

## Introduction to the Study Guide

This Select Multimedia Resources course can be used in a variety of ways. The following are 4 ways we have thought of. Users are welcome to come up with further ways to use the resource as a whole or in part.

Using the lectures and discussion questions included with the lectures (*This CD Rom contains a printable page of the discussion questions for each section*) :

- 1) Use a session, or some of the 20 minute segments of a session, as an introduction for a Bible study series on a particular book of the Old Testament or section of the Old Testament.
- 2) Use the DVD course, which includes discussion questions between each section, with a local group (congregational or across congregations) Do the assigned readings to support the lectures and discussion.

**Going even deeper.** Using the Study Guide for in depth study. Those who are using this course for preparation for the Associate in Ministry roster will need to use one of the methods below:

- 3) Use the Study Guide with a local group. This will require meeting either twice a week or working with a session over 2 weeks. Come to the first gathering having read the assigned reading. Watch the sections of a session together as a group, stopping to use the discussion questions between each section. (About 2 hours.) Before meeting for a second time on this session do the written assignment included in the Study Guide. (*Completing these assignments can be in a rough form. Their main purpose is to have individuals encounter the text more deeply in preparation for discussion with one another.*) Meet again (for about 1 hour) to share some of the work that participants did and to participate together in an in depth discussion based on the assignments. (*This 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting could be in person, by conference call, or an online chat.*) Write a final paper at the end of the course.
- 4) Take this course in an online version with participants from across the country with a facilitator/theologian. The online version will include the reading assignments, watching the lectures, doing the assignment from the study guide, and participating in online discussions. Write a final paper to be read by the class facilitator.

## Introducing the Old Testament

**Textbook:** Michael D. Coogan, *The Old Testament. A Historical and Literary Introduction to the Hebrew Scriptures*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Website: The Old Testament and the Ancient Near East  
(<http://prophetess.lstc.edu/~rklein>)

### 1. Canon and Exegesis

Canon, historical critical exegesis (and other methods), timeline of Old Testament history, Old Testament or Hebrew Bible; BCE; relationship of Old Testament to Judaism, relationship of Old Testament to the New Testament, relationship of the Old Testament to the church today.

**Reading:** Coogan, Appendix: The Canons of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament 545-549; Chronology 550-557; Glossary 560-565; Supplementary Klein, "Reading the Bible as Lutherans in the Twenty-First Century."  
(<http://prophetess.lstc.edu/~rklein>)

### 2. The Primeval History—Genesis 1-11

**Reading:** Coogan, Chapter 1 Creations, 3-20; Chapter 3 Primeval History, 31-42; Supplementary: Chapter 2 The Formation of the Pentateuch, 21-30

### 3. The Ancestral History—Sarah and Abraham

**Reading:** Coogan, Chapter 5 The Ancestors of Israel, 63-84; Supplementary: Chapter 4 The Promised Land: Geography, History, and Ideology, 45-62

### 4. Exodus and the Decalogue; Deuteronomy

**Reading:** Coogan Chapter 6 Escape from Egypt 85-119; Chapter 11 The End of the Journey to the Promised Land, 173-190

### 5. The Deuteronomistic History (especially the Book of Samuel)

**Reading:** Coogan Chapter 12 Joshua and the Conquest of the Land, 191-193 only [The Deuteronomistic History]; Chapter 14 The Establishment of the Monarchy, 231-247; Chapter 15 The Reign of David, 248-265;

Supplementary: Chapter 16 The Reign of Solomon, 266-306; Klein "The Secret Things and the Things Revealed: Reactions to the Exile in the Deuteronomistic History" (<http://prophetess.lstc.edu/~rklein/>) first drop down menu under Deuteronomistic History.

**6. Amos and Prophecy; the First Isaiah and the Messiah**

**Reading:** Coogan, Chapter 18, The Northern Kingdom of Israel in the Eighth Century, 307-326; Chapter 19 The Kingdom of Judah in the Eighth and Early Seventh Centuries BCE 327-348

**7. Jeremiah**

**Reading:** Coogan Chapter 21 The Fall of Jerusalem, 359-377.  
Klein “Saying Yes to Exile—and No! Reactions to the Exile in the Book of Jeremiah” (<http://prophetess.lstc.edu/~rklein>) first drop down menu under Prophets and look at the listings under Jeremiah.

