

***Old Testament Prophets and the Holy Imagination:
Power, Gender, Justice, and Economics
BIB 314***

Point Loma Nazarene University
Fall 2017
Mondays 2:55—5:40pm

Professor: Dr. Brad E. Kelle
Email: bradkelle@pointloma.edu
Office: Smee Hall
Phone: 849-2314
Office Hours: See schedule on door

Course Description

The words of the Old Testament prophets have energized and criticized the people of God from ancient to contemporary times. This staying power of the prophetic texts is due in large part to their dual focus. Prophets like Amos and Hosea offered a specifically crafted message to their eighth-century audience that drew upon and reflected historical, social, and religious events in that ancient setting. At the same time, however, the messages of these prophets that have been handed down continue to function as a valuable resource for contemporary social critique, religious formation, and Christian proclamation.

This course is designed to provide a foundation for a lifetime of dialogue with ancient Israel's and Judah's prophets. It seeks to introduce the student to the phenomenon of prophecy, to provide the student with a general background to each of the classical prophets, and to equip the student with a method of exegetical study for the prophetic literature. The aim of the course is to work specifically with the biblical texts in light of their historical, social, and religious contexts. It will also explore, however, the meaning and significance of the literature within Christian proclamation as well as the diverse literary, theological, and methodological issues connected with these texts. This course will have a decidedly exegetical focus. That is, the class's primary aim is to engage in a group reading or "exegesis" of the prophetic texts with an eye to the various historical, literary, and theological aspects therein. The course should also allow and encourage the student to practice and develop his or her own skills for exegeting the prophetic literature within its historical and literary context.

Course Learning Outcomes

The instructor brings to this course the following intentions for personal and corporate learning. They establish an initial framework for the development of individual and group learning goals. The class sessions, readings, and outside assignments should enable the student to

1. **exegete** the OT prophetic literature within its **historical, literary, and theological settings**. This goal will also enable the student to carry on an informed dialogue concerning the persons, ministries, and messages of the various OT prophets.

2. explore the **phenomenon of ancient Israelite prophecy** in light of its place within the broader context of the ancient Near East and within the context of its historical precedents.

3. encounter the **basic categories of prophetic literature** and the process by which spoken word became written word.

4. begin to identify **diverse ways of reading** prophetic literature that go beyond traditional historical and literary exegetical methods and appreciate their implications for understanding the texts and their interpretive issues.

5. explore the **broader theological, literary, and social issues** involved in reading these texts in a **contemporary setting** and thereby to apply these bodies of literature to contemporary situations and Christian ministry, proclamation, and instruction.

Course Texts

1. Mark McEntire, *A Chorus of Prophetic Voices: Introducing the Prophetic Literature of Ancient Israel*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2015.
2. Walter Brueggemann, *The Prophetic Imagination*. Rev. ed. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 2001.
3. Julia O'Brien, *Challenging Prophetic Metaphor: Theology and Ideology in the Prophets*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2008.
4. Leander E. Keck (ed.), *The New Interpreter's Bible: The Twelve Prophets (Volume 7)*. The New Interpreter's Bible. Nashville: Abingdon, 1996.
5. A Bible of the student's choosing (NRSV preferred; modern translation required [i.e., no KJV, New KJV, Message, Living Bible, New Living Bible]).

Course Requirements

1. **Class Participation and Attendance:** Attendance is a necessity for optimum academic achievement. *If the student is absent from more than 10 percent of class meetings (more than TWO [2] classes), the faculty member can file a written report which may result in de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent (more than THREE [3] classes), the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation. See [Academic Policies](#) in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog. In addition, each student is expected to participate actively in class by contributing to the discussions on the basis of his or her reading of the assigned material.*

2. **Readings:** All readings are required unless otherwise indicated. Please bring your Bible to class. It is important to keep up with the readings on a session by session basis or the information will quickly become overwhelming. *Evidence of reading*

preparation and completion for each class will be factored into the student's final class participation grade. [Fulfills Outcomes #1-5]

3. Homework Assignments: In order to enhance the quality and depth of our classroom discussions, various homework assignments will be assigned and should be completed on an occasional basis throughout the semester. Homework assignments will be given out in the session before they are due and are listed on the course schedule. Please note that it is the student's responsibility to obtain information about assignments given out when the student is absent. ****NOTE: All hw assignments MUST be TYPED (they will NOT be accepted in hand-written form) and submitted in class on the day they are due.*** See also "Late Work Policy." [Fulfills Outcomes #1-5]

