

## **Associated Canadian Theological Schools**

### **MTH 840: Old Testament Exposition: Exodus**

Professor: Robert J. V. Hiebert, PhD  
Fall - 2008  
3 credit hours  
Prerequisites: RES 500, BIE 505, BIE 613

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Class Dates: Sept. 4 – Dec. 3  
Class time: Wednesdays, 2:30 – 5:10 pm

#### **I. Course Description**

This study of Exodus seeks to elucidate the message and significance of the second book of the Hebrew canon. Historical, cultural and literary backgrounds are investigated, the content of the book is surveyed, selected portions are analyzed in detail (some in the Hebrew text), and key themes are highlighted. Interaction with commentary and theological literature is included. Prerequisites: Research Strategies (RES 500); Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics (BIE 505); Hebrew Exegesis II (BIE 613) or equivalent.

#### **II. Objectives**

This course is designed to help the student gain a greater understanding of:

1. the intended message and canonical and theological significance of the book of Exodus;
2. the context out of which this inspired text arose and the issues to which it addressed itself;
3. the role of historical and literary criticism in the study of Exodus;
4. the translation and interpretation history of the book;
5. the benefit of exegetical study based on the original Hebrew text;
6. the applicability of the message of Exodus for the contemporary Christian.

#### **III. Course Textbooks**

1. *Exodus* in both the New Revised Standard Version and *A New English Translation of the Septuagint* (ed. Albert Pietersma and Benjamin Wright; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

2. Terence E. Fretheim, *Exodus* (Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching; Louisville: John Knox, 1991).
3. James K. Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt* (Oxford: OUP, 1996).
4. Nahum M. Sarna, *Exploring Exodus* (New York: Schocken, 1986, 1996).
5. Christopher J. H. Wright, *Old Testament Ethics for the People of God* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2004).

NOTE: Students are expected already to have on hand:

1. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1997).
2. F. Brown, S. R. Driver and C. A. Briggs, *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1996); OR, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (London: Oxford, 1975).
3. William R. Scott, *A Simplified Guide to BHS*, 3d ed. (Berkeley: Bibal, 1995). Course Assignments

#### **IV. ASSIGNMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS:**

Typically, a student is expected to spend approximately 40 hours to complete the work necessary to earn 1 semester hour of credit, hence 120 hours for a 3 credit course. This includes time spent in class, so unexcused absences will result in grade reductions. If a student is absent from more than two classes for any reason, s/he will either be required to do make-up work to avoid further grade reductions or will have to retake the course to receive credit for it, depending on the number of absences. For full credit, assignments must be completed on time. Grades for late written work will be reduced 5% per day (weekends = 1 day) to a maximum reduction of 35%. All assignments must be completed in order to receive credit for this course. Those that have not come in by December 3, 2008 will not be accepted.

Students are encouraged strongly to use RefWorks (available through the library home page [www.twu.ca/library](http://www.twu.ca/library)) as their bibliographical manager and as a tool for formatting bibliographies. For information regarding Turabian formatting style, see <http://faculty.ucc.edu/egh-damerow/turabian.htm> or [www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/](http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/).

NB: See section IX. ACADEMIC HONESTY below and view the PowerPoint / flash tutorial before doing your written assignments.

Several kinds of assignments have been created to help the student work through the required material in a meaningful way and to understand the basic issues involved in the study of this part of the Bible.

1. Readings:

Read the book of Exodus in the NRSV and NETS translations, and the textbooks by Fretheim, Hoffmeier, Sarna, and Wright. These readings are to be completed in accordance with the schedule in the Reading Statement found below in this syllabus.

2. Textbook Evaluations and Reading Statement

Write a 2000 word paper in which you evaluate the books by Fretheim, Hoffmeier, Sarna, and Wright in terms of factors such as their

- contribution to your understanding of the book of Exodus
- treatment of issues that are relevant to the expositor
- overall informativeness
- readability
- strengths and weaknesses

Give specific examples to support your evaluative statements, and provide relevant page numbers in the books for your examples. Attach the Reading Statement (which you must complete and sign) to the front of this paper and submit both by Dec. 3.

3. Class Presentations:

Students will make class presentations on a variety of topics related to the book of Exodus. More information will be provided on Sept. 10 during the first class.

