

## **ADVANCED EXEGESIS OF SAMUEL**

**Spring semester 2014**

**Instructor: Johanna W.H.Bos**

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

In this course we will build on basic exegetical skills to gain insight into the texts of 1 and 2 Samuel. We will read through the entire text of 1 and 2 Samuel in English guided by commentary in the required books and study overall structure, main themes as well as possible editing and composition process. In our reading we will pay close attention to character, plot development, style and other literary features. Historical contexts of writing and editing will help our understanding of the concerns that created this biblical material. We will study a small number of texts in Hebrew, practicing discernment of the parameters of a unit of text and consult interesting variants and alternative readings noted in the Critical Apparatus.

### **OBJECTIVE**

At the end of the course students will grasp the structure of the Books of Samuel, the arc of the narrative and recognize units within the narratives that are of special significance to an understanding of the main themes and motifs of these texts. They will be able to give an overview of the possible schools or traditions of writing in ancient Israel to which different texts of Samuel may be assigned. They will be able to translate a unit of text, determine its literary shape and provide an analysis of the unit following principles of exegetical analysis with a focus on close reading. The final objective of our work is to increase insightful theological interpretation of the texts of 1 and 2 Samuel.

### **METHOD**

We will meet twice a week for instruction and practice of our reading and translating. If needed, we will work on weak areas of basic Hebrew. We will discuss the possible origins and editing process of the texts in Samuel and study the overall arc of the narratives and their themes. The instructor will assign specific passages for translating and close attention (see Schedule) chosen from the main divisions of Samuel. During the second half of the semester a team of students will select a text for a class presentation. A final research paper will constitute the written work required for the course (see Requirements and evaluation)

### **POLICY ON INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE**

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In speech and in written assignments, it is the policy of the school to avoid divisive terms that reinforce stereotypes or are pejorative. Do not use language that leaves out part of the population, perpetuates stereotyping, or diminishes importance. Do not use male pronouns (such as “men”) to refer to a group that includes females as well. Consult the Academic Support Center for additional guidance if necessary. See: [http://www.lpts.edu/Academic\\_Resources/ASC/avoidinggenderbiasinlanguage.asp](http://www.lpts.edu/Academic_Resources/ASC/avoidinggenderbiasinlanguage.asp).

### **Academic Honesty**

All work turned in to the instructors is expected to be the work of the student whose name appears on the assignment. Any borrowing of the ideas or the words of others must be acknowledged by quotation marks (where appropriate) and by citation of author and source. Students unfamiliar with issues relating to academic honesty can find help from the staff in the Academic Support Center and should make use of the available resources at an early date, since violations of seminary policy of academic honesty can lead to a failing grade for the course.

### **REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION**

Class preparation and participation (clear unavoidable absences with instructor): 300 pts.

Class presentation: 300 pts

Final paper: 400 pts.

The final paper will constitute a 20-25- page research project on a text 1 and 2 Samuel.

Guidelines for the class presentation and the final paper are provided by the instructor.

Besides your notebook, have the following material present in every class: the Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia, a standard translation with notes (*The New Interpreter's Study Bible*, the *Jewish Study Bible*, *Harper Collins* or the *New Oxford Annotated Bible*), a lexicon, the books that are required reading for the course (see below), and printouts of the material posted on CAMS. For research purposes, the Koehler Baumgartner Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon (HAL) is available in the library if you do not possess your own copy.

### **Required Books:**

1. Elliger, K. and Rudolph, W. eds. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1967/77).

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2. English Bibles: The New Interpreter's Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version (Nashville: Abingdon, 2003)
3. The Jewish Study Bible
4. **THE HEBREW AND ARAMAIC LEXICON OF THE OLD TESTAMENT** Study Edition, by Koehler and Baumgartner. Leiden: Brill, 2001.
5. Alter, Robert. *The David Story: A Translation with Commentary of I and 2 Samuel* (New York: W.W.Norton, 1999)
6. Van Wijk-Bos, Johanna W.H. . *Reading Samuel – A Literary and Theological Commentary* (Macon, GA: Smyth and Helwys, 2011)

### **Recommended Books**

**Fokkelman, J.P.** *Narrative Art And Poetry in the Books of Samuel – Volume 1: King David (II Sam. 9-20 & 1 Kings 1-2)* – Van Gorcum, Assen, The Netherlands, 1981.

