

OT 503: Old Testament Survey III

Online Course Syllabus

New Geneva Theological Seminary

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I. PURPOSE

The prophet Ezekiel, at the inception of his ministry to God's people, saw a vision of a scroll and heard the Lord's command: "Son of man, eat whatever you find here. Eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel" (Ezekiel 3:1, ESV). Like Ezekiel, if God's servants are to be effective in mission and ministry in today's world, they must be equipped by ingesting the Word of God until its truths are integrated into their thinking and behavior. More than any of the other information or skills you may obtain in seminary, a thorough familiarization with the Scriptures is central to preparing you for God's service wherever He may call you.

As a vital part of ministry preparation, this course serves to give you exposure to the content and flow of the Old Testament prophetic books—Isaiah through Malachi. As you thoughtfully and prayerfully read through each of these books in an English translation, the lectures and assigned readings will assist you in discerning the major figures, events, and themes of each book and how each prophet's message fits into the canon of Scripture and the larger flow of biblical history. Understanding the author, purpose, and historical setting of each book will also help you gain the necessary perspective for good understanding and accurate interpretation. Reflection on the role and calling of the prophet in ancient society will help you better understand how you can have a prophetic ministry as you face the challenges of the contemporary church and world. The purpose of this course is to help students learn and effectively use the New Testament, with specific emphasis upon the corpus of New Testament writings known as the General Epistles and the Book of Revelation.

II. EDUCATIONAL AND PERSONAL OBJECTIVES

- to gain an overview of the historical context of the seventeen Old Testament prophetic books;
- to grasp the flow and theme of each of the prophets' messages for their times and in the larger context of God's redemptive program;
- to understand the calling and role of the prophet and how it relates to God's gifts and callings in today's world;
- to reflect on the themes of judgment and deliverance as reflected in the various prophetic books in order to gain a deeper appreciation for the character and workings of our covenant God;
- to discover the joy experienced by the prophets, grounded in the Lord and His promises, in the midst of great national and historical calamity;
- to become personally engaged with the character and message of each prophet and, through the prophets, with the Lord who inspired them;
- to understand better the ways in which we, both personally, as a community of believers, and as a nation and world, need to be driven to repentance and faith by the message of the prophets; and
- to explore ways in which the prophetic books can be used for preaching and teaching God's word in the current generation.

III. ONLINE COURSE STRUCTURE

Modules: You have up to fifteen weeks to complete this online course. The course is divided into a series of modules designed to be completed in order over the course of 13-14 weeks, though you may complete the modules as quickly as you like within the fifteen-week time frame. Generally speaking, each week includes Bible reading, course textbook reading, and a lecture video. To see a detailed outline of the structure, click the "Modules" link on the left side of any Canvas screen.

Mentor: As you proceed through the course, you will need to obtain the services of a mentor who will meet with you on a monthly basis to interact with you regarding your studies and to proctor the course exams. (The quizzes may be taken without supervision.) Ideally, your course mentor will be a pastor, youth pastor, or other spiritual authority in your church who can guide and counsel you as you pursue biblical and theological training. In the course materials there is a mentor agreement form that your mentor will need to sign and return to New Geneva Seminary before you begin the course. There is also a mentor report that your mentor will need to complete after each meeting and return at the end of the course.

Conferences: Your course instructor will want to meet with you at least monthly using the conferencing capabilities of Canvas. Contact your instructor about setting up a conference within the first couple of weeks of the course.

III. COURSE DESCRIPTION

1. Modules: You have up to fifteen weeks to complete this online course. The course is divided into thirteen modules, designed to be completed in order over the course of 13-14 weeks. Generally speaking, each week includes Bible reading, course textbook reading, and a lecture video. To see a detailed outline of the structure, click the "Modules" link on the left side of this page.

2. Reading Assignments: Since a very limited amount of material can be communicated through the weekly lectures, and since thoughtful and critical reading is such an essential skill for your personal and academic development, reading assignments form an essential part of the learning process for this course. This emphasis is reflected in the fact that the completion of the course reading assignments will constitute 40% of your grade.

The primary textbook for this inductive survey course is the Bible itself. Weekly readings from Isaiah through Malachi in a major English Bible translation (e.g., NKJV, NASV, NIV, ESV, NLT) have been assigned. It is highly recommended that you complete these weekly Bible readings by dividing them up into daily readings rather than attempting to burn through them at the last minute. Daily reading will help ensure adequate time for reflection on God's holy word, especially when accompanied with prayer and an obedient heart. Daily reading also lightens the load, requiring only a few pages of Bible reading per day. Progress in the Bible reading assignments will be assessed through weekly "honor system" reports on the percentage of the assignment completed.

These weekly Bible readings are supplemented with readings from *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophetic Books* by C. Hassell Bullock, which serve to put the biblical readings in historical perspective as well as to provide an overview of the structure, themes, and contents of each biblical book studied.

