



Course Syllabus Wycliffe College Toronto School of Theology

This description is intended to assist in the course approval process and to assist students in determining whether this course will help them achieve their educational objectives and the learning goals of their program. It is not a learning contract. The details of the description are subject to change before the course begins. The course syllabus will be available to the class at the beginning of the course.

Course Identification

Course Number: WYB1009HF
Course Name: Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture for the Church
Campus: Online

Instructor Information

Instructor: Gordon Oeste, PhD
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Office Hours:
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Course Prerequisites or Requisites

NA

Course Description

This course will introduce the student to the history, literature, theology and genres of the Old Testament with an emphasis on application to the life of the Church. Students will encounter the Old Testament in its ancient Near Eastern setting in order to better understand the historical and sociological context of the biblical of the Old Testament.

Course Methodology

This course will include the use of lectures, online discussions, reading notes, inductive study, an exegetical paper, and a final exam.

Course Outcomes

COURSE OUTCOMES	COURSE ELEMENT	PROGRAM OUTCOMES
By the end of this course, students	This outcome will be demonstrated through these course elements:	This course outcome corresponds to these aspects of Wycliffe's statements of outcomes (MTS, MDiv)

Demonstrate basic knowledge of the content of particular books in the Old Testament: Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Lamentations, Esther, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and the Minor Prophets	Lectures, readings, and assignments	MTS: 1.1 MDiv: 1.1
• Exercise basic exegetical skills necessary for interpreting Old Testament passages effectively and faithfully today through inductive Bible study methods	Lectures, readings, inductive study, exegetical paper	MTS: 1.2 MDiv: 1.2
• Identify historical and current issues in Old Testament scholarship, particularly different kinds of methodology	Lectures, readings, final exam	MTS: 1.1 MDiv: 1.1
• Identify major events and periods in Israelite history and the influence of the major powers of the Ancient Near East on the Old Testament	Lectures, readings, inductive study, final exam	MTS: 1.1 MDiv: 1.1
• Understand how knowledge of the biblical world influences one's reading of the Old Testament	Lectures, readings	MTS: 1.1 MDiv: 1.1

Course Resources

Required Course Texts

Copies of required and books for the term have been ordered in stock at Crux Books, located underneath Leonard Hall at Wycliffe. It is the bookstore for all of TST, and we encourage you to buy your books from them. You can visit their store from 10-7 M-F, or order from them online at www.cruxbooks.com.

- Hess, Richard S. *The Old Testament: A Historical, Theological, and Critical Introduction*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 2016. 801 pp. ISBN-13: 9780801037146. \$62.49hb, \$39.99 Kindle edition on amazon.ca.
- Bartholomew, Craig G. and David J. H. Beldman, eds. *Hearing the Old Testament: Listening for God's Address*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012. 475 pp. ISBN-13: 9780802865618. \$42.99pb, \$31.04 Kindle edition on amazon.ca.
- Fee, Gordon D. and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible Book by Book: A Guided Tour*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009. 448pp. ISBN-13: 9780310518082. \$24.99pb, \$3.99 Kindle edition amazon.ca.

Course Website(s)

- Blackboard <https://weblogin.utoronto.ca/>

This course uses Blackboard for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT portal login page at <http://portal.utoronto.ca> and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to the portal using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you'll find the link to the website for all your Blackboard-based courses. (Your course registration with ROSI gives you access to the course website at Blackboard.) Note also the information at <http://www.portalinfo.utoronto.ca/content/information-students>. Students who have trouble accessing Blackboard should ask Thomas Power (thomas.power@wycliffe.utoronto.ca) for further help.

Class Schedule

For Readings: Hess is abbreviated H, Bartholomew and Beldman as BB. The full bibliographic details of other readings can be found below in the "Assigned Bibliography" section. Your other suggested textbook is also a vital part of the course, even though it has not been assigned specific readings in the schedule. Reading the Bible Book-by-Book is meant to be read alongside your various Bible readings as a supplement. The authors wonderfully introduce each book and provide helpful hints and strategies for reading. It is meant to complement the more technical focus of your Hess textbook. Books of the Bible will play an important role in your final exam (cf. the final exam section below).

