

Understanding the Psalms, 9126
 Instructor: R. V. McCabe, Th.D.
 Course Outline (Th.M.)

Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary
 Summer Semester
 2008

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

A course designed to assist in developing a greater appreciation for the Old Testament worship manual, the Psalms. This course looks at the historical development and the organization of the Psalter. It also aims to use the various literary genres found in the Psalms as paradigms for further study and worshipful reading in the book of Psalms.

OBJECTIVES:

In this course the student should

1. have an understanding of the historical development of the Psalms,
2. have an understanding of the organization of the book of Psalms,
3. become acquainted with the genres found in the Psalms along with some key psalms associated with each genre, and
4. acquire an appreciation for the message of the psalms studied.

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. **Quizzes:** At the beginning of each class, a quiz over the notes from the previous day, which includes the content from an English translation, may be administered—**50% of grade.**
2. **Sight reading of Hebrew Text:** Each Th.M. student is required to be able to sight read and interact with the Hebrew text of the selected psalms. A time period will be schedule with the professor to demonstrate that the student can judiciously read from the Hebrew text. This should be scheduled for no later than Friday, August 1—**20% of grade.**

The following ten psalms are required reading:

1:1–6 (wisdom psalm)	2:1–12 (theocratic kingship psalm)
8:1–9 (praise of God as Creator)	13:1–6 (individual lament)
32:1–11 (individual thanksgiving)	51:1–21 (penitential lament)
100:1–5 (praise to Israel's covenant LORD)	121:1–8 (psalm of trust)
124:1–8 (national lament)	137:1–9 (imprecatory lament)

3. **Critical book review:** Each Th.M. student is to write an 8 to 15 page critical evaluation of Bullock's *Encountering the Psalms*. This is due on Friday, August 1—**20%**.
 - a. A critique, in its most basic form, is an examination of the content of a specific chapter, article, or book and an evaluation of the effectiveness of this material so that the reviewer's audience can make an objective assessment of the source's value (for details on this type of critique, a decent high school or college grammar book that includes a section on writing book reviews should be consulted). Items that this critique should include are these:
 - 1) an identification of the type and subject of this chapter;
 - 2) a description of the author's background in order to provide relevant information concerning the author's presuppositions undergirding his work (background information may be drawn from areas such as specific, *yet pertinent*, vocational information, memberships in societies, accessible lectures, articles, reviews, books [if drawn from internet, which should be checked, include internet addresses]);
 - 3) a condensation of the author's thesis into one or two sentences;

- 4) an accurate presentation of the author's view with the most significant argument(s) to support his case;
 - 5) an objective evaluation of the author's conclusion(s) and the argumentation used to support this (such as inconsistencies in author's logic, logical inconsistencies with scientific data, prejudicial use of sources, etc.);
 - 6) an identification of the theological perspective of the author and a critical interaction with this perspective;
 - 7) a reflection of being conversant with any other germane literature dealing with the subject addressed in the article (yes, footnotes must be used); and
 - 8) a brief, concluding assessment of the book and a statement about the audience to whom this chapter is applicable; the assessment should be either a commendation or denunciation of the book, or, as is true in most cases, an assessment somewhere between these two extremes; with this assessment, the most significant reason for the assessment should be explained.
- b. In order to reduce some of the ambiguity associated with a critical review, the following five critiques illustrate the type of work that I desire.

DeYoung, Donald B. Review of *Christianity and the Age of the Earth*, by Davis A. Young. *Grace Theological Journal* 4 (Fall 1983): 297–301.

Gaffin, Richard B., Jr. Review of *A New Paradigm in Theology*, by Gordon J. Spykman. *Westminster Theological Journal* 56 (Fall 1994): 379–90.

Jones, Brian. Review of *Darwin's Black Box*, by Michael J. Behe. *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 5 (Fall 2000): 125–34.

