

## Course Instructor

Layton Talbert

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## Course Texts (Required)

1. Derek Kidner, *The Message of Ecclesiastes*. IVP Academic, 1984. ISBN 9780877842866
2. Layton Talbert, *Beyond Suffering: Discovering the Message of Job*. BJ Press, 2007. ISBN 1591666201

## Course Description

An exposition of Job and Ecclesiastes. Focuses on the development of the theme of each book. Emphasizes how to teach both books.

## Course Goals (Learning Objectives)

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. understand the function and methodology of Wisdom literature.
2. understand how Job & Ecclesiastes fit into the overall message of the Bible.
3. understand the organization of both Job & Ecclesiastes.
4. explain the overall message of both Job & Ecclesiastes.
5. identify major theological themes and distinctive emphases in both Job & Ecclesiastes.

## Course Activities

### Reading Reports & Reviews

**Warning:** Points will be deducted for misspellings and poor grammar. Be sure to proofread your work.

- **A Reading Report** must indicate by a “Yes” or “No” whether you *completed* the reported reading *as assigned*. On occasion, some Reports will require additional information which should be supplied in simple bullet points. That does not mean, however, that you may simply skim the text looking for those points; the full assignment must be fully read.
- **A Reading Review** must indicate by a “Yes” or “No” whether you *completed* the reported reading *as assigned*. In addition, a Review must include your own summary and evaluation of the assigned reading. Reviews should be double-spaced, 12-point font, 2-3 pages (i.e., at least 2 full pages but no more than 3 pages).

## Text Readings

- Kidner, *Message of Ecclesiastes* must be completed and a **Review** turned in at the beginning of class Monday (05/11).
- Talbert, *Beyond Suffering* Preface and Chapters 1-2 must be completed and a **Report** of salient points turned in at the beginning of class Wednesday (05/13). (Endnotes are not required, but you are encouraged to peruse them for substantive and additional insights beyond the text.)
  - “Salient Points” include the book of Job’s (1) four major structural divisions (with chapter numbers), (2) possible authors, (3) possible date of writing (two theories), (4) setting (when and where the story took place), (5) five tips for profitable reading, (6) four different kinds of suffering, (7) suggested themes, (8) central topic, and (9) three-fold message.
  - Chapters 3-21 and Appendix must be completed and reported by 06/20 (final projects date).

## Bible Readings

You may use an online reader, provided you are following along in the text. Readings should be in at least 2 different translations. Make brief notes of questions, insights, recurring themes, etc., as you read; but avoid being sidetracked during single-sitting readings. The goal of single-sitting readings is to get the big picture of the book as a whole. See Assignment Schedule for **Report** deadlines.

- Before beginning your Bible Readings for this course, take the two brief Introductory Surveys for both Ecclesiastes and Job located at the end of this syllabus. These should be taken anonymously and take less than 10 minutes. Turn in at the beginning of the first day of class.
- Read Ecclesiastes 4x *prior to the beginning of the course*—3x in single sittings (at least 1x aloud), and 1x in Kidner’s *Message of Ecclesiastes* along with Kidner’s comments. You will read Ecclesiastes 2x more during the week of class.
- Read Job 2x *prior to the beginning of the course*—each reading may be no more than 2 sittings (single sitting preferable, at least 1x aloud). You will read Job 1x more during the week of class.

Normal Reading Time: Ecclesiastes—30 minutes (pulpit rate); Job—2 hours (pulpit rate).

## Supplemental Readings

Supplemental Readings are due by 06/20/15.

- **Review:** Derek Kidner, *The Wisdom of Proverbs, Job, & Ecclesiastes*. (IVP, 1985)—Chs. 1-2, 4, 6, 8. Turn in a **Review** indicating that you have completed the reading and reviewing the assigned chapters per instructions above (Reading Reports & Reviews).
- **Report:** Robert D. Bell, *The Theological Messages of the OT* (BJUP, 2010)—Chs. 14, 17. Turn in a **Report** that you have completed the reading; the Report must include 6-8 points per chapter (include page number) that you found especially helpful.
  - **Extra Credit Option:** You may include Chapter 18 in this Report for 10 Extra Points.

## Exam

There will be no tests or quizzes for this course, only a final exam over the lecture material only. You will receive a final exam prep document in class to narrow the focus of your exam preparation.