*****Special Note: Some of the homework assignments will involve watching videos from the website www.thebibleproject.com***

4. Book Review of Brueggemann, *The Prophetic Imagination* (4-5 pages): The student should read Brueggemann's *The Prophetic Imagination* and prepare a book critique. The paper should be **4-5 pages, typed, double-spaced, 12 pt font, with 1-inch margins on all sides**. The critique is due in class ***Mon. October 2, 2017***. Students should follow the ***instructions included in the back of this syllabus.*** [Fulfills Outcomes #1, 4, & 5]

5. Class Presentation on Books of the Minor Prophets: The students will be divided into pairs or groups and assigned one of the Minor Prophets books to present to the class (see course schedule for assigned days). Each presentation should be **15 minutes long**. The exact format, style, and content is up to the individual group. *Each group member will receive the same grade for the presentation.* The exact books to be presented will be provided in class. **Students should follow the instructions included in this syllabus.** [Fulfills Outcomes #1, 4, & 5]

(NOTE: a one-page handout is required to be given to the class for the presentation).

6. Final Exegetical Paper (12-14 pages): In place of a final examination, the student will prepare a major exegetical paper on a text of his or her choosing from the OT prophetic books (excepting Daniel). *The chosen text should be approximately 10 verses in length and will be submitted for review to the professor before work begins on the paper.* Throughout the process, *the student should use the attached guide for researching and writing the exegetical paper.* The paper should be **12-14 pages, typed, double-spaced, 12 pt font, 1-inch margins on all sides**. The paper must be turned in on the scheduled day for the final exam of the course (see attached guides for researching and writing the exegetical paper). [Fulfills Outcomes #1, 4, & 5]

Course Policies

1. Grading: The student's grade will be based on a combination of class participation, reading, assignments, and exams as follows:

<u>Possible Points</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
10%	Class Attendance and Participation
30%	Homework Assignments
15%	Review of Brueggemann, <i>Prophetic Imagination</i>
20%	Class Presentation on Minor Prophet Book
25%	Exegetical Paper

<u>*Grading Scale:</u>	94-100 A	84-86 B	74-76 C	64-66 D
	90-93 A-	80-83 B-	70-73 C-	60-63 D-
	87-89 B+	77-79 C+	67-69 D+	50s F

2. Attendance: Attendance is a necessity for optimum academic achievement. *If the student is absent from more than 10 percent of class meetings (more than TWO [2] classes), the faculty member can file a written report which may result in de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent (more than THREE [3] classes), the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation. See [Academic Policies](#) in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog. Please note that it is the student's responsibility to obtain notes, etc. from other students for any missed classes. See Late Work Policy.*

3. Late Work Policy: In order not to be considered "late," all assignments must be submitted **in person, in hard copy, in class** on the day listed as the due date. *NO assignment may be submitted electronically (by email, etc.) for full credit.* If the student "forgets" an assignment, he or she may submit it after class (either electronically or in hard copy) for no more than half credit. *Any assignment submitted electronically (whether late or on-time) will receive no more than half credit. No assignment will be accepted for credit of any kind more than one week after the original due date.* (NOTE: extra-credit assignments must be submitted on or before the due date and will not be accepted late for any credit.)

4. Inclusivity: The School of Theology and Christian Ministry is committed to the equality of women and men. Recognizing that people have often used the English language in ways that imply the exclusion or inferiority of women, the school urges students, faculty, and staff to avoid sexist language in public discourse, in classroom discussion, and in their writings. This course will strive to practice sensitivity toward and foster respect for issues of inclusivity in matters of language and conduct. Each student should seek to enrich this inclusive atmosphere in both their class contributions and personal interactions.

5. Academic Honesty: Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the

procedure in the university Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

6. Academic Accommodations: If you have a diagnosed disability, please contact PLNU's Disability Resource Center (DRC) within the first two weeks of class to demonstrate need and to register for accommodation by phone at 619-849-2486 or by e-mail at DRC@pointloma.edu. See [Disability Resource Center](#) for additional information.

