <https://thirdmill.org/seminary/course.asp/vs/JAM>
- September 28**      Syllabus Review and Discussion: Intro to ancient Near Eastern Wisdom Literature & Job  
**Due** – “Cosmic Bully or God of Grace” Critique
- September 29 –  
October 18**      Reading:  
                           Old Testament Speaks: *Proverbs—An Anthology of Israel (289-292)*  
                           Journal Article: *God and Man in Ecclesiastes*  
                           Journal Article: *Reading the Song of Songs through Proverbs 1-9*
- Thirdmill Video:  
                           Forum 2: *Two Paths of Wisdom*  
                           web address – <https://thirdmill.org/seminary/course.asp/vs/JAM>
- October 19**      Discussion: Proverbs  
**Due** – “God and Man in Ecclesiastes” Critique  
**Due** – “Reading the Song of Songs through Proverbs 1-9” Critique
- October 20 –  
November 8**      Reading:  
                           Old Testament Speaks: *Ecclesiastes— Investigation of Life (292- 295)*  
                           Old Testament Speaks: *Song of Solomon (296-297)*  
                           Journal Article: *Creation Theology in Psalm 148*
- November 9**      Discussion: Ecclesiastes & Song of Solomon  
**Due** – “Creation Theology in Psalm 148”
- November 10 –  
December 6**      Reading:  
                           Old Testament Speaks: *Psalms— Hymnology of Israel (286- 289)*  
                           Journal Article: *Preface to the Psalter: Two Ways*  
                           Journal Article: *Psalms: A Cantata About the Davidic Covenant*

**December 7** Discussion: Psalms  
**Due** – Class Paper  
**Due** – Reading Completion & Video View Record

## PAPER TOPIC LIST

### General

*A Comparison of Ancient Near Eastern Wisdom Literature to Hebrew Wisdom Literature*  
*Apocalypse and Hebrew Wisdom Literature*  
*Distinguishing Characteristics of the Poetical Books from the Rest of the Old Testament*  
*Hebrew Poetic Structure and Its Relationship to Biblical Interpretation*  
*The Concept of the Divine Council in Job, Psalms, and the Ancient Near East*

### Psalms

*An Exposition of Psalm 110*  
*God as Creator and Sustainer in the Psalms*  
*Prayers of Imprecation in the Psalms*  
*The Kingship of God in the Psalms*  
*The Messianic Psalms*

### Job

*Job 38-41: God's Response to Job*  
*Job 42:7: What Was Not Right about the Speech of Job's Friends*  
*The Literary Structure of Job in Relation to Its Message and Meaning*  
*The Place of Elihu and His Speeches in the Book of Job*  
*The Satan in the Book of Job*

### Proverbs

*The Personification of Wisdom in Proverbs*  
*The Simple, the Wise, and the Fool in Proverbs*  
*The Tongue in the Book of Proverbs*  
*Truths Concerning רע (neighbors, friends) in the Book of Proverbs*  
*Wisdom and the Fear of the Lord in Proverbs*

### Ecclesiastes

*Irony in Ecclesiastes*  
*The Concept of הבל (vapour/meaningless/vanity) in Ecclesiastes*  
*The Literary Structure of Ecclesiastes in Relation to Its Message and Meaning*  
*The Meaning of Life in Ecclesiastes*  
*The Relationship between Now and Forever in the Book of Ecclesiastes*

### Song of Solomon

*Characteristics of Wise Courtship in the Song of Songs*  
*Song of Songs: A Celebration of Human Love or Divine Love?*  
*The Literary Structure of the Song of Solomon in Relation to Its Message and Meaning*  
*The Rhetorical Effect of Symbolic Imagery in the Song of Songs*  
*Wordplay in the Song of Solomon*

## Turabian: A Quick Guide

### Title Page

- The title page should include the paper title, your name, and your class information
- All the text on the title page should be standard 12pt. font, centered and double-spaced
- The paper's title should be about one-third of the way down the page
- Your name and class information should be about two-thirds of the way down the page

### Margins

- The left margin of each page is 1.5 inches; all other margins are 1 inch.

