

DE 5060 | THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

3 sem. hrs.

I. Course Description

An exegetical study of The Book of Proverbs in both its cultural and historical setting and in its literary setting with attention to its critical and hermeneutical problems.

II. Course Objectives

A. General Objectives:

1. To understand the Book of Proverbs in its historical, canonical, and contemporary contexts.
2. To know God by doing His will as expressed in this book.

B. Specific Objectives:

1. To understand the forms of sapiential literature in the Book of Proverbs as understood in part from Ancient Near Eastern collections of sayings and admonitions
2. To understand its court setting and its democratization
3. To define "wisdom" precisely and to understand the relationship of God and man to wisdom
4. To understand the relationship of the Book of Proverbs with other forms of wisdom in the Bible
5. To understand the hermeneutical issues in using the book: e.g., the fittingness of a proverb to a given situation; the truthfulness of its promise of prosperity and life; the distinction between that which is abiding from that which is historically and culturally conditioned.
6. To understand the book's teaching on selected topics

III. Course Materials

All course materials can be purchased through the TEDS bookstore (800.456.7323/ 847.317.7103).

- A. Waltke, Bruce K. *The Book of Proverbs, Audio Lecture Series, Study Guide, and Expanded Study Guide*. Grand Rapids, MI: Institute of Theological Studies, a division of Outreach, Inc., 1988. (Included with Study Guide: Whybray, R. N. *Proverbs*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994.)

B. Textbooks

Crenshaw, James L. *Old Testament Wisdom: An Introduction*, rev. ed. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998 (Note that this syllabus has been paginated according to the revised edition).

Kidner, Derek. *Proverbs: An Introduction and Commentary*. Tyndale Old Testament Commentary, Vol. 15. Downers Grove, IL.: InterVarsity Press, 1964.

_____. *The Wisdom of Proverbs, Job and Ecclesiastes: An Introduction to Wisdom Literature*. Downers Grove, IL.: InterVarsity Press, 1985.

Von Rad, Gerhard. *Wisdom in Israel*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1972. Reprint, Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1993.

C. DE 506 Coursepack (the following materials comprise a coursepack that can be purchased through the TEDS bookstore):

Bryce, G.E. *A Legacy of Wisdom: The Egyptian Contribution to the Wisdom of Israel*. London: Associated United Press, 1979, pp. 80-87.

Clements, Ronald E. *One Hundred Years of Old Testament Interpretation*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976, pp. 99-117.

Malchow, Bruce V. "A Manual for Future Monarchs," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 57 (1955): 238-245.

Pritchard, James B., ed. "The Teaching of Amenemope" in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts: Relating to the Old Testament*. Princeton Univ. Press, 1969. pp. 421-425.

Ruffle, John. "The Teaching of Amenemope and its Connection with the Book of Proverbs," *Tyndale Bulletin* 28 (1977) :29-68.

Waltke, Bruce K. "The Book of Proverbs and Ancient Wisdom Literature," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 136 (1979) :221-238.

IV. Course Requirements

- A. The daily or individual lecture assignments (see programmed learning guide) can be turned in as they are completed. This will be worth 40% of the grade.
- B. There will be one closed-book final examination worth 45% of the course.
- C. The student will be expected to read at least 1200 pages from the assigned required and suggested readings, submitting a list detailing authors, books, and pages read. Also, every chapter of the Book of

Proverbs should be read at least three times, preferably once in the King James Version, and once in each of the New International Version and the New American Standard Version. This will be worth 10% of the grade.

- D. The student is required to participate in the discussion areas of TriNet. Thoughtful responses should be given to at least one question in each discussion area, and responses to the comments of other students are encouraged. This will be worth 5% of the grade.

All assignments should be submitted directly to your Course Tutor using the Submit Work icon within your TriNet course. Exams should be mailed by your proctor to the address below. Course work may be submitted by mail if necessary.

Distance Education
Trinity Evangelical Divinity School
2065 Half Day Road
Deerfield, IL 60015

If you have questions related to your assignments, please contact your Course Tutor in TriNet. All other questions should be directed to the Distance Education office (email or 847-317-6554).

STUDY GUIDE FOR THE FINAL EXAM

1. Be able to deal with the various issues raised in the lectures. These include: theodicy, relation of Proverbs and Amenemope, and the means of hokmah ("wisdom"), slysym ("30"), 'aharit ("end"), and issa zara.
2. Be able to utilize Alter's categories from memory (both symbols and classification explanations).
3. Be able to discuss various approaches to the classification of the proverbs. This should include the ability to interact critically with the various approaches.
4. Be familiar with the major contributions to the study of wisdom literature and their applications to the study of the Book of Proverbs.
5. Be able to answer the question, "What is the authority of wisdom?"
6. The promises of the Proverbs can be problematic when compared to experience. Be familiar with the reasoning by which the two are reconciled.

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