**8. The Exile, Second Isaiah, and the Servant**

**Reading:** Coogan Chapter 22 After the Fall: Jews in Judah and Babylon, 381-386 only; Chapter 23 Return from Exile, 401-416; Klein: “Yahweh Willing and Able.” (<http://prophetess.lstc.edu/~rklein>) first drop down menu under Prophets and look under Second Isaiah.

**9. Job**

**Reading:** Coogan Chapter 28 Dissidents and Lovers, 479-498

**10. Psalms**

**Reading:** Coogan Chapter 27 The Consolidation of Traditions 456-476

## Introducing the Old Testament

**Textbook:** Michael D. Coogan, *The Old Testament. A Historical and Literary Introduction to the Hebrew Scriptures*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Website: The Old Testament and the Ancient Near East  
(<http://prophetess.lstc.edu/~rklein>)

### Lesson 1. Canon and Exegesis (Ralph W. Klein )

Reading: Coogan, Appendix: The Canons of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament 545-549; Chronology 550-557; Glossary 560-565  
Supplementary: Klein, "Reading the Bible as Lutherans in the Twenty-First Century." <http://prophetess.lstc.edu/~rklein/Doc9/metrochicago.doc>

#### Section 1

- I. The Old Testament Canon (Tenak)
  - A. Content of the Canon (Jews and Protestants; the significance of the different order in these two canons)

Pentateuch—Law—Instruction: (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy)  
Prophets: Former Prophets Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings;  
Latter Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Twelve Minor Prophets  
Writings: Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ruth, Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah Chronicles

    - Roman Catholic
    - Eastern Orthodox
    - Lutherans and the canon.
  - B. The Date of the Canon: 400 BCE; 200 BCE; 90 CE  
What we know and what we don't know
  - C. The text of the Hebrew Bible: Masoretic Text, Septuagint, Dead Sea Scrolls

#### Questions for Discussion Reflection

1. Reflect on the canonical lists on pp. 546-547 of Coogan. How are the lists the same? How do they differ?
2. Throughout the course, use the glossary on pp. 560-565 frequently. Create your own list of new terms
3. What is the significance of not having copies of the original Old Testament?

## Section 2

- II. Old Testament or Hebrew Bible? B.C. or B.C.E.?  
Continuities and discontinuities with Jewish readings  
What it meant and what it might mean
  
- III. A Brief Overview of Old Testament History
  - A. Ancestral period 2000-1700
  - B. Israel in Egypt ca. 1700-late 13<sup>th</sup> century
  - C. Exodus and “Conquest” Late 13<sup>th</sup>/early 12<sup>th</sup> century
  - D. The Period of the Judges 1150-1025
  - E. The United Monarchy 1025-928
  - F. The Divided Monarchy 928-586
  - G. Israel in Babylonian Exile 586-539
  - H. The Post-Exilic (Persian) Period 539-332
  - I. The Hellenistic Period 332-63
  - J. The Roman conquest 63 B.C. E.

### **Questions for Discussion/Reflection**

1. Why should there be similarities in theology between Christians and Jews?
2. Can stories be true if their history is unknown?
3. Which period of Israelite history offered the greatest challenge to their faith?

## Section 3

- IV. How have people read the Scriptures over the ages?
  - The four fold method in the Middle Ages: Literal, allegorical, tropological, and eschatological
  - Luther’s approach to Scripture and Biblical Authority
  - How do we read the Bible today:
  - The Historical Critical Method
  - Narratological and sociological methods
  - Reading from social location (everyone has one; African American readings; feminist readings, etc.)
  - Reading as believers
  
- V. The Old Testament/Hebrew Bible and the New Testament
  - The Bible of the earliest church
  - The Peshet exegesis in the Dead Sea Scrolls
  - Promise and fulfillment
  - What’s new and what’s old about Christianity

### **Questions for Discussion/Reflection**

1. Reflect on the fact that our predecessors 500 and more years ago read the Bible in a much different way than we do, and yet came to similar faith conclusions.