Tentative Course Schedule

1. Tues. Aug. 29 (*Special Monday session on Tuesday)

- A. Starting Points for the Prophets
- B. Basics of the Prophets and Canon
- C. Prophecy in Pop Christianity and Culture
- D. First Impressions of the Prophets

Readings: none

***MON. SEPT. 4: NO CLASS (Labor Day)**

2. Mon. Sept. 11

- A. Approaching the Prophets: Canon, Literature, and History
- B. The Phenomenon of Prophecy in the Ancient Near East

**Readings*: 1) McEntire, *Chorus*, pp. xv-xvii, 1-12, 18-23; 2) Brad E. Kelle, "The Phenomenon of Israelite Prophecy in Contemporary Scholarship," *CBR* 12 (2014): 275-320 (copied); 3) Begin reading Brueggemann, *Prophetic Imagination*

***Homework assignment due today**: After reading the Kelle article, type out a 1-2 page summary (double-spaced) that re-states in your own words the difference explained in the article between "ancient Hebrew prophecy" (as a socio-historical phenomenon) and "biblical prophecy" (as a literary/scribal phenomenon).

3. Mon. Sept. 18

- A. Prophets and Prophecy in Ancient Israel (Sociology and Anthropology)
- B. Prophets, Orators, and Rhetoric

***Organize Minor Prophets Books Presentations*

**Readings*: 1) McEntire, *Chorus*, pp. 13-17; 2) Brad E. Kelle, "Ancient Israelite Prophets and Greek Political Orators: Analogies for the Prophets and Their Implications for Historical Reconstruction," in Kelle and Moore, *Israel's Prophets and Israel's Past* (T&T Clark, 2006), pp. 57-82 (copied); 3) Continue reading Brueggemann, *Prophetic Imagination*

***Homework assignment due today**: After reading the Kelle article, focus especially on pp. 69-82. Type out a 1-2 page (double-spaced) response that re-states in your own words the central argument the article is making about thinking of prophets as orators, as well as one or two of the supporting arguments that go along with the main argument.

4. Mon. Sept. 25

A. New Theological Interpretation: Feminist Engagement with the Prophets

B. The Assyrian Crisis (Part 1): Background (and Begin Isaiah 1—39)

**Readings:* 1) O'Brien, *Challenging Prophetic Metaphor*, chs. 2-3 (pp. 29-61); 2) Continue reading Brueggemann, *Prophetic Imagination* (paper due next class); 3) Brad E. Kelle, "Israelite History" in *Dictionary of the Old Testament Prophets* (IVP 2012), for today read only pp. 397-410 (copied)

***Homework assignment due today:** After you have read O'Brien, *Challenging Prophetic Metaphor* chs. 2—3, type out a 200-word summary that puts in your own words the content of that reading and what the author is proposing/arguing/trying to do.

***Homework assignment due today:** After you have read the portion of the Kelle, "Israelite History" article assigned for today, type out a 200-word summary/abstract of the content of just the section on pp. 402-410 of the article. Be prepared. I will call on someone to read their abstract aloud and summarize the section of the article.

5. Mon. Oct. 2

A. The Prophetic Consciousness Past and Present: Discussion of Brueggemann Book

B. The Assyrian Crisis (Part 1 continued): Isaiah 1—39

**Readings:* 1) Brueggemann, *Prophetic Imagination* (whole book completed); 2) Isaiah 1—39; 3) McEntire, *Chorus*, ch. 2

***DUE: Brueggemann Book Critique**

6. Mon. Oct. 9

A. Finish The Assyrian Crisis (Part 1): Isaiah 1—39

B. The Assyrian Crisis (Part 2): The Book of the Twelve (Hosea)

**Readings:* 1) Hosea (whole book); 2) McEntire, *Chorus*, pp. 51-66; 3) *The New Interpreter's Bible Vol. 7*: read the introduction to Hosea and SKIM the commentary sections for Hosea 1—3; 4—6; 11; 4) O'Brien, *Challenging Prophetic Metaphor*, ch. 4; 5) watch the video on "Hosea" on www.thebibleproject.com

***Homework assignment due today:** After you have read O'Brien, *Challenging Prophetic Metaphor* ch. 4, type out a 200-word summary that puts in your own words the content of that reading and what the author is proposing/arguing/trying to do.

***Homework assignment due today:** After watching the video "Hosea" from www.thebibleproject.com, type out a 200-word summary that puts in your own words the content of that video as an overall introduction to the book as a whole.

