

**The Pathos of God:
The Literature and Theology of the Prophets**
LPTS: OT3043; Bellarmine: MAS 560
Schlegel Hall 120
September, 2008

Faculty:

Professor W. Eugene March

Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary; Phone: 502-896-4386; Office hours
TBA

emarch@lpts.edu

This online syllabus should be used to gain a better understanding of the content and focus of a course. The syllabus given out in the class may differ from this online version and its content supersedes that of the online syllabus.

Course description:

In this course attention will be given to the variety of ways God is characterized, primarily in the Old Testament Prophetic Literature, as acting, reacting vis-à-vis the world, and more especially humankind. Some of the questions considered are: how does God affect the world; how does God feel; how is God righteous, merciful, and just? The dynamic engagement of the divine with the human will be emphasized over against more static or deistic views. The aim will be to understand and consider the piety of passion and engagement modeled by the prophets. There will be faculty lectures, student presentations, discussions, and written projects.

Course Objectives:

At the conclusion of this course a student will have demonstrated the ability:

- 21 to discuss some of the major currents in the contemporary study of Biblical Theology with emphasis on the Old Testament prophetic literature;
- 22 to identify some of the major ways the Bible describes God relating to creation;
- 23 to describe in some detail several of the “attributes” of God related to the divine pathos;
- 24 to describe the prophetic piety of passion and engagement.

Means of Evaluation:

A student’s grade in this course will be determined on the basis of performance on the following tasks:

- (1) regular preparation and participation in class sessions (30%);

- (2) participation in the preparation and presentation of a group report to the class (25%);
- (3) a research paper between 14-18 pages in length which develops some aspect of the topic of the course of particular interest to the student (45%).

NOTE: Any papers turned in that show use of secondary sources that are not cited properly will be returned without credit. Be aware that when you summarize information, even when you give the complete documentation information, your summaries should be in your words and not retain too much of the original author's style. To present the ideas or writing of someone else as if they were your own is considered plagiarism. School and departmental policies on academic honesty must be followed (consult the Student Handbook for details).

Attendance policy: Students are expected to attend and actively participate in each scheduled class meeting.

Disability/Accommodation Policy: Students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids or services) for this course must contact the Dean of Students (Room 105 Nelson Hall, phone 895-3411, ext.367) or the Disability Services Coordinator (Room 225 Horrigan Hall, phone 452-8150).

Required Reading:

Farley, W., Tragic Vision and Divine Compassion: A Contemporary Theodicy
Heschel, A., The Prophets

Selected Bibliography:

Clements, R.E., Old Testament Theology
Eichrodt, W., Theology of the Old Testament
Fierman, M., Leap of Action: Ideas in the Theology of Abraham Joshua Heschel
Fretheim, T., The Suffering of God
Hasel, G., Old Testament Theology: Basic Issues in the Current Debate
Merkle, J., The Genesis of Faith: The Depth Theology of Abraham Joshua Heschel
Terrian, S., The Elusive Presence
von Rad, G., The Old Testament

Inclusive Language:

It is important to avoid divisive terms that reinforce stereotypes or are pejorative. To accomplish this, you should strive to use language that does not leave out part of the population, perpetuate stereotyping, or diminish importance. Gender specific pronouns, when gender is unknown, should be avoided.

Biased language is also a common problem in reference to issues of race, national origin, age,

politics, religion, health and abilities, and sexual orientation. Be especially sensitive when dealing with these issues.

All contemporary writing books contain sections on how to address this issue, the Academic Support Center has handouts, and/or the Library can be of assistance.

Grading Scale:

- A 4 quality points earned per hour
- B 3 quality points earned per hour
- C 2 quality points earned per hour
- F 0 quality points earned per hour
- I Incomplete (0 hours, 0 points)
- W Withdrawal
- AU Audit (0 hours, 0 points)

