OT 511
Interpreting the Old Testament (Weekend Course)
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary
Spring 2014
Instructor: Thomas Petter
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Feb 7-8
March 14-15
April 11-12

Course Description:
An introduction to the principles of Old Testament Hebrew Exegesis and to the study of the Old Testament. Various exercises will be assigned that prepare students for 600-level exegesis courses (e.g., text criticism, translation, grammar, structure, lexical analysis). In addition, students are exposed to the major questions pertaining to Old Testament studies (Inspiration, authority, historical questions, critical methodologies).

Prerequisites:
OL 501; OL 502 (completed or taken concurrently); OT 500; NT 501
Note: Hebrew requirements must be met in order to pass the course

Learning outcomes:
- Familiarity with the process of Hebrew exegesis in preparation for 600-level exegesis courses.
- Development of critical skills to assess the major schools of interpretation in Old Testament studies (literary, historical and recent trends, e.g. postmodern and liberation readings)
- Strengthened commitment to the Scriptures as the inspired and inerrant Word of God (cf. Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary’s Mission Statement)

Required Readings:
G. Beale, The Erosion of Inerrancy in Evangelicalism (Crossway)
E. Brotzman, Text Criticism (Baker)
D. Stuart and G. Fee, How To Read the Bible for All Its Worth. Third Edition (Zondervan)
K.A. Kitchen, On the Reliability of the Old Testament (Eerdmans)
Note: Please no use of iPhones (texting, etc.) during class time. This course requires approximately 3 hours of concentrated work per hour of class time.

**Recommended Readings:**
M. Adler and C. Van Doren, *How to Read A Book*
A. Hoerth, *Archaeology and the Old Testament*

Note: Recommended readings means that these texts will greatly enhance your learning experience in the course.

**Course Evaluation:**

Final Exam: All course readings and lectures (40%)
Exegetical Exercises (60%)
  1. Literary context (due February 21)
  2. Text Criticism (due March 28)
  3. Grammar (due April 11)
  4. Lexical Analysis (due April 18)
  5. Structure (due April 25)
  6. Application (due May 5)

**Schedule and Readings:**

**Pre-course readings:**
Read Brotzman
Read OT chapters of Fee and Stuart
Begin reading Kitchen

Note: These readings must be done before class starts. I will collect a reading report from each student on the first day of class.
FIRST WEEKEND: Feb 7-8
Friday, Evening Session: 18:30-21:30
“The Old Testament as History and Theology”
- Brief recapitulation of Old Testament themes and topics
- Historiography, ideology and inerrancy
- The Old Testament in its ancient Near Eastern context

Saturday, Morning Session: 9:00-12:00
“Exegesis: The Big Picture”
- Overview of the exegetical process

Afternoon Session: 13:30-16:30
“Literary Context”
- Contours, placement and function of a text
- From Hebrew to English: principles of translation

Assignments in preparation for next class:
- Read Brotzman
- Continue reading Kitchen
- Read Klein, Blomberg and Hubbard, chs. 1, 2, 3, 4 (OT sections), 5, 6.
- Exegetical assignment:
  Literary context of Nehemiah 8: **Due Feb 21**
- Translate Nehemiah 1 from the Hebrew
SECOND WEEKEND: March 14-15
“The Exegetical Process”
Friday, Evening Session

- The Texts of the Old Testament
- Introduction to Text Criticism

Saturday, Morning Session

- How to observe and interpret grammatical features

Afternoon Session

- The search for contextual meaning: lexical analysis
  Note: Accordance or Bible Works is required for the lexical analysis exercise.
  Brown Driver and Briggs (unabridged) is also required

Assignments in preparation for next class:

Exegetical assignments:

- Text Criticism (due March 28)
- Grammar (due April 11)

Readings:

- Finish Kitchen
- Klein, Blomberg and Hubbard, chs 7, 8, 9, 11, 12
- Translate Nehemiah 8
THIRD WEEKEND: April 11, 12

Friday, Evening Session
“Situating the Exegetical Idea”

- Identifying Structure and Narrative Art

Saturday, Morning Session

- Biblical Context: discerning true from false parallels
- Cultural Environment: how is the text illuminated by history, geography and archaeology

Afternoon Session

- The goal of exegesis: contextualization, application and proclamation

Exegetical assignments

- Lexical Analysis (due April 19)
- Structure (due April 25)
- Application (due May 5)

Final Exam: during exam week April 28-May 2; check with registration office

Bibliography will be posted on Sakai