## Projects

**Warning:** Points will be deducted for misspellings and poor grammar. Be sure to proofread your work.

- **Project 1. Job: Dialogue Chart**—A paraphrased flow chart of the dialogue in Job based on nodal statements of each speech. More explanation will be given in class. No sources required.
- **Project 2. Ecclesiastes: Book Exposition**—An expositional sermon or Bible study on “The Message of Ecclesiastes,” designed to walk an audience through the *whole* book in *one* session (about 45

mins). Requires a holistic and contextual consideration of the book’s leading themes and arguments. Include a cover page with (a) a succinct statement of the book’s *topic* (what the book is about), (b) a succinct statement of the book’s *theme* (what the book says about its topic), (c) a succinct statement of the book’s *message* (what the book says to do with or about its topic), and (d) the raw outline of your sermon/study. The rest of the project should fill out (in outline format, not paragraph format) the main points with specific data and passages from the book that corroborate and demonstrate your main points. The last page should be points of personal application addressing how the themes, arguments, and message of the book should impact the life of a believer (or unbeliever). [Think of it this way: you have 45 mins to explain to someone what Ecclesiastes is all about in one sweep, from beginning to end—*not to talk to them about Ecclesiastes*, but *to walk them through* the book as a guide and *show them from the book* what Solomon is saying.] Minimum of 5 extrabiblical sources.

## Course Policies

The student’s sacred calling is to study; if you are called to be a student, you are called to study. The goal is progress in utilizing the tools of learning and understanding; grades are merely a mechanism for evaluating that progress. Skipping assignments or projects in exchange for calculated point losses is not an acceptable discharge of the stewardship of your calling as a student.

## Late Work Penalty

Deadlines are a life reality and perform a secondary disciplinary function. All assignments are due by class time on the day assigned. Late work will be penalized one letter grade per day beyond the due date. Projects are due by midnight on the date assigned. Late work will be penalized one letter grade per day beyond the due date.

## Unsubmitted Work Penalty

All assignments are designed for your training and profit. The course syllabus is not a buffet, and skipping assignments or projects in exchange for calculated point losses is not an acceptable discharge of the stewardship of your calling as a student. Unsubmitted projects and assignments will accrue a double penalty—i.e., not just a 0, but a negation of the project’s point value from the student’s grade. (E.g., an unsubmitted 10-point project results not in a score of 0 but a score of -10.)

## Grading

Point Values			
#	Item	Pts.	Total
9	Bible Reading Reports	10/hr	90
3	Text Reading Reports	15/50/20	85
2	Reading Reviews	45	90
2	Projects	50	100
1	Exam	100	100
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>465</b>

Scale	
A	90% →
B	80% - 89%
C	70% - 79%
D	60% - 69%
F	← 60%

# Course Schedule

## Daily Assignments

DATE	DAY	READINGS & REPORTS	LECTURES
05/11	M	Introductory Surveys due Ecclesiastes Readings #1-4 Report due Kidner ( <i>Message of Ecclesiastes</i> ) Review due	Solomon/Wisdom Ecclesiastes
05/12	T	Ecclesiastes Readings #5-6 Report (single sittings, at least 1x aloud) due	Ecclesiastes
05/13	W	Job Readings #1-2 Report due	Job
05/14	T	Talbert, <i>Beyond Suffering</i> , Preface and Chs 1-2 Report due	Job
05/15	F	Job Reading #3 Report (maximum of two sittings) due	Job
05/16	S	Exam Prep	Job (AM) Exam (After Lunch) Song of Solomon (PM)
06/20	S	<b>NO CLASS; all supplemental readings and final projects due by 9 PM (Edmonton Time).</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project 1—Job Dialogue Chart</li> <li>• Project 2—Ecclesiastes Exposition</li> <li>• Text Reading Report—complete Talbert, <i>Beyond Suffering</i> (chs 3-21 and Appendix)</li> <li>• Supplemental Reading Review—Kidner, <i>Wisdom of Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Chapters 1-2, 4, 6, 8</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Supplemental Reading Report—Bell, <i>Messages of the Books of the OT</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Chapters 14, 17 (18 for Extra Credit)</li> <li>◦ Include 6-8 points of personal interest from each chapter</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

## COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY

\* signifies some of the most helpful works on various levels.

**Advanced** signifies more extensive use of Hebrew or a more academic focus.

### Job

#### **Intermediate**

Alden, Robert L. *Job*. New American Commentary. B&H, 1994.

\*Andersen, Francis I. *Job: An Introduction & Commentary*. TOTC. IVP, 1974.

Archer, G. *The Book of Job: God's Answer to the Problem of Undeserved Suffering*. Baker, 1982.

Carson, D. A. *How Long, O Lord? Reflections on Suffering and Evil*. Baker, 1990.

Green, William Henry. *The Argument of the Book of Job Unfolded*. New York: Hurst & Company, 1891.

Hartley, John E. *The Book of Job*. NICOT. Eerdmans, 1988.

\*Kidner, Derek. *The Wisdom of Proverbs, Job & Ecclesiastes*. IVP, 1985.

Konkel (and Longman). *Job, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*. CBC. Tyndale, 2006.

\*Smick, Elmer B. "Job" in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*. Volume 4. Zondervan, 1988.