2. In what ways should we read the Bible like any other book? In what ways do we read it unlike any other book?

If exegetical methods of the New Testament or the Middle Ages seem archaic to us, how will our successors 200 years from now view our methods of reading the Bible?

## Section 4

- VI. How and why do we read the Old Testament in and for the church today  
Sunday services; adult forums; personal study.

Is Marcion still alive?

Bible translations: NRSV, NIV, TEB, other.

Study Bibles.

- VII. What we hope to do in this course

While this first lesson is mostly survey, in subsequent lessons we will always look at one or more significant biblical texts and unpack its meaning.

Textbook, Michael Coogan; websites The Old Testament and the Ancient near East; leaders Kathryn Schifferdecker, and Ralph W. Klein

### **Questions for Discussion/Reflection**

1. Write down two or three hopes or expectations as you begin this class and two or three anxieties as you begin this class. Reflect on them later in the course and when the course is over.
2. Why do you think the church needs the Old Testament?

### **Written Assignment**

Write a two page essay in which you reflect on how the Bible has been read during the course of Christian history and your own past experience in reading and studying the Old Testament.

## **Lesson 2: The Primeval History Genesis 1-11 (Ralph W. Klein)**

**Reading:** Coogan, Chapter 1 Creations, 3-20; Chapter 3 Primeval History, 31-42. Supplementary: Chapter 2: The Formation of the Pentateuch, 21-30. Also supplementary: The Primeval Story by Barry Bandstra. Go to <http://prophetess.lstc.edu/~rklein>. On the first drop down menu, select Pentateuch, and then Genesis. Scroll down to Genesis 1-11 where you will find this essay.

### Section 1

- **The Story of Creation in “P” and the Babylonian Creation Story**

#### **Questions for discussion/reflection:**

1. Since we are God’s good creatures, and placed in charge of God’s creation, what responsibility should we exercise in our rule of the earth? Does our giftedness have implications for things like art and music? Does our rulership make issues like global warming and conservation top priorities?
2. In what ways is our contemporary culture a challenge to our faith, just as the Enuma Elish was a challenge to the faith of Israel? How can we meet the challenge of our culture?

### Section 2

- **The Second Creation Story in Genesis 2:4b and following**

#### **Question for discussion/reflection:**

If the world is a very divided place, as indeed it is, what might be God’s good news for this bad situation?

### Section 3

- **The Biblical and Babylonian Flood Stories**

#### **Question for discussion/reflection:**

Are we prepared to live out our Christian life in an imperfect world with all its problems?

### Section 4

- **The Conclusions to the Flood Narrative**
- **Genesis 9:1-17**
- **Genesis 9:18-27**
- **The Primeval History and Real History**

#### **Questions for discussion/reflection:**

What is the relationship between science and the Bible? Between Primeval History and Real History?

**Written Assignment**

The last segment of the lecture talked about the interface between science and religion, and specifically between creation and evolution. Write an essay in which you reflect on what was said in the lecture on this question and give your own assessment about a Christian response to creation and evolution. (Approximately 2 pages double spaced.)



### **Lesson 3: Lecture on Sarah and Abraham (Ralph W. Klein)**

**Reading:** Coogan, Chapter 5 the Ancestors of Israel, 63-84. Supplementary: Coogan Chapter 4 The Promised Land: Geography, History, and Ideology. Also supplementary by Ralph W. Klein, "The Yahwist Looks at Abraham." <http://prophetess.lstc.edu/~rklein/> and look under Documents by RWK and Choose Selected Other Documents. The very last item on this list is "The Yahwist Looks at Abraham."

#### Section 1

- **Go to the Land that I will show you Gen 12:1-3**
- **Gen 12:10-20 The Endangering of the Ancestress Sarah**

#### **Questions for discussion/reflection:**

What are our options in our congregations or in our daily life to bring blessings to the nations?

