

NT1210 Synoptic Gospels: Matthew
Course Procedures and Schedule
Instructor: Arland J. Hultgren
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Spring Semester, 2009

A Preface to the Course

The purpose of the course is to provide a general introduction to the Synoptic Gospels and more specific engagement with a particular gospel. In this section of the course the Gospel of Matthew will be the gospel of more specific treatment.

Course Objectives

- To become familiar with major topics and themes in the Gospel of Matthew.
- To gain a basic understanding of the formation and composition of the Synoptic Gospels within the context of early Christianity.
- To become knowledgeable and conversant concerning the methods currently in use in the study of the Synoptic Gospels.
- To gain a good grasp of the issues that rise from a careful study of the Gospel of Matthew.
- To gain confidence in one's ability to use scholarly tools, procedures, and materials in the study of the gospels and of Scripture generally.
- To improve skills for interpreting the Scriptures.
- To become confident in one's ability to teach a Bible study and/or to preach a sermon based on the Gospel of Matthew.
- To become aware of how one's reading of the gospels is influenced by confessional and contemporary concerns and values.

Course Procedures

Required Books and Resources

In addition to the Greek New Testament and/or the English Bible, the following books are required (available through the Luther Seminary Book Store or online):

Douglas R. A. Hare, *Matthew* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1993).

Mitchell G. Reddish, *An Introduction to the Gospels* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997).

The Gospel of Thomas. This can be found online (<http://www.utoronto.ca/religion/synopsis/gth.htm>).

One of the following:

Synopsis Quattuor Evangeliorum, ed. Kurt Aland; or *Synopsis of the Four Gospels*, ed. Kurt Aland; or *Synopsis of the Four Gospels: English Edition*, ed. Kurt Aland (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1985 [or later]).

Recommended Books (on Reserve)

Davies, W.D., and Dale C. Allison. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew*. International Critical Commentary. 3 vols. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988-97. BS2575.3 .D285

- Hagner, Donald A. *Matthew*. Word Biblical Commentary. 2 vols. Dallas: Word Books, 1993-95. BS2575.3 .H32
- Harrington, Daniel J. *The Gospel of Matthew*. Sacra Pagina. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1991. BS2575.3 .H37
- Schweizer, Eduard. *The Good News according to Matthew*. Trans. by David E. Green. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1975. BS2575 .S44
- Senior, Donald. *Matthew*. Abingdon New Testament Commentaries. Nashville: Abingdon, 1998. BS2575.2 .S448

Expectations

The expectations of students, on which evaluation and credit will be based, are: (1) regular class attendance; (2) the completion of assigned readings; (3) the completion of a bibliographical exercise; (4) a presentation in a preceptorial; (5) a report on readings in *Texts and Tools for Biblical Studies* (textual criticism, translations, and other tools for biblical study); and (6) the submission of an exegetical or thematic paper, described below.

Evaluation/Grading

The course can be taken either for a letter grade (A, B, C, etc.) or on a Pass/Marginal/Fail basis. The student who elects a letter grade should indicate this choice in writing no later than Monday, February 23, 2009.

Bibliographical Exercise

Each student is to prepare a brief bibliography on Matthew 5:2-12, based on periodical literature. This is to consist of at least six entries and abstracts for any three of them. The resources for this exercise are any of the following: *New Testament Abstracts* (print [BS410 .N39 Periodicals Room] or electronic), the *ATLA Religion Database* (electronic), *Religious and Theological Abstracts* (print [BL1 .R4 Periodicals Room] or electronic), and/or Watson E. Mills, *The Gospel of Matthew*. Bibliographies for Biblical Research 1. Lewiston: Mellen Biblical Press, 1993 (Z7772. L1. B4 v.1 Ref.). This assignment is due Monday, February 23, 2009.

Preceptorial Presentations

Each student is expected to make a presentation in a preceptorial based on a written essay (not more than two or three pages, double-spaced) that is submitted to the instructor. Topics for the presentations are included in the Course Schedule below. Those who are not making a presentation at a particular session are expected to have done the readings in order that they can enter into the conversation in an informed and thoughtful manner.

