



AMBROSE
SEMINARY

FACULTY OF
THEOLOGY

BL 621 *Advanced Greek Exegesis -- Hebrews* (3)

Fall 2008

Instructor: R. R. Remin

Contacting the Instructor

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Class Location: A2212

Course Description

A Greek reading course in the “Epistle” to the Hebrews. The style of the syntax and the vocabulary of the Greek of this epistle are distinctive within the Greek of the New Testament. The syntax is more complex and reflects more the tastes of the Asiatic style than Attic (Luke-Acts). The vocabulary is more sophisticated and incorporates words and expressions found nowhere else in the New Testament. In general the style of the Greek reflects an author with a more Hellenistic education than the other authors of the New Testament.

In addition to the benefits of the student's knowledge and experience in Greek, this study is also advantageous to the student of Greek because of other distinctive characteristics of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The Epistle is in fact far more characteristic of a sermon than an epistle. Moreover a very good portion of the Christology presented in Hebrews is found nowhere else in the New Testament. Hebrews is also an excellent illustration of early Christian hermeneutics. Hebrews also provides a window into the Jewish and Hellenistic milieu in which the initial proclamation of Christ took place.

This study of Hebrews will also pay attention to understanding the flow of the argument of the sermon as a whole and how to communicate the overarching message of Hebrews in a relevant manner to our contemporary audience.

Student Outcomes

1. The student will read the Epistle to the Hebrews in Greek and learn the distinctive style of this author's work.
2. The student will improve his/her understanding of Greek grammar, particularly syntax.

3. The student will identify the flow of the argument of Hebrews so as to understand its overall message.
4. The student will identify the sections of Hebrews in a manner consistent with the argument and yet manageable for teaching and/or preaching.
5. The student will prepare and write a series of exegetical projects which are based on selected texts from Hebrews but which also as group reflect the whole message of the Epistle. Each project results in a sermon outline or a lesson/ study plan. This is the major assignment in the course. At least two of the five will be developed in some detail during the class sessions. These projects will require the student to:
 - ❖ research, reflect, synthesize and demonstrate the relevance to their understanding of the passage,
 - ❖ base the projects on units of the text which are of a length realistic for teaching or preaching;
 - ❖ select units of text which are consistent with the message and emphasis of the whole of Hebrews;
 - ❖ select units of text which after exegesis have a message which is relevant to a contemporary audience;
 - ❖ select units which as a whole will reflect the message of Hebrews in such a way that the audience, if they heard all of sermons/lessons, will have an appreciation of the whole message of the whole of Hebrews.
6. The student will examine the thesis of Hebrews so as to be able to demonstrate the unity of the epistle in theme and form. Students will learn the distinctiveness of the sermon's Christology. Students will formulate a thesis as to the identity of the addressees of this epistle and the nature of the heresy (heresies) which were weakening the church. The student will consider the relation of the epistle to the thought of Philo of Alexandria, the Old Testament, Hellenistic Judaism and Greco-Roman paganism and how this affects the meaning of the epistle. Students will be challenged to proclaim this sermon's message of encouragement (*parakhsij*) to our contemporary church in a manner consistent with the sermon itself and relevant to our context..

Required Texts

The Greek NT and the standard reference books for Greek exegesis are required for this course.

Recommended Reading

CARR, Wesley. *Angels and Principalities. The Background, Meaning and Development of the Pauline Phrase hai archai kai hai exousiai*, (SNTSMS 42, Cambridge University Press, 1981).

ARNOLD, Clinton. *Ephesians: Power and Magic. The Concept of Power in Ephesians in Light of its Historical Setting* (Baker, 1989).

NOLL, Stephen. *Angels of Light, Powers of Darkness. Thinking Biblically about Angels, Satan and Principalities* (IVP, 1998).

LANE, William L. *Hebrews: A Call to Commitment* (Hendrickson, 1985).

TROTTER, Andrew H. *Interpreting the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Guides to New Testament Exegesis, Baker, 1997). BS2775.2 T76 1997

BATEMAN, Herbert W. ed., *Four Views on the Warning Passages in Hebrews* (Kregel, 2007).

LONG, Thomas G. *Hebrews (Interpretation, A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching, John Knox Press, 1997). Cf. Long's Preaching and the Literary Forms of the Bible* (Fortress, 1989).

EVANS, Louis H. *Hebrews (The Communicator's Commentary, Word, 1985).*

HURST, Lincoln Douglas. *The Epistle to the Hebrews: its background of thought* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1990). BS2775.2 .H87 1990

HUGHES, Graham, *Hebrews and Hermeneutics: the Epistle to the Hebrews as a New Testament example of biblical interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979). BS2775.2 .H8 1979

KASEMANN, Ernst. *The Wandering People of God: an Investigation of the Letter to the Hebrews* (trans. Roy A. Harrisville and Irving L. Sandberg; Minneapolis: Augsburg Pub. House, [c1984]). BS2775.2 .K3313 1984.