Progress in the completion of the weekly textbook reading assignments will be assessed by alternating reading quizzes and assigned reading summaries covering each module's reading assignment.

3. Student Presentation: Each student will be responsible to make a twenty-minute online presentation, using conferencing software, on one of the minor prophets or a section of one of the major prophets. The presentation should essentially build a bridge between the selected prophet's message and our contemporary situation. It should offer 1) an overview of the key themes of the prophet's message in their original historical setting, 2) an explanation of some relevant ways in which the prophet's message addresses the current situation of a local American congregation, and 3) an outline of a series of four or more messages you would preach or teach applying the prophet's message to that congregation. This outline of sermons should contain 1) a provocative title for each message, 2) an outline of the major points of each message, 3) a one-sentence summary of each major point, and 4) a one-sentence summary of how hearers should respond to each message.

4. Examinations: Midterm and final examinations containing four essay questions each will assess your awareness of the lecture material. Each exam will focus only on the lecture contents for the six weeks

leading up to the exam. Both exams are "open notes," and may be completed using only the notes taken while listening to the course lectures.

5. Interaction and Oversight: As you proceed through this course, you will be asked to obtain the services of a course mentor who will meet with you periodically to interact with you regarding your studies and to proctor the course exams. Ideally, your course mentor will be a pastor, youth pastor, or other spiritual authority in your church. The course resources module contains a link to a course mentor contract and guidelines for your course mentor to follow for this course. Print these out and have your mentor fill out the contract and return it to New Geneva Seminary.

This course also requires that you hold at least three regular online conferences with your course instructor. The course resources module contains a link to a form for reporting on these conferences and help in setting up the conference.

V. GRADING

Letter grades will be assigned using the grading scale presented in the seminary catalog. Your grade for this course will be weighted as follows:

- 40%: Reading summaries and quizzes
- 20%: Midterm Exam
- 20%: Final exam
- 10%: Student presentation
- 10%: Interaction (professor and mentor conferences)

VI. TEXTBOOKS

Required:

- A major translation of the Bible (ESV, NASV, NIV, NKJV, NRSV, KJV).
- C. Hassell Bullock, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophetic Books*, Updated Edition (Moody, 2007). ISBN: 9780802441546

Recommended:

- O. Palmer Robertson, *The Christ of the Prophets*, Abridged Edition (P&R Publishing, 2008).
- Edward J. Young, *My Servants the Prophets* (Eerdmans, 1952).
- James Montgomery Boice, *The Minor Prophets*, 2 Volumes (Baker, 2006).

Course Outline

Module	Lecture Topics	Bible Reading	Textbook Reading
1	Amos: Judgment, Repentance, and Restoration; Jonah: The Lessons of a Wayward Prophet	Amos, Jonah	Bullock, ch. 1 (Introduction)
2	Hosea: Prosecuting God's Wayward Wife; Micah: Judgment and Promise	Hosea, Micah	ch. 2 (Jonah) ch. 3 (Amos)
3	Isaiah #1: Judgment and Hope for the Nations	Isaiah 1-20	ch. 4 (Hosea) ch. 5 (Micah)
4	Isaiah #2: Woe and Comfort for Israel	Isaiah 21-39	ch. 6 (Isaiah)
5	Isaiah #3: God's Servant and Israel's Glorious Future	Isaiah 40-66	ch. 7 (Zephaniah) ch. 8 (Habakkuk)
6	Jeremiah #1: Persecution and Judgment	Jeremiah 1-20	ch. 9 (Jeremiah)
Midterm Exam			
7	Jeremiah #2: Messages to the Nations	Jeremiah 21-52	ch. 10 (Nahum)
8	Ezekiel #1: God's Glory Departs from Judah	Ezekiel 1-24	ch. 11 (Ezekiel)
9	Ezekiel #2: Oracles Concerning the Nations	Ezekiel 25-48	ch. 12 (Obadiah) ch. 13 (Lamentations)
10	Lamentations: Weeping and Comfort for Zion Obadiah: Proud Edom's Coming Judgment Day Nahum: Coming Woes for the Proud Nation of Ninevah Habakkuk: Asking the Hard Questions Zephaniah: The Lord's Judgment upon Jerusalem and the Nations	Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Nahum, Obadiah, Lamentations	ch. 14 (Daniel) ch. 15 (Haggai)
11	Daniel: Dreams and Visions of the Future Haggai: Encouragement to Build	Daniel, Haggai	ch. 16 (Zechariah) ch. 17 (Joel) ch. 18 (Malachi)
12	Joel: The Future Outpouring Zechariah: Visions and Challenges Malachi: A Challenge to Cynical Israel	Joel, Zechariah, Malachi	
Final Exam			