

BIBL 490, Jonah, Syllabus

(3 credits)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is a study of the prophetic book of Jonah using its historical, cultural, literary, and prophetic context as a tool for correct interpretation and contemporary application.

Introductory Notes to Students – by Dr. John Morris

Jonah was a prophet, ooh – ooh (VeggieTales)

The word of the Lord came to Jonah (Jonah 1:1)

Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time saying, “Arise, go to Nineveh, the great city and proclaim to it the proclamation which I am going to tell you.” (Jonah 3:1-2)

Then God said to Jonah, “Do you have good reason to be angry about the plant?” And he said, “I have good reason to be angry, even to death.” Then the Lord said, “You had compassion on the plant for which you did not work, and which you did not cause to grow, which came up overnight and perished overnight. And should I not have compassion on Nineveh?” (Jonah 4:9-11)

(With apologies to Superman) What's that up in the sky? Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No it's a word from God and Jonah is His reluctant prophet! God told Jonah to go East (to Nineveh) and you can see him flying West (to Tarshish). Every other prophet in the Old Testament was obedient to God regardless of the personal consequences. Jonah was not just reluctant; he was down right rebellious. As you read the book of his prophecy, he actually wanted the Ninevites to be destroyed by God's judgment. God in His mercy had other plans for the Ninevites and Jonah. As you go through this class, there is a possibility that you will hear the word of God calling you somewhere or asking you to do God's will. The real lesson of Jonah (and this class), is what will YOU do when you hear God's word?

People argue about how Jonah should be understood and interpreted. Is it merely a great children's tale about a man and a “whale”? Is it an artificially constructed teaching story that questions the hypocrisy of Israel and its relationship with God? What did Jesus have to say about Jonah? Is it mere fantasy or is it a true word from God, faithfully recorded and transmitted to use today? Depending on which decision we make about what Jonah really is, we may come up with different interpretations and applications. There are sure a lot of questions about Jonah that don't have anything to do with a “whale,” aren't there?

There is no question that Jonah is a strange book of prophecy. It is very short, but as you will find, very carefully constructed. It portrays some of the most shameful action by a prophet of God in the Old Testament, yet it was part of the Hebrew canon even before the time of Jesus. Why would the Jews remember, honor, teach and revere the story of Jonah and how can this reluctant prophet speak to us today? Hopefully, this class will answer these questions and show you how Jonah applies to us today.

At its heart, Jonah is about the sovereignty and mercy of God and revolves around taking God's message to the godless Gentiles. If you think about it in those terms, it could almost be a book of the New Testament describing the work of Jesus and the Apostles. In fact, Jesus compares the

audience of His day to the Ninevites in Jonah and predicted that the Ninevites would receive mercy, while His unbelieving audience wouldn't.

This class takes a literary approach to the study of Jonah that you might not be familiar with. This method treats Jonah like a story and uses the literary features of the story as tools to help interpret and apply its message. Looking at Jonah like a "story" does not in any way reduce the importance, accuracy, canonicity or inspiration of the prophecy. Jonah used a "story" format to tell about the events that happened to him and to the Ninevites. Jonah used things like the plot, characters, sequence of events and literary markers to tell his story and accomplish his purpose. We can use those same things to understand his original meaning and devise a modern day application. This same literary approach can help you understand Old Testament narrative like you will find in Genesis and Exodus as well as the New Testament Gospels and the book of Revelation.

REQUIRED TEXTS & RESOURCES

- Morris, John. Jonah! A Word From God in Four Acts. JEM Publishing, 2019. ISBN 13 978-0-9816582-8-5.
- Any modern translation of the Bible.

NOTE: The Point University Bookstore may offer this textbook (s) in other formats. Information can found at www.pointuniversityshop.com.

- Students must have the skills, software and hardware available to create and watch video content. Creating teaching or sermon videos and critiquing the work of other students will be an essential part of the class. Sakai has a video recording feature under the meetings tab on the left hand side of the screen that you can use to record your work and make it available to the rest of the class. A group can sign on to create a group video or one person can "attend" a meeting to make an individual recording. Students may use their own equipment to create videos and then upload the results to Sakai.
- Additional reading assigned by the professor

Each week, I will give you some reading from a book Dr. David Brown and I are writing. You will need information from this reading in order to complete your weekly work, so don't miss it. I would appreciate any comments you have about the book in order to make it better for you.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Each course begins on a Wednesday with a Getting Started module before moving into the week 1-7 content. The introduce yourself forum is required during the Getting Started module in order to be counted present during this half-week of instruction. The introduce yourself forum is open from the start of the course to the first Sunday. All posts are due by Sunday at 11:59 p.m. Participation is required to be marked present for this time period. Keep in mind that in future weeks, forum due dates may be different.

