

**OT5300 POETS**  
**Spring 2026**  
**DR. JOHN CURRID**

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### **POETRY OF THE BIBLE**

**GOAL:** This course is an introduction to the poetical sections of the Old Testament. As such, it will introduce the student to the major poetical books of the Bible: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. Included in the study will be such varied themes as Figures of Speech, Parallelism, Authority and Inspiration, and the Use of the Poetical Books in the New Testament. In this respect, the student should become aware of the many issues in biblical poetry, and how these have been understood and interpreted. Ultimately, this study should provide a good foundation for the student to apply Scripture to all of life.

**TEXTBOOKS:** The following books are required for the course:

1. R. P. Belcher, The Messiah and the Psalms: Preaching Christ from the Psalms (Christian Focus, 2006).
2. J. Currid, Why Do I Suffer? Suffering and the Sovereignty of God (Christian Focus, 2004; reprint 2014).
3. T. Longman, How To Read the Psalms (Inter-Varsity, 1988).

**REQUIREMENTS:** The grade for the course will be computed on the basis of the following variables:

1. There will be a “take home” final examination. It will be presented to the student on the last day of class (Wednesday, April 15). You have one week to finish the exam. It must be sent to me by midnight Wednesday, April 22 by e-mail. This examination is worth 50% of the final grade.
2. The student is expected to read the five wisdom books in their entirety, in addition to the assigned readings from the textbooks. To ensure the completion of this assignment,

the student must submit to me a reading report by Wednesday, April 22 by e-mail. The report will include the number of pages you have read of the assigned readings, the approximate percentage of all the reading, and your signature.

3. The student is required to submit a 12-15 page paper on a topic assigned during the first class period. It is due to me by e-mail on Wednesday, April 29 at midnight. The paper is worth 50% of the final grade.

4. My e-mail address is [jcurrid@rts.edu](mailto:jcurrid@rts.edu).

5. Class attendance and participation are expected.

### **OUTLINE OF THE COURSE**

#### 1. Wednesday, February 18

Syllabus  
 Authority and Inspiration  
 What is Poetry?  
 Form and Structure of Hebrew Poetry  
 Figures of Speech  
 Typology

#### 2. Wednesday, March 4

The Book of Job  
 Introduction to the Psalms  
 Are the Psalm Titles Authentic?  
 Psalm 1  
 Psalm 2, A Royal Messiah Psalm  
 Psalm 8, A Son of Man Psalm

#### 3. Wednesday, March 18

Psalm 23, The Shepherd Hymn  
 Psalm 110, A Royal Messiah Psalm  
 Psalms of Ascent

What is a Proverb?  
How to Interpret a Proverb  
Wisdom in the Book of Proverbs  
Proverbs 31, A Woman of Worth

4. Wednesday, April 1

Vanity of Vanities  
Ecclesiastes 1:1-2:26  
Ecclesiastes 3:1-5:20  
Is the Plan of God Fair?

5. Wednesday, April 15

The Song of Solomon

Paper Requirements:

12-15 pages in length.

Spacing 1.5.

Use footnotes, not endnotes: see standard journals, such as JBL, JETS for form.

Include *at least* three journal articles.

Include *at least* twelve sources i.e., books and articles.

Paper must have a title page in proper format.

Paper must have a bibliography in proper format.

The standard format for the paper is *The SBL Handbook of Style*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014). This may be found in the library, but you should own your own copy.

For an excellent example of this paper, see the Charlotte RTS web-site under Resources: Best Student Papers, Pen and Parchment (see paper by K. McIlvaine).