Extra credit: In addition to reading Gen 12:10-20, I would encourage you to read a similar story in Gen 20:1-18. This story is told in quite a different way. How does God reveal himself in Gen 12 and Gen 20? Was Sarah kept safe sexually in Gen 12? In Gen 20? Did Abraham tell the truth about Sarah being his sister in Gen 12? In Gen 20? Abraham also received animals and servants in Genesis 20. How does the timing of this gift in Gen 20 make a difference? What title is Abraham given in Gen 20? What is he to do in that capacity?

#### Section 2

- **Genesis 15:1-6 Abraham and righteousness**
- **Genesis 15:7-21 Yahweh invokes upon himself a curse**
- **Genesis 17:1-23 The Everlasting Covenant**

#### **Questions for discussion/reflection:**

1. Consider times when you like Abraham found it hard to believe in God. What promises of God have been especially meaningful to you at such times?
2. Secondly, is the everlasting covenant God made with Sarah and Abraham still valid for Jews today?

### Section 3

- **Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar**

#### **Questions for discussion/reflection:**

1. Did Sarah and Abraham fail to trust the promise in the stories about Hagar, or did they think that God would not carry out his promise without them doing their own part to help out?
2. Why do you and I have so great difficulty accepting people who are seen as “other?”

### Section 4

- **The Birth of Isaac Gen 18:1-15; 21:1-7**
- **The Near Sacrifice of Isaac Genesis 22:1-14**
- **The Death and Burial of Sarah**
- **Conclusion**

#### **Questions for Discussion/reflection:**

1. Spend some time reflecting on the meaning of the story of the sacrifice of Isaac. Read it aloud to catch its power and its beauty.
2. Consider and reflect upon this modern translation of the Lord’s Prayer: Save us from the time of trial.

#### **Written Assignment**

The lecture discussed Gen 12:10-20, but a similar story appears in Gen 20:1-18 where it is told with quite different emphases and possibly by a different writer. Write an essay that addresses the following questions: How does God reveal himself in Gen 12 and Gen 20? Was Sarah kept safe sexually in Gen 12? In Gen 20? Did Abraham tell the truth about Sarah being his sister in Gen 12? In Gen 20? Abraham also received animals and servants in Genesis 20. How does the timing of this gift in Gen 20 make a difference? What title is Abraham given in Gen 20? What is he to do in that capacity?

## Lesson 4: Exodus and the Decalogue; Deuteronomy (Kathryn Schifferdecker)

**Reading:** Exodus 1-4; 12-15; 20; Deuteronomy 5-6, 34

Coogan, Chapter 6 “Escape from Egypt,” pp. 85-119; chapter 11 “The End of the Journey to the Promised Land,” pp. 173-190

**For further study:** Resources at Prof. Klein’s website:

(<http://prophetess.lstc.edu/~rklein>). Look under “Pentateuch” and then “Exodus” and “Deuteronomy” for these resources.

Terence Fretheim, *The Pentateuch* (Abingdon Press, 1996)

Jon Levenson, *Sinai and Zion* (Harper Collins, 1985)

### Section 1

#### I. Introduction to the Pentateuch

#### II. Exodus 1-15

#### Questions for Discussion/Reflection:

1. What images come to your mind when you think about the story of the Exodus? Do these images come from Sunday School, movies, Bible studies?
2. What moves you in this story of the Exodus? What troubles you?
3. What do you know of the rest of the book of Exodus, after the miracle at the Red Sea?

### Section 2

#### III. Exodus 16-40

#### IV. Deuteronomy

#### Questions for Discussion/Reflection:

1. The Israelites are given freedom in the Exodus. Is this freedom only a freedom *from* something, or is it also freedom *for* something?
2. How have you understood law in the Old Testament? Important? Outdated? Boring?
3. Do you understand the Sinai covenant in Exodus as a love relationship, as Jon Levenson argues? What can we learn as Christians from this Jewish understanding of Torah?