<i>Week</i>	<i>Lecture</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>Bible Readings</i>	<i>Assignments</i>
Week 1 Sept 11-17	Hebrew Poetry and the Book of Psalms	H: 417-451 Mays, "Question of Identity"	Pss 1-8, 14-15, 22-24, 46, 50-51, 63, 69, 72-73, 89	
Week 2 Sept 18-24	The Psalms in the Life of the Church	BB: 277-301 Davis, "Maximal Speech"	Pss 90-95, 102-107, 109-110, 120, 132-137, 145-150	
Week 3 Sept 25-Oct 1	Hebrew Wisdom and the Book of Job	H: 393-416 BB: 302-331	Job	
Week 4 Oct 2-8	The Book of Proverbs	H: 452-474 Davis, "Surprised by Wisdom"	Proverbs	
Week 5 Oct 9-15	Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs	H: 475-510	Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs	
Week 6 Oct 16-22	Introduction to Biblical Prophecy	BB: 332-355 Sandy, "Plowshares & Pruning Hooks" 103-128		Inductive Study Due: Oct 20
Week 7	Reading Week			Reading Notes

Oct 23-29				Due: Oct 27
Week 8 Oct 30-Nov 5	The Book of Isaiah	H: 513-539 BB: Boda, "Biblical Theology & OT Interpretation"	Isaiah	
Week 9 Nov 6-12	The Books of Jeremiah and Lamentations	H: 540-567 BB: Wright, "Mission and OT Interpretation"	Jeremiah	
Week 10 Nov 13-19	The Book of Ezekiel	H: 568-584 Block, "Preaching Ezekiel"	Ezekiel	
Week 11 Nov 20-26	Daniel and Apocalyptic Literature	H: 585-598 Long, "Preaching Apocalyptic"	Daniel	
Week 12 Nov 27-Dec 3	The Twelve, Pt. 1	H: 599-630, 647-655 BB: 356-379	Hosea-Micah	Exegesis Paper: Due: Dec 1
Week 13 Dec 4-10	The Twelve, Pt. 2	H: 656-675, 683-710 Lo, "Preaching the Minor Prophets"	Nahum-Malachi	Reading Notes Due: Dec 8
Week 14 Dec 11-15	Final Exam			Due: Dec 15

A Sample Week (and Timeline) for Online Discussions

- (1) Previous Friday at 8:00AM (EST): The introductory video, lecture, and readings will be posted onto Blackboard in the appropriate unit folder.
- (2) Wednesday night by midnight (EST): Students will post their answer to the weekly discussion board. Answers will typically be around 200-250 words.
- (3) Friday morning at 8:00AM (EST): The unit for the next week of the course will be posted, giving students the weekend to prepare, if they so choose.
- (4) Friday night by midnight (EST): Starting on Thursday, students will be given a few days to respond and interact with each other's posts. Your responses to posts will make up a part of your total participation mark. Typical responses can range in length, from 100-200 words.

- (5) Friday night by midnight (EST): Bigger assignments, such as papers and reading notes, will be due during the appropriate week, as noted in the schedule above.

Evaluation

Requirements

This is an online course which will be administered through the University of Toronto's Portal (Blackboard) system. Students are expected to log into the course website regularly (<http://portal.utoronto.ca>), where one can access class lectures and the forum for discussing material throughout the course (further instructions for online contribution will be provided).

Each week the instructor will post a short video introducing the material for the course, as well as a written lecture. Participation in the course is very important, and is encouraged through online discussion of assigned readings. On top of these, students will also be evaluated through an inductive paper, an exegesis paper, reading notes, and a final exam.

All assignments will need to be submitted as PDF or DOCX files to the instructor at his email address.

