

Exegesis of Apostolic Letters

Academic credits

10 KP (15 ECTS)

Prerequisites

Overview of the Bible
New Testament Greek

Approved by

Methodological Commission (August 2022)

Course author and main Lecturer

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Lecturers

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Content

In the lecture course, students are presented with the methods of exegesis of the New Testament in explaining the Apostolic Letters. Following the introduction to the basic questions regarding the date of letters, the location, purpose and translation of letters in Latvian in the various editions of the Bible. For the Letter to Romans, the original text of the letter is also examined in a simple way. Particular focus is on the relationships of Law and the Gospel, as well as central topics such as sin, the mercy of God, faith, evangelical freedom and sanctification, which are crucial to Luther's doctrine of atonement, are examined in depth. The letter to Hebrews is addressed by focusing on the development of the reasoning in the letter, namely by presenting a message to its audience on the purpose and objectives of the letter, and on how to understand and translate it to the reader of the 21st century. Special attention is paid to the Old Testament quotes in the letter that uniquely reveal Scripture as the living Word. Also looking at the letters by Peter highlights the context of the Old Testament, as well as the subject and language of baptism in the 1 Peter.

Aims

- Developing basic hermeneutic skills in students;
- explaining the reasoning of the Apostle Paul in letter to the Romans, presenting the students with the methods of exegesis;
- by looking at Paul's example, to give students basic messages in the use of the theological statement "Law and Gospel";
- to present the structure, context and application of the Letter to Hebrews in order to reveal the objectives of its message;
- enabling the understanding and appreciation of the worldview offered by Paul's letters and Hebrews;
- developing the skills of translating simpler letter fragments;

Exegesis of Apostolic Letters

- provide basic knowledge on historical issues regarding the authorship, date and content of the letters of the Apostle Peter;
- raising awareness of the use of OT context and narrative in the letters of the Apostle Peter;
- to prepare students for Individual exegesis for the creation of sermons and bible studies.

Learning Outcomes

Assessment

Knowledge

The students will know:

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| - the content, structure, date, author and main theological accents of the apostolic letters; | Intermediate tests (1-4) |
| - the most important points of the apostle Paul's biography; | Individual tasks (1-4) |
| - the major texts of the Paul Corpus and the possibilities for their interpretation in the Lutheran context; | Final test |
| - The use of Law and the Gospel in the Letter to Romans; | |
| - The structure of the letter to the Hebrews, its objectives and the use of Scripture in it; | |
| - OT context and narrative uses in letters by the Apostle Peter. | |

Skills

The students will be able to:

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| - to carry out an exegesis of apostolic letters; | Individual tasks (1-4) |
| - to focus on Apostle Paul's main points in theology; | Final test |
| - account for themes of baptism in First Letter of Apostle Peter. | |

Competencies

The students will be able to:

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| - preach, to conduct bible studies and to prepare educational events on apostolic letters; | Intermediate tests (1-4) |
| - explain the author's arguments by analyzing apostolic letters, avoiding personal exegesis; | Final test |
| - choose and apply exegetical materials and appropriate academic literature for the interpretation of apostolic letters. | |

FULL-TIME STUDIES**Lesson plan**

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Academic hours (45 min)</i>
1. Introduction. Apostle Paul – a missionary and theologian. Paul's life and biography	4
2. Introduction to Paul's theology. Theology. Christology. Pneumatology. Soteriology. Anthropology. Ethics. Ecclesiology. Eschatology.	8
3. First mission trip and related texts. Letter to the Galatians.	2
4. The second mission trip. I and II letters to Thessalonians.	8
5. A third mission trip. Letters I and II to the Corinthians.	8
6. Letters of imprisonment. Letters to the Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians, Philippians.	6
7. Paul's pastoral letters: I and II to Timothy and a letter to Titus.	4
8. Letter from the Apostle Paul to the Romans. The context of writing the letter.	2
9. ROM 1: 1-7 and 1: 8-15 exegesis.	4
10. ROM .1: 16-17, 1:18-32 and 2: 1-11 exegesis.	4
11. ROM .2: 12-16, 2:17-29 and 3: 1-20 exegesis.	4
12. ROM .3: 21-31, 4: 1-12 and 4:13-25 exegesis.	4
13. ROM .5: 1-11, 5:12-14 and 5:15-21 exegesis.	4
14. ROM .6: 1-11, 6:12-23 and 7: 1-6 exegesis.	4
15. ROM .7: 7-13, 7:14-25 and 8: 1-4 exegesis.	4
16. A letter to the Hebrews. Isogenic issues.	6
17. Letter to Hebrews 1-2 exegesis	4
18. Letter to Hebrews 3: 1-4:13 exegesis	4
19. Letter to Hebrews 4:14-10:39 exegesis	4
20. Letter to Hebrews 11: 1-12:29 exegesis	4
21. Letters from the Apostle Peter: author, date, topics, intent.	4
22. Hypothesis of the First Letter as a christening sermon/liturgy. Discussion.	4
23. Exegesis of 1. Pt 1: 3-12 – Resurrection of Christ as a basis for faith and hope	8
24. Exegesis of 1. Pt 1:13-2:10 – Christian Action in Resurrection Light	8
25. Exegesis of 1. Pt 2:11-3:12 – Christian action in society	4
26. Exegesis of 1. Pt 3:13-4:11 – Ready to suffer for Christ	4
27. Exegesis of 1. Pt 3:18-20 and <i>descensus ad infernos</i>	4
28. Exegesis of 1. Pt 4:12-5:11 – Steadiness in Society and Church	8
29. Presentations of student-made exegesis.	24
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>160</i>