Talbert, Layton. *Beyond Suffering: Discovering the Message of Job*. BJ Press, 2007.

Zuck, Roy B. *Job*. Everyman's Bible Commentary. Chicago: Moody Press, 1978.

#### **Advanced**

Zuck, Roy B., ed. *Sitting with Job*. Wipf & Stock, 1992.

Delitzsch, Franz, *Commentary on Job*. Trans. Francis Bolton. Eerdmans, rpr. 1982.

Dhorme, E. *A Commentary on the Book of Job*. Trans. Harold Knight. Thomas Nelson, 1967.

Gordis, Robert. *The Book of Job: Commentary, New Translation and Special Studies*. 1978.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Book of God and Man: A Study of Job*. 1978.

### Ecclesiastes

#### **Intermediate**

Bartholomew, Craig. *Ecclesiastes*. Baker Academic, 2009.

Eaton, Michael. *Ecclesiastes*. TOTC. IVP Academic, 1983.

\*Garrett, Duane A. *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*. Nashville: Broadman, 1993.

\*Kaiser, W. *Ecclesiastes: Total Life*. Everyman's Bible Commentary. Moody, 1979.

\*Kidner, Derek. *The Message of Ecclesiastes*. The Bible Speaks Today. IVP, 1984.

Longman (and Konkel). *Job, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*. CBC. Tyndale, 2006.

Longman, Tremper. *The Book of Ecclesiastes*. NICOT. Eerdmans, 1997.

Moore and Akin, *Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs*. HOTC. Holman, 2003.

#### **Advanced**

Gordis, Robert. *Qoheleth: The Man and His World*. Schocken, 1987.

Zuck, Roy. ed. *Reflecting with Solomon*. Baker, 1994.

### Song of Solomon

#### **Intermediate**

\*Garrett, Duane A. *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*. Nashville: Broadman, 1993.

Gledhill, T. *The Message of the Song of Songs*. The Bible Speaks Today. 1994.

Hess and Longman. *Song of Songs*. Baker Commentary on the OT Wisdom and Psalms.

Longman (and Konkel). *Job, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*. CBC. Tyndale, 2006.

Moore and Akin, *Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs*. HOTC. Holman, 2003.

Phillips, John. *Exploring the Love Song of Solomon*. Kregel Academic & Professional, 2003.

#### **Advanced**

Roberts, D. Phillip. *Let Me See Your Form: Seeking Poetic Structure in the Song of Songs*. UPA, 2007.

Garrett and House. *Song of Songs, Lamentations*. WBC. 2004.

## INTRODUCTORY SURVEYS

**Instructions:** Complete these surveys before you begin your Bible readings for this course. Do NOT put your name on this paper. Read each question and circle the answer which most accurately reflects your feelings or impressions. Be honest; this is anonymous and there are no wrong answers. Feel free to circle more than one option if you wish to combine answers. These should be turned in at the beginning of the first class.

### Ecclesiastes

1. Which best expresses how you normally feel about Ecclesiastes?
  - a) I enjoy it.
  - b) I find it confusing / depressing / disturbing.
  - c) I am intrigued by much of it, though I'm not sure I understand what the book is saying.
  - d) Other: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Prior to this course, how long has it been since you read all the way through Ecclesiastes?
  - a) Less than a year
  - b) A year or two
  - c) Probably longer
  - d) Never. (I thought Ecclesiastes was in the Apocrypha!)
3. Which phrase best expresses your impression of Ecclesiastes?
  - a) It's basically pessimistic.
  - b) It's basically optimistic.
  - c) It's basically hedonistic.
  - d) It's basically \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Which phrase best expresses your understanding of Ecclesiastes?
  - a) It's a reliable divine revelation of absolute truth.
  - b) It's an accurate record of sometimes flawed human reasoning.
  - c) It's a mixture of a and b.
  - d) Other: \_\_\_\_\_
5. State in one sentence what you think is the basic theme of Ecclesiastes.

### Job

1. How do you feel about reading Job?
  - a) I enjoy it.
  - b) It kind of bores me.
  - c) It's a neat story, but I don't understand *exactly* what it's saying or why it takes so long.
  - d) Other: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Prior to this course, how long has it been since you read all the way through Job?
  - a) Less than a year
  - b) A year or two
  - c) Probably longer
  - d) Never.
3. Which term best expresses your impression of Job's three friends?
  - a) Legalists
  - b) Insincere
  - c) Sincere but misguided
  - d) Other: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Which phrase best expresses your impression of Elihu's long speech near the end (Job 32-37)?
  - a) He comes closer to correctly addressing Job's situation than the first three friends.
  - b) He basically just reiterates all the same things the others say.
  - c) He's seems arrogant and full of himself.
  - d) Eli who? Who's Elihu?
5. State in one sentence what you think is the basic theme or point of Job.