### Font and Typeface

- Use only a 12-point Times New Roman font for main text and 10-point Times New Roman font for footnotes. For biblical languages, use 12-point (or a similar size) font.
- Italicize book, magazine, and journal titles (do not underline).

### Page Numbers

- Page numbers should begin on the first page of the paper's text, not on the title page.
- Place page numbers flush with the top right-hand margin.

### Spacing/Indentation

- The entire paper should be double-spaced, apart from the following exceptions: block quotes, footnotes, bibliography, and table titles (all of which are single spaced).
- A terminal punctuation should be followed by single space.
- Indent the first line of paragraphs and entire block quotations 0.5 inch from the left margin.

### Quotations

- Block quotations are used only with a prose quotation of five or more lines.
- Single space a block quotation, and leave a blank line before and after it.

### Citations/References

- Use superscript numbers both in the text and footnote numbers preceding the notes.
- Cited Bible passages should be in parentheses within the main text rather than in a footnote.
- Spell out book names of the Bible in the main text but use abbreviations in parenthetical or reference material. Example:
  - Genesis 1:1 states, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."
  - The Bible states, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen. 1:1).
- Use the "traditional" style for abbreviations of books of the Bible; do not italicize.
- Cite unpublished interviews in the footnotes.

### Voice and Style

- Papers generally should be written in the 3rd person (he, she, it) with an active voice. 1st person pronouns (I, we, us) can be used where appropriate, but the 2nd person pronoun (you) should be avoided.
- Capitalize pronouns when referring to any Person of the Godhead to minimize ambiguity.

## PAPER GRADING RUBRIC

A	B-	C-	D-
<p>Thesis sentence/statement is clear/comprehensive.</p> <p>Punctuation, spelling, and grammar are accurate and correct. Writing is even, creative and guides the reader effectively through the paper.</p> <p>Paragraphs are well organized and coherent; paper flows smoothly.</p> <p>Person and format are appropriate for the assignment.</p> <p>Quotes, Scriptures, paraphrases and summaries are used &amp; cited appropriately and with excellence.</p> <p>Research reveals sources (primary and secondary) which clearly support main arguments (Scholarly, Academic and Theological).</p> <p>Turabian's <i>Manual for Writers</i> is understood and adhered to.</p>	<p>Thesis sentence/statement lacks specificity and clarity. Opportunity for significant improvement exists.</p> <p>Minor misspellings and grammar/punctuation mistakes exist that disrupt flow but do not hinder understanding.</p> <p>Paragraph structure is acceptable but not as organized and coherent.</p> <p>Person and format do not work in this particular assignment.</p> <p>Sources adequately support main points, but using greater variety and depth of primary and secondary sources and more critical thinking would have made a more compelling argument.</p> <p>Some minor errors occur but paper generally conforms to Turabian's <i>Manual for Writers</i>.</p>	<p>Thesis sentence/statement is unclear and vague.</p> <p>Numerous misspellings, punctuation and grammar mistakes, difficult to follow reasoning, and flow of reading is disrupted.</p> <p>Paragraph structure is often confusing and inconsistent.</p> <p>Person and format are inappropriate for this assignment.</p> <p>Sources are inadequate and shallow; do not reflect an understanding of the project. Serious research, study and preparation are not evidenced. Ideas presented do not reflect mastery or insight but more manipulation of terms and concepts.</p> <p>Paper does not reflect an adequate understanding or usage of Turabian's <i>Manual for Writers</i>.</p>	<p>Thesis sentence/statement is non-existent.</p> <p>Spelling, punctuation and grammar make it nearly impossible to follow the line of reasoning from sentence to sentence.</p> <p>Paragraphs lack focus, clarity, and are incoherent and without structure or form.</p> <p>Person and format are confusing and totally inappropriate for this assignment.</p> <p>Insufficient numbers of quotes or quotes are overly used; paraphrases, quotes, summaries, Scripture and sources are improperly used and cited in error.</p> <p>Paper does not conform to Turabian's <i>Manual for Writers</i>.</p>

