SYLLABUS

1OT501: Exegesis in the OT 1: The Nations in the Minor Prophets
RTS-Jackson
2 credits
Fall 2010
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DT
Get Collins, Mantle of Elijah, for pp 66-83, “Nations as Enemies and Allies” in the Twelve—use him and Roth as dialogue partners.
You need to read Klaus, Roth, Ryou (and reviews), and maybe Seitz, Formation
You’d be wise to write half the book 2010 (six prophets), half 2011 (six prophets), otherwise you’ll cram too much in and work too quickly. Thus wait with Joel until 2011.

Axes for the course

• In what literary genres do the prophets speak about the nations? Note especially appearance of the nations in oracles of salvation addressed (in part?) to Israel, which broaches the question of redefinition, etc. (that will be the focus of your Zeph 3:8-20 paper). Cf. Raabe
• Given that the nations figure in the prophets’ messages across the 8-5th C, what correlation can we show between RH and aspects of the prophets’ treatment of the nations? Cf. OPR, Zapff
• Both within the 12 and elsewhere in the OT (and ultimately NT), what theological elements go into their characterization? In particular, what accounts for the fact that sometimes the nations are judged while in other contexts they are saved? Cf. your SBL Jonah-Nahum paper
• What factors should inform the way that we relate the books of the twelve to one another? (This will be the method section for your SBL Jonah-Nahum paper). Subsume all under synchronic/diachronic, and probe how redaction sees unity as being imposed, contrast it with an authorial-intent approach to individual books, and see what you can do. Cf. Ryou, diss bib

A. COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course constitutes an exegetical study of selected portions of the minor prophets dealing with the non-Israelite “nations.” Attention will be given to literary, historical, and theological facets of the question within the context of biblical theology. Prerequisites include Hebrew 1, Hebrew 2, and Hebrew Exegesis.

B. COURSE OBJECTIVES
1. To understand the basic elements that distinguish contemporary approaches to the Twelve (the Minor Prophets) and to develop a careful hermeneutical approach to the Twelve.
2. To accurately identify the literary genres in which the prophets discuss or address the nations and their significance.
3. To identify the theological characteristics of the nations in the Twelve and so to understand why the nations are sometimes judged and sometimes delivered (the same is true of Israel/Judah) in eschatology, noting the lexical semantics of polysemy, metonymy, and so on.
4. To explore the correlation between redemptive history and the minor prophets’ treatments of the nations, especially in relation to Israel/Judah before and after the exile.
5. To further develop a careful exegetical method that does justice to the richness of the historical, literary, and theological expression of these books in light of their God-breathed nature.
6. To have the content of these books permeate us, rendering us more Christ-like.

C. REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS


Other required readings


New Dictionary of Biblical Theology on Apostasy; Eschatology; Exile; Israel (nation); Land; Nations; OT and NT, relationship of; People of God; Remnant; Righteousness... On reserve

Strongly recommended:


Hays, J. D., From every People and Nation: A biblical theology of race, NSBT 14 (InterVarsity: Downers Grove; Nottingham: Apollos, 2003).


D. COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

This course is designed to help you practice good exegesis and biblical theology, focusing on the proper approaches to the diversity which exists in Scripture’s coherent, harmonious message. This includes

2 D. C. Timmer, RTS-Jackson, 2010
good use of the many tools available to you (dictionaries, etc.) and the various other aspects of learning to work through a passage on your own (abdicating interpretative responsibility is immoral as a reader), and culminates in exploring how Scripture finds its ultimate and multiform fulfillment in Jesus Christ.

Our main concern will be to help you develop an integrated method, a way of thinking theologically about a passage on the basis of the word-, sentence-, and discourse-level work that you’ve done with dictionaries, verbal syntax, literary structure, etc. The process of good interpretation is dependent on your (prayerful) effort even as we recognize our inability to work apart from God’s enabling grace by his Spirit; Ps 119:18, ℎ ejaculation of the word. The following assignments will help you achieve this goal:

1) To ground our study of the prophets, we will typically read some Hebrew every day. Please come to class prepared to sight-read the first 10 verses of the day’s passage.

2) You should read and summarize in 3-5 pages the prophets we’ll study in the course. Focus your summaries on how that prophet portrays Israel and the nations, but be sure to note the other theological themes that go into that presentation (Day of the Lord, sin, remnant, etc.). Each summary is due the first day that we treat that particular prophet.

3) A study of prophecy and/or the nations outside the OT. Study an appropriate ANE text, group of texts, or phenomenon/theme to see how cultures and religions outside Israel/Judah viewed the relation between one nation (and its god(s)) and other nations. Do so using the compare-and-contrast method discussed in class. This paper should be 8-10 pages.

4) Write a paper that deals with one minor prophet’s theology of the nations. This paper should present a thorough analysis of the prophet’s presentation of the nations, and briefly situate it in biblical theology. Pay special attention to instances in which the prophet gives more than one definition to the “nations.” This will involve study of passages that we haven’t covered in class, though you can build on what the lectures covered. Paper should include (a) title page, (b) bibliography, and (c) adequate footnotes, and (d) must interact with at least 5 (five) academic journal/dictionary articles in addition to at least 3 (three) commentaries and other resources. The paper should be about 15 pages, not counting the title page and bibliography. Feel free to discuss the writing of this paper with me during office hours.

