Major Themes of the Bible and the Qur'an – (SC-634)
Wednesdays 4:30-7:30pm, Winter/Spring 2015
Steven Blackburn, Faculty Associate in Semitic Scriptures
sblackburn@hartsem.edu; 860-509-5960
Office Hours: MWF 2:30-4:30pm and by Appointment

Through comparative reading of the Hebrew, Christian, and Islamic scriptures, students will acquire a vision of how the Abrahamic religions treat some of the most seminal theological issues of their communities, such as monotheism, creation, the love of God, God’s acts in history, revelation, mysticism, prophecy, covenant, repentance and mercy, sin and punishment, forgiveness, redemption, atonement, final judgment and salvation.

While there will be occasional in-class presentations by the professor, students will be expected to read, reflect upon (in written form on a weekly basis), and discuss written materials that have been composed by members of the three Abrahamic faiths. One student will be the “point-person” for each unit; accordingly, during “your” week you may wish to take copious notes for each unit in order to assist in leading the discussion. Those sessions labeled as “led by the Professor” will include a short lecture on the topic at hand.

Required Books (on Reserve):

Be sure to bring to each class a Bible and a Qur’an.

Scriptural Commentaries (in Reference and/or online): JPS Commentaries on Hebrew scripture; New Interpreter’s Bible; various Tafsir as found at www.altafsir.com, The Qur’an and Its Interpreters (Ayoub), The Qur’an and Its Exegesis (Gatje), etc.

Non-scriptural materials (on Reserve):
Ayoub, Mahmoud. A Muslim View of Christianity.
Ayoub, Mahmoud. Redemptive Suffering in Islam.
Cragg, Kenneth. The Privilege of Man: a Theme in Judaism, Islam, and Christianity.
Davis and Hays, eds. The Art of Reading Scripture.
Ernst, Carl. How to Read the Qur’an.
Etzioni & Carney, eds. Repentence.
Grose & Hubbard, eds. The Abraham Connection.
Heschel, Abraham J. Between God and Man.
Hinze & Omar, eds. Heirs of Abraham.
Hubbard, Benjamin. The Abraham Connection.
Kaltner. *Ishmael Instructs Abraham.*
Kerr, David A. “He Walked in the Path of the Prophets,” in Haddad & Haddad, *Christian Muslim Encounters.*
Reeves. *Bible and Qur’an.*
ter Borg, Marlies. *Sharing Mary: Bible and Qur’an Side by Side.*
Volf, Miroslav. “God is Love” in *Christian Century* (Nov 2 2010) 29-34.
Winter, Tim, ed. *Cambridge Companion to Classical Islamic Theology.*

There is a lengthy written assignment consisting of a term paper of 16-20 pages on a topic chosen in consultation with the professor. It is due Wednesday, May 5. Sample topics include, but are not limited to, the following: Yusuf (great grandson of Ibrahim / Abraham); Moses / Musa; Job / Ayyub; David / Dawud; Solomon / Suleiman; John the Baptist / Yahya; Jesus /’ Isa. If you prefer not to focus on a personality common to both the Qur’an and the Bible, a theme common to all three religious traditions may be chosen, such as mysticism, suffering, conflict (spiritual and worldly), gratitude, belief and disbelief, vice-gerency (khilafah) / stewardship.

Timely attendance at all classes is required. Absence over nine classroom hours may result in a Failing grade. There is no mid-term and no final exam. The final grade for the term will be weighted as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance / Participation</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Written Reflections</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>40%</td>
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</tbody>
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As per Seminary policy, all professor-student email communications for this class will be made by using official student Hartford Seminary email accounts. Enrollees should check their Seminary email account regularly.

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While every attempt will be made to adhere to the following schedule, adjustments may have to be made during the course of the term.

**January 21**  **Reading Scripture** (led by the Professor)
**WEEK I**  Cantwell Smith: 1-20, 65-91
Heschel: 241-250
Davis & Hays: 1-5, 27-37, 38-53

**January 28**  **What is Scripture; Intertextuality**
**WEEK II**  Ayoub (Qur’an / Interpreters): 7-40
Ernst: 1-15, 20-58, 62-75
Rahman: xi-xvi
Reeves: 23-42, 43-60
Exodus 24:3-7; II Timothy 3:13-17, II Peter 1:19-21; Qur’an 6:55-59, 27:1-6

February 4
WEEK III
Monotheism
Gunton: 121-140
Heschel: 102-107
Hinze: 20-54
Deuteronomy 6:4, Romans 3:29-30, I Corinthians 8:5-6, Qur’an 2:133, 163; 112:1-4

February 11
WEEK IV
Creation
Gunton: 141-157
McGrath: 181-184
Ter Borg: 59-82
Winter: 141-160

February 18
WEEK V
Revelation, God’s Acts in History
Gillman: 1-34
Heschel: 72-79
Winter: 180-195
Exodus 19-20:1-21, 24:15-18; Qur’an 6:91-93

February 25
WEEK VI
Mediation between God and Humanity (led by the Professor)
Zechariah 1:7-20, John 3:13-21, I Timothy 2:3-6, Qur’an 4:64, 33:40

March 4
WEEK VII
Prophecy and Prophethood
Kerr: 426-446
Heschel: 124-126
Rahman: 80-105
Soulen: 331-343

March 11
WEEK VIII
Ethics
Gunton: 180-188
Heschel: 79-87, 181-186
Rahman: 37-64
Amos 5:11-24; Matthew 5:21-48; Qur’an 23:1-11

March 18
WEEK IX
Sin, Punishment
Heschel: 186-197
McGrath: 404-406, 411-419
March 25  Repentance, Mercy, Forgiveness
WEEK X  Etzioni & Carney 21-30, 60-75, 96-121
Leviticus 20:1-21; Romans 5:12-21, 6:20-23; Qur’an 7:8-25

April 1  No Classes at Hartford Seminary

April 8  Love of God for Humanity
WEEK XI  bin Talal: 37-53
Volf: 29-34
Zephaniah 3:16-17; John 3:16-17, Romans 8:35-39, I John 4:7-21

April 15  Worship, Prayer
WEEK XII  Gunton: 207-225
Heschel: 198-229
Winter: 218-236
Psalm 100, Psalm 150; Matthew 6:7-15, John 4:20-24; Qur’an 1:1-7

April 22  Final Judgment
WEEK XIII  Rahman: 106-120
Ter Borg: 213-228
Winter: 308-324

April 29  Atonement and Salvation
WEEK XIV  Ayoub (Muslim View): 90-97
Gillman: 247-272
Gunton: 189-206, 226-244
Ter Borg: 239-246