## Section 3

### V. The Ten Commandments or Decalogue

### VI. Conclusion

- Law as gift
- The end of the Pentateuch and the death of Moses

### **Questions for Reflection/Discussion:**

1. What role do (or should) the Ten Commandments have in the life of the church?
2. In what ways might the Law be understood as a gift?
3. In what ways have the stories of Exodus and Deuteronomy (the stories of the Exodus, Sinai, and the Promised Land) shaped your own understanding of God? Of faith?

**Written Assignment:** Write a two-page essay on one major theme you've noticed in your study of the Pentateuch (for example: covenant, law, liberation, God's call, God's faithfulness, etc.). How does that theme from the Pentateuch resonate in your own life and ministry?

## **Lesson 5: The Deuteronomistic History: Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings (Ralph W. Klein)**

**Reading:** Coogan Chapter 12 Joshua and the Conquest of the Land, 191-193 only [The Deuteronomistic History]; Chapter 14 The Establishment of the Monarchy, 231-247; Chapter 15 The Reign of David, 248-265;

Supplementary: Chapter 16 The Reign of Solomon, 266-306; Klein “The Secret Things and the Things Revealed: Reactions to the Exile in the Deuteronomistic History” (<http://prophetess.lstc.edu/~rklein/>) first drop down menu under DTR (Joshua-Kings) and then scroll down to Introduction to the Deuteronomistic History and this title is the seventh starred item.

### Section 1

- **Introduction to the Deuteronomistic History**

#### **Questions for discussion/reflection:**

1. What are your reflections on the instructor’s interpretation of the Battle of Qarqar?
2. What do you think about understanding Joshua-2 Kings as the Deuteronomistic History?

### Section 2

- **The book of Joshua**
- **The book of Judges**
- **The books of Samuel**
- **1 Samuel 12 Samuel’s Farewell Sermon**

#### **Questions for discussion/reflection:**

The Deuteronomistic History is based on the doctrine of retribution: good deeds have good consequences, bad deeds have bad consequences. How is this doctrine helpful? How is it problematical?

### Section 3

- **2 Samuel 7 The Oracle of Nathan**
- **1 and 2 Kings**
- **1 Kings 8: Solomon’s Prayer at the dedication of the temple**
- **The Division of the Kingdom**
- **The Fall of the Two Kingdoms**

#### **Questions for discussion/reflection:**

1. What promises in the Bible give you hope when you face troubling times?
2. In what old and new ways does Jesus fulfill the promises made to David?

### **Written Assignment**

On the basis of 2 Kgs 17:7-23, write an essay that describes how this sermon interprets the fall of the Northern Kingdom.

## Lesson 6. The Prophets: Amos and Isaiah

### Amos and Prophecy; the First Isaiah and the Messiah (Ralph W. Klein)

**Reading:** Coogan, Chapter 18, The Northern Kingdom of Israel in the Eighth Century, 307-326; Chapter 19 The Kingdom of Judah in the Eighth and Early Seventh Centuries BCE 327-348

### Website: The Old Testament and the Ancient Near East

<http://prophetess.lstc.edu/~rklein>. Look in the first drop down menu under the word Prophets. Click the reference to Isaiah at the top of the page or to the Twelve Minor Prophets, where you will find information on Amos.

## Section 1

- I. Introduction to the Prophets
- II. Amos
  - A. Turning the world upside down
    - Amos 3:1-2 and election
    - Amos 5:18-20 The day of Yahweh
    - Amos 9:7 Exodus—Everybody's had an Exodus
  - B. The Compulsion to Prophesy
    - Amos 3:3-8

### Questions for Discussion/Reflection

1. Why are we so shy about bearing witness to our faith or correcting someone who is behaving in an inappropriate manner? Why do we have to be urged to do evangelism?
2. Consider this as well: Is the compulsion of Amos to speak also a dangerous thing? Is he somewhat of a fanatic?

## Section 2

- C. The Visions of Amos
  - Amos 7:1-3, 4-6, 7-8; 8:1-2; 9:1-4

### Questions for Discussion/Reflection

1. Did Amos over do it in denouncing the people?
2. Why does he not make a distinction between the righteous and the sinners?

