

Preaching Jonah OT 5XP5



McMASTER DIVINITY COLLEGE
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Instructor

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Course Designations

OT 5XP5

Course Schedule

Tuesday through Friday

9:00–10:30; 10:45–12:00 Morning Classes

1:00–13:00 Lunch Break

13:00–14:30; 14:45–16:00 Afternoon Classes

Course Description

Why is there a book of Jonah, and what should it do when you read it or preach it? Jonah is unique among all Biblical books. Among its distinctions are the conflict it has caused in interpretation and the

vastly diverse creativity of sermons preached from it. This course will probe the intentions and purpose of the author of this prophetic composition, his method of accomplishing his goals, and how ministers can further his goals in their preaching. It will examine structure, genre, and setting in order to ascertain how this book intended to teach about God and his mercy.

Course Objectives

Knowing

- Become familiar with the text of Jonah, including translation (exegetical) questions.
- Understand Jonah in relation to the scroll of the twelve.
- Appreciate diverse perspectives of literary analysis of Jonah in Jewish and Christian traditions.
- Become familiar with interpretations of Jonah from pre-Christian times to the present.

Being

- Becoming Christ-like in forgiving others because they know not what they do.
- Responding to injustice and wrong without hate and a quest for revenge.
- Practicing love as Christ loved us and gave himself for us (Eph. 5:2).
- Dealing with anger in a mature and responsible manner.

Doing

- Preach and teach Jonah to challenge vengeful attitudes and inspire Christian perspectives.
- Correct false emphases on what is important in the book of Jonah.
- Demonstrate forgiveness with help from examples like those of Sokreaksa Himm (see below).

Course Topics

1. Review the uniqueness of Jonah as a prophet and in the book of the twelve.
2. Study of the text and vocabulary of Jonah.
3. Analyse the structure of Jonah, its literary form, its setting and function.
4. Examine the interpretations of Jonah in Christian and Jewish traditions.
5. Interview with Sokreaksa Himm from Cambodia (survivor of the killing fields and a pilgrim in learning to forgive the executioners of his family).

Course Texts

1. Ehud Ben Zvi, *The Signs of Jonah: Reading and Rereading in Ancient Yehud*, JSOTSup 367, Sheffield Academic press, 2003.
2. Janet Howe Gaines, *Forgiveness in a Wounded World: Jonah's Dilemma*, Atlanta/Leiden: Society of Biblical Literature/Brill, 2003.
3. Catherine Muldoon, *In Defense of Divine Justice: An Intertextual Approach to the Book of Jonah*, CBQMS 47; Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 2010.
4. Kevin Youngblood, *Jonah, God's Scandalous Mercy*, Hearing the Message of Scripture, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013.

All required textbooks for this class are available from the College's book service, READ On Bookstore, McMaster Divinity College. Texts may be purchased on the first day of class. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstore, Etobicoke, ON M9C 5K1: phone 416.620.2934; fax 416.622.2308; email books@readon.ca. Other book services may also carry the texts.

Course Assignments and Grading

All course work is due four weeks after the last class day. The final day for submissions is June 19.

I. Literature Review: *Develop a suitable title for the assignment*

- (a) The student will conduct a literature review of approximately 15-20 resources (4000 pages) related to *the topic of the course* and write a 100-150 word annotation for each one. The required texts for the course can be included as part of the book list. **The literature review will be approximately 2,000 words. This assignment will constitute 25% of the course grade.**
- (b) A paper will also be prepared that summarizes the key learnings from the literature review and provides a cogent foundation for a theology and practice of *the topic of the course*. **The paper will be approximately 3,000 words. It will constitute 25% of the course grade.**

II. Major Paper: *Develop a suitable title for the paper according to the topic of the course*

The paper should include four key sections. First a brief, but clear explanation of how the paper is rooted in a Practice Led-research approach, second an exploration of the challenges and problems that provoke this study (i.e. why does this ministry practice need to be addressed? What are the problems that you want to identify?) Third, a consideration of a foundational theology of the practice of ministry under consideration in this course and a deep consideration of how new approaches to this practice can be employed in helping to address and improve ministry practice in this area. Fourth some reflection on the application of these ideas to the student's own ministry context (both in terms of the local church and their ministry beyond the local church).

The paper should be approximately 8,000 words. It will constitute 40% of the course grade.

III Class Presentation

The student will offer a class presentation of their paper and its findings to the class.

The presentation is due at a time agreed upon by the instructor and the student and will constitute 10% of the course grade.

