

The Twelve Prophets

Professor	Daniel R. Driver, PhD	Course	Version 2.1
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1 Course Description

To better understand the origins and impact of the Book of the Twelve, this course will look at its redactional history and editorial shaping, its final canonical forms, and its effects as biblical prophecy. It will introduce current issues in scholarly debate about the Twelve while also exploring ways that they meet the ancient expectation that their “bones” can “send forth new life” amidst the people of God (Sirach 49:10).

Prerequisites: BF 1001; RM 1000 or GTRS 6000.

2 Required Texts & Materials

In addition to **the Bible in a modern translation** such as the NJPS or NRSV, the following text is required. Students are strongly encouraged to purchase their own copies. AST Library copies will be placed on a two-hour reserve.

- [Heschel] Heschel, Abraham J. *The Prophets*. New York: Harper & Row, 1962. Repr., New York: Perennial Classics, 2001. ISBN 978-0060936990. [Order online](#).
- [Theodoret] Theodoret of Cyrus. *Commentary on the Twelve Prophets*. Vol. 3 of *Commentaries on the Prophets*. Translated by Robert C. Hill. Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2006. ISBN 978-1885652768. [Order online](#).

3 Supplementary Texts

Supplementary readings will be recommended throughout the semester. Excerpts from this literature may be placed on reserve or made available for download through the course website. Outstanding students will also pursue leads on their own, using library databases and pursuing notes and bibliographies in the required reading.

The following titles are notable in relation to the main texts. They are not required.

- [1] Bickerman, Elias. *Four Strange Books of the Bible: Jonah, Daniel, Koheleth, Esther*. New York: Schocken, 1967.
- [2] Heschel, Abraham Joshua. *The Sabbath: Its Meaning for Modern Man*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1951.
- [3] Hill, Robert C. *Reading the Old Testament in Antioch*. Bible in Ancient Christianity 5. Leiden: Brill, 2005. Link: [AST eBook](#).
- [4] Nogalski, James D., and Marvin A. Sweeney, eds. *Reading and Hearing the Book of the Twelve*. SBL Symposium Series. Atlanta: SBL, 2000.
- [5] Redditt, Paul L., and Aaron Schart, eds. *Thematic Threads in the Book of the Twelve*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2003.
- [6] Watts, James W., and Paul R. House, eds. *Forming Prophetic Literature: Essays on Isaiah and the Twelve in Honor of John D.W. Watts*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996.

4 Course Outline

We will adhere to the schedule in [Table 1](#) as closely as possible, though the professor reserves the right to adjust it to suit the needs of the class.

See the AST website for a list of other [important dates](#).

5 Evaluation

5.1 Grade Structure for HB 3114

1. Weekly **seminar discussions** will facilitate close work with text and interpretation in select books from the Twelve. Students should come to class fully prepared to discuss the assigned material, which will ordinarily include one to four chapters of biblical

§. Primary	Secondary	Date
1. None: Introductions	Syllabus	11 Jan.
2. Hosea 1	Theodore 1–42, Heschel 47–61	18 Jan.
3. Hosea 2–3	Theodore 42–48, Heschel 61–75	25 Jan.
4. Hosea 4–6	Theodore 48–57, Heschel 3–19	1 Feb.
5. Hosea 7–9	Theodore 57–67, Heschel 19–31	8 Feb.
6. Hosea 10–14	Theodore 67–83, Heschel	15 Feb.
☞ Essay 1: Due by the end of Week Six		18 Feb.
~. No Class: Reading Week (Tuesday to Friday)		22 Feb.
7. Joel 1	Theodore 85–90, Heschel	29 Feb.
8. Joel 2–end	Theodore 90–102, Heschel	7 Mar.
~. No Class: Attend Grad Projects in lieu of regular class		14 Mar.
9. Amos 1–2	Theodore 103–10, Heschel 32–39	21 Mar.
10. Amos 3–4	Theodore 110–16, Heschel 39–46	28 Mar.
11. Amos 5–6	Theodore 116–22, Heschel	4 Apr.
☞ Essay 2: Due by the end of Week Eleven		7 Apr.
12. Amos 7–9	Theodore 122–28, Heschel	11 Apr.
☞ End of Term: Final marks are due for all courses		17 Apr.

Table 1: Schedule of Readings

material per week, plus some commentary on those chapters. Commentary available for study and preparation is by no means limited to the assigned works of [Theodore] and [Heschel]. Also, Heschel does not follow the text sequentially; his book should be read beyond the assigned pages in a self-directed manner.