## Section 3

- D. The Limits to God's Patience  
Amos 4:6-12
- E. Liturgy and Life  
Amos 5:21-24
- F. The Incident with Amaziah  
Amos 7:10-17
- G. The Last Words of Amos  
Amos 9:11-15

### **Questions for Discussion/Reflection**

1. In our work for social justice, what do we think about the people whose actions we criticize? Do we think of ourselves as superior to them?
2. Is God's final answer always yes?

## Section 4

### III. Isaiah--and the Messiah

Isa 7:9 a call to faith  
Isa 30:15-16 critique of military alliances  
Isa 6:1-8 The call of the prophet

- A. The basis of the messianic hope 2 Sam 7:1-16
- B. The child with the wondrous name Isa 9:1-7: Wonderful Counselor; Mighty God; Everlasting Father; Prince of Peace or

The Mighty God is Planning a Wonder  
The Everlasting Father is Planning to give an Officer of Peace

- C. A shoot from the stump of Jesse Isa 11:1-9
- D. The Old Testament Messiah and the New Testament Christ

### **Questions for Discussion/Reflection:**

1. How does the description of the Old Testament Messiah in this lecture help us to understand the reactions of Jews then and now to the message of Jesus?
2. How might you or your congregation implement signs of the messianic age?

**Written assignment:** On the basis of the exegesis of the two messianic passages in Isaiah, read carefully Isaiah 11:10-16. Write a short essay (about two pages) in which you describe what is said in these verses about the messiah or about the messianic age.



## Lesson 7. Jeremiah (Ralph W. Klein)

**Reading:** Coogan Chapter 21 The Fall of Jerusalem, 359-377.  
Klein “Saying Yes to Exile—and No! Reactions to the Exile in the Book of Jeremiah” (<http://prophetess.lstc.edu/~rklein>) Look under the first drop down menu under Prophets and then click on the hyperlink for Jeremiah. This essay will be found there.

### Section 1

#### I. Introduction to the Book

Biography and History of his times  
The Makeup of the Book of Jeremiah  
    A words, B words, C words  
    Words of Jeremiah and the Deuteronomistic redaction  
    The Hebrew text of Jeremiah and the Greek translation called the Septuagint (LXX)

#### II. The Call of Jeremiah 1:4-10

##### **Questions for discussion/reflection**

1. In what ways have you been called by God? How did you experience that call?
2. How satisfying was Yahweh’s response to the anxieties expressed by Jeremiah?
3. Can you think of other examples in the Bible when God’s final answer was Yes?

### Section 2

#### III. Symbolic actions: 16:1-4; 18:1-11; 19:1-2, 10-13; 24:1-10; 27:2-28:17; 32:6-15;

##### **Questions for discussion/reflection**

1. Do you see any similarity between the symbolic actions of Jeremiah and the parables of Jesus?
2. Some scholars have proposed that Jeremiah used symbolic acts as a dramatic way to emphasize his message and to try to convince people of his reliability. How would you have decided between Jeremiah and Hananiah?
3. Faith is trusting in Yahweh, all evidence to the contrary notwithstanding. Do you agree? Why?

### Section 3

#### III. Jeremiah’s Confessions 20:7-18

#### IV. Jeremiah’s Temple Sermon Jeremiah 7 and 26

V. Jeremiah's Letters to the exiles 29:1-9; 51:59-64

V. The Biography of Jeremiah Jeremiah 36-45

VI. Jeremiah's Promise of a Coming King (Messiah) Jer 23:5-6; 33:14-16

VII. The New Covenant 31:31-34

**Questions for discussion/reflection**

1. What continuities or discontinuities do you see between Jer 23:5-6 and its fulfillment in Jesus?
2. How might the translation "renewed covenant" be beneficial in interfaith discussions?

