

BI 333 Ezra-Nehemiah (Fall 2023)

Final Year Advanced Bible- HB Requirement
Three Credits ; Grade or Credit/No Credit

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course on Ezra-Nehemiah is an advanced level course designed to study key concepts such as exile, identity, ethnicity, rebuilding the community and temple, continuity and discontinuity, empire, endogamy, prayer, language and the like. It explores the interconnections between the Persian empire, the missions of Ezra and Nehemiah and the historiography of the returnees in the aftermath of exile. This course focuses on reading and understanding Ezra-Nehemiah in its multi-cultural context to teach and preach in our diverse context.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES & OUTCOMES

At the end of the course, students will be able to

1. understand the influences of the Persian period on the missions of Ezra-Nehemiah
Assessments:
 - a) Assigned Readings: The assigned class readings will introduce students to the strategies and governance of the Persian period
 - b) Lectures: The lectures will present Ezra-Nehemiah as texts deeply shaped by the Persian influence
2. become familiar with the unique voices in Ezra-Nehemiah alongside the other biblical texts from the Persian period
Assessments:
 - a) Lectures: The lectures in the classroom will explore the difference and uniqueness of various biblical texts from the Persian period
3. interpret and preach the books with a sensitivity to the key concepts of biblical and contemporary worlds
Assessments:
 - a) Written assignment: the assignment on preaching the text exegetically and contextually provides an opportunity for the students to integrate their learning from the classroom with their creativity in the church context
 - b) Class discussion: In each class, students will have an opportunity to contextualize their learnings to ministerial contexts

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

Fried, Lisbeth. *Ezra: A Commentary*. England: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2015.
Williamson, H.G.M. *Ezra-Nehemiah*. Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1985.

TEACHING METHODOLOGY

This course is a combination of lectures, small group discussions, and student presentations. Each class typically consists of a lecture, a time to engage with the scholarship of Ezra-Nehemiah and a small group discussion to discuss the relevance of the class learnings to the ministerial contexts. Students will be required to complete the assigned readings prior to the class and participate in the class activities.