Course Policies

Academic Honesty

Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or

unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College.

Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty: <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/rules-regulations/>.

Gender Inclusive Language

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all its publications. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected, but you will need to use gender-inclusive language for humans, and you will need to quote from a gender-inclusive version such as the following: NRSV (1989), NCV (1991), TEV/GNB/GNT (1992), CEV (1995), NLT (1996), TNIV (2005), and the Common English Bible (CEB 2011).

Style

All stylistic considerations (including but not limited to questions of formatting, footnotes, and bibliographic references) must conform to the McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses: <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/resources-forms/mdc-style-guide/>. Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

Bibliography

Commentaries

Allen, Leslie C. *The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah and Malachi*. NICOTT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978.

Baldwin, Joyce. *Jonah*. In *The Minor Prophets: An Exegetical and Expository Commentary 2*, edited by Thomas Edward McComiskey. 543–590. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006.

Bewer, Julius A. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, and Jonah*. ICC. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1912.

Bruckner, James. *Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*. NIV Application Commentary. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004.

Cary, Philip. *Jonah*. Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2008.

Chisholm, Robert. *A Workbook for Intermediate Hebrew: Grammar, Exegesis, and Commentary on Jonah and Ruth*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2006.

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Simon, Uriel. *Jonah*. The JPS Bible Commentary. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1999.

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Wolff, Hans W. *Obadiah and Jonah: A Commentary*. Minneapolis: Augsburg/London: SPCK, 1986.

Literary Studies

Bolin, Thomas H. *Freedom beyond Forgiveness: The Book of Jonah Re-Examined*. JSOTSup 236. Sheffield Academic Press, 1997.

Craig Jr., Kenneth M. *A Poetics of Jonah: Art in the Service of Ideology*. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1993.

Good, Edwin M. *Irony in the Old Testament*. 2nd ed. Bible and Literature Series 3. Sheffield: Almond, 1981.

Goswell, Gregory. "Jonah among the Twelve Prophets." *JBL* 135/2 (2016) 283–299.

Kelly, Joseph Ryan. "Joel, Jonah, and the YHWH Creed: Determining the trajectory of the Literary Influence." *JBL* 132/4 (2013) 805–826.

Magonet, Jonathan. *Form and Meaning: Studies in Literary Techniques in the Book of Jonah*. 2nd ed. Bible and Literature Series 8. Sheffield: Almond, 1983.

Person Jr., Raymond F. *In Conversation with Jonah: Conversation Analysis, Literary Criticism, and the Book of Jonah*. JSOTSup 22. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996.

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_____. "Cross-Currents in the Book of Jonah: Some Jewish and Cultural Midrashim on a Traditional Text." *Biblical Interpretation* 6/1 (1998) 49–79.

Wiseman, Donald J. "Jonah's Nineveh." The Tyndale Biblical Archaeology Lecture, 1977. *Tyndale Bulletin* 30 (1979) 29–51.

Theological Studies

Chow, Simon. *The Sign of Jonah Reconsidered: A Study of its Meaning in the Gospel Traditions*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1995.

Gaines, Janet Howe. *Forgiveness in a Wounded World: Jonah's Dilemma*. Atlanta/Leiden: Society of Biblical Literature/Brill, 2003.

Green, Barbara. *Jonah's Journeys*. Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2005.

Ellul, Jacques. *The Judgment of Jonah*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971.

France, R. T. *Jesus and the Old Testament: His Application of Old Testament Passages to Himself and His Mission*. Downer's Grove: InterVarsity, 1971.

Kamp, Albert. *Inner Worlds: A Cognitive Linguistic Approach to the Book of Jonah*. Boston: Brill, 2004.

Marcus, David. *From Balaam to Jonah: Anti-Prophetic Satire in the Hebrew Bible*. Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press for the SBL, 1995.

Handy, Lowell K. *Jonah's World: Social Science and the Reading of Prophetic Story*. London: Equinox, 2008.

Perry, T. A. *The Honeymoon is Over: Jonah's Argument with God*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2006.

Smith-Christopher, Daniel L. *Jonah, Jesus, and Other Good Coyotes: Speaking Peace to Power in the Bible*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2007.

Wolff, Hans W. *Studien zum Jonabuch*. Neukirchener Verlag, 1965.

Disclaimer: This syllabus is the property of the instructor and is prepared with currently available information. The instructor reserves the right to make changes and revisions up to and including the first day of class.