



OT 502 – OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY II

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Online Course Syllabus

The foundation of a good theological education is a thorough familiarity with the flow of God's revelation in his holy word. The Bible survey courses at New Geneva Theological Seminary serve to provide that foundation as the basis for further studies in theology and exegesis.

I. PURPOSE OF THIS COURSE

Freed from slavery in Egypt, God's people Israel was to be a new nation reflecting His character in a dark and oppressive world. But becoming a holy nation would require more than the extensive legal and social structures mandated by the Law of Moses. The people needed the kind of individual and internal change that can only be brought about by the work of the Holy Spirit.

In this course we will survey the central era of Israel's national history as recorded in the books of Judges through Song of Solomon, covering the early period of sporadic government by the judges and extending to the development of the monarchy. We will see the ebb and flow of the nation's commitment to God from its pinnacle during the reigns of David and Solomon to the final exile of a people who failed to fulfill their national calling. In the midst of a frail and fallible people, poets such as David sowed the seeds of hope by speaking of a coming King who would restore and bring to fulfillment the nation's divine purpose as a light to the whole world. Speaking prophetically in the second Psalm, he writes of that future King:

⁶ *As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill.*

⁷ *I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you.*

⁸ *Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.*

⁹ *You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."* (Psa. 2:6–9, ESV)

As He did with Israel of old, God works patiently yet decisively with struggling believers today in whose hearts Christ reigns as King. As you see how God worked through his ancient people, their leaders, and key individuals in the Old Testament, you will understand better how God works even more powerfully in the New Testament era of fulfillment to call people to himself from all the nations and to enable them to grow in His grace.

II. PERSONAL AND EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

- To read reflectively and become familiar with the content of the books of Judges through Song of Solomon;
- To grasp the flow and major themes each book's message for their times and in the larger context of God's redemptive program;
- To gain an overview of the historical context of these books;
- To understand the content of Old Testament history and poetry and to reflect on its meaning and application for followers of Christ today;
- To discern the ways in which we, both personally, as a community of believers, need to reflect the holiness of God in the midst of a twisted and wayward generation;
- To explore ways in which these historical and poetic books can be used for preaching and teaching God's word to contemporary people.

III. ONLINE COURSE STRUCTURE

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.

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.

Mentor: As you proceed through this course, you will need to obtain the services of a course 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.

IV. READING ASSIGNMENTS

Since a very limited amount of material can be communicated through the weekly lectures, and since thoughtful and critical reading is 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 final grade.

The primary textbook for this inductive survey course is the Bible itself. Weekly readings from Judges through Song of Solomon in a major English Bible translation (e.g., NKJV, NASV, TNIV, 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 on the due date. Daily reading will help insure 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.

These weekly Bible readings are supplemented with readings from *An Introduction to the Old Testament Historical Books* by David Howard and *An Introduction to the Old Testament Poetic 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 reading assignments will be assessed by weekly Bible reading reports, and a series of alternating reading summaries and quizzes. The quizzes will focus on the broad themes and major points of the textbook reading assignments rather than minor details and minutia. You will not be quizzed on specific Bible reading content; however, the reading quizzes will provide a place for you to report, using the honor system, on the extent (%) of your completion of the Bible reading assignment for the week in question. Five points of each ten-point reading quiz will be related to the textbook reading, and five points will be based on the Bible reading report.

V. STUDENT PRESENTATION

Each student will be responsible to make a twenty-minute presentation focusing on one of the important historical figures of the period covered in the course. The presentation should include 1) an overview of the figure's life, 2) an examination of the main challenges this person faced, 3) an enumeration of the person's most important accomplishments or contributions, 4) and a summary of the key lessons we can learn from the person's life. Contact your instructor to schedule a conference to make your presentation.

VI. EXAMINATIONS

Two examinations containing four essay questions each will be given during the semester. The exams will focus on the lecture contents for the weeks leading up to the exam. The final exam will contain questions related only to the lecture material presented since the midterm. Both exams may be taken using any lecture notes you have taken during the course. You will have two hours to complete each exam. The two exams will constitute 40% of your final grade.

VII. GRADES

Letter grades will be assigned using the 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)

VIII. TEXTBOOKS

Required Resources:

David Howard, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Historical Books* (Moody, 2007).

C. Hassell Bullock, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Poetic Books*, (rev. ed., Moody Publishers, 2007).

Recommended Supplementary Resources: The following books are not required reading but are helpful supplementary resources for those who want to gain greater perspective on how to grasp and use the Old Testament.

Tremper Longman III, *Making Sense of the Old Testament: 3 Crucial Questions* (Baker, 1999).

Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., *Mission in the Old Testament* (Baker, 2000).

Reading Assignment Schedule

Week	Bible Reading	Textbook Reading
1	Judges - Ruth	Howard, ch. 1
2	1 Samuel	Howard, chs. 3-4
3	2 Samuel; 1 Chron. 1-21	Howard, ch. 5
4	1 Kings; 1 Chron. 22-29; 2 Chron. 1-18	Howard, chs. 6-7
5	2 Kings; 2 Chron. 19-36	Howard, ch. 8
6	Ezra; Nehemiah; Esther	Howard, chs. 9-10
7	Job; Ecclesiastes	Bullock, chs. 1-2
8	Psalms 1-50	Bullock, ch. 3
9	Psalms 51-100	Bullock, ch. 4
10	Psalms 100-150	Bullock, ch. 5
11	Proverbs	Bullock, ch. 6
12	Song of Solomon	Bullock, ch. 7