Inductive Study	20%	Oct 20
Exegesis Paper	25%	Dec 1
Posted Online Reflections	15 %	Weekly
Bible Reading (2 at 7.5% each)	15%	Oct 27; Dec 8
Final Exam	25 %	Dec 14-15
Total Grade	100 %	

Grading System

Letter Grade	Numerical Equivalents	Grade Point	Grasp of Subject Matter
A+	90–100%	4.0	Profound & Creative
A	85–89%	4.0	Outstanding
A-	80–84%	3.7	Excellent
B+	77–79%	3.3	Very Good
B	73–76%	3.0	Good
B-	70–72%	2.7	Satisfactory
FZ	0–69%	0	Failure

Grades without numerical equivalent:

CR	Designates credit; has no numerical equivalent or grade point value
NCR	Designates failure; has no numerical equivalent, but has a grade point value of 0 and is included in the GPA calculation
SDF	Standing deferred (a temporary extension)
INC	Permanent incomplete; has no numerical equivalent or grade point value
WDR	Withdrawal without academic penalty
AEG	May be given to a final year student who, because of illness, has completed at least 60% of the course, but not the whole course, and who would not otherwise be able to convocate; has no numerical equivalent and no grade point value

Policy on Assignment Extensions

The two term papers, reading notes, and final exam will all be due by Midnight (EST) on the day noted in the course schedule. Any late online participation results in a mark of zero. Extensions must be sought before the due date and will only be given in exceptional circumstances. **Do not ask me for an extension the night before or the day an assignment is due.** For the two term papers and reading notes, a 1% deduction will be taken off a student's assignment for each day late (including weekends). There are no deductions for the **final exam: you must take it during the open time or receive a zero.**

Basic Degree students are expected to complete all course work by the end of the term in which they are registered. Under **exceptional circumstances**, with the written permission of the instructor, students may request an extension (SDF = “standing deferred”) beyond the term. An extension, when offered, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. An SDF must be requested no later than the last day of classes of the term in which the course is taken. The request form is available on the college website or from the Registrar’s office.

One percentage point per day will be deducted on the course grade if an extension has not been requested by the stated deadline.

Course grades. Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor’s college before being posted. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University grading policy (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/grading.pdf>) or college grading policy.

Policies

Accessibility. Students with a disability or health consideration are entitled to accommodation. Students must register at the University of Toronto’s Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

Plagiarism. Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* (linked from <http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks> and the

University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters*

<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>), a student who plagiarizes in this course. Students will be assumed to have read the document “Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing” published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges (http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm).

Turnitin.com. Students may be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.

Other academic offences. TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>).

Writing Style. The writing standard for the Toronto School of Theology is Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, 8th edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), which is available at Crux Books.

Bibliography

Assigned Bibliography

- Block, Daniel I. “Preaching Ezekiel.” Pages 157-178 in *Reclaiming the Old Testament for Christian Preaching*. Edited by J. R. Kent Grenville, Paul J. Kissling, and Laurence A. Turner. Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2010.
- Davis, Ellen F. “Maximal Speech: Preaching the Psalms.” Pages 17-32 in *Wondrous Depth: Preaching the Old Testament*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005.
- Davis, Ellen F. “Surprised by Wisdom: Preaching Proverbs.” *Interpretation* 63 (2009): 264-277.
- Lo, Alison. “Preaching the Minor Prophets.” Pages 197-214 in *Reclaiming the Old Testament for Christian Preaching*. Edited by J. R. Kent Grenville, Paul J. Kissling, and Laurence A. Turner, 197-214. Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2010.
- Long, Thomas G. “Preaching Apocalyptic Literature—2001: A Preaching Odyssey.” *Review & Expositor* 90.3 (Sum 1993): 371-381.
- Lucas, Ernest C. “Preaching Apocalyptic.” Pages 179-196 in *Reclaiming the Old Testament for Christian Preaching*. Edited by J. R. Kent Grenville, Paul J. Kissling, and Laurence A. Turner, 179-196. Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2010.
- Mays, James L. “A Question of Identity: The Threefold Hermeneutic of Psalmody.” *Asbury Theological Journal* 46 (1991): 87-94.
- Sailhamer, John H. “Preaching from the Prophets.” Pages 115-136 in *Preaching the Old Testament*. Edited by Scott M. Gibson. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2006.
- Sandy, D. Brent. *Plowshares & Pruning Hooks: Rethinking the Language of Biblical Prophecy and Apocalyptic*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2002, pp. 103-128.

For help with inductive studies, see Oletta Wald, *The New Joy of Discovery in Bible Study* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2002). Two standard guides for biblical exegesis include Michael J. Gorman, *Elements of Biblical Exegesis: A Basic Guide for Students and Ministers*, Revised and Expanded Edition (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson,

2009); Douglas Stuart, *Old Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors*, Fourth Edition (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009); John H. Hayes and Carl R. Holladay, *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook*, Third Edition (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007). Another introductory guide is Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, Fourth Edition (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014).

