

Module Title:	History of Ancient Israel and Prophetic Literature
Module Code:	409 THPL
Level:	4
Credit Rating:	20 Credits
Duration:	Student Learning Time: 200 hours
Teaching Hours:	40 Hours
Academic Responsibility:	Séamus Mulholland OFM, PhD

Module Aims:

This module aims

To expose the student to the primary Prophets and their texts

To determine the historical, social, political, religious and cultural context of Israelite Prophecy

To view Israelite Prophecy against the backdrop of other Mesopotamian forms of prophetic activity

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the module students should be able to:

1. Situate the phenomenon of prophecy in ancient Israel within the context of its near eastern forerunners
2. Understand the social and religious impact of prophecy in ancient Israel
3. demonstrate a knowledge of the literary and theological structure of prophetic oracles
4. Show the significance at both the personal and corporate level of the prophetic call

Indicative Module Content:

The module examines the phenomenon of prophecy in ancient Israel, with particular attention being devoted to the content of the writings attributed to named 'prophets' in the Hebrew Bible and the historical, social and religious circumstances from which they emerged. Inasmuch as it can reliably be reconstructed, the development of Israelite prophecy will be studied from its earliest appearance in narrative sources (Deborah, Balaam, Samuel, anonymous 'anshey ha-'elohim) to the alleged cessation of prophecy during the Second Temple period. Religio-historical antecedents and parallels to Israelite prophecy (e.g. Mesopotamian divination, prophecy at Mari, Assyrian oracle collections) will also be studied in order to gain some insight into the religious and social status of the prophet and the nature of prophetic activity.

Learning and Teaching Strategies:

The basic format of presentation will be lectures systematically treating the subject matter as described in the Indicative Module Content. Students are given specific weekly reading assignments as well as directed toward extra-curricular reading

proposed by the instructor. Research interests are quickly identified and tutorial sessions, depending on individual needs of the students, arranged for clarification and direction, inclusive of suggested extra-curricular reading. Within the classroom context of lectures, active participation of students in terms of questions and, especially, discussion is strongly encouraged as a primary way of developing analytical skills, critical thinking, and clarity of expression.

Assessment:

The module will be assessed by an essay of 2,500 words

Indicative Essay Titles

1. By using the 'Call to Prophecy' analyse and discuss how literary structure in tone, content, and diction give the reader of the Prophetic text an insight into the nature of Prophecy.
2. Critically assess the view that the primary prophetic activity of Jeremiah was to call the Israelites back to fidelity to the Covenant through a rejection of the syncretism of Yahwism with Ba'al worship.
3. Analyse the principle elements of Prophetic activity with a view to determining whether Prophecy among the Israelites was religious, political or social in its agenda.
4. Compare TWO of the Mari texts with TWO of the Israelite prophets and critically discuss the significance of similarity or difference for Israelite prophecy

Illustrative Bibliography

- Aberbach, D. (1993) *Imperialism and Biblical Prophecy, 750-500 BCE*, London Routledge.
- Alexander, T. D. (2002) *From Paradise to the Promised Land*, New York, London, Paternoster
- Anderson, B., Harrelson, W., eds., (1962), *Israel's Prophetic Heritage*. New York: Harper and Row
- Clements, R. E., (1965), *Prophecy and Covenant*, Studies in Biblical Theology, 43. London: S.C.M. Press,
- Davies, L. J. D. L., *The Origin and Development of Early Hebrew Prophecy in Special Relation to the Development of Yahwism in Israel*. Dissertation, University of Bonn, 1959.
- Davies, P. (1994) 'The Society of Biblical Israel' in T.C. Eskenazi and K.H. Richards (eds) *JSOT Second Temple Studies 2: Temple and Community in the Persian Period*
- Dheilly, J., (1960 reprint 2007), *The Prophets*, The Twentieth Century Encyclopedia of Catholicism, Rachel Attwater, trans. New York: Hawthorn Books,
- Fohreh, G., "Remarks on Modern Interpretation of the Prophets," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXXX (1961), 309-319. .
- Fosbroke, Hughell E. W., "The Prophetic Literature," *The Interpreter's Bible*, I, 201-211.

- Frost, S. B., (1963), *Patriarchs and Prophets*. Montreal: McGill University Press,
- Gerstenberger, Erhard, " The Woe Oracles of the Prophets," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXXXI (1962), 249-263.
- Gottwald, Norman K., (1964 reprint 2005). *All the Kingdoms of the Earth: Israelite Prophecy and International Relations in the Ancient Near East*. New York: Harper and Row,
- Guillaume, A., (1998), *Prophecy and Divination Among the Hebrews and Other Semites*. New York: Harper and Brothers,
- Hayes, H. J., and Maxwell J. (1990), *Israelite and Judean History*. London, Longman.
- Henshaw, T., (1958), *The Latter Prophets*. London: Allen and Unwin,
- Hoenig, S. B., *A Guide to the Prophets*. New York: Yeshiva University, 1957.
- Huffmon, H. B., "The Covenant Lawsuit in the Prophets," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXXVIII (1959) , 285-295.
- Hyatt, J. P., (Ed. 3, 2006), *Prophetic Religion*. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press,
- Johnson, A. R., (1961), *The Cultic Prophet in Ancient Israel*. Cardiff: University of Wales,
- Kingsbury, Edwin C., "The Prophets and the Council of Yahweh," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXXXIII (1964), 279-286.
- Kuhl, C., (1960, Ed.2 2008) *The Prophets of Israel*. London: Oliver and Boyd,
- Lindblom, J., (1962), *Prophecy in Ancient Israel*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell,
- Matthews, V.H., (2002) *A Brief History of Israel*. Oxford, OUP
- McKane, Wm., (1965), *Prophets and Wise Men*, Studies in Biblical Theology, 44. Napierville: Alex R. Allenson,
- Milton, John P., *Prophecy Interpreted; Essays in Old Testament Interpretation*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Pub. House, 1960.
- Mowinckel, S, (1946) *Prophecy and Tradition*. Oslo: I Kommissjon Hos Jacob Dybwad,.
- Mowvley, H. (2002) *Guide to Old Testament Prophecy*, London, James Clarke Co.
- Napier, B. D., (1963), *Prophets in Perspective*. New York: Abingdon Press,
- Rowley, H. H., (1963), *Men of God: Studies in Old Testament History and Prophecy*. London: Thomas Nelson and Sons,
- Stuhlmüller, C., (1964) *The Prophets and the Word of God*. Notre Dame, Indiana: Fides Publishers, Inc.,
- Vawter, B., *The Conscience of Israel*. New York: Sheed and Ward, 1961.
- Wace, H. (2005) *The General Character Of Old Testament Prophecy*, Bonn, Kessinger
- Whitley, C., F., (1963), *The Prophetic Achievement*. Leiden: E. J. Brill,.