***Optional extra-credit assignment due today:** Last class, I distributed the article, Brad E. Kelle, "Wartime Rhetoric: Prophetic Metaphorization of Cities as Female," in *Writing and Reading War: Rhetoric, Gender, and Ethics in Biblical and Modern Contexts* (eds. Brad E. Kelle and Frank Ritzel Ames; SBLSymS 42; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008), 95-111. For 10 points extra credit applied to your hw scores, read the article, type out a 200-250 word abstract to turn in today, and present it for 5 minutes in today's class.

7. Mon. Oct. 16

A. The Assyrian Crisis (Part 2): The Book of the Twelve (Finish Hosea and Amos)

**Readings*: 1) Amos (whole book); 2) McEntire, *Chorus*, pp. 66-70; 3) *The New Interpreter's Bible Vol. 7*: read the introduction to Amos and SKIM the commentary sections for Amos 1—3 and 5; 4) O'Brien, *Challenging Prophetic Metaphor*, ch. 5; 5) watch the video on "Amos" on www.thebibleproject.com

***Homework assignment due today**: After you have read O'Brien, *Challenging Prophetic Metaphor* ch. 5, type out a 200-word summary that puts in your own words the content of that reading and what the author is proposing/arguing/trying to do.

***Homework assignment due today**: After watching the video "Amos" from www.thebibleproject.com, type out a 200-word summary that puts in your own words the content of that video as an overall introduction to the book as a whole.

8. Mon. Oct. 23

A. The Assyrian Crisis (Part 2): The Book of the Twelve (Finish Amos and Micah)

**Readings*: 1) Micah (whole book); 2) McEntire, *Chorus*, pp. 70-75; 3) *The New Interpreter's Bible Vol. 7*: read the introduction to Micah and SKIM the commentary sections for Micah 1—3 and 6; 4) Watch the video on "Micah" on www.thebibleproject.com

***Homework assignment due today**: After watching the video "Micah" from www.thebibleproject.com, type out a 200-word summary that puts in your own words the content of that video as an overall introduction to the book as a whole.

9. Mon. Oct. 30

A. The Babylonian Crisis (Part 1): Isaiah 40—55

B. The Babylonian Crisis (Part 2): Obadiah, Habakkuk, Zephaniah (Group Presentations)

**Readings*: 1) Isaiah 40—55; 2) McEntire, *Chorus*, ch. 4; 3) Brad E. Kelle, "Israelite History" in *Dictionary of the Old Testament Prophets* (IVP 2012), for today read only pp. 410-414 (copied from earlier class); 4) *The New Interpreter's Bible Vol. 7*: read the introductions to Obadiah, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah

***Homework assignment due today**: After you have read the portion of the Kelle, "Israelite History" article assigned for today, type out a 200-word summary/abstract of the content of just that section of the article. Be prepared. I will call on someone to read their abstract aloud and summarize the section of the article.

***DUE: Group Presentations on Obadiah, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah**

10. Mon. Nov. 6

A. The Babylonian Crisis (Part 3): Jeremiah

**Readings:* 1) Jeremiah 1; 3:6-22; 7; 8:18—9:3; 11; 18; 20:7-18; 29; 30—33; 2) McEntire, *Chorus*, ch. 5; 3) O'Brien, *Challenging Prophetic Metaphor*, ch. 6; 4) *The New Interpreter's Bible Vol. 7*: read the introduction to Jeremiah; 5) watch the video on "Jeremiah" on www.thebibleproject.com

***Homework assignment due today:** After you have read O'Brien, *Challenging Prophetic Metaphor* ch. 6, type out a 200-word summary that puts in your own words the content of that reading and what the author is proposing/arguing/trying to do.

***Homework assignment due today:** After watching the video "Jeremiah" from www.thebibleproject.com, type out a 200-word summary that puts in your own words the content of that video as an overall introduction to the book as a whole.

