

Micah: Exegetical Hebrew



McMaster Divinity College
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May 2 – June 3

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Course Designation

OT 2XM3 Micah: Exegetical Hebrew

Specialization

This is a course in exegesis of Hebrew scripture.

Course Schedule

Synchronous online sessions Mondays 1:00 p.m. – 2:50 p.m.

Asynchronous sessions will be scheduled according to student preferences. There will be time for all students to read and discuss questions of text and grammar.

Course Description

This is a course in learning to read and interpret Hebrew by exegeting, translating, and studying the book of Micah. The goal is to enable preaching of the inspired word and to prepare for further study.

The course will be an expositional and Biblical theological reading of the book of Micah. The composition of Micah will be contextualized within the book of the twelve. The course will briefly review the eighth century of Israel as given in the biblical narrative and within the context of ancient near eastern history. The emphasis will be on establishing the world view of Micah, his understanding of covenant, mercy, justice, and hope for the people of faith in Yahweh.

Course Objectives

Knowing

- History of the first temple period of Israel and Judah in the eighth century
- Prophetic placement of Micah in the book of the twelve
- Message of Micah among the eighth century prophets
- Practice of Hebrew exegesis, exposition, and translation

Being

- Being aware of justice within society as a critical aspect of living a spiritual life
- Learning how to represent God as his image in a violent world
- Learning to live courageously in a world of conflict
- Living with hope especially when temporal situations create despair

Doing

- Teach the message of Micah to those that take this book seriously as a prophetic word
- Determine and address issues of justice within individual life circumstances
- Find ways to address issues of injustice at various levels of society engagement
- Inspire hope to those who feel that human life has become meaningless desperate

Course Texts

Hebrew Masoretic Text

Kittle R., et al., *Biblical Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, 5th ed., Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1997.

This should be owned by the student in hard copy, paperback edition is sufficient. It will be used in the asynchronous sessions for reading and exegesis.

Micah: Exegetical Hebrew

Hebrew Reference Grammar

The student will need to own a reference grammar. Grammars are available in digital formats, often links to the grammar are supplied for the biblical texts that are part of the program. This can be an advantage in analyzing grammar. Gesenius and other standard grammars will be referred to in the asynchronous sessions, but it is not necessary that these be owned.

The following hard copy grammar is recommended for learning intermediate Hebrew:

Van der Merwe, C. H. J., et al. *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*. 2nd ed. New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017.

Biblical Hebrew Lexicon

Students will need to own a lexicon suitable for their use of Hebrew. Many of these are available in digital format as well and have links to the digital Westminster Masoretic text. The *Concise Dictionary of Classical Hebrew* by David Clines (2009) is the best contemporary one volume hard copy lexicon.

Commentary on Micah

Waltke, Bruce K. *A Commentary on Micah*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007.

This exhaustive (and exhausting) commentary reviews Micah in all textual, literary, and exegetical questions. It is the best commentary on Micah for a student learning to read the Hebrew text of Micah. It includes Waltke's translation which in itself explains a lot of his interpretation.

Textbook Purchase

Read On Bookstore
5 International Blvd
Etobicoke, Ontario. M9A 3C3

Bookstore Phone: 416 620 2934

Cell to text orders: 416 668 3434

Email for orders: books@readon.ca

Course Lectures

1. The text of Micah (including Minor Prophets Scroll from Nahal Hever), compositional history, and canonical setting of the Book of Micah
2. Oracles of Doom: Judgment on Samaria and Judah (Micah 1:1-16; Isaiah 2:6-22)
3. Oracles of Doom: Judgment on Greedy Land Barons and False Prophets (Micah 2:1-13; Isaiah 5:8-30)

4. Future of Jerusalem: Zion Ploughed like a Field (Micah 3:1-12; Isaiah 3:1 – 4:1)
5. Future of Jerusalem: Mountain of Zion (Micah 4:1-5; Isaiah 2:2-5; 65:17-25)
6. Future of Jerusalem: City of the Great King (Micah 4:6-13; Isaiah 54–55)
7. Future of Jerusalem: Rule of the Faithful Remnant (Micah 5:1-15; Isaiah 8:16–9:7)
8. Restoration of Zion: Guilty in the Divine Court (Micah 6:1-8; Isa 1:1-20)
9. Restoration of Zion: Curses on Jerusalem (Micah 6:9–7:7; Amos 4:1-13)
10. Restoration of Zion: Who is like our God? (Micah 7:8-20; Amos 9:11-15)

Course Assignments and Grading

Assignments

1. *History of the Eighth Century (10%)*

A paper of about 1000 words will review the historical circumstances of Israel and Judah during the eighth century. The paper will provide background to explain the milieu of the Omride – Jehu and Judean dynasties during the ninth-eighth centuries. It must explain the events that transpired, including an account of the exile of Israel by Shalmaneser V and the attack against Jerusalem by Sennacherib.

The older book by Philip J. King, *Amos, Hosea, Micah-An Archaeological Commentary*, is recommended as the basis for this paper as it incorporates relevant artifacts, inscriptions, descriptions of warfare, and cultic practices in a history of the eighth century.

2. *Translation and Assignments*

Students will submit translations for the following passages. Textual issues need not be considered unless a textual decision affects translation. Translations must all be done from the Masoretic text and show an understanding of the word forms and syntax of the sentences. Exegetical notes are appropriate in explaining translation decisions.

The instructor will be available for consultation and explanation of grammatical issues according to the schedule of the students. Assignments should be submitted as soon as they are done. They will be reviewed, graded, and returned within the week. Each section will be worth 10 points and all must be completed by July 15.

1. Micah 1:1-16: Judgment on Samaria and Judah
2. Micah 2:1-13 Judgment on Greedy Land Barons and False Prophets
3. Micah 3:1-12: Zion Ploughed like a Field
4. Micah 4:1-5; Isaiah 2:1-5: Mountain of Zion
5. Micah 4:6-13: City of the Great King
6. Micah 5:1-15: Rule of the Faithful Remnant
7. Micah 6:1-8: Guilty in the Divine Court
8. Micah 6:9–7:7: Curses on Jerusalem
9. Micah 7:8-20: Who is like our God?

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: <http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/rules-regulations>.

Gender Inclusive Language

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all its publications. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. The NRSV and TNIV are examples of the use of inclusive language for human beings. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.

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 for Micah Research

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