






Advancing God's Kingdom by Preparing Competent Christian
Leaders for Spirit-Empowered Life and Ministry

OT5307 Psalms

3 credit hours. Prerequisites: none.

Course delivery options:  On Campus  Live-Stream  Video on Demand

November 1-5, 2021
Module B
Mon – Fri, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

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Course Goals

Course Description

This course explores the literary genres and theology of the Psalter. While the study covers different critical methods and approaches to reading the Psalms, it also considers how the Psalms are relevant to Christian worship, faith, and discipleship.

Relationship to Horizon's Mission

Through this course, students will gain a greater grasp of the Psalms, its genres, and theology, with the aim to foster one's understanding of God's character and work, to deepen one's spiritual walk, and to enrich one's ministry.

Course Competencies and Learning Outcomes

To demonstrate competency in **Biblical and Theological Literacy** students will

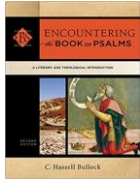
1. Interpret the book of Psalms in light of its literary and socio-historical contexts, and distinct theological perspective with the assistance of relevant secondary literature.
 - *Assessment:* Presentation; Exegetical Essay; Theological Response Emails.
2. Describe the key interpretive issues that are critical for understanding the Psalter.
 - *Assessment:* Presentation; Exegetical Essay; Theological Response Emails.
3. Identify and explain key emphases and their significance within the Psalter.
 - *Assessment:* Presentation; Devotional Reflection; Exegetical Essay; Theological Response Emails.

To demonstrate competency in **Spiritual Maturity** students will

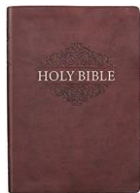
4. Explain how the theological witness of the Psalter speaks to the way we think, live, and minister today.
 - *Assessment:* Presentation; Devotional Reflection; Theological Response Emails.

Course Work

Required Readings



Bullock, C. Hassell. *Encountering the Book of Psalms: A Literary and Theological Introduction*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018. ISBN: 9780801098307



An English translation of Psalms. A translation that is more literal (e.g. NASB, ESV, NRSV, etc.) is preferable to one that is more paraphrased (NIV, NLT, etc.). In class, the professor will use ESV.

Various chapters/articles. See schedule below. These will be posted on Populi.

**While students have the benefit of accessing their textbooks online through the [Digital Theological Library](#), they will not have access to the Digital Theological Library upon graduation. Therefore, we encourage students to purchase select textbooks to build their personal library. For your convenience, Horizon has partnered with Kennedy's Parable to provide textbooks.

Course Assignments and Activities

Part I: Pre- and Mid-Module Assignments

1. *Participation and Reading.*

Students are expected to attend and participate in each class; this includes discussions and in-class activities. **In preparation for each class**, students should read select chapters/articles as follows:

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| Monday | McCann Jr. Clinton. "The Shape and Shaping of the Psalter." In <i>The Oxford Handbook of the Psalms</i> , edited by William P. Brown, 350-62. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2014. |
| Tuesday | Waltke, Bruce K., James M. Houston, and Erika Moore. <i>The Psalms as Christian Lament: A Historical Commentary</i> . Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2014. Read Ch. 1. |
| Wednesday | Strawn, B. A. "Imprecation." In <i>Dictionary of the Old Testament Wisdom, Poetry & Writings</i> , edited by Tremper Longman III and Peter Enns, 314-20. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2008. |
| Thursday | Wenham, Gordon J. "The Ethics of the Psalms." In <i>Interpreting the</i> |

- Psalms: Issues and Approaches*, edited by David G. Firth and Philip Johnston Leicester, 175-94. UK: Apollos, 2005.
- Friday** Firth, David G. "The Teaching of the Psalms." In *Interpreting the Psalms: Issues and Approaches*, edited by David G. Firth and Philip Johnston Leicester, 159-74. UK: Apollos, 2005.

At times, these may serve as the basis for discussion. Additionally, students will read the entirety of Psalms and the course text by Nov 17. Reading the Psalms before the start of class is encouraged. While no summaries or reviews are required, a form will be provided, on which students will indicate how much of the readings they completed. 10% of final grade.