For preaching (and reading with an eye towards preaching) the Old Testament, a number of excellent books have been published in recent years. We would recommend *The Art of Reading Scripture* (eds. Ellen David and Richard Hays; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003); *Preaching the Old Testament* (ed. Scott Gibson; Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2006);

For a brief overview of modern OT commentaries, see Tremper Longman III, *Old Testament Commentary Survey* (5th edition; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013), as well as Brevard S. Childs, *Old Testament Books for Pastor and Teacher* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977). A good introduction to the various critical methodologies employed in both Old and New Testament studies is *To Each Its Own Meaning: An Introduction to Biblical Criticisms and their Application* (ed. Stephen R. Haynes and Steven L. McKenzie; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1993). We would also recommend John Barton, *Reading the Old Testament: Method in Biblical Study*, Revised and Expanded (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1997). For those seeking to delve deeper into the history of OT criticism, an excellent resource written at an introductory level is Mark S. Gignilliat, *A Brief History of Old Testament Criticism: From Benedict Spinoza to Brevard Childs* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012).

Breaking Down the Assignments: Inductive Paper (due Oct 20) – 20% of final mark

Choose one of the following books for your inductive study: Amos or Ecclesiastes.

Use the following headings to organize your paper. *Be sure that the amount of space devoted to each section reflects its value. That is, if you state the theme of the book in only two sentences, you will not receive the full 25 marks. Also, be sure to follow the additional information given in the Inductive Study Supplemental Information.*

(A) Table of contents with captions (10%)

I am looking for appropriateness, conciseness and – to a lesser extent, creativity. *(N.B. Don't be constrained by the traditional chapter divisions; remember that they are a late addition to the text and may not always be helpful in outlining the structure of a biblical book).*

(B) Analysis of the book's structure (35%)

Expand and *justify* your table of contents. How did you come up with your structure? What are the major sections of the book? How are these sections subdivided? Are the sections of a different literary style (poetry, biographical or sermonic material)? *Be sure to defend your assessment of the book's structure.*

(C) Theme of the book (25%)

What is the *one central message* or theme of the book? How is this theme developed (give examples from several passages in the book to illustrate the development of the theme)? Be sure that you do not confuse the theme of the book with sub-themes or motifs. *Make sure to support your assessment of the theme with evidence from the biblical text.*

(D) General observations and theological insights (20%)

What are some of the more prominent theological emphases of the book? How are they developed? How do these emphases relate to other books in the Bible?

(E) Ideas for preaching or teaching: questions for further study (5%)

How would you preach or teach this book? Provide a brief outline (be specific), and be sure to indicate your intended audience (adult congregation, Sunday school, etc). Also include a list of questions for further study that emerge from your paper.

Essentials to remember:

- 1) Grammar, spelling and style will account for 5% of your grade. Be sure to proof-read your paper carefully before handing it in!
- 2) **Do not** use secondary resources (annotated Bible, commentaries etc.) You may use an Atlas or Bible Dictionary for place names or puzzling terms, but make sure to cite them properly.
- 3) Papers should be typed (not handwritten) and not more than 7 pages (not including the title page and bibliography). Papers should be double spaced with margins of no less than 1 inch; use a 12 pt font (either Ariel or Times New Roman).

Inductive Study: Supplemental Information

1. Chapter/Section Captions

Keep your captions short and concise. A good guideline is to think of a newspaper headline. Most headlines are quite short (usually between 2-7 words), and yet succinctly summarize the content of the following article. The caption does not need to capture every detail within the chapter, however it should get at the heart of the content, so that at a glance you have a quick summary of what the chapter is about.

E.g. • An effective caption for Exodus 2 might be: *The Birth of Moses*.

• A less than effective caption for Exodus 2 might be: *Moses is Found in a Basket by a Princess of Egypt on the Banks of the Nile*. While this captures the heart of the chapter, it is rather unwieldy and quite long.