## REFERENCE LIST

- Andersen, Francis I. *Job* (TOTC, vol. 14). Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity, 1976.
- Carr, G. Lloyd. *Song of Solomon* (TOTC, vol. 19). Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity, 1984.
- Cotterell, Peter and Max Turner. *Linguistics and Biblical Interpretation*. Downers Grove: IVP, 1989.
- Dorsey, David A. *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament: a Commentary on Genesis – Malachi*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991.
- Eaton, Michael A. *Ecclesiastes* (TOTC, vol. 18). Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity, 1983.
- Estes, Daniel J. “Creation Theology in Psalm 148.” *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 171 no 681 Jan - Mar 2014, p 30-41.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Handbook on the Wisdom Books and the Psalms*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010.
- Garrett, Duane A. *NAC Commentary Series, vol. 14: Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*. Nashville: Holman Reference, 1993.
- Good, Edwin M. *Irony in the Old Testament (Bible & Literature Series)*. Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic, 1981.
- Imray, Kathryn. “Love is (strong as) Death: Reading the Song of Songs through Proverbs 1-9.” *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, 75 no 4 Oct 2013, p 649-665.
- Jackson, David R. “Cosmic Bully or God of Grace?: The Book of Job as Māšāl.” *The Westminster Theological Journal*, 78 no 1 Spr 2016, p 65-73.
- Kidner, Derek. *Proverbs* (TOTC, vol. 17). Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity, 1964.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Psalms 1–72* (TOTC, vol. 15). Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity, 1973.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Psalms 73–150* (TOTC, vol. 16). Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity, 1975.
- Kitchen, K. A. “Proverbs and Wisdom Books of the Ancient Near East: The Factual History of a Literary Form.” *Tyndale Bulletin*, 28 (1977) 69-114.
- Schultz, Samuel J. *The Old Testament Speaks: A Complete Survey of Old Testament History and Literature*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: HarperCollins, 2000.
- Waltke, Bruce K., J. M. Houston, and E. Moore. *The Psalms as Christian Worship: A Historical Commentary*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2010.
- Wiersbe, Warren W. *The Bible Exposition Commentary Series: Old Testament Wisdom and Poetry*. Colorado Springs: Victor, 2001.

## READING COMPLETION RECORD

**OT1023 Old Testament III: Wisdom Books and Psalms**

**Fall 2019**

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>DUE DATE</b>	<b>READING or VIDEO ASSIGNMENT</b>	<b>% DONE</b>
<b>Sep 28</b>	Old Testament Speaks: <i>Job—The Problem of Suffering</i>	
<b>Sep 28</b>	Article: “ <i>Proverbs and Wisdom Books of the Ancient Near East</i> ”	
<b>Sep 28</b>	Article: <i>Cosmic Bully or God of Grace</i>	
<b>Sep 28</b>	Thirdmill Video: Lesson 2: <i>Two Paths of Wisdom</i>	
<b>Oct 19</b>	Old Testament Speaks: <i>Proverbs—An Anthology of Israel</i>	
<b>Oct 19</b>	Article: <i>God and Man in Ecclesiastes</i>	
<b>Oct 19</b>	Article: <i>Reading the Song of Songs through Proverbs 1-9</i>	
<b>Oct 19</b>	Thirdmill Video: Forum 2: <i>Two Paths of Wisdom</i>	
<b>Nov 09</b>	Old Testament Speaks: <i>Ecclesiastes— Investigation of Life</i>	
<b>Nov 09</b>	Old Testament Speaks: <i>Song of Solomon</i>	
<b>Nov 09</b>	Article: <i>Creation Theology in Psalm 148</i>	
<b>Dec 07</b>	Old Testament Speaks: <i>Psalms— Hymnology of Israel</i>	
<b>Dec 07</b>	Article: <i>Psalms: A Cantata About the Davidic Covenant</i>	
<b>Dec 07</b>	Article: <i>Preface to the Psalter: Two Ways</i>	