- Related learning outcome(s): # 1, 2, 3, 4.
- **Due date:** Wednesday, November 17.

2. *Presentation.*

Each student will teach a psalm to the class. The presentation should cover the most pertinent historical, literary, and theological aspects of the psalm. Leading from this exegesis, the student should also discuss the psalm's application for the way we think, live, and minister today. Students should consult at least four scholarly sources; include citations and bibliography in the written presentation notes. The presentation should be between 10-15 minutes in length and will be followed by Q&A. The use of tools such as PowerPoint, handouts, and other teaching aids are optional; it is up to the student to determine how best to teach the material. Presentation notes (a **minimum of 2 pages**—format can vary) are to be submitted to the instructor along with any handouts by **5pm the day before** the presentation. These notes will comprise part of the student's mark and will aid the professor in evaluating the presentation. Each student should contact the professor ahead of time to select a psalm and presentation date. Here are a few ideas: Psalms 8, 80, 88, 90, 119. 20% of final grade.

- Related learning outcome(s): # 1, 2, 3, 4.
- **Assignment Length:** 10-15 min.
- **Due date:** Various days of the module week.

Part II: Post-Module Assignments

3. *Devotional Reflections.*

Students will write a series of devotional reflections on the following eight Psalms: 6, 7, 10, 37, 38, 100, 115, 130. The goal of this assignment is to encourage students to pray, read, and meditate on Scripture. Designed to serve as a form of devotional to be spread out over two-three weeks, this is not an assignment to be completed all at once. Students should complete no more than one devotional per day.

For each devotional, follow this procedure: 1) Pray; 2) Read the psalm; 3) Meditate on the psalm; and 4) Write a reflection. The reflection is to consist of two primary parts: 1) Summary; and 2) Application. For the first part of the reflection, students should *concisely* describe the main point(s) and movement of the psalm. What is the psalm about? What is its main point? How does the writer reach/support this main point? Students are to demonstrate that they are able to pick out the main idea of the psalm. The second part of the reflection should focus on the student's response to the psalm. What could you learn from this psalm? How might it be applied to one's life? This part of the reflection can go a variety of directions as the student may find the

psalm encouraging, comforting, convicting, challenging, or even troubling. The main thing I want to see in this part is that you are meaningfully engaging with the psalm, leading to your own reflections.

For this exercise, students are to use no secondary resources (that is, no commentaries, study Bible notes, or other resources). This is not a research project. The goal is for students to develop the skill of personal study in response to what they have learned in class about interpreting the Book of Psalms. 20% of final grade.

- Related learning outcome(s): # 3, 4.
- **Assignment Length:** 1 page each; 8 pages in total.
- **Due date:** Wednesday, November 17.

4. *Exegetical Essay.*

Each student will write an exegetical essay on Psalm 110. This paper should address the following points:

- Historical background
- Literary analysis: Discuss the psalm's form/genre, structure, movement, changes of voice, use of literary devices.
- Literary context: Is there significance to the psalm's position in one of the books of the Psalter or in the Psalter as a whole? Does it relate in a significant way to the larger movement/narrative of the whole?
- Significant interpretive issues
- The main point of the psalm and how the writer makes it
- Other theological points/implications
- Relation to the larger narrative of the OT/NT
- The significance of this psalm for the church today

Students are encouraged to study the psalm first by themselves before turning to secondary sources. Include at minimum five secondary sources such as commentaries, scholarly articles, and theological treatments. 25% of final grade.

- Related learning outcome(s): # 1, 2, 3.
- **Assignment Length:** 6-8 pages.
- **Due date:** Wednesday, December 1.

5. *Theological Response Emails.*

You are a leader at a local congregation and have recently received a series of emails from members with a variety of questions about Psalms. As the final assignment, each student will write responses to hypothetical situations and questions. The four questions will concern major concepts, difficulties, and questions covered throughout the course. Responses should be well written, include citations to research (five sources at minimum for the whole paper), and may be a mix of exegetical, pastoral, theological, and apologetic. I am not so much looking for tact in approaching potentially difficult situations but more of a demonstration of the student's understanding of the matter at hand. The questions will be provided at class on Friday, November 5. 25% of final grade.