2. Structure

Most literary compositions have structure. A personal letter, a mortgage, a sermon, even a recipe has a structure—the content is arranged by convention in a certain order or format, which helps us understand the message being communicated. “A composition’s layout generally reflects the author’s main focus, points of emphasis, agenda, etc., and accordingly represents an important avenue to better understand the author's meaning.”¹

The structure of a book is primarily a question of how the material in a given book or section is arranged. In the study of a book or larger block of text, the author has made conscious decisions about which materials are placed beside each other and in what sequence. Sometimes a story will be arranged chronologically, but even then, the choice of what to include or exclude affects the telling of the story. Thus, the fact that John focuses almost half of his gospel (John 11:45-21:25) on the last week of Christ's life is one significant way in which John communicates to his readers what he considers to be important. By his choice of which material to include or exclude, John communicates to us about the life of Christ. By this arrangement, the organization (and selection) of the material, affects how the story is told, and thereby, the overall impact of the book.

Texts (or often sections within a given body of text) may be arranged in various ways:

¹ David Dorsey, *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1999), 17.

- 1) Chronologically
- 2) Spatially - (e.g. 1 Sam 21-31 is a group of texts focusing on David's time in the wilderness)
- 3) As an acrostic (e.g. Ps 119)
- 4) According to certain similar events (e.g. The plagues in Exodus 7-11)
- 5) Around a theme or focus (e.g. The Psalms of Ascent - Pss 120-134)
- 6) In an envelope (*inclusio*) pattern ("Blessed" bracketing Pss 1+2)
- 7) A key word (*Leitwort*) or set pattern of words - E.g. "Woe" oracles (e.g. Isa 5); oracles against the nations (Jeremiah 46-51), X + 1 pattern (Prov 30:15ff)
- 8) A repeating pattern (e.g. the book of Jonah)
 - A Jonah's commissioning (1:1-3)
 - B Jonah and the pagan sailors (1:4-16)
 - C Jonah's pious, grateful prayer (1:17-2:10)
 - A' Jonah's recommissioning (John 3:1-3a)
 - B' Jonah and the pagan Ninevites (3:3b-10)
 - C' Jonah's angry, resentful prayer (4:1-4)
 - D God's lesson for Jonah (4:5-11)
 - 9) As a chiasm (For the Greek letter *Chi* [X]) - E.g. Ruth 2
 - A Introduction - Ruth tells Naomi her plans to glean (2:1-2)
 - B Ruth goes out to glean (2:3)
 - C Boaz arrives and hears about Ruth (2:4-7)
 - D TURNING POINT - Ruth and Boaz Meet (2:8-13)
 - C' Boaz invites Ruth to join him and his harvesters for a meal (2:14)
 - B' Ruth arises and gleans again (2:15-17)
 - A' Conclusion - Ruth returns to Naomi (2:18-23)

There are a number of clues that hint at the structure of a section or book and signal the beginning or end of a section. Often these can be discerned by noticing shifts or repetitions in the story or the communication pattern of the text.

- 1) Shifts in time (1 Sam 6:1)
- 2) Shifts in place (Num 20:1)
- 3) Shift in characters or speaker (Job 4:1; 6:1)
- 4) Shift in theme or topic (Isa 40:1)
- 5) Shift in genre (1 Chron 10:1 after chronologies)
- 6) Shift in speed of action (Ruth 1:6)
- 7) Shift in narrative technique (dialogue to narration)
- 8) Shift from prose to poetry (1 Sam 22)
- 9) Change of major characters (1 Sam 16:1ff).
- 10) Summaries (Judg 21:24-25)
- 11) Concluding formulas (Judg 3:11, 30)
- 12) Last part of an *inclusio* or chiasm (Ps 8:9)
- 13) Poetic refrains (e.g. "put your hope..." Pss 42-43)
- 14) Shift in tense, mood or person of verbs (Lam 1:1-11, 12-22)
- 15) "Says Yahweh"—often closing prophetic discourses or subunits (Isa 21:17; 22:25; Jer 29:32)²

3. General Observations

Look for general patterns within a book. They may not necessarily be structural patterns, but may be similar ways that different characters are portrayed or described (e.g. are kings anointed? By whom are they anointed

² Note: Many of these examples are taken from David Dorsey's book, cited above.

in 1-2 Sam and 1-2 Kings?). What events are similar in the lives of various characters (1 Sam 24, 26 - David twice spares Saul's life)? Geography plays a key role in Jonah. Knowing that Tarshish is in the exact opposite direction from Nineveh and at the "farthest corner of the world" tells you something about the intensity of Jonah's flight. The repeated phrase "walked in the ways of Jeroboam" is key for evaluating the kings of Israel in the books of Kings.