**Written assignment:** Write a two page essay reflecting on the double message of Jeremiah: Saying Yes to Exile—and No!

## **Lesson 8. The Exile, Second Isaiah, and the Servant (Ralph W. Klein)**

**Reading:** Coogan Chapter 22 After the Fall: Jews in Judah and Babylon, 381-386 only; Chapter 23 Return from Exile, 401-416; Klein: “Yahweh Willing and Able.” (<http://prophetess.lstc.edu/~rklein>) Look in first drop down menu under Prophets and look under Second Isaiah where you will find this essay.

### Section 1

Responses to the exile in

- The Deuteronomistic History
- Lamentations
- The Priestly writer in the Pentateuch
- Ezekiel

### **And in Second Isaiah (Isaiah 40-55)**

- I. The reasons for identifying a Second Isaiah

#### **Questions for Discussion/Reflection**

1. Exile was a time of great loss and of threats to the faith. Discuss which of these losses would have been most difficult for you.
2. Note that several biblical authors offered responses to Israel’s exile. Which of them seems most attractive to you? What do you think of the canon containing such disparate, almost contradictory, responses?

### Section 2

- II. The call of Second Isaiah Isa 40:1-8
- III. The return of the Divine Warrior Isa 40:9-11
- IV. The Conclusion of Second Isaiah Isa 55:10-13
- V. Creation and Mythology Isa 51:9-11
- VI. The Messenger’s Beautiful Feet Isa 52:7-10
- VII. A Disputation Isa 44:24-45:13; 40:12-31

#### **Questions for Discussion/Reflection**

1. Why was there resistance to Second Isaiah’s message?

2. Do we see God's hand at work in those who are not Christians, just as Second Isaiah found God's anointed one to be Cyrus the Persian?

### Section 3

VIII. A Lawsuit against the gods 41:21-29. See also 41:1-5; 43:8-13; 44:6-8; 45:18-25

IX. Oracles of Salvation 41:8-13, 14-16; 43:1-4; 5-7; 44:1-5; 54:4-6

X. The Servant of Yahweh 42:1-4; 49:1-6; 50:4-9; 52:13-53:12

### **Questions for discussion/reflection**

1. What role do the servant poems play in Second Isaiah's overall response to the exile?
2. In what ways can you identify with ancient Israel the servant? With Jesus as servant.

### **Written assignment:**

Write a two page essay in which you discuss the Oracles of Salvation not treated in this class: 43:1-4, 5-7; 44:1-5; 54:4-6. What is comforting to you about these oracles? What causes you difficulty?

## Lesson 9: The Book of Job (Kathryn Schifferdecker)

**Reading:** Job 1-3, 18-19, 29-31, 38-42

Coogan, Chapter 28 “Dissidents and Lovers,” pp. 479-498

**For further study:** Resources at Prof. Klein’s website:

(<http://prophetess.lstc.edu/~rklein>). Look under “Writings” and then “Job” for these resources.

J. Gerald Janzen, *Job* (John Knox Press, 1985)

Ellen Davis, *Getting Involved with God: Rediscovering the Old Testament* (Cowley, 2001)

### Section 1

#### I. Background and Structure

- Outline of the book
- Authorship and Date

#### II. Prologue (Job 1-2)

#### Questions for Discussion/Reflection:

1. What do you know about the story of Job? Can you think of any parallels to the story in literature or movies?
2. What is your initial reaction to the prologue? Would you agree with Virginia Woolf’s statement: “I read the book of Job last night. I don’t think God comes out of it well”?
3. How is your answer to the previous question influenced by the knowledge that the book of Job is not recording historical events?

### Section 2

#### III. Poetic Dialogue (Job 3-37)

#### Questions for Discussion/Reflection:

1. What sorts of things do people say to those who are going through great suffering? Which are helpful? Which are unhelpful?
2. What is the value of speaking to God and not just about God?
3. Have you ever felt like Job? Have you lamented to God? What is the value of lament? (See Ps. 13 for another example of lament.)