11. Mon. Nov. 13

A. The Babylonian Crisis (Part 4): Ezekiel

**Readings:* 1) Ezekiel 1—3; 4; 8; 16; 20; 23; 36; 37; 40; 48; 2) McEntire, *Chorus*, ch. 6; 3) *The New Interpreter's Bible Vol. 7*: read the introduction to Ezekiel; 4) O'Brien, *Challenging Prophetic Metaphor*, ch. 7; 5) watch the video "Ezekiel" from www.thebibleproject.com

***Homework assignment due today:** After you have read O'Brien, *Challenging Prophetic Metaphor* ch. 7, type out a 200-word summary that puts in your own words the content of that reading and what the author is proposing/arguing/trying to do.

***Homework assignment due today:** After watching the video "Ezekiel" from www.thebibleproject.com, type out a 200-word summary that puts in your own words the content of that video as an overall introduction to the book as a whole.

***Optional extra-credit assignment due today:** Last class, I distributed the article, Brad E. Kelle, "Dealing with the Trauma of Defeat: The Rhetoric of the Devastation and Rejuvenation of Nature in Ezekiel," *JBL* 128 (2009): 469-90. For 10 points extra credit applied to your hw scores, read the article, type out a 200-250 word abstract to turn in today, and present it for 5 minutes in today's class.

***MON. NOV. 20: NO CLASS (Society of Biblical Literature Conference)**

12. Mon. Nov. 27

A. The Restoration Crisis (Part 1): Isaiah 56—66

**Submit passages for final exegetical paper*

**Readings:* 1) Isaiah 56—66; 2) Brad E. Kelle, "Israelite History" in *Dictionary of the Old Testament Prophets* (IVP 2012), for today read only pp. 414-417 (copied from earlier class); 3) McEntire, *Chorus*, ch. 8.

***Homework assignment due today:** After you have read the portion of the Kelle, "Israelite History" article assigned for today, type out a 200-word summary/abstract of the content of just that section of the article. Be prepared. I will call on someone to read their abstract aloud and summarize the section of the article.

13. Mon. Dec. 4

A. The Restoration Crisis (Part 2): The Book of the Twelve (Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi) (Group Presentations)

B. The Broad Scope of Prophets Study

**Readings*: 1) Haggai (all); Zechariah 1—8; Malachi (all); 2) McEntire, *Chorus*, ch. 11; 3) *The New Interpreter's Bible Vol. 7*: read the introductions to Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi; 4) Watch the video EITHER “Haggai” OR “Zechariah” on www.thebibleproject.com

***Homework assignment due today**: After watching the video EITHER “Haggai” OR “Zechariah” from www.thebibleproject.com, type out a 200-word summary that puts in your own words the content of that video as an overall introduction to the book as a whole.

***DUE: Group Presentations on Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi**

14. Mon. Dec. 11 (during finals week)

A. From Here to Where? Looking Forward:

New Testament Appropriations of Old Testament Prophets
What Then Shall *WE* Say?

B. Discussion of Exegetical Papers

**Readings*: 1) McEntire, *Chorus*, ch. 12

***DUE: Exegetical Paper**

INSTRUCTIONS FOR BOOK REVIEW OF BRUEGGEMANN, *PROPHETIC IMAGINATION*

While Brueggemann attempts to deal with the underlying meaning and function of a prophet, he is also concerned to deal with the way in which this ancient office provides a model for present day persons and communities of ministry. The task of this paper is to review Brueggemann's work with a focus on understanding the office of the prophet as it relates to a community living under covenant obligation to Yahweh and to each other. This paper is not a cursory "review" or "report" but should emphasize critical engagement with the work. The student should not simply summarize or compliment ("I did/did not like...") but should subject the major points, arguments, methods, and conclusions to critical analysis by utilizing a broad range of perspectives. The exact format is flexible, but the critique should address at least the following issues:

- a. What is the author's thesis? What is he trying to say or accomplish?
- b. What is the writer's basic line of argument in attempting to prove his thesis? In other words, what are the main subpoints, how does he structure the book to get the argument across, etc.? (continued...)
- c. In his line of argument, what assumptions or presuppositions (concerning the Bible, concerning God, concerning Israel, law, covenant, the New Testament, the office of the prophet, etc.) does the author make? Are these assumptions valid? Why or why not?
- d. What are, in your opinion, the *strongest points* of the book and why? What, in your opinion, are the *weakest points* of the book and why?
- e. Perhaps one of the most significant movements that Brueggemann makes for the Christian community is his final link to present society and to the ministry of Jesus. Discuss the way in which he perceives the link between ancient prophetic understanding and contemporary application.
- f. What did you learn from the book? Is this book valuable for you? If so, why? If not, why not and for whom might it be valuable?