Individual study plan

	Individual studies	Hours
1. Individual task: an essay on a theological notion in the letters of the apostle Paul.		48
2. Individual task: Exegesis of letter to the Romans		48
3. Individual task: Exegesis of letter to the Hebrews		48
4. Individual task: Exegesis of Peter's First Letter to the Romans		48
5. Study the literature sources specified by the teacher.		48
		240

Assessment

	Learning Outcomes			% of the final score
	Knowledge	Skills	Competencies	
1. Individual task	+	+		10
1. Test	+		+	10
2. Individual task	+	+		10
2. Test	+		+	10
3. Individual task	+	+		10
3. Test	+		+	10
4. Individual task	+	+		10
4. Test	+		+	10
Final test	+	+	+	20

Readings

Mandatory Readings

1. Džoiņa, F. *Pāvils no Tarsas*. Rīga: KALA raksti, 2008.
2. Francmans, Martins. *Dieva vārds aug: ievads Jaunajā Derībā*. Andris Smilgdrīvs (tulk.). Rīga: LMF, 2001.
3. Wischmeyer, O. (Hrsg.) *Paulus (Leben – Umwelt – Werk – Briefe)*. Basel: A.Francke Verlag, 2006.
4. Roetzel, C. J. *The Letters of Paul. Conversations in Context*. Westminster: John Knox Press, 1991.
5. Furnish, V. P. *Theology and Ethics in Paul*. New York: Abingdon Press, 1968.
6. Wright, N. T. *What Saint Paul Really Said. Was Paul of Tarsus the Real Founder of Christianity?* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.
7. Baikovs, Guntars. *Bībele kā Kristus liecība: uzticama, pārbaudāma, saprotama*. Rīga: LMF, 2016.
8. Melanhtons, Filips. *Loci communes: teoloģijas pamatjautājumi*. Kaspars Bankovskis (tulk.). Rīga: Luterisma mantojuma fonds, 2021.
9. Lutera, Mārtiņš. "Priekšvārds Sv. Pāvila Vēstulei romiešiem." Gundega Dumpe (tulk.). Latvijas Luterānis (2000.9.16).
10. *Luteriskais garīgums: Dieva bērna dzīve*. Egons Mudulis (tulk.). Rīga: LMF, 2014.
11. *Vienprātības grāmata: Luterāņu ticības apliecības*. Aleksandrs Bite (red.). Rīga: LMF, 2012.

Additional Readings

1. *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: New Testament VI Romans*. Gerald Bray (ed.), Thomas C. Oden (gen.ed.). Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2014.
2. Attridge, Harold W. *The Epistle to the Hebrews: A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1989.
3. Bruce, Frederick F. *The Epistle to the Hebrews*. Revised Edition. Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1990.
4. Buchanan, George W. *To the Hebrews*. Anchor Bible. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1972.
5. Carson, D. A., Douglas J. Moo, Leon Morris. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992.
6. Čakare, Laila. *Romas prokuratoru pārvaldes un Pirmā jūdu–romiešu kara ietekme uz Jeruzalemes draudzi*. Npublicēts materiāls, jūnijs 2021.
7. Davies, W.D. *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980.
8. Dreins, Dž. *Ievads Jaunajā Derībā*. Rīga: LBB, 2003.
9. Elliott, John H. *I Peter: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible 37B. New York/London: Doubleday, 2000.
10. Giertz, Bo. *Romans: A Devotional Commentary*. Bror Erickson (trans.). Irvine: NRP Books: 2018.
11. Johnson, Luke Timothy. *Hebrews: A Commentary*. The New Testament Library. Louisville, Ken.: WJK, 2006.
12. Johnson, Luke Timothy. *The Writings of the New Testament: An Interpretation*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986.
13. Kleinig, John W. *Hebrews*. Concordia Commentary. St Louis, Missouri: Concordia Publishing House, 2017.
14. Lauersdorf, R.E. *Hebrews*. Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Northwestern Publishing House, 1984.
15. Luther, Martin. *Lectures on Romans Glosses and Scholia*. Luther's Works, American Edition. Vol. 25. Edited by Hilton C. Oswald. Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1972.
16. Middendorf, Michael P. *Concordia Commentary Romans 1-8: A Theological Exposition of Sacred Scripture*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2013.
17. Middendorf, Michael P. *Concordia Commentary Romans 9-16: A Theological Exposition of Sacred Scripture*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2016.
18. Nestle (Eberhard and Erwin), Aland (Barbara and Kurt). *Greek-English New Testament*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1981, 9th edition 2001.
19. Ridderbos, H. *Paul. An Outline of His Theology*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975.
20. Roetzel, C. J. *Paul. The Man and the Myth*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999.
21. Sāgrustens, Hanss Juhans. *Liela puzzle: pa senāko manuskriptu pēdām*. Agrita Otomere (tulk.). Rīga: Latvijas Bībeles biedrība, 2019.
22. Sanders, E. P. *Paul*. Oxford: OUP, 1991.
23. Schnelle, U. *Theologie des Neuen Testaments*. Gottingen: V&R, 2007.
24. Tolpežņikovs, Jānis. *Bībeles studijas par Vēstuli ebrejiem*. Rīga: LMF, 2021.