By asking how the above elements impact the plot, one is attempting to discover what the authors were trying to communicate by highlighting these patterns or elements (e.g. the repeated portraits of King Ahab as "weak" [1 Kings 16:30-33; 18:6; 18-19; 21:4-5] are suggestive of his character and his openness to Jezebel's influence).

4. Theme

The theme of a book is generally the main idea(s) that the biblical text is attempting to communicate. A theme should generally be able to be stated in 1 sentence (e.g. the theme of Joshua is the possession of the land of Canaan). Another way of looking at the same thing might be to ask if one were to boil the plot down to one message, what would that message be? Thus, the theme of a book should generally run through the entire book. It need not be found in every verse or necessarily every chapter, but it should be present in every major section of the book. One illustrates the development of a theme by showing how various elements in a text add to our understanding of that theme (e.g. each of the events in 2 Sam 13—1 Kings 1 at least in part answers the question of "who will rule Israel after David and what will be the size of his kingdom?"

5. Theological Insights

Theological questions often ask: What does this book (section/passage) tell us about God & his character, or what does this book tell us about humanity and how God views people? A further question is then, how do other scripture passages outside this book deal with this concept? Do they affirm this understanding of God/humanity? Do they say something different? If so, what? What do they add/change?

Breaking Down the Assignments: Exegesis Paper (Due Dec 1) – 25% of final mark

The second paper due this term is an exegetical paper. You must choose one of the following passages: Isaiah 5:1-7; Isaiah 42:1-9; Jeremiah 23:23-29; or Lamentations 3:19-33. The paper is to be typed, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins, 12-pt Times New Roman or Ariel black font, and roughly 3,000 words (about 9-10 pages, not including the title page or bibliography).

Follow the "Guidelines for Writing an Exegetical Paper" by Dr. Glen Taylor found here:

http://web.trinity.utoronto.ca/library_archives/theological_resources/theological_guides/exegetical.html

Preparatory Work

In the guidelines, follow the steps under "provisional method" as the preparatory work for your exegesis paper. In step 2, the "meaningful unit" will be one of the four lectionary readings above. Note that lectionary readings are quite often smaller parts of a larger "meaningful unit." One of the questions you must ask during your exegesis is how the lectionary passage fits within the boundaries of the text: is your passage a complete unit, or does it fit within a larger unit which may extend a few verses before or after your passage?

The work you do for the “provisional method” steps should not be turned in. It is preparation for the paper, and is necessary for you to turn in a good exegetical paper. My advice is to write out good notes for each step, as these will prepare you well for actually writing the paper.

Writing the Exegetical Paper

As noted in the guidelines, your exegetical paper is meant to be a presentation of conclusions which you arrived at in your preparatory work. As with your inductive paper, use the following headings in your paper, and be sure to devote an appropriate amount of space so that each section reflects its value (e.g., if you state the theme of the book in only two sentences, you cannot expect the full 25%).

Introduction (5%, or ~150 words, 1/2 pg)

In this opening section, summarize in a few sentences the main point of the passage you chose. Close the paragraph with a concise statement of what you plan on arguing in the paper.

Text and Translation (10%, or ~300 words, 1 pg)

In this section, provide a translation of the passage you are studying, noting places where English translations differ. To the best of your ability, also discuss *why* these translations differ at these points. If you have Hebrew language training, is there any ambiguity or textual problems which lead to different translations? Multi-lingual students are encouraged to see how translations of different languages render the passage, and you are welcome to comment on that as well. The goal is to see that students are not taking a single translation at face value, but are wrestling with how different translations aim to render Scripture.