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CLASS PRESENTATION ON BOOKS OF THE MINOR PROPHETS

GOAL: The goal of this presentation is to give a substantial but overall introduction to your assigned biblical book, *informed by modern biblical scholarship's work on the book*. Think of your group as answering the question, "What is the book of x, what is modern biblical scholarship saying about it, and how does it relate to the other prophetic books?" You have only **15 minutes**, so you will want to plan your presentation carefully in advance, yet you should still give a thorough presentation. (**note:** you may not use powerpoint or any other electronic media in your presentation. However, a one-page printed handout is required to be distributed to the class for your presentation; see below).

1) PREPARATION: To research your presentation, you should draw from two sources:

- a) Read the introduction for your book in the *New Interpreter's Bible Vol. 7* (you should also examine the specific commentary on some particular passages, especially ones you may discuss at length)
- b) Examine any discussion of your book that appears in McEntire, *A Chorus of Prophetic Voices* and/or Brueggemann, *Prophetic Imagination* and incorporate any insights there.

2) PRESENTATION: For your 15-minute presentation, you should include at least the following elements:

- a) Based on your reading of the material listed above, give an introduction/survey of the major content, themes, structure, and distinctive elements of your book (*i.e., what is this book and what is in it?*)
- b) Give a brief survey of the major critical interpretive issues that have been and are discussed in modern biblical scholarship (these might include the date, setting, genre, redaction, etc. or difficult interpretive issues such as gendered language, divine violence, ethics, etc.). Give the class a rundown on the various views on the major issues and provide what you take to be the best options on these issues (*i.e., what issues do scholars discuss about this book?*)
- c) Walk the class through one or two substantial sample passages from the book, explaining how they, in your group's mind, illustrate the book's message, issues, circumstances, etc. (*kind of a "Here's a Taste of Our Book" presentation*)

3) OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

- a) You must prepare and bring a **1-page handout** (double-sided is ok) that has the most important points you want the class to remember from each of the 3 areas of your presentation listed above. *You must make copies for each class member & the professor and bring them to class.*
- b) You may NOT use powerpoint or any other kind of electronic media for the presentation

<i>*Failure to meet these requirements will result in 5 points subtracted from your presentation grade</i>
--

EXEGETICAL PAPER GUIDE PART ONE

Instructions for Researching the Paper

*For the research part of your paper, work through the following steps.

STEP 1: ENGAGING THE TEXT

Initial questions on which to make some notes:

- a. What drew you to this text for an exegetical paper? What interests you about it?
- b. What do commentaries and your other sources say about why this text is significant?

STEP 2: TRANSLATE YOUR TEXT

Read and compare at least four different translations (e.g. NIV, NRSV, NAB, etc.) of your text. Note any textual problems in margins or footnotes. Note words that seem significant or problematic.

STEP 3: OUTLINE YOUR TEXT

Divide your text into main units and subunits based on content. Make an outline of the text using your division (note: you will organize the body of your paper by offering exegetical analysis of each section [as you have divided the text] in turn)

STEP 4: PUTTING THE TEXT IN LITERARY CONTEXT

- a. Formulate a summary of the unit or section that *immediately precedes* your text.
- b. Formulate a summary of the unit or section that *immediately follows* your text.
- c. Make notes on how your text fits and functions in this literary context (e.g., is it a transitional passage? Is it the climax? Is it the beginning? Etc.)

STEP 5: PUTTING THE TEXT IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Using outside resources such as commentaries and histories of Israel, compile notes on the following:

- a. what is the historical context of this passage? That is, what is the context in which it was composed? What historical background does the text presume? How do you see that in the text itself?
- b. what *type* of literature ("genre") is your text (ex: is it a narrative? sermon? poem? speech? prayer? etc.)? What technical genre, if any, do commentaries suggest for this text? How does knowing the genre change the way you understand the text?

STEP 6: ANALYZE YOUR TEXT

- a. Within the text itself, what literary artistry do you see? What rhetorical devices are used? How do these devices affect the meaning of the text? Look for and note:

Repetition	Anaphora (repeated use of initial word)
Hyperbole (exaggeration for effect)	Irony
Simile (one thing likened to another)	Rhetorical Questions
Metaphor (implied comparison)	Dialogue Between Characters

- b. Note key words, names, and places which seem significant. Use Bible Dictionaries and Concordances to explore the significance of these words.