Schreiner, Thomas R. Review of *Women in the Church: A Biblical Theology of Women in Ministry*, by Stanley J. Grenz with Denise Muir Kjesbo. *Trinity Journal* 17 (Spring 1996): 115–24.

Southwell, Andrew. Review of *The History of the Christ*, by Adolf Schlatter. *Trinity Journal* 20 (Spring 1999): 91–95.

4. **Reading requirement:** The reading assignment for this class is due on Friday, August 1, 2008. The student must turn in a reading report on this day. If the student completes all the assigned reading by this date, he will receive a 98%. If the student does not complete the assignment by this day, he will have 1% subtracted from 98% for every 25 pages or chapters (if from the Bible) that he is short of the total pages due on this date. If the reading is not turned in on that day, the student receives a zero for this — **10% of grade.**

The following are the works that the student must read (total pages due is **933**; for a full citation of bibliographic information, see the third page of this handout):

Bullock, pp. 15–238 (**224 pp.**)

Harman, pp. 8–75 (**68 pp.**)

Longman, pp. 9–149 (**141 pp.**)

Psalms 1–150 in NASB or ESV or HCSB (**150 Pss**)

Psalms 1–150 in NIV or NET BIBLE (**150 Pss**)

An additional **200** pages from a commentary, any combination of commentaries, or journal articles that provide an academically expositional and/or theologically-oriented exegetical

examination of various psalms or topics in the psalms The purpose of reading the 200 additional pages is to get you acclimated to the range of literature on the Psalms.

CLASS ABSENCES:

The policy for absenteeism in summer school is that a student may miss up to two hours of a class with an unexcused absence and up to six hours with an excused absence. The maximum number of absences is eight hours of a class. Anyone who is absent from class beyond this will receive an “F” for this course, except by vote of the faculty in extenuating circumstances.

When a student has consumed his two hours of permissible unexcused absences for a given course, his final grade will be penalized by 1% per hour of class that he has gone beyond this limit and extending until he has missed eight hours of class. After this, he will receive an “F” for the course.

An excused absence is one where the student’s absence is beyond his control. In order to have his absence excused the student must submit to the course instructor a **written explanation** for his absence. Based upon this the instructor will then determine whether or not the absence should be excused.

TEXTBOOKS:

1. Bullock, C. Hassell. *Encountering the Psalms*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001.
2. Longman, Tremper III. *How To Read the Psalms*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988.
3. McCabe, Robert V. “Understanding the Psalms.” Class notes, Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary, 2008.

GRADING SYSTEM:

96–100	A	86–87	B-	76–77	D+
94–95	A-	84–85	C+	72–75	D
92–93	B+	80–83	C	70–71	D-
88–91	B	78–79	C-	69 & below	F

FULL CITATION OF REQUIRED READING FROM BOOKS AND ARTICLES

Book of Psalms in NASB, ESV or HCSB; **Pss 1–150**

Book of Psalms in NIV or NET BIBLE; **Pss 1–150**

Bullock, C. Hassell. *Encountering the Psalms*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001; **pp. 15–238**.

Harman, Allan. *Commentary on the Psalms*. A Mentor Commentary. Ross-shire, Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications, 1998, **pp. 8–75**.

Longman, Tremper III. *How To Read the Psalms*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988, **pp. 9–149**.

Various academically expositional and exegetical sources on Psalms, **200** pages

Reading Report

Due Date: Fri, Aug 1, 2008

Course Understanding the Psalms

Name _____

Author	Title	Req Pages	Total	Tot Read	Date Compl.
Bullock, C. Hassell	<i>Encountering the Psalms</i>	15-238	224		
Harman, Allan M.	<i>Psalms</i>	8-75	68		
Longman, Tremper	<i>How To Read the Psalms</i>	9-149	141		
	NASB, ESV or HSCS: Psalms	1-150	150		
	NIV or NET BIBLE: Psalms	1-150	150		

Total number of pages required to be read. 933

Give the total number of pages actually read.