Form and Structure (20%, or ~600 words, 2 pgs)

The goal in this section is to describe the structure of the passage you chose. Look not only at how your passage has structure, but how your passage fits within the larger unit or book under question. For example, if you were writing a paper on Genesis 3, it would be important to outline and describe the units within the chapter, as well as how Genesis 3 fits within the larger unit of Genesis 1-11. This would be a point to also speak about how the lectionary reading in particular fits the larger passage. For instance, a given chapter of the Bible has 30 verses and the passage you have chosen to exegete goes from verses 5-19. Show how your passage begins with verse 5 and ends with verse 19. That is to say, show how it is thematically and/or syntactically independent from its surrounding context. Would you choose a different place to begin or end the unit (if so, why)?

In order to make your case for why your passage is structured the way it is, be sure to highlight the presence of such things as contrast, similarities, repetitions of key words or phrases, wordplays, development in argumentation, etc. Does it contain obvious forms (law form, messenger speech, and judgment oracle), formulae, or literary techniques (poetic parallelism)?

Historical and Biblical Contexts (20%, or ~600 words, 2 pgs)

In this section of the paper, do your best to describe the passage within the world in which it arose. Helpful secondary sources here will be your course textbooks and required readings. Given the cultural and religious differences between modern day readers and the original ancient audience, are there things in the passage which would have been understood by the original audience that are lost on our ears? Pay attention to the people mentioned, the metaphors used, social practices, and institutions available to an original hearer that are inaccessible to us.

At the same time, we have been given Scripture not as independent books, but as a canonical whole. Are there any ideas, concepts, or themes in your passage that are developed elsewhere in Scripture, in particular within the larger book your passage is from (e.g. Isaiah)? Some questions which may help: what textually

connects your passage to other parts of the Bible? Does it mention any person(s) or place(s) or theological concept(s) of significance found elsewhere?

Significance (25%, or 750 words, 2.5 pgs)

Comment on the meaning of the text. Comment in detail on the significance and function of your passage in light of the book that it is in as well as the section that it is in. What is going on in the text? How did it develop? How does it connect to the rest of the book it is in? This will help solidify the work you've done in completing the eight steps forwards and backwards. How does it fit within the overall structure of the book? What bearing does the main thrust of your passage have on the theme of the book? Does it emphasize or advance the theme or does it bear only a loose connection with the theme?

Comment on each subsection and verse individually. If, for example, in the "form and structure" section of your paper you argued that your passage may be divided into three sections, then briefly introduce the first section and then comment on the particular verses of that section; do the same thing for the second and third sections. When you find a word that is of particular importance be sure you do a word study of it at this point in order to determine its particular meaning in the given context. Use tools introduced in class for your word studies- i.e. a concordance, a theological wordbook and/or various online or computer resources. Ask the following kind of questions. What meaning or nuance do these words have in the rest of the book as well as in the rest of the Old Testament? In what context do these words appear in other sections of the book? What particular nuance do they have in your passage?

Application/Conclusion (20%, or ~600 words, 2 pgs)

One of the most important aspects of an exegesis paper is the transition between describing the significance of a passage and its application. There are two aspects of application that are important for your study of the Bible, especially if you are going to be preaching in a church someday. First, what theological questions of contemporary relevance are raised by the passage? And second, how does the passage resonate with other portions of Scripture and with the Gospel itself? These questions go hand-in-hand with one another. More than simply bridging a gap between the original reader and ourselves, application is kerygmatic. It seeks to describe how a passage reveals God to us, helps us understand and love ourselves and our neighbors, and helps us understand the creative purpose of nature. How is this passage bringing me onboard in God's mission to reconcile the world to himself? What is our place in that mission?

In this section, write three or four sentences about what you think the passage meant in its original context. Ask yourself why the passage was included in the canon. Ask how the first readers would have heard the text. How did later readers use it or understand it (if it is a passage that is referred to elsewhere in Scripture)? Now make the critical hermeneutical shift from what the passage meant to what it means. How would you appropriate the passage to a modern context? If the passage addresses the community of faith in the OT then it should address the community of faith today in similar ways. The greatest danger at this point is to make your application too general or too vague. State the essential message of the passage briefly; we do not want a homily or sermon at this point (that will come next term!).

Bibliography

Your bibliography should list all the works you consulted in your research, not simply those you cited in your footnotes. There is no need to cite your Bible. As mentioned at the beginning of the syllabus, Wycliffe encourages citation using the Chicago/Turabian style guide.