Nuwe-Testamentiese Werkgenenskap van Suid-Afrika. Ad Hebraeos: essays on the Epistle to the Hebrews. (Neotestamentica 5, Pretoria, South Africa: Faculty of Theology, University of Pretoria, 1971). BS2775.2 N88 1971

DEAN, William Walter. *A church at risk: the encroachment of American culture upon the church* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: F. Asbury Press, 1990). BS2775.4 D33 1990

PETERSON, David. *Hebrews and Perfection: An examination of the concept of perfection in the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 47; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982). BS2860 H6 P28 1982

JEWETT, Robert. *Letter to Pilgrims: a Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1981). BS2775.3 .J48

HORTON, Fred L. *The Melchizedek Tradition: a critical examination of the sources to the fifth century A.D. and in the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Society for New Testament studies. Monograph series 30; Cambridge [Eng.] ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976). BS580 M4 H67

D'ANGELO, Mary Rose. *Moses in the Letter to the Hebrews* (Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation series no. 42, Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1979). BS580 M6 D33 1979

WILLIAMSON, Ronald. *Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Leiden, Brill, 1970). BS2775.3 .W5 1970

LINDARS, Barnabas. *The Theology of the Letter to the Hebrews* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1991). BS2775.5 .L55 1991

Course Schedule

This course meets on Tuesdays from 8:15 to 11:00 a.m. in room A2212 of Ambrose University College.

Special dates to remember are:

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| October 14 (Tuesday) | Regular Class in spite of the Canadian federal election. Vote latter! Don't forget to vote! |
| December 9 (Tuesday) | Last Day of Lectures |
| December 18 | <i>The Day</i> beyond which no professor can grant an extension for incomplete work. This is <i>the Day</i> by which you must apply to the Dean and/or Registrar's Office for an extension beyond this <i>the Day</i> ! |

Course Requirements

1. Read the sermon to the Hebrews in Greek so as to be able to translate portions as assigned and discuss the grammar of the text as it relates to meaning. Read the sermon at least three times in various English translations. Each time read it in one sitting.
2. Read in conjunction with the Greek text the required commentary. Read and study all handouts delivered in class and in particular the professor's compilation of primary sources which illustrate the background of Hebrews.

Each student will read

(1) Paul Ellingworth, *Commentary on Hebrews* (NIGTC, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1993) and Lane, "Introduction, Genre," and "Introduction, Literary Structure," *Word Biblical Commentary* 47a, (Word, Waco, 1991) pages lxxxiv-ciii.

And, if you are in the MA(BTS) program and taking BL 621 *Advanced Greek Exegesis*, read

Daniel Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics, An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Zondervan, 1996);

or, if you are in the M.Div. or any other program and taking NT 710 *Advanced Biblical Study in Greek, Hebrews*, read

Daniel B. Wallace, *The Basics of New Testament Syntax: An Intermediate Greek Grammar: The Abridgement of "Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, (Zondervan, 2000).

Please remember read means *read*; reading in this case is not a synonym for memorize.

3. Read other commentaries, articles, and monographs. Research and dig, dig, dig! Students must show initiative in finding relevant published material.

Recommended commentaries are:

William L. Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, and *Hebrews 9-13* (Word, Waco, 1991).

B.F. Westcott, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (1892, 1970).

F.F. Bruce, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (NICNT, 1964).

G.W. Buchanan, *To the Hebrews* (Anchor Bible, 1972).

P.E. Hughes, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (1977).

H. Montefiore, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (HNTC, 1964).

C. Spicq, *L'Épître aux Hébreux*, 2 vols. (1952).

4. Read in Greek grammars sections relevant to the Greek text being read. The professor will regularly identify relevant sections. Students should take the initiative to identify the relevant sections in grammars by using the indices of the grammars and Robert Hanna's *A Grammatical Aid to the Greek New Testament* (1983).
5. Complete and submit a series of exegetical projects which are based on select texts from Hebrews but which also as a series reflect the message of the Epistle. This is the major assignment in the course. The material for at least two of the projects will be developed in some detail during the class sessions. Each exegetical project consists of five parts as taught in Introduction to Greek Exegesis. These exegetical projects will include a summary statement of each of the following. Each summary section will concentrate on the details which most help to understand and explain the text on which the project is based. Each should be approximately one page in length:
- Contextual Analysis
 - Syntactical Analysis
 - Verbal (Word) Analysis

- Theological Analysis
- Sermon Outline or Lesson Plan. The sermon or lesson will treat the text
 - in a manner which is expository (there is an obvious connection between the text and the point of the sermon or less);
 - based on units of the text which are of a length realistic for teaching or preaching;
 - consistent with the message and emphasis of the whole of Hebrews;
 - relevant to a contemporary audience;
 - and as a whole will reflect the message of Hebrews in such a way that the audience will have an appreciation of the whole message of the whole of Hebrews.
 - As a series the sermons will reflect the message and emphases of the whole Epistle.
 - The series is to be relevant to a contemporary audience.
 - Each sermon or lesson must be consistent with the unit of text and the grammatical meaning of that text.

note bene: At least one of the projects must deal with the Christology of Hebrews and the practical relevance of the same for the modern audience. Remember that the humanity of Christ is very important in Hebrews. The sermon must incorporate or make reference to Joan Osbourne's pop rock song entitled *One of Us* and the Lloyd Webber's hit *Jesus Christ Superstar*. In both cases do not be too eager to condemn.