Unless stated otherwise, graded assignments are due on the last day of the course week (Sunday). <http://point.edu/course-schedules/>

	Learning Activities	Graded Assignments
Week 1	Introduction to Jonah	
	Reading and Videos	
	Read the entire book of Jonah Read the introduction to Jonah in your textbooks View the Welcome video from your professor	

	View the Introduction to Jonah video – Jonah the Printed Prophet View the “How to create your weekly reading lesson” video View the VeggieTales version of Jonah	
	Assignments	
	Attend the online class introduction and Q&A session during preview week Introduce yourself to the class by completing an entry in the “Introduction forum.” Post your modern media examples in the “Media Forum” Preconceived notions about Jonah reflection paper Continuing work on your Critical Introduction paper and group project	Preview Week Week 1, day 7 Week 1, day 7 Week 1, day 7
Week 2	Jonah 1:1-3	
	Reading and Videos	
	Read the entire book of Jonah Read the material in your textbooks that covers Jonah 1:1-3 Read or view other material your professor may assign Watch the video “Jonah the Rebellious Prophet”	
	Assignments	
	Post your modern media examples in the “Media Forum” Post your weekly reading lesson Continue working on your Critical Introduction paper and group project	Week 2, day 7 Week 2, day 7
Week 3	Jonah 1:4-16	
	Reading and Videos	
	Read the entire book of Jonah Read the material in your textbooks that covers Jonah 1:4-16 Watch the video “Jonah the Prodigal Prophet” Read or view other material your professor may assign	
	Assignments	
	Post your modern media examples in the “Media Forum” Post your weekly reading lesson Post your peer review of one other students reading lesson from the previous week (see Appendix A for review rubric) Continue working on your Critical Introduction paper and group project	Week 3, day 7 Week 3, day 7 Week 3, Day 7
Week 4	Jonah 1:17-2:10	
	Reading and Videos	
	Read the entire book of Jonah Read the material in your textbooks that covers Jonah 1:17-2:10 Watch the video “Jonah the Praying Prophet” Read or view other material your professor may assign	
	Assignments	
	Post your modern media examples in the “Media Forum” Post your weekly reading lesson Post your peer review of one other students reading lesson from the previous week (see Appendix A for review rubric)	Week 4, day 7 Week 4, day 7 Week 4, Day 7 Week 4, Day 7

	Submit your Critical Introduction Paper Continue working on your group project	
Week 5	Jonah 3	
	Reading and Videos	
	Read the entire book of Jonah Read the material in your textbooks that covers Jonah 3 Watch the video "Jonah the Preaching Prophet" Read or view other material your professor may assign	
	Assignments	
	Post your modern media examples in the "Media Forum" Post your weekly reading lesson Post your peer review of one other students reading lesson from the previous week (see Appendix A for review rubric) Continue working on your group project	Week 5, day 7 Week 5, day 7 Week 5, Day 7
Week 6	Jonah 4	
	Reading and Videos	
	Read the entire book of Jonah Read the material in your textbooks that covers Jonah 4 Watch the video "Jonah the Pouting Prophet" Read or view other material your professor may assign	
	Assignments	
	Post your modern media examples in the "Media Forum" Post your weekly reading lesson Post your peer review of one other students reading lesson from the previous week (see Appendix A for review rubric) Continue working on your group project	Week 6, day 7 Week 6, day 7 Week 6, Day 7
Week 7	Jonah in the New Testament	
	Reading and Videos	
	Read the entire book of Jonah Read Mt 12:38-41, 16:4; Lk 11:29-30 and the surrounding contexts in the New Testament Read or view other material your professor may assign	
	Assignments	
	Post your modern media examples in the "Media Forum" Post your peer review of one other students reading lesson from the previous week (see Appendix A for review rubric) Submit your group project	Week 7, day 7 Week 7, Day 7 Week 7, Day 7

GRADING POLICIES

Course Evaluation Plan

An assessment instrument (checklist, rubric, quiz, etc.) will accompany each major graded assignment. See the instructions for specific assignment criteria and accompanying grading instruments.