**Ibid:** *Narrative Art and Poetry in the Books of Samuel – Volume II: The Crossing Fates (1 Sam.13-31 & II Sam.1)* – (Assen/Maastricht: Van Gorcum 1986)

**Ibid.:** *Narrative Art and Poetry in the Books of Samuel – volume III: Throne and City* (Translation Mrs.L. Waaning-Wardle) (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1990)

**Ibid.:** *Narrative Art and Poetry in the Books of Samuel, Volume IV: Vow and Desire* (Assen: Van Gorcum, The Netherlands, 1993).

**Bar-Efrat, Shimon.** *Narrative Art in the Bible*. Sheffield: Almond, 1989

**Goldingay, John:** *Men Behaving Badly*. Paternoster, 2000.

**Brenner, Athalya ed.** *A Feminist Companion to Samuel and Kings*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994.

**Niditch, Susan:** *War in the Hebrew Bible – A Study in the Ethics of Violence*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.

**Polzin, R.** *Samuel and the Deuteronomist- A Literary Study of the Deuteronomistic History – Part Two 1 Samue*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989.

**Ibid.:** *David and the Deuteronomist – A Literary Study of the Deuteronomistic History* Indiana Univ.Press, 1993.

## *Samuel course syllabus and schedule*

Scholz, Susanne. *Sacred Witness – Rape in the Hebrew Bible*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2010.

Schwartz, Regina M. *The Curse of Cain – The Violent Legacy of Monotheism* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997.

### **COURSE SCHEDULE**

- This schedule is tentative, so do not panic! We need to discover how much of the text of 1 and 2 Samuel we are able to read in Hebrew and I will make adjustments according to the needs and ability of the class.
- I urge you not to put off the work on your final paper until the last minute. A list of suggested texts for the paper is appended.
- Guidelines for the class presentations and the final paper will be posted.
- Teams of 2 students will provide the class presentations.

In preparation for the first class read: Bos pp.1-18, Alter pp.ix-xxv and Fokkelman's Twelve Levels of Signification (posted on CAMS).

*Part I [Feb.6 -Feb.20]: 1 Samuel 1-7: Hannah and Samuel .*

*Part II [Feb.27 - March 6]: 1 Samuel 8-15: Samuel and Saul*

*Part III (March 11-April 3): 1 Samuel 16-2 Samuel 1: Saul and David*

*Part IV (April 8 – May 8): 2 Samuel 2-24: David the king*

*Chapters for in-class translation: Part I: 1 Samuel 1: 1-17;*

*Part II: 1 Samuel 8: 11-22; 1 Samuel 9: 15-16; 10:1; 10:21-22 and 11: 11-15.*

*Part III : 1 Samuel 16: 1-13; 1 Samuel 19: 1-10; 1 Samuel 28: 6-14; 1 Samuel 31: 1-6 ; 2 Samuel 1 : 17-27.*

*Part IV : 2 Samuel 11:1-5; 2 Samuel 12: 1-15; 2 Samuel 13: 1, 10-15, 19-22 ; 2 Samuel 15 : 1-12 ; 2 Samuel 21 : 10-14.*

**Thursday Feb.6:** Introduction to the course. Looking at the whole story: Overview of the Books of Samuel.

Different theories of editing process. Fokkelman's Twelve Levels.