5. Keep a list of relevant items read in addition to those specifically stated as required in this syllabus.

6. Attendance. In a course of this nature attendance in class is mandatory because of the interaction which takes place over the text.

Course Grade

25 % -- Demonstration in class of having read the Greek text and attendance.

25% -- Demonstration of having read Ellingworth, and other relevant materials including including the in class handouts.

50% -- Five exegetical projects (BL 621); three exegetical projects (NT 710).

The students who are take BL621 will be held to a higher standard of accountability on grammatical details in their assignments..

Recommended Activities

1. a.) Listen to a recorded reading of the whole of the Epistle to the Hebrews in one uninterrupted session. Do this twice! Do not follow along in a written text. Do not take notes. Any translation is acceptable.

As an alternative to listening to a recording you may have a second person read to you the entire Epistle in one session. Eugene Peterson's *The Message* (Navpress) is highly recommended. Eugene Peterson's *Working the Angles* expounds the benefits of *hearing* the text as opposed to *reading* the text.

- b.) Immediately after hearing the reading of the whole Epistle, without any reference to a written text, write a one page summary of what impressed you as the main point(s) of the sermon. Try as much as possible to write this summary on basis of what you have just heard as opposed to what you remember from previous readings and study of this epistle.
2. Complete a Christological inventory. See handout.
 3. Visit at least two bookstores in your area and browse the shelves for books about angels, spirit guides and spiritual disciplines (not particularly Christian ones). How many titles are on the shelves? Browse through the books in order to gain a sense of their content, quality, genre, etc. Keep a record of what you discovered.
At least one of the two stores should be a major chain such as Coles or W.H. Smith. The second store should be a store with more depth and quality and typically will not be part of a national chain. If at all possible, make one of your choices a store which specializes in New Age literature.

Important Notes

1. Students will not use interlinear editions (including that by Fribergs') of the Greek NT in class. This rule is absolute. Do not insult the professor or yourself by bringing these to class.
2. All assignments must be submitted in hard copy. These assignments must use Greek and/or Hebrew fonts. The fonts will be made available to students.
3. By means of a written examination students may challenge the grade assigned for in class demonstration of preparation of Greek text and reading of the scholarly materials.
4. As the need may arise minor modifications to this syllabus and the class schedule may adopted from time to time.
5. You may contact your professor by various means.
 - a. Office Hours on campus:
 - i. Tuesday Between morning classes or in the afternoon
 - ii. Wednesday By Appointment Only
 - iii. Thursday When not in class. Over lunch.
 - iv. Friday Between morning classes or in the afternoon
 - b. Email in the office: rrem@ambrose.edu
 - c. Voice in the office: 410-2000 ext 7906

d. Voice at home: 946-4635

6. Absences are intolerable because of the nature of the subject being learned and the manner in which this course is taught, namely the inductive method. If you must miss a class please work through the lesson(s) missed and then come to the instructor with any problems or questions. In the event you cannot be prepared, you are better being in class unprepared than not in class at all.
7. The instructor shall comply with all academic regulations as printed in the current *Catalogue* and *Student Handbook*, and it is the student's responsibility to be familiar with these regulations. The following academic policies are particularly relevant.

a. Add/Drop Policy: Students wishing to add a course should refer to the current academic calendar for the last day to officially enter the class. Students intending to withdraw from a course must complete the relevant Registration Revision form. The dates by which students may voluntarily withdraw from a course without penalty are contained in the academic calendar.

b. Course Extensions or Alternative Examination Requests: Students may not turn in course work after the date of the scheduled final examination for the course unless they have received permission for a "Course Extension." Alternative times for final examinations cannot be scheduled without prior approval. Requests for course extensions or alternative examination times must be submitted to the Registrar's Office two weeks prior to examination week (noted as the "Last Day for Alternative Exam or Course Extension Requests" on the academic calendar). Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise "due to circumstances beyond the student's control."

c. Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty. The seminary maintains a zero tolerant policy on plagiarism and academic dishonesty. Plagiarism and academic dishonesty can result in a failing grade for an assignment for the course, or immediate dismissal from the seminary. Even unintentional plagiarism is to be avoided at all costs. Students are expected to be familiar with the policy statements in the current academic calendar and the student handbook that deal with plagiarism, academic dishonesty (cheating), and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean.

BL 621 (NT 710) *Advanced Greek Exegesis* (3)