Paper on Texts and Tools for Biblical Studies. The directions for this paper will be provided on a separate document. This assignment is due Monday, March 2, 2009.

Exegetical or Thematic Paper

Exegetical or thematic papers are expected by the end of the semester (Monday, May 11, 2009). The paper should be 12-15 pages in length (double-spaced). Students are free to write on a passage or topic of interest, but should consult with the instructor by Tuesday,

March 9, 2009, concerning it. The student who wishes to write on any of the following may do so without prior approval: Matt 1:18-25; 5:1-12; 16:13-20; 17:1-8; 21:1-11; 22:1-14; 28:1-10. A guide for exegetical work will be provided.

Note: Bring your *Synopsis* to every class session. There are two reasons for this: (1) we shall often do comparative work among the gospels, and (2) the *Synopsis* is a valuable tool for a close reading of the Gospel of Matthew, allowing one an efficient way to see what is distinctive about it.

Course Schedule

Week One (February 9-13, 2009)

Lecture Sessions: Organization of the Course. Lectures: “The World of Jesus and the Gospels,” “The New Testament Canon,” and “Introduction to the Synoptic Gospels.”

Reading Assignment for the Week: Read M. Reddish, *Introduction to the Gospels*, 13-43 (“The Formation of the Four Gospels”), 44-72 (“The World of the Gospels”), and 214-240 (“The Other Gospels”).

Preceptorial: Organization, Assignments.

Week Two (February 16-20, 2009)

Lecture Sessions: Presentation by Bruce Eldevik (Reference Librarian): “Bibliographical Tools for the Trade.”

Reading Assignment prior to class the following Monday: Mark Allan Powell, “Toward a Narrative-Critical Understanding of Matthew,” *Interpretation* 46 (1992): 341-46 [e-reserve]; and Jack D. Kingsbury, “The Plot of Matthew’s Story,” *Interpretation* 46 (1992): 347-56 [e-reserve].

Preceptorial: Greek Work on Texts for Exegesis.

Week Three (February 23-27, 2009)

Lecture Sessions: “Introduction to the Synoptic Gospels: Form Criticism, Redaction Criticism, and Literary Criticisms (Narrative, Rhetorical).”

Reading Assignment prior to class the following Monday: M. Reddish, *Introduction to the Gospels*, 73-106 (“The Gospel of Mark”) and 144-179 (“The Gospel of Luke”).

Preceptorial: Presentation on Matthew’s Story of Jesus.

Paper Due: Bibliographical Exercise due Monday, February 23, 2009.

Week Four (March 2-6, 2009)

Lecture Sessions: “The Gospel of Mark” and “The Gospel of Luke.”

Reading Assignment prior to class the following Monday: The Gospel of Matthew in the New Testament; M. Reddish, *Introduction to the Gospels*, 107-143 (“The Gospel of Matthew”); Ernst von Dobschütz, “Matthew as Rabbi and Catechist,” *The Interpretation of Matthew*, ed. Graham Stanton, 2d ed. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1995), 27-36 [e-reserve]; and Douglas R. A. Hare, “Current Trends in Matthean Scholarship,” *Word & World* 18 (1998): 405-10

(http://www.luthersem.edu/word&world/Archives/18-4_Matthew/18-4_Hare.pdf).

Preceptorial: General Discussion on Scholarship and Faith Issues.

Week Five (March 9-13, 2009)

Lecture Sessions: "The Gospel of Matthew."

Reading Assignment prior to class the following Monday: D. Hare, *Matthew*, 1-22; and Arland J. Hultgren, "Matthew's Infancy Narrative and the Nativity of an Emerging Community," *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 19 (1997): 91-108 [e-reserve].

Preceptorial: Presentation on Matthew as Evangelist.

Week Six (March 16-20, 2009)

Lecture Sessions: "The Birth and Infancy Narratives."