***Part I [Feb.6 -Feb.20] - 1 Samuel 1-7: Hannah and Samuel: 1 Samuel 1: 1-17.***

**Preparation for class on Feb.11 and 13:** Bos: pp.19-46. Alter: 3-8; Hebrew Translation 1 Sam.1: 1-10; Cams posting.

**Tuesday Feb.11:** Translating 1 Samuel 1: 1-10. Reading the notes in the Critical Apparatus.

**Thursday Feb.13:** Analysis and discussion of the first part of chapter 1.  
**Preparation for class on Feb. 18 and 20:** Hebrew translation: 1 Samuel 1: 11-17. English: 1 Samuel 1-7. Bos pp.46-56; Alter pp.9-35; CAMS posting.

**Tuesday Feb.18:** Translation of 1 Samuel 1: 11-17.

**Thursday Feb.20:** Discussion of 1 Samuel 2-6: wicked priests, departure and return of the Ark.

***Part II [Feb.27 - March 6] - 1 Samuel 8-15: Samuel and Saul: 1 Samuel 8: 11-22; 1 Samuel 9: 15-16; 10:1; 10:21-22 and 11: 11-15.***

**Preparation for Thursday Feb.27 (NO CLASS ON FEB.25):** English: 1 Samuel 7-8: 1-10; Hebrew: 1 Samuel 8: 11-22; Bos, pp.56-72, Alter. Pp.36-45; CAMS posting.

**Thursday Feb.27:** Demand for a king: 1 Samuel 8. Translation and discussion.

**Preparation for March 4 and 6:** English: 1 Samuel 9-15; Hebrew translation 1 Samuel 9: 15-16; 10: 1; 10: 21-22; 11: 11-15. Bos: 56-88; Alter: 46-94; CAMS posting.

**Tuesday March 4:** Saul triply elected. Translation and discussion.

**Thursday March 6:** Saul twice rejected. Discussion of 1 Samuel 12-15.  
Perspectives on God

***Part III (March 11 - April 10 – 1 Samuel 16-31: Saul and David: 1 Samuel 16: 1-13; 1 Samuel 19: 1-10; 1 Samuel 28: 6-14; 1 Samuel 31: 1-6; 2 Samuel 1: 17-27.***

**Preparation for March 11 and 13:** English 1 Samuel 16-18; Hebrew 1 Samuel 16: 1-13; Bos 88-105; Alter: 95-117; CAMS or handout.

**Tuesday March 11:** The anointing of David: Translation of 1 Samuel 16: 1-13.

**Thursday March 13:** Discussion of 1 Samuel 16-20

**Preparation for March 25 and 27:** English: 1 Samuel 21-31; Hebrew: 1 Samuel 19: 1-10; Bos: 106-162; Alter: 118-201; CAMS posting; Team 1 class prep for March 27.

**Decide on text unit for final paper and begin work.**

**Tuesday March 25:** Translation of 1 Samuel 19: 1-10 and discussion.

**Thursday March 27:** Team 1: 1 Samuel 28: 6-14.

**Preparation for April 1 and 3:** Hebrew: 1 Samuel 31: 1-6; Handout and/or posting. Recheck Bos and Alter pages for March 25 and 27. Team 2 prep for April 3.

**Tuesday April 1:** Translation and discussion of 1 Samuel 31: 1-6

**Thursday April 3:** Team 2 presents reading and discussion of 2 Samuel 1: 17-27. Perspectives on Saul's kingship.

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***Part IV (April 8 – May 8]: 2 Samuel 2-24: David the king - 2 Samuel 11:1-5; 2 Samuel 12: 1-6 and 19-25; 2 Samuel 13: 1, 10-15, 19-22 ; 2 Samuel 18: 29-32 and 19:1 ; 2 Samuel 21 : 10-14.***

**Preparation for April 8 and 10: English: 2 Samuel 2-10; Hebrew 2 Samuel 11: 1-5. Bos: 163-198; Alter 202-251; CAMS posting**