- Related learning outcome(s): #1, 2, 3, 4.
- **Assignment Length:** 6-8 pages in total.

- **Due date:** Sunday, December 19.

Video-on-Demand (VOD) Student Requirements

As indicated on the course schedule, this class is being offered by VOD. Students who intend to take the course primarily through VOD are required to indicate this during their course registration. While VOD recordings are available for any student who may miss a class, non-VOD students are expected to attend class live following the class attendance policy.

- For this course, VOD students have the same assignment due dates as in-class students.
- Including the module week, each week for five weeks, VOD students are required to watch and engage with all lecture content and in-class activities from one full day of the module.
- By Monday at 11:59pm each week (**Nov 8, 15, 22, 29, Dec 6**), VOD students will submit either as a written statement on Populi (100-250 words) or FlipGrid video (1-3 min) the following: 1) confirmation of having watched the class recordings and completed the corresponding readings; and 2) brief thoughts about what stood out most from the class, what the student has learned, and/or questions that have arisen. These should demonstrate engagement with the course material. Alternatively, the student may wish to meet the professor live over Zoom. This is encouraged in place of at least one of the weekly submissions, preferable one of the initial ones (e.g. Mon, Nov 8).
- In order to pass the course, VOD students must submit all of their VOD weekly submissions. These submissions are pass/fail based on whether or not they demonstrate thoughtful engagement with the lecture content and in-class activities.

Course Outline / Class Schedule

**The following schedule is a guideline. Adjustments may occur.*

Day	Time	Topics
Monday	9:00 – 9:30	• Course Introductions
	9:30 – 12:00	• Interpreting the Psalter
	1:00 – 4:00	• The Shape of the Psalter
Tuesday	9:00 – 12:00	• Psalms 1-2: The Psalter's Introduction
	1:00 – 4:00	• Psalms of Lament
Wednesday	9:00 – 12:00	• Psalms of Praise and Thanksgiving
	1:00 – 4:00	• Psalms of Trust • Psalms of Imprecation
	Thursday	9:00 – 10:30
1:15 – 4:00		• Royal Psalms • Kingship of Yahweh Psalms • The figure of David
Friday		9:00 – 12:00
	1:00 – 4:00	• Preaching the Psalms: Issues and Approaches

- Assignments will not be accepted after **Monday, December 27, 2021**.

Estimate of Time Investment (*individual time investments may vary*)

Classroom time	30 hrs	N/A	N/A
1. Readings	27 hrs	Nov 17	10%
2. Presentation	15 hrs	Various	20%
3. Devotional Reflection	8 hrs	Nov 17	20%
4. Exegetical Essay	20 hrs	Dec 1	25%
5. Theological Response Essay	20 hrs	Dec 19	25%
Total =		~120 hrs	

Academic Policies**General Guidelines for the Submission of Written Work***Formatting Papers*

- Papers should be typed, double-spaced and follow the appropriate formatting guidelines (e.g. 1 inch margins).
- Follow the [Horizon Format Guide](#) consistently.
- The length of papers should fall within +/- 10% of the stated length. Papers that fall outside the length guidelines may not be graded and will receive a grade reduction.

Failure to follow these guidelines warrants a grade reduction.

Submitting Your Assignments

Assignments should be submitted via [Populi](#). The resource at this link

<https://support.populiweb.com/hc/en-us/articles/223792507-How-to-submit-work-for-assignments> explains how to submit assignments on Populi (the link to the video is also available on the info tab of the Populi course page).

Late Assignments and Extensions

All assignments are due when stated by the professor or, if not specified, within 8 weeks after the first day of class. Please contact the professor well in advance if you would like to request an adjustment to any of your due dates. A late penalty will be assessed for all overdue assignments: 1-3 days late, penalty of 10%; 4-6 days late, penalty of 20%. After six days late, an assignment receives a grade of 0.