Example

A great example of an exegesis paper, with similar instructions as my own, can be found at the following website (this is also posted on Blackboard under “Course Materials.” Although it uses much more of the original languages than expected in your paper, the types of concerns it discusses illustrate well the kinds of discussions I am expecting:

<http://www.vanguard.edu/services/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/Exegesis-Sample-2Chron26.pdf>

Breaking Down the Assignments: Online Participation (due weekly) – 15% of final mark

Each week there will be an online participation portion of the course in which the students will reflect on questions related to the readings or lectures. Questions could come from a specific biblical text, an essay, or topic or theme mentioned in the textbooks. Students will typically be asked to post their answer to a discussion board and then respond to the answers of their peers. The instructor will likely divide the class into small groups for discussion, switching the groups around at reading week. Your mark for this portion of the course will be calculated by gaging your timeliness in posting, as well as your engagement with other students. Videos, lectures, readings, and questions will become available on Friday morning at 8:00am for the next week. For instance, the questions for Week 2 (Sep 18-24) will be posted on Friday, Sept 15, at 8:00am. This will allow for weekend participation for those of you constrained by work commitments. During most weeks, initial posts on the discussion board will be due on Wednesday by midnight (EST), with follow-up responses due Friday by midnight (EST). For further clarification, see the Discussion Group Rubric on the course webpage.

Breaking Down the Assignments: Reading Notes (due Oct 27 and Dec 8) – 15% of final mark

There will be two sets of reading notes due based on your readings from Hess each week. They will be typed notes (single spaced, 12-pt Times New Roman, 1 inch margins) which should run between 500 to 700 words, which is roughly one to 1.5 pages single spaced (per week; so a total of 2500-3200 words per “set”). The aim of the study notes is to keep you on a good pace, and to help you in your own preparation for the final exam, where a good number of questions will be pulled from your reading of Hess. In your notes, summarize each section of the chapter succinctly, attempting to mimic the length of your summary with the length of the section within the chapter. For instance, if a section in the textbook takes 2 pages out of 10, roughly 20% of your readings notes should be given to that section. At the end of the notes, list a few questions which still stand out to you. The first set of reading notes will be due during Reading Week (by Oct 27) and the second during the final week of the course (by Dec 8). So, by Oct 27 at midnight, email me one PDF or DOCX file containing all the notes for that part of the term (Psalms through Song of Songs). By Dec 8, email me the notes for the remaining readings in Hess (Isaiah-Malachi).

Breaking Down the Assignments: Final Exam (due Dec 15) – 25% of final mark

Your final exam will take place on Blackboard. I will give you a 48-hour window within which to write the exam: Dec 14-15. Within this window, once you start the exam, you will be given a time limit in which you must complete the exam (no more than 2 hours, likely less). You can only take the exam one time, and once you start the exam you must complete it during that session. It is highly recommended that you do not take the exam over a Wifi connection, since that connection may drop out. Take the final exam using a wired connection.

The exam itself will be closed book and closed note; that is, you cannot use anything but your brain to take the exam. This is an honour system: you are in seminary writing an exam on the Old Testament; don't cheat. And do not help your friends who might be writing the exam after you. The goal of the exam is to test your introductory knowledge of the content of the Old Testament, not to stump you. Focus will be on key themes,

major characters, important events, and significant places. If you pay attention to your readings and lectures (take good notes) and study for the exam, you should do just fine. The exam will be broken down into several parts:

- (1) (50%) A multiple-choice portion based on the content of the Old Testament. Questions will mostly be pulled from your readings of Hess (*The Old Testament*). Good reading notes will be great preparation.
- (2) (10%) A True/False section based upon your Bible reading. I will not be looking for a detailed knowledge of every very, but a general understanding of key biblical figures and events. These questions will be drawn from your reading of the biblical text.
- (3) (15%) An ordering portion based on key OT events within the biblical narrative. In order to understand the typological connections between the OT and the NT, you need to have a basic understanding of the ordering of events in the OT. For this term, the timeline will begin in the eighth-century BCE (approx. 750) and will go until the late fifth century BCE (approx. 450). I will list between 15-20 events and you will have to put them in the correct order. I will not list obscure events or people, but those you should be aware of.
- (4) (25%) A short answer portion of the exam will cover key ideas from the class lectures.