Reading Assignment prior to class the following Monday: D. Hare, *Matthew*, 62-87; and Richard Lischer, "The Sermon on the Mount as Radical Pastoral Care," *Interpretation* 41 (1987): 157-69 [e-reserve].

Preceptorial: Presentation on the Visit of the Magi (Matt 2:1-12).

Week Seven (March 23-27, 2009)

Lecture Sessions: "The Sermon on the Mount" and "The Lord's Prayer."

Reading Assignment prior to class the following Monday: D. Hare, *Matthew*, 146-159, 208-212; Arland J. Hultgren, "The Parables of Jesus: An Introduction," and "'The Lost Sheep,'" *The Parables of Jesus: A Commentary* Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2000), 1-19, 46-63 [e-reserve].

Preceptorial: Presentation on the Sermon on the Mount.

Week Eight (March 30-April 3, 2009)

Lecture Sessions: "Parables in the Gospel of Matthew."

Reading Assignment prior to class the following Monday: D. Hare, *Matthew*, 187-193; A. Hultgren, "The Weeds in the Wheat," *Parables*, 292-303 [e-reserve].

Preceptorial: Presentation on the Parable of the Lost Sheep (Matt 18:12-14//Luke 15:4-7; Thomas 107).

Week Nine (April 6-10, 2009)

Lecture Sessions: "Parables in the Gospel of Matthew" and "The Confession of Peter."

Reading Assignment prior to class the following Monday: Arland J. Hultgren, "The Miracle Stories in the Gospels," *Word & World* (forthcoming spring 2009).

Preceptorial: Presentation on the Parable of the Weeds in the Wheat and Its Interpretation (Matt 13:24-30, 37-43; Thomas 57).

Week Ten (April 13-17, 2009)

Easter Break (April 9-14). No class on April 13.

Week Eleven (April 20-24, 2009)

Lecture Sessions: "Miracle Stories in the Gospel of Matthew."

Reading Assignment prior to class the following Monday: Read D. Hare, *Matthew*, 98-100.

D. Hare, *Matthew*, 284-86, 291-327; and Donald Senior, "The Gospel of Matthew and the Passion of Jesus: Theological and Pastoral Perspectives," *Word & World* 18 (1998): 372-79 (http://www.luthersem.edu/word&world/Archives/18-4_Matthew/18-4_Senior.pdf).

Preceptorial: Presentation on the Healing of the Paralytic (Matt 9:1-8//Mark 2:1-12//Luke 5:17-26).

Week Twelve (April 27-May 1, 2009)

Lecture Sessions: "The Passion Narratives in the Gospels" and "Matthew's Passion Narrative."

Reading Assignment prior to class the following Monday: D. Hare, *Matthew*, 327-335; Eberhard Jüngel, "Life after Death?" *Word & World* 11 (1991): 5-8 (http://www.luthersem.edu/word%26world/Archives/11-1_Death/11-1_J%FCngel.pdf).

Preceptorial: Presentation on the Last Supper (Matthew 26:26-29//Mark 14:22-25//Luke 22:14-21// 1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

Week Thirteen (May 4-8, 2009)

Lecture Sessions: "The Resurrection Narratives"

Reading Assignment prior to class the following Monday: Raymond E. Brown, "The Resurrection in Matthew (27:62-28:20)," *Worship* 64/2 (1990): 157-70 [e-reserve] and Arland J. Hultgren, "Forgive Us, As We Forgive," *Word & World* 16 (1996): 284-90 (http://www.luthersem.edu/word%26world/Archives/16-3_Forgiveness/16-3_Hultgren.pdf).

Preceptorial: Presentation on Teaching the Gospel of Matthew in a Parish.

Week Fourteen (May 11-15, 2009)

Lecture Sessions: "Matthew's Resurrection Narrative" and "The Lord's Prayer (Matt 6:9-13)."

Preceptorial: Presentation on Forgiveness: Biblical and Pastoral Issues.

Note: Exegetical and Thematic Papers are due Monday, May 11, 2009.