- At some point in the semester, each student should read and report back to the class about some recent scholarship on the book of the Twelve. This **reading report** should be scheduled between weeks two and twelve, to the extent possible with only one student per week. The reading should be drawn from the literature in [section 3](#) or [section 7](#), selected in consultation with the professor.
- A **first essay** will be due at the end of the sixth week of class (Sunday, 18 February 2024). It should be 4,000 words long, plus or minus 250 words. It should answer the following question: *How does the book of Hosea speak to the goodness of God and the sovereignty of God?*
- A **second essay** will be due at the end of the eleventh week of class (Sunday, 7 April 2024). It should be 4,000 words long, plus or minus 250 words. It should answer the following question: *How does the presentation of God develop in the first part of the book of the Twelve?* Note that this question is not a repeat of the first one. Rather, it builds on the first paper by examining the character and presentation of God in the literary context that follows Hosea. If this question does not appeal, students are invited to propose an alternate question to the professor. The professor reserves the right to turn down the proposal or to make a counterproposal.

The breakdown for the semester's total work is shown in [Table 2](#).

AST's [Academic Calendar](#) provides guidelines and criteria for academic assessment. Marks are assigned by letter grade using these benchmarks. Note that graduate and under-

Weekly Seminars	10%
Reading Report	10%
Essay 1	40%
Essay 2	40%

Table 2: Distribution of Grades

graduate programs are currently assessed on a different scales at AST (see [Table 3](#)). For graduate students, a grade of C is deemed “Unsatisfactory,” whereas for undergraduate (BTh) students, a C is “Satisfactory” and the grade of D is possible for “Marginal” performance.

Graduate Courses			Undergraduate Courses	
A+	94–100	Exceptional	90–100	Excellent
A	87–93	Outstanding	85–89	Excellent
A–	80–86	Excellent	80–84	Excellent
B+	77–79	Good	75–79	Good
B	73–76	Acceptable	70–74	Good
B–	70–72	Marginally Acceptable		
C	60–69	Unsatisfactory	60–69	Satisfactory
D			50–59	Marginal
F	0–59	Failure	0–49	Failure
FP	0	Failure due to Plagiarism	0	Failure due to Plagiarism

Table 3: Summary Definitions of Grades at AST

6 Other Course Policy

Late work will not be accepted, except in genuinely extenuating circumstances. Students must submit something before the deadline if they wish to receive credit. Unless I state otherwise, assignments are to be uploaded by 11:59 PM (Atlantic) on the date indicated.

Essay submissions must be typewritten and double-spaced. They should be free from error. In this course they should follow SBL Style (see [?] in [section 3](#), above). As a reminder, AST upholds an Inclusive Language Policy. Please use gender-inclusive language when referring to human beings. Our traditions have different norms for speech about God; you are of course free to follow and explore those traditions when referring to God.

Plagiarism is the **failure to attribute** (by means of footnotes when writing or aloud when speaking) any ideas, phrases, sentences, materials, syntheses, et cetera, that another author has composed and that you have borrowed for your own work. Plagiarism is unethical. Academic penalties for plagiarism at AST are serious, and may include failure of the course or even suspension of further studies. Unintentional plagiarism is considered plagiarism. AST’s Plagiarism Policy is found under that heading in the Academic Calendar.

Students should request permission to record a class or lecture. If permission is granted, or if recordings are provided (as in the case of an online or hybrid course), I stipulate that all recordings be for personal use only. They may not be shared or distributed.

If you have needs that require modifications to any aspect of this course, please consult with the instructor as soon as possible. Any documentation regarding disabilities that you wish to divulge to AST should be provided to the Registrar’s Office, where it will be kept in a confidential file.

Finally, I encourage the conscientious use of laptops, tablets, and other technology in my classes. In classroom settings, realize that, as **cognitive psychologists have demonstrated**, “laptop multitasking hinders classroom learning for both users and nearby peers.” Do your part to foster an environment for dialogue by honouring the presence of your classmates. In online and hybrid settings, consider both the physical environment in which you choose to work and the virtual environment that you help create through your participation in various forums. Let your engagement in this course be marked by rigour and charity alike.

7 Further Bibliography

Access and study the following resources:

Schart, Aaron. “Bibliography on the Book of the Twelve Prophets.” This database with nearly all literature on the Book of the Twelve since 2010 is maintained at <https://www.zotero.org/groups/twelv prophets/items>.

Sweeney, Marvin A. “Book of the Twelve Prophets.” In *Oxford Bibliographies: Biblical Studies*, <https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780195393361/obo-9780195393361-0016.xml> (last modified 30 March 2015). AST students can sign in with their OpenAthens credentials.