4. Septuagint Institute Conference:

On September 18-20, the Septuagint Institute of TWU/ACTS is sponsoring a major international conference on the theme, "Septuagint Translation(s): Retrospect and Prospect." Leading scholars and Bible translators from across Europe and North America will be presenting papers, and various events involving graduate students are planned. I will be posting the conference schedule on the MyCourses page for this course and on the Septuagint Institute website. Students in the Hebrew Exegesis course are expected to participate in the Graduate Collegium gathering and attend the Public Lecture, both on the evening of September 18, and to take in at least 4 presentations by conference speakers on any of the days of the conference. (If there are scheduling problems with regard to conference participation, contact the professor.) Students must submit a 1000 word report on their conference experience, focusing on key things they have learned. The report is due on October 1.

5. Hebrew Translations and Textual Commentary:

Produce your own translations of Exodus 16-20 from the Hebrew text. Comment briefly on four of the most significant textual variants per chapter listed in the BHS apparatus, indicating whether or not you would accept the lemma or the variant in each case and on what basis. Submit chapters 16-18 by October 15 and chapters 19-20 by November 5.

#### 6. Exegetical Paper

Hebrew Bible exegetes and literary/source critics have wrestled with Exodus 19-20 in terms of the question as to whether these chapters constitute a unity or are comprised of more than one original source. Thus, for example, do two distinct versions of the theophany on Mt. Sinai lie behind the text as it now stands? Does the account of the giving of the Decalogue cohere with what precedes and follows does it represent an insertion into the narrative(s) regarding the theophany? What about the seemingly anachronistic reference to priests in ch. 19? etc. These and other questions regarding these interesting and pivotal chapters highlight the importance of a careful exegetical treatment of them.

- a. In addition to relevant material in your class texts, read discussions of these chapters by a good selection of other authors of divergent opinions (e.g., Blenkinsopp, Campbell & O'Brien, Cassuto, Childs, Friedman, Sailhamer) to orient yourself to the exegetical issues and varying treatments of this part of Exodus.
- b. Write a 3500 word paper on Exodus 19-20, analyzing these chapters carefully in order to determine how they cohere in their present configuration (whether or not you consider them to be a unity or comprised of originally disparate sources) and addressing the kinds of exegetical problems they present. Your conclusions must be based on your own exegesis of the (Hebrew) biblical text. Respond as well to the kinds of arguments that run counter to positions that you adopt. As usual, this paper is to be well researched, properly footnoted, and is to include an outline/table of contents (the headings of which appear in the body of the paper as well) and a bibliography of works consulted and cited. Consult and make use of at least ten to twelve sources in your research and writing. Citation or other use of sources must be scrupulously documented. NB: Be advised that plagiarism for this or other assignments will not be tolerated. Penalties may range from receiving an F on the paper to failing the entire course. This paper is due on Nov. 19.

### **V. COURSE OUTLINE:**

Sept. 10 Introduction

Read Fretheim: pp. 1-22; Sarna: Foreword, Preface, Introduction;

Wright: pp. 11-20, chap. 12; Hoffmeier, Preface, chap. 1.

17 Israel in Egypt—Changes of Fortune

Hebrew and Greek Texts of Exodus (presentation by Dr. Perkins)

Read the book of Exodus in the NRSV and NETS versions.

Read Fretheim: part 1; Sarna: chaps. 1-2; Wright: chaps. 13-14;

Hoffmeier, chaps. 2-5.

18-20 International conference sponsored by the Septuagint Institute (see IV.4 above)

24 NO CLASS (in lieu of Septuagint Conference participation)

Oct. 1 Moses' Commissioning

Read Fretheim: part 2; Sarna: chap. 3; Wright: chaps. 1-3.

8Plagues; Passover and Exodus, I

Read Fretheim: Parts 3 & 4; Sarna: chaps. 4 & 5; Wright: chaps. 4, 7,

Appendix; Hoffmeier, chap. 6.

15 Passover and Exodus, II

Read Wright: chap. 8.

22 From Egypt to Sinai

Read Fretheim: Part 5; Sarna: chap. 6; Wright: chap. 10;

Hoffmeier, chaps. 7-10.

29 NO CLASS (Reading Week & Modular Courses)

Nov. 5 Covenant and Law, I

Read Fretheim: Part 6; Sarna: chap. 7; Wright: chap. 9.

12 Covenant and Law, II

Read Sarna: chap. 8; Wright: chaps. 5, 11.

19 Tabernacle

Read Fretheim: Part 7; Sarna: chap. 9.

26 Breach of Covenant and Restoration

Read Fretheim: Part 8.

Dec. 3 Tabernacle, Divine Immanence, Covenant Community

Read Fretheim: Part 9; Wright: chap. 6.