- c. Address the theological issues in the text: What appears to be the major theological affirmations in this text? What is being said about God? about humanity? about salvation?

STEP 7: RESEARCH YOUR TEXT

At this point you should work through a number of commentaries and other outside sources to supplement the initial notes you have taken on each of the steps above. From the commentaries, pull out additional items on the elements above, grab some quotations to use, look for insights or especially technical items that you missed, etc. You should find things to plug into each of the research categories above.

****Specifically:** Research your text using at least **four commentaries** and **2 scholarly journal articles** to add to your work. *The four commentaries MUST be from the following list of series (available in the reference room in the front desk in Ryan Library or in the stacks:* a. Word Biblical Commentary, b. The New Century Bible Commentary, c. New Interpreter's Bible Commentary, d. Anchor Bible Commentary, e.

International Critical Commentary, f. Old Testament Library, g. The Interpreter's Bible, h. Hermeneia, i. Continental Commentary, j. Berit Olam, k. New International Commentary on the OT (NICOT), l. Tyndale OT Commentaries, m. The Cambridge Bible Commentary.

STEP 8: FORMULATE A THESIS FOR YOUR INTERPRETATION OF THE TEXT

Now that you have completed your research, come up with a single thesis statement that succinctly states *your reading/interpretation* of the text at hand (that is, a statement that says what this passage is in your view).

[*Example: "Hosea 2 is a metaphorical and theological commentary on the events in Samaria at the close of the Syro-Ephraimitic War (ca. 731 BCE)."]

STEP 9: APPLY YOUR TEXT

How could you bring this text to bear on human need? How could you apply this text in a setting of preaching, teaching, etc.? What would a sermon or lesson based on your exegesis of this text look like?

EXEGETICAL PAPER GUIDE PART TWO

Instructions for Writing the Paper

****Your main goal is to write your research from page one of these instructions. In order to do that, follow these guidelines in putting together your final paper:**

1. Turn in your final paper TYPED, DOUBLED SPACED, WITH 12 PT. FONT AND 1-INCH MARGINS ON ALL SIDES.
2. Make sure to reference any authors that you cite, including the book, page number, etc. in a consistent form throughout the paper.
3. The final paper should be ca. 12-14 pages in length.

Format for the Paper

**think of your paper as a guided tour through your passage, where you are the tour guide who is leading an informed, yet not expert, reader through a critical interpretation of your chosen text*

1. Opening/ Introductory paragraphs- Give a general introduction to your text:
 - a. Give a basic summary of what happens in your text (brief!)
 - b. Explain why you and others find this text significant in general
 - c. Provide your thesis for what this text is/is doing/is saying, etc.
2. Give the outline of your text that you have devised (major units, subunits)—this should be in regular outline form

***the following sections (##3-6) should be thought of as background to orient your reader to the unit-by-unit analyses that will form the body of the paper. Here you are providing the orienting information to set up your reading of the passage:*

3. Note and discuss any significant textual and translation issues that arise from your comparison of different English translations.
4. Describe what comes before and after your text and how your text fits and functions in that context (literary context).
5. Describe the form or type (genre) of material that your text is and how this impacts its interpretation.
6. Discuss the specific historical background of the text and how the text fits and functions within that historical context.

***The following section (#7) should constitute the body of the paper. Here, organize the paper according to your outline (in other words, discuss the text by going sequentially through the major units as you have defined them). In the discussion of each unit, you should bring together the relevant insights you gained in your research especially from Step 6, letters a & b on the research guide. You should also bring in the supplemental insights you gained from commentaries and other sources for each unit. So:*

7. Walk through the passage unit by unit (following your outline of it) discussing the major literary devices found in the text, significant words, and any insights from commentaries (note: this is the primary part of the exegetical paper).

**The final sections of your paper should be thought of as the conclusion of your guided tour:*

8. Discuss the major theological affirmations in the text (from Step 6 letter c on the research guide)

9. Drawing upon your work from Step 9 on the research guide, conclude your paper by proposing a specific way to apply this text. Include a sermon outline (with introduction and conclusion), an outline for a Sunday School lesson, etc., or some other concrete (but brief) example of application.