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## OT 520 Old Testament Introduction

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Subject:

Syllabus (to print)

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OT 520 OLD TESTAMENT INTRODUCTION  
Asbury Theological Seminary  
Spring 2004

[Image: File1.png]

Instructor:

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Welcome!

Welcome to the world of the Ancient Near East! The world of Ruth and Boaz, Jacob and his sons, Joseph and the Egyptians awaits you. Together we will cross "the great divide" that separates us from the Psalms of David, Hezekiah and Sennacherib, Zedekiah and Nebuchadnezzar. You'll learn to track Abraham's journey across the desert and Moses' expedition to the Promised Land. But more than anything else, you'll learn how all these people, places, and dates are bound together in a single story, your story, the story of Redemption.

Course Description:

This course is designed to lay a foundation for the rest of your seminary career by familiarizing you with the narrative of Redemption that is the Old Testament. To accomplish this goal, you will be exposed to the geographical and socio-historical context from which the Old Testament emerges, the content, historical flow and theological structure of the Old Testament, the genre and history of the Canon, and the scholarship which has sought for generations to understand this collection of Scripture. It is my hope that this class will provide you with a framework for your study of the OT, while investing in each a profound excitement and respect for these sacred texts.

Course Objectives:

- 1) To become familiar with the history and geography of the biblical world in order to contextualize the OT narrative in real space and time.
- 2) To become familiar with the sociological structure of the biblical world in order to contextualize OT personalities within the societal and relational structures from which they emerge. (This cross-cultural exercise will further equip the student to communicate cross-culturally within their own context of ministry.)
- 3) To become familiar with the intentional theological structure of the OT in order to relate its message of redemption to that of the New and to the contemporary Christian community.
- 4) To be exposed to issues of genre and authorship in order to facilitate future study and exposition of the text.
- 5) To engage the major questions of OT study and scholarship (historicity,

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canonicity, authorship) in order to equip the student to respond to these same questions for those they are called to serve.

Copywrite:

It is an ExL policy that the development of this extended learning syllabus is intended for distribution to members of the course and others by my permission only. It is not intended for general distribution on the internet. Permission to copy, in whole or in part, must be requested from the professor (Sandra Richter). Thanks for honoring these instructions.

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BASIC ORIENTATION:

Beginnings ....

Our course will begin (the flag will drop) on Monday, February 9th at 12 noon (ET). On that Monday the first module will be accessible within the Course Center.

Modules ....

A new module will be accessible every other Monday by 12 noon (ET). Upon opening each module, you will find detailed instructions pertaining to the particular focus of that week of study. These modules will consistently be found within the Course Center. In addition to posting each module on Monday of each week, I will be online throughout each week to answer any of your questions and respond to your comments.

Windows and Icons ....

While I am sure that each of you are aware of the intended