Points Distribution

Graded assignments will be distributed as follows:

Graded Assignments	Points Possible
Reflection Paper	10
Modern Media Examples	10
Reading Lesson	20
Reading Lesson Peer Review	20
Critical Introduction Paper	20
Group Project	20
Total Points:	100

Final Grades

The following scale will be used when calculating final grades:

A	90-100%	D	60-69%
B	80-89%	F	0-59%
C	70-79%		

Final grades will be posted according to the Academic Calendar:

<http://point.edu/academic-calendar/>

COURSE LEARNING GOALS & OBJECTIVES

TIME REQUIREMENTS & COMMITMENTS

This course is 3 credit hours. Regarding time on task, students can expect to spend approximately 16 hours per week for an undergraduate course.

COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES		Program Objective(s)
Goal 1: Describe the historical and literary context of Jonah and demonstrate how it fits into the overall context of the Old and New Testament.		
	Objective 1.1: Students will define, describe and employ social, historical, literary and religious backgrounds to the understanding of Jonah.	1.1
	Objective 1.2: Students will compare and contrast the features and purpose of Jonah to other material in the Old and New Testament.	1.1
Goal 2: Examine the different literary and narrative features of Jonah and evaluate how they contribute to the overall purpose of Jonah.		
	Objective 2.1: Students will define and discuss how the literary and narrative features of Jonah contribute to its original meaning.	1.1, 1.2, 2.4
	Objective 2.2: Students will examine the internal parallels in Jonah and evaluate their contribution to the meaning and interpretation of Jonah.	1.2, 2.1, 2.4

Goal 3: Interpret Jonah in a Biblically appropriate fashion. Evaluate the meaning of Jonah in its original context and create an application for a modern setting.		
	Objective 3.1: Students will formulate a presentation to defend their understanding of Jonah in its Biblical setting (Old and New Testament) and its modern application	1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4
	Objective 3.2: Students will demonstrate correct Biblical interpretation methods.	1.2

DISABILITY SERVICES

Point University is committed to providing qualified students with disabilities an equal opportunity to access a Point education through the provision of reasonable and appropriate accommodations and support services. Accordingly, Point complies with Title IX (<https://point.edu/title-ix>) of the Educational Amendments of 1972 and the subsequent reauthorization of that act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and subsequent amendments to that act. For more information about Disability Support Services, see the “Consumer Information” section of the website (<http://point.edu/disclosures>) and the “Student Services” section of this catalog, or contact the Director of Disability Services and College Section 504 Coordinator, at disability.services@point.edu.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Attendance

A student is expected to actively participate in each week of the class in which he or she is enrolled. Active participation each academic week includes submitting classwork in one or more of the following activities within the course during the week they are due: discussion forums, assignments such as (but not limited to) projects, papers, presentations, case studies, quizzes, or exams. Students may be absent up to 25% of the class. After absences exceed 25% of the session or term’s total – in either consecutive or cumulative days – the student will be withdrawn from the class roster and assigned a grade on the basis of work completed at the time of withdrawal unless, because of exceptional circumstances, prior arrangements have been made with the professor and the Chief Academic Officer.

Students representing the university, such as student-athletes, remain responsible for submitting work online within the week it is due to be counted present. No student will be disadvantaged while representing the university. However, the responsibility is on the student to notify faculty no later than one week before missing class for any reason, to ensure time for content to be made available to them and for make-up work to be considered and arranged. It is expected that students will limit their absences outside of these required absences, as they will be dropped if they overcut the allowed number of absences.

The full attendance policy is found in the catalog (<https://point.edu/catalogs/>).

Etiquette & Netiquette

Students are expected to be respectful and well-mannered towards the instructor and their peers, whether in the physical classroom or the online course site. For guidance on meeting this expectation, particularly in the online environment, please see the materials provided during student orientation or reach out to advising.center@point.edu.

Policies

For academic policies governing attendance, late assignments, and student support, please refer to the Academic Catalog directly (<https://point.edu/catalogs/>).

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