Weighting of Assignments
Preparation and participation 10
Study of nations/prophets in ANE 20
Summaries (7) 35
Paper 35

E. MISCELLANEOUS
All written work is to be typed, double-spaced, on 8.5”x11” paper. All main text is to be in a legible 12-pt typeface; footnotes may be in 10- or 12-pt typeface. The cover page should include
• paper title
• your name
• campus mailbox number
• class name
• professor
• date

Be sure that each page after the cover page is numbered. Bibliographies and foot/endnotes are to be prepared according to Turabian’s A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations (6th ed. or later), specifically the “notes-bibliography” style (as opposed to APA style = “Jones 1999, 23-25”).

The grading scale for the course is as follows: late work will be penalized one full letter grade/day.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week, Dates</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading/writing to complete by the beginning of class</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1, 22-28 Aug</td>
<td>— No class —</td>
<td>— No class —</td>
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<tr>
<td>2, 29 Aug-4 Sep</td>
<td>Intro to the 12</td>
<td>NDBT readings; Raabe; Nogalski; Two Sides</td>
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<td>3, 5-11 Sep</td>
<td>— Labor Day, no class —</td>
<td>— Labor Day, no class —</td>
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<td>4, 12-18 Sep</td>
<td>Jonah 1, 3</td>
<td>Jonah summary</td>
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<td>5, 19-25 Sep</td>
<td>Micah 4:9-5:15</td>
<td>Micah summary</td>
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<td>6, 26 Sep-2 Oct</td>
<td>Nahum 1</td>
<td>Nahum summary</td>
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<td>7, 3-9 Oct</td>
<td>Nahum 2-3</td>
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<td>8, 10-16 Oct</td>
<td>— Reading week —</td>
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<td>9, 17-23 Oct</td>
<td>Habakkuk 2</td>
<td>Habakkuk summary</td>
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<td>10, 24-30 Oct</td>
<td>Zephaniah 1</td>
<td>Zephaniah summary</td>
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<td>11, 31 Oct-6 Nov</td>
<td>Zephaniah 2</td>
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<td>12, 7-13 Nov</td>
<td>Zephaniah 3</td>
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<td>13, 14-20 Nov</td>
<td>Zech 2:6-11</td>
<td>Zechariah summary</td>
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<td>14, 21-27 Nov</td>
<td>— SBL/Thanksgiving —</td>
<td>— SBL/Thanksgiving —</td>
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<td>15, 28 Nov-4 Dec</td>
<td>Zechariah 14</td>
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<tr>
<td>16, 5-11 Dec</td>
<td>Malachi 1:2-5, 9-14</td>
<td>Malachi summary; ANE, Nations papers due on “Paper Day”</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**F. COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Bib**


**Christiansen**, D. L. “A New Israel: The Righteous from among All Nations.” Pages 251-59 in *Israel’s Apostasy and Restoration*. “The inclusion of the righteous—those who give YHWH their allegiance—from among all the nations in the new Israel of prophetic vision appears to be a specific and sustained challenge to a narrow nationalistic conception rooted in ancient legal pronouncements. This ancient nationalistic point of view surfaces in the fundamentalist reforms of Ezra and Nehemiah, which excluded all foreigners.” ¹


**Conrad**, E. *Reading the Latter Prophets: Toward a New Canonical Criticism*. LHBOTS. 2003. *Not at RTS*


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Garcia, J. “Meaning.” *DTIS*.

Geyer, John B. “Mythology and Culture in the Oracles against the Nations.” *VT* 3 (1986)


Hasel, Gerhard F. *The Remnant: The History and Theology of the Remnant Idea from Genesis to Isaiah*. Andrews University Monographs 5. Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University Press, 1972. “The OT remnant idea appears to undergo considerable development from its earliest usage in Genesis, where it is from the start intensely theological which shows itself from its immediate incorporation into salvation history up to its usage as a vehicle to express the election of God's people. In the Elijah narratives new aspects will become transparent. A religious-cultural threat leaves a remnant after a past catastrophe and climaxes in the survival of a remnant in the future judgment that has characteristics qualifying it to become the nucleus of a new Israel faithful to Yahweh. Amos will be seen to refute popular remnant hopes while at the same time expressing his hope that a remnant from Israel may emerge from an eschatological judgment. It will become apparent that the remnant idea is a central element in the theology of Isaiah. The notion of a purified and holy remnant will present itself as a main aspect of Isaiah's eschatology. At the same time Isaiah know a non-eschatological-historical remnant of Israel and the nations and | | employs this aspect to call the people back to God in order to create conditions for an eschatological remnant to emerge from future judgment. (viii-ix)


Hays, J. Daniel, *From every People and Nation*, NSBT, esp. 121-30


Irsliger, H. *Zefanja* (HTHKAT; Freiburg: Herder, 2002)


May, Herbert G. “‘This People’ and ‘This Nation’ in Haggai.” *Vetus testamentum* 18 (1968) 190-197. HAVE
Tarazi, Paul Nadim. “Israel and the Nations (according to Zechariah 14).” St Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly 38 (1994) 181-192. Have
Zapff, Burkard M. “The perspective of the nations in the Book of Micah as a ‘systematization’ of the nations’ role in Joel, Jonah and Nahum: reflections on a context-oriented exegesis.” Pages 292-312 in Thematic Threads.

Quotes and thoughts
“Genauso wie im Jonabuch wird Jhwh in Mal 1,11.14b und Zef 2,11 von Nichtisraeliten verehrt.”
On Mal 1,11, 14, see Roth, 154-55.
On Zeph 2:11, see Roth, 155; he thinks a rel’ship between Jonah and Zeph 2 unlikely since there is no literary basis for it (156).
Zeph 2:13-15 is supposedly related to Isa 13:2-14:27; Goldstein, 89.

2 Roth 153.