**Tuesday April 8: Discussion of 2 Samuel 2 -10: The beginnings of David's kingship.**

**Thursday April 10: Team 3 presents 2 Samuel 11: 1-5 – David and Bathsheba.**

**Preparation for April 15: English: 2 Samuel 12; Hebrew: 2 Samuel 12: 1-6 and 19-25. CAMS.**

**Tuesday April 15: Team 4 presents 2 Samuel 12: 1-6. Entire class 12: 19-25. David as father.**

**NO CLASS ON APRIL 17 – EASTER RECESS- WORK ON FINAL PAPER**

**Preparation for April 22 and 24: English 2 Samuel 13-18: 28; Hebrew: 2 Samuel 13: 1, 10-15, 19-22 Bos: 200-227; Alter: 265-310;**

**Tuesday April 22: The court of King David, David as father – Amnon, Absalom and Tamar.**

**Thursday April 24: Team 5: 2 Samuel 13: 1, 10-15. Entire class 13: 19-22.**

**Preparation for April 29 and May 1: English: 2 Samuel 19-20; Hebrew: 2 Samuel 18: 29-32 and 19:1. Bos: 227-235; Alter: 311-328**

**Tuesday April 29: Team 6: 2 Samuel 18: 29-32 + 19:1.**

**Thursday May 1: Women in the house of David.**

**Preparation for May 6 and 8: English 2 Samuel 21-24; Hebrew: 2 Samuel 21: 10-14. Bos: 235-247; Alter: 329-359**

**Tuesday May 6: Translation of 2 Samuel 21: 10-14. Rizpah's long watch.**

**Thursday May 8: Last day of class: Wrap-up**

**Final paper due date: May 16.**

#### **SUGGESTED TEXT PASSAGES FOR FINAL PAPER**

If the suggested text is long and I have noted the length, you may select a short unit for translation and close analysis. If you choose to translate the entire passage, you need to present it in distinct units.

**1 Samuel 2: 1-11: Hannah's prayer/song. This text is poetic and you should make it your choice if you have a preference for analysis and exegesis of biblical poetry).**

**1 Samuel 4: 12-22: Departure of the Ark, death of Eli and birth of Ichabod. This is part of longer narrative, not terribly difficult to translate. If you make this text your choice you may choose to focus on one particular unit for closer analysis.**

**1 Samuel 5:1-6:9: The Ark among the Philistines. This is a set of chapters and you may choose one shorter unit for your exegesis and analysis.**

**1 Samuel 16: 14-23: Saul's distress and David's first appearance at Saul's court.**

**1 Samuel 17: 1-58: David and Goliath. A long text of which you need to choose a short unit for exegetical discussion.**

**1 Samuel 19: 1-10: Jonathan and David – s background: 1 Samuel 18: 1-16. An opportunity for exploring the David-Jonathan relationship.**

**1 Samuel 19: 11-18: Michal's intervention on David's behalf. A manageable text unit with implications for the presence of women and specifically Michal in David's life and in the text.**

**1 Samuel 25: 1-44: Nabal, Abigail and David. A long narrative of which you need to choose a short unit for exegesis and analysis while taking the entire chapter into account.**



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**2 Samuel 1: 1-16:** The announcement of Saul's death to David. A passage that elucidates the fragile presence of those who served David and David's reaction to the death of Saul.

**2 Samuel 4: 1-12:** The murder of Ishboshet, Saul's son. This section needs to be set clearly in the chapters that concern David's road to kingship and the threat to his crown from descendants of David's house.

**2 Samuel 6: 1-23:** The return of the Ark to Jerusalem and Michal's relationship to David. This text can be taken up in its entirety or with focus on a shorter unit.

**2 Samuel 9: 1-13:** David and Mephibosheth, one of Saul's sons.

**2 Samuel 14: 1-20:** The wise woman of Tekoa. A long chapter with opportunity to choose a short unit for translation and closer discussion.

**2 Samuel 15: 1-12:** Absalom's rebellion. Fascinating machinations on the part of the one of David's sons.

**2 Samuel 19:1-9:** David's grief over Absalom and Joab's reproach to his king.