

## I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION

A study of the historical periods, the characters, and the messages of the twelve Minor Prophets, with special attention to the nature and concerns of the prophetic movement in ancient Israel and Judah.

## II. COURSE RATIONALE

The Church of the Nazarene, together with the larger Wesleyan/Holiness movement and most Christian denominations, views the Bible as a foundational document, informing all the life of the church. The Minor Prophets, though largely unknown in the church, make a vital contribution to the whole of the Scriptures.

The prophetic ministries of the twelve whom Christians usually call the Minor Prophets clustered, generally, around three great crisis periods in the life of God's ancient people, Israel and Judah. Hosea, Amos, and Micah (along with Isaiah) all prophesied when Israel, the northern kingdom, was in process of losing their national existence, and Judah, the southern kingdom, was in real danger of losing theirs, in the Assyrian onslaught upon the small western nations in the second half of the Eighth Century B.C. Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, and Obadiah (along with Jeremiah and Ezekiel) all prophesied in the period of the Babylonian crisis, culminating in the destruction of Jerusalem and Solomon's Temple in 586 B.C. Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, and probably Jonah and Joel, helped the Post-Exilic Judean community rediscover their bearings and re-establish themselves as the people of God under the vastly different conditions of Persian hegemony.

The Minor Prophets are unfamiliar territory, even to most devout Christians. But they are books of profound depth and insight, and of considerable emotional intensity in many of their parts. These small books will richly reward those willing to expend time and effort to understand their patterns and their messages. They are mines of hidden treasure; wealthy, indeed, are those who explore their depths.

## III. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, you will:

1. Be familiar with the content of the Minor Prophets;
2. Be able to summarize the important positions regarding authorship, provenance, dating, occasion, and audience of these several books;
3. Be able to identify the Prophets' major theological themes, and discuss their contributions to the life and thought of God's people;
4. Have experience with the exegesis of some of the Prophets;
5. Use your knowledge of and "feel" for the Prophets in ministry assignment(s).

#### IV. COURSE TEXTS

1. Allen, Leslie C. *The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah and Micah*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1976.
2. Andersen, Francis I., and David Noel Freedman. *The Anchor Bible: Hosea*. New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1980.

#### V. STUDENT EVALUATION

Course grades will be determined by the following:

1. You should read the course texts before our first class session.
2. Class attendance will influence your grade: two absences will lower any grade; three absences will result in failing the course.
3. Six 600-word essays will be assigned during the two weeks of class sessions. **N.B.:** These essays, due at class time, will not be accepted more than twenty minutes late. Essays deficient in style, grammar, spelling, etc., cannot earn a grade of A.
4. Two post-class-sessions exegetical projects on passages from two different Minor Prophets will be assigned. Expectations for these projects will be discussed during the two weeks of class sessions.

#### VI. COURSE SCHEDULE

January 18 – Syllabus; Course introduction; Hosea

January 19 – Hosea; Amos

January 20 – Micah

January 21 – Nahum; Habakkuk; Zephaniah

January 22 – Obadiah; Haggai

January 25 – Zechariah; Malachi

January 26 – Joel

January 27 – Jonah

January 28 – Living, preaching, and teaching the Minor Prophets