

# Course Descriptions

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## Old Testament Survey

This course provides a brief overview of the Hebrew Scriptures (in English) following the three-section division of the Hebrew Bible – the Law (Torah), the Prophets, and the Writings. Emphasis will be placed on each book's origin and setting, content and form, and overarching themes in relation to contemporary life and mission. Occasional attention will be given to interpretive issues and theological concerns.

### Learning Outcomes/Course Goals

Completion of this course should result in

- a basic understanding of the nature and process of the composition of the OT
- a structural knowledge of the history and traditions of Israel as portrayed in the OT
- basic skills in interpreting OT texts and the critical use of scholarly resources, and
- the ability to reflect theologically on the central themes of the Hebrew Scriptures and their significance for NT writers.

### Course Format

Weekly online video instruction coordinated with textbook reading and online forum reflections/discussions. Workload: approximately five to seven hours per week.

### **Required Reading**

- A more critical English translation (vs. paraphrase) of the Bible – NRSV, ESV, NIV, NASB, NKJV, NLT, or the internet-based NET. (Some use “verbal/formal equivalence” translation guidelines, while others use “dynamic/functional equivalence” translation guidelines. The NKJV differs in providing footnoted reference to the “critical” NT Greek texts (UBS4 or NA27) used in the other translations while translating from the Textus Receptus.)
- House, Paul R., and Eric Mitchell. *Old Testament Survey*, 3rd ed. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2007.

### **Highly Recommended Resource**

- Patzia, Aruthur G., and Anthonie J. Petrotta. *Pocket Dictionary of Biblical Studies*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2002.

### **Recommended Reading**

- Longman, Tremper, III. *Introducing the Old Testament: A Short Guide to Its History and Message*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012.
- Waltke, Bruce K., and Charles Yu. *An Old Testament Theology: An Exegetical, Canonical, and Thematic Approach*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007.
- Youngblood, Ronald. *The Heart of the Old Testament: A Survey of Key Theological Themes*, 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998.

### **Assignments**

(“Satisfactory” evaluation required for completion of the course)

1. Weekly online posts and participation in online forum related to video instruction, class notes, and textbook reading
2. Final essay (3–5 pages) that demonstrates the integration of course content with a contextual personal or ministry issue of biblical interpretation
3. Participation in video-conference calls

## Syllabus Overview

### 1. OVERVIEW OF THE OLD TESTAMENT AND THE CREATION ERA

Instructional content is concerned with establishing the divisions of the Hebrew Bible so the student can gain a grasp on how the text was written.

### 2. THE PATRIARCHS

A pivotal period in Scripture, the patriarchs, where God makes a covenant with Abraham and his descendants to provide land, children (seed), and blessing. Gives a solid overview of what occurs during chapters 12-50 of Genesis.

### 3. THE EXODUS ERA

The children of Abraham are in Egypt but now enslaved to the Egyptians. Examine material from Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

### 4. THE CONQUEST AND JUDGES ERA

We will discuss Joshua's leadership of the conquest of the promised land and the following period of the judges.

### 5. THE EARLY KINGDOM

The first section of the monarchical era in Israel when the nation moved from Samuel, the last judge, to their first king, Saul.

### 6. THE DIVIDED KINGDOM

Deuteronomy 17:14-20 lists the rules a king is to live by and though the wisest man in history, Solomon breaks nearly all of them.

### 7. EXILE AND RETURN ERA

Israel is scattered to the winds by Assyria and Judah in exile in Babylon.

### 8. THE INTER-TESTAMENTAL PERIOD

The inter-testamental period or "period between the Testaments" serves as a bridge to connect the Old and New Testaments.

### 9. THE PROPHETICAL BOOKS

Though not fortune tellers, prophets were God's voice piece to communicate what would happen for covenantal unfaithfulness.

### 10. THE WISDOM LITERATURE

At the conclusion of the Old Testament Survey the focus will be on the wisdom literature.