### Section 3

#### IV. The Divine Speeches (Job 38-41)

- The theme of procreation
- The place of humanity in creation
- God’s ordering of creation

**Questions for Discussion/Reflection:**

1. What is your initial reaction to the divine speeches in the book of Job? Is God simply putting Job in his place, or is something else going on?
2. Job's focus is taken off himself in the divine speeches, and he is made to consider things and creatures outside of his social world. Is such an approach helpful, do you think, to a person who is suffering? Why or why not?
3. How would you compare the view of humanity in the divine speeches to the views of humanity elsewhere in the Bible? (Look at Psalm 8, or Gen. 1:26-31.)

Section 4

V. The Epilogue (Job 42)

VI. Conclusions

**Questions for Discussion/Reflection:**

1. What are your reactions to this interpretation of Job? Does Job's story reflect your own experience in any way, or the experience of someone you know?
2. How do we as Christians talk about suffering, given our claim that God in Christ has entered into our suffering on the cross?
3. How might the book of Job be used in pastoral care situations?

**Written Assignment:** Write a two-page essay about the divine speeches at the end of Job (chapters 38-41). What is your reaction to these speeches? What do you find comforting or helpful? What disturbs you?

## Lesson 10: Psalms (Kathryn Schifferdecker)

**Reading:** Psalms 1, 2, 13, 22, 104, 122, 136, 137, 148, 150  
Coogan, chapter 27, “The Consolidation of Traditions,” pp. 456-476

**For further study:** Resources at Prof. Klein’s website: (<http://prophetess.lstc.edu/~rklein>).  
Look under “Writings” and then “Psalms” for these resources.  
Eugene Peterson, *Answering God: The Psalms as Tools for Prayer* (HarperCollins, 1991)  
James Limburg, *Psalms* (Westminster John Knox, 2000)

### Section 1

#### I. Introduction

- Authorship and date
- King David and the Psalms
- The five “books” of Psalms
- Beginning and ending (Psalms 1-2 and 146-150)

#### Questions for Discussion/Reflection:

1. What is your favorite psalm? Why is it your favorite?
2. How are the Psalms used in your church? Can you think of specific times in the liturgy or in the church year when a psalm is used? (Psalm 22, for instance, is often read on Good Friday.)
3. Talk about the role of music in worship. How does music add to the worship experience for you?

### Section 2

#### II. Psalms as Liturgy

#### III. Lament Psalms

#### Questions for Discussion/Reflection:

1. Read the first few verses of Ps. 22. Jesus prayed this prayer from the cross. Have you ever felt like the psalmist? Have you ever prayed a prayer like this, or known someone who has?
2. How might the church claim (or re-claim) lament in worship? In pastoral care?
3. For an example of how lament may have been used in ancient Israel, read 1 Samuel 1:9-18 (individual lament) and 2 Chronicles 20:3-17 (communal lament). In both instances, a priest or prophet offers a promise of deliverance. Scholars believe such promises were spoken in the liturgy in answer to laments, which resulted in the vow to praise at the end of most laments.
4. How would you answer someone who asked, “Is it all right to be angry with God?”

## Section 3

### IV. Imprecatory Psalms

### V. Creation Psalms

#### **Questions for Discussion/Reflection:**

1. Have you ever encountered the imprecatory psalms before? Read Psalm 58. Can you imagine any time in your life when this psalm might be useful?
2. What does it mean to hand over our “enemies” into God’s hands?
3. Read Psalm 8. Along with Genesis 1-3, the psalmist here asserts that human beings have “dominion” over the rest of creation. How should we exercise that dominion, in light of the other creation psalms (for instance, Psalms 104, 148)?

## Section 4

### VI. Praise Psalms

### VII. Conclusion

#### **Questions for Discussion/Reflection:**

1. “All prayer, pursued far enough, becomes praise,” says Eugene Peterson in his book *Answering God: The Psalms as Tools for Prayer* (p. 127). What do you think of this statement?
2. What effect does singing a song of praise have on you?
3. How do you pray? How might you use the book of Psalms to shape your own prayer life?

**Written Assignment:** Write a two-page essay about one of the following psalms: 24, 51, 121, or 130. How would you characterize the psalm (praise, lament, confession, thanksgiving, blessing, etc.)? How might it have been used in ancient Israel? What does it say to Christians today?