**VI. COURSE EVALUATION:**

- 1. Class Presentation, Participation, Septuagint Conference (report Oct. 1) .....25%
- 2. Hebrew Translations (Oct. 15, Nov. 5).....20%
- 3. Exegetical Paper (Nov. 19).....30%
- 4. Textbook Evaluations and Reading Statement (Dec. 3).....25%

**VII. LETTER GRADE TO PERCENTAGE CORRELATION:**

A+ = 97-100	B+ = 85-89	C+ = 70-74	F = 59 and less
A = 93-96	B = 80-84	C = 65-69	
A- = 90-92	B- = 75-79	C- = 60-64	

**VIII. SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

See Fretheim, pp. 317-21; Hoffmeier, Notes at the end of each chapter; Sarna, pp. 247-63; Wright, pp. 481-99.

**IX. ACADEMIC HONESTY:**

An essential discipline in the academic process is that of academic honesty. This includes, but is not limited to, avoiding all forms of plagiarism and cheating in scholarly work. Students are expected to be familiar with the requirements, and to adhere to the principles, of academic honesty. Further details about this subject can be found in the ACTS Student Handbook in section 4.12. The handbook is available online at [www.acts.twu.ca/Handbook.html](http://www.acts.twu.ca/Handbook.html).

NB: Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Penalties may range from receiving an F on the paper to failing the entire course. An excellent resource describing plagiarism and how to avoid it has been prepared by ACTS/TWU Librarian William Badke and is freely

available for download (PowerPoint file) or used as a flash (self-running) tutorial. All students in this class are REQUIRED to view this PowerPoint / flash tutorial. Click on the following:

<http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/plagiarism.ppt> (PowerPoint)

<http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/Plagiarism.swf> (Flash Tutorial)

#### **X. RESEARCH ETHICS:**

Please note that all research projects involving human participants undertaken by members of the TWU university community (including projects done by ACTS students to satisfy course or degree requirements) **MUST** be approved by the Trinity Western University Research Ethics Board. Information and forms may be found at <http://www.twu.ca/research/ethics/Main.asp>. Please allow at least three (3) weeks from the date of submission for a review of the application.

#### **XI. EQUITY OF ACCESS:**

Occasionally a student may enter a class who experiences a learning disability. Students who experience such a disability have a responsibility to inform the ACTS Director of Student Life before the beginning of the course so that any necessary adjustments can be made to facilitate the student's learning process. We are unable to accommodate any student who informs the Director of Student Life of a disability after the beginning of class.

#### **XII. CAMPUS CLOSURE POLICY:**

In the event of deteriorating weather conditions overnight or other emergency situations, every effort will be made to communicate information regarding the cancellation of classes to the radio stations CKNW (980 AM), CKWX (1130 AM), MAX (850 AM), PRAISE (106.5 FM) and KARI (550 AM) by 6:30 a.m., and an announcement will be placed on the University's switchboard (604-888-7511) and website (<http://www.twu.ca/conditions/>). The first announcement regarding a closure will cover the period up to 1:00 p.m. only. If classes are to be cancelled beyond 1:00 p.m., this decision will be announced by the same means before 11:00 a.m. that day. Students and faculty should assume that all night classes will continue to operate. If the emergency continues into the evening, students and faculty may check for a closure notice on the University's switchboard and website after 3:00 p.m. that day.

## Reading Statement Old Testament Exposition: Exodus

### MTH 840A

Note: Readings are to be completed by the dates indicated below.

- Sept. 10 Read Fretheim: pp. 1-22; Sarna: Foreword, Preface, Introduction;  
Wright: pp. 11-20, chap. 12; Hoffmeier, Preface, chap. 1.
- 17 Read the book of Exodus in the NRSV and NETS versions.  
Read Fretheim: part 1; Sarna: chaps. 1-2; Wright: chaps. 13-14;  
Hoffmeier, chaps. 2-5.
- Oct. 1 Read Fretheim: part 2; Sarna: chap. 3; Wright: chaps. 1-3.
- 8 Read Fretheim: Parts 3 & 4; Sarna: chaps. 4 & 5; Wright: chaps. 4, 7,  
Appendix; Hoffmeier, chap. 6.
- 15 Read Wright: chap. 8.
- 22 Read Fretheim: Part 5; Sarna: chap. 6; Wright: chap. 10;  
Hoffmeier, chaps. 7-10.
- Nov. 5 Read Fretheim: Part 6; Sarna: chap. 7; Wright: chap. 9.
- 12 Read Sarna: chap. 8; Wright: chaps. 5, 11.
- 19 Read Fretheim: Part 7; Sarna: chap. 9.
- 26 Read Fretheim: Part 8.
- Dec. 3 Read Fretheim: Part 9; Wright: chap. 6.