Grading

Grade	Percentage	GPA	Descriptor
A+	97-100%	4	Exceptional
A	93-96%	4	Excellent
A-	90-92%	3.7	Excellent
B+	87-89%	3.3	Good
B	83-86%	3.0	Good
B-	80-82%	2.7	Good

C+	77-79%	2.3	Satisfactory
C	73-76%	2.0	Satisfactory
C-	70-72%	1.7	Satisfactory
D+	67-79%	1.3	Minimal Pass
D	63-66%	1.0	Minimal Pass
D-	60-62%	0.7	Minimal Pass
F	<60%	0	Failure

Academic Honesty

Horizon uses the University of Saskatchewan definition of plagiarism described as “the presentation of the work or idea of another in such a way as to give others the impression that it is the work or idea of the presenter. Adequate attribution is required. What is essential is that another person have no doubt which words or research results are the student’s and which are drawn from other sources” (Office of the University Secretary, 2012). Students are expected to give due recognition to sources from which all substantial phrases, sentences or even ideas are drawn. Note also that you may not submit work done in one course to satisfy the requirements of another course (unless both instructors agree beforehand to accept such work). See [here](#) for examples of plagiarism and further guidelines in the Seminary [Student Handbook](#).

Disability Services Information

If you would benefit from learning accommodations due to pre-existing physical or mental health conditions or learning disabilities, contact the Academic or Student Life departments at the beginning of the course. Horizon will work to meet your learning and/or physical needs where possible. If any conditions arise during the course that you wish to disclose, please contact us as soon as possible. In all cases you will need to provide current [documentation](#) of the disability or condition you wish to disclose. Horizon takes appropriate care to ensure confidentiality about any such disclosures. For more information, contact Bob Williamson, Dean of Students, at bwilliamson@horizon.edu; Heather Wood, Associate Dean of Students, at hwood@horizon.edu; or Leanne Bellamy, Academic Coach, at lbellamy@horizon.edu.

Class Attendance

Students should attend all classes in order to optimize their learning experience. In the case of illness or other unforeseen circumstances, students may miss one day of a module course or three days of class in a term or semester course without academic penalty. A student must be present for the full duration of a class period in order to be registered as present for the class. Students who are absent for more than the number of classes stated above will automatically fail the course. Students wishing to be exempted from this policy due to extenuating circumstances may make an academic appeal, where they will need to document and verify those circumstances.

Campus Health Policy

Do not come on campus if you are experiencing symptoms (even if they are mild) of fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, chills, runny nose, or a loss of your sense of taste or smell. If you have any of these symptoms, do not return to campus until advised by Public Health. You should self-isolate and contact HealthLine 811 for advice on whether you should be tested for COVID-19. This will help keep others safe and possibly spare them from self-isolation and testing. While you are in self-isolation, you may attend class online. The link to access your

class is posted on the course page on Populi, under the Syllabus tab, under Links on the right side of the page.

Live-Streaming Etiquette

If attending class online via live-stream, keep your camera on and stay present and attentive throughout the class session, extending the gift of full engagement. Access your class with a computer (preferably) or tablet, not a cell phone. Arrive to class on time, and dress as you would if you were attending class on campus. Join the class from a quiet space with minimal background noise, and mute your microphone until you wish to speak to the class.

Use of Technology

Horizon encourages the use of electronic devices in the classroom to enhance learning. Careful consideration must be given to privacy issues, copyrighted materials, and the general care and concern for others. Please respect the following classroom policies:

- Please use online access for course learning only. This is a matter of respect for the instructor's teaching, your own learning, and fellow students who may be distracted by other uses.
- Students should secure permission from the instructor to record any teaching material. This includes PowerPoint slides, white board illustrations, notes, and any form of audio or video.
- Student feedback is a valuable input for course improvements. Please resolve any classroom grievance about the instructor or course with the instructor personally, through the Horizon College and Seminary grievance procedures, or the Populi-based course evaluations. It is inappropriate to air classroom grievances on a social media platform.
- When instructors use recording mechanisms in the classroom, recorded materials will be used for the sole purpose of instruction and cannot be released to any social media outlet without the written consent of the students whose images have been recorded.
- In general, it is not acceptable to share photographs or videos of students in the classroom setting without permission from those whose images appear in such media.

Bibliography

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