

CARIBBEAN SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Educating and training ministerial leadership



LIT112 Old Testament Literature

Mission Statement

CST is committed to connect, serve, and train for Pentecostal ministry, leadership, and missions throughout the world.

Professor

Course Description

The work of God in relation to humankind begins in the Old Testament. All of the events from humanity's creation up to the point of redemption occur in this larger portion of the Bible. In Old Testament Literature the events are dissected into their historical and prophetic contexts. It includes a study of the development of the nation of Israel and individuals who made significant contributions to this process. It is recommended that the student study this course before any other Old Testament subject.

Resources

In addition to Old Testament Literature: His Story, an Independent-Study Textbook by Steven Fettke, The Holy Bible is also required. Bible quotations in the Independent-Study Textbook are from the New International Version (NIV 1978 edition) unless otherwise noted. Some assignments require you to access the Global University Library Web site or other academic sources. Instructions for accessing the Internet are provided in the Undergraduate Writing Assignment Guidelines (UWAG) in the Student Packet. If you are enrolled in this course for three credits, the third credit will be earned by completing a collateral reading assignment (CRA). This is based on the textbook They Spoke from God: A Survey of the Old Testament by William C. Williams. The instructions for completing the CRA are in the Student Packet.

Objectives

The key concepts presented in the lesson are derived from the objectives. Study each objective carefully as you begin each lesson. First, identify the key concepts presented in the objective, and second, identify what each objective is asking you to do with the key concepts. For example, in the objective, Assess the positive and negative ways that colonialism affected the spread of Christianity, the key concept is colonialism affected Christianity. In this objective you are asked to assess positive and negative ways—or show the good and bad effects colonialism had on the spread of Christianity.

Course Procedures

Classroom lectures, group discussion, audio-visual presentations, handouts, and case studies constitute some of the various methods that will be utilized in order to attain the course objectives.

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Course Introduction

This course is a study of beginnings. It is intended to show how the ancient inspired Hebrew writers expressed their narratives about God's saving deeds from the beginning of God's work with all humankind. From these narratives students can see God's unfolding plan of redemption through what Christians believe to be God's revelation.

A study of beginnings provides a foundation for what comes later. If contemporary New Testament believers wonder where ideas like covenant, priesthood, law, trust, faithfulness, and righteousness came from, then they should examine the roots of these ideas in the Old Testament. When the apostle Paul spoke of Jesus as a "sacrifice of atonement" in Romans 3:25, he was not inventing a new concept; he was building his theology on the firm foundation of God's revelation through the Law and the Prophets (a synonym for the Old Testament Scriptures used in Luke 16:16).

The Old Testament discloses a sovereign Creator who is both Lord and Almighty God. He is described as holy, righteous, and just. He is to be revered, trusted, and obeyed. This wondrous God has condescended to enter into covenant with sinful humanity. He loves, forgives, and is longsuffering. He judges, redeems, and restores. This God calls for people to repent of their sins and live in imitation of God.

Some believers have said the Old Testament no longer has relevance for the faith. They have forgotten that the Bible of the original New Testament church was the Old Testament. The apostle Paul described it as inspired of God and useful for one's faith (2 Timothy 3:16–17).

The canon of Scripture is the final authority of our study and our final rule of faith and practice. This is not to say that everything in the Bible will always be perfectly clear to us. We should remember that the Old Testament reflects different cultural, social, and linguistic emphases over varied time periods and traditions.

This means that any study of the biblical material must be done carefully, with the principles of biblical hermeneutics always in mind. As we study the Old Testament canon, we will work with the assumption that the Bible is God-inspired and authoritative as the rule of faith and practice. If we try to allow the Bible to speak for itself, without trying to structure it according to our preconceived notion of how it should be, and by asking for the Holy Spirit's illumination, we can be confident that God will help us grasp the plain meaning of the text.

We also want to discover ways we can proclaim faithfully the biblical story in its plain meaning in terms that are familiar in our cultures. That requires us to become good storytellers.