*Record the percentages for the appropriate options below. Then sign (legibly and in English) and date this statement. Due: December 3.*

I have  / have not  viewed the PowerPoint / flash tutorial described in section IX.  
(Check appropriate box)

I completed \_\_\_\_\_ % of the assigned readings by the due dates.

I completed \_\_\_\_\_ % of the assigned readings after the due dates.

I failed to complete \_\_\_\_\_ % of the assigned readings.

NB: The total of the preceding percentages cannot exceed 100%!!

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please print your name (in English!) \_\_\_\_\_

### ***Supplement: Important Academic Notes from ACTS***

#### **Web Support – Student Portal <https://students.twu.ca>**

All students at TWU have a TWUPass username and password. This is determined at the time of an online application or can be managed through the computing services help desk or the link on the student portal. Your student email account is also available through this student portal and is vital for communication about grades, account statements, lost passwords, sign-up instructions, etc. If you do not know your account or password, there is a link at the login area called “I forgot my password.” When you click on that link, you will be walked through the process of retrieving your account information.

#### **Campus Closure**

In the event of deteriorating weather conditions overnight or other emergency situations, every effort will be made to communicate information regarding the cancellation of classes to the radio stations CKNW (980 AM), CKWX (1130 AM), MAX (850 AM), PRAISE (106.5 FM) and KARI (550 AM) by 6:30 a.m., and an announcement will be placed on the University's switchboard as well as on the website <http://www.twu.ca/conditions/>. The first announcement regarding a closure will cover the period up to 1:00 p.m. only. If classes are to be cancelled beyond 1:00 p.m., this decision will be announced by the same means before 11:00 a.m. that day. Students and faculty should assume that all night classes will continue to operate. If the emergency continues into the evening, students and faculty may check for a closure notice on the University's switchboard and website after 3:00 p.m. that day.

#### **Paper Formatting**

Students need to adhere to Turabian format except in counselling courses, for which APA format is used.

Students are encouraged strongly to use RefWorks (available through the library home page [www.twu.ca/library](http://www.twu.ca/library)) as their bibliographical manager and as a tool for formatting bibliographies. They will need to be aware of the need to “clean up” most bibliographies generated by this program. Students are encouraged to view the documents on the following websites for format samples: <http://faculty.ucc.edu/egh-damerow/turabian.htm> or [www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/](http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/). Note that in RefWorks the available formatting styles are those of Turabian (Notes), 6th edition, and APA – American Psychological Association, 5th edition.

Counselling students are expected to purchase the APA Publications Manual. More information found at the following website. <http://www.apastyle.org/pubmanual.html>.

CANIL students can locate this on the CANIL intranet, under the “student” side. A hard copy is given to incoming students in the fall.

**Please check with your professor to see which one he/she recommends you use!!**

### **Research Ethics**

Please note that all research projects involving human participants undertaken by members of the TWU university community (including projects done by ACTS students to satisfy course or degree requirements) **MUST** be approved by the Trinity Western University Research Ethics Board. Information and forms may be found at <http://www.twu.ca/research/ethics/Main.asp>. Those needing additional clarification may contact Dr. Bruce Guenther. Please allow at least three (3) weeks from the date of submission for a review of the application.

### **Academic Integrity and Avoiding Plagiarism at TWU**

As Christian scholars pursuing higher education, academic integrity is a core value of the entire TWU community. Students are invited into this scholarly culture and required to abide by the principles of sound academic scholarship at TWU. This includes, but is not limited to, avoiding all forms of plagiarism and cheating in scholarly work. TWU has a strict policy on plagiarism (see academic calendar 2008-09, pp. 37-38). Further details on this subject are contained in the ACTS Student Handbook in section 4.12. The handbook is available online on the ACTS webpage ([www.acts.twu.ca](http://www.acts.twu.ca)) at the following link: [www.acts.twu.ca/Handbook.html](http://www.acts.twu.ca/Handbook.html).

Learning what constitutes plagiarism and avoiding it is the student's responsibility. An excellent resource describing plagiarism and how to avoid it has been prepared by TWU Librarian William Badke and is freely available for download (PPT file) or used as flash (self running) tutorials of varying lengths from:

<http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/plagiarism.ppt>

<http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/Plagiarism.swf> (14 minute flash tutorial)

[http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/Plagiarism\\_Short.swf](http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/Plagiarism_Short.swf) (8 minute flash tutorial)

### **Equity of Access**

It is the responsibility of a student with a learning disability to inform the ACTS Director of Student Life of that fact before the beginning of a course so that necessary arrangements may be made to facilitate the student's learning experience. We are unable to accommodate any student who informs the Director of Student Life of a disability after the beginning of class.