

**THEO 60108 - WISDOM LITERATURE**  
**(The Rev.) Hugh R. Page, Jr., DMin, PhD**  
**July 7 to July 25**  
**2:00 to 4:20**

OVERVIEW

This course will examine writings found in the Hebrew Bible and Apocrypha that scholars commonly assign to the *wisdom* genre. The primary canonical exemplars of this type of literature are Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes. To this group, some have added Esther and the Song of Songs. Ecclesiasticus, Wisdom, and (in the opinion of certain commentators) Judith -- all of which are extra-canonical works -- also belong to this genre. In addition to these books, the presence of *wisdom motifs* has also been detected in other parts of the Bible (e.g., Genesis, the Psalter, and Daniel).

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students should be able to: (1) articulate the life settings within which Wisdom Literature developed and the way(s) in which such texts may have been originally understood; (2) describe the role of the sage in Israel; (3) demonstrate knowledge of the authorship, date, and major themes of each of the biblical and apocryphal works falling, in whole or in part, within the wisdom genre; (4) explain in a cogent manner the significance of biblical *wisdom literature* for contemporary theological discourse; and (5) formulate an apologia and guidelines for reading, interpreting, and utilizing Wisdom Literature in pastoral settings.

TEXTBOOKS

Dianne Bergant, *Israel's Wisdom Literature* (Augsburg Fortress, 1997)

Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Wisdom and Law in the Old Testament: The Ordering of Life in Israel and Early Judaism*, Revised Edition (Oxford University Press, 1995)

Katharine Dell, *Get Wisdom, Get Insight: An Introduction to Israel's Wisdom Literature* (Smyth and Helwys, 2000)

Roland E. Murphy, *The Tree of Life: An Exploration of Biblical Wisdom Literature*, 3rd Edition (Eerdmans, 2002)

Kathleen M. O'Connor, *The Wisdom Literature* (Michael Glazier, 1990)

Leo G. Purdue, *Wisdom Literature: A Theological History* (Westminster John Knox, 2007)

Gerhard von Rad, *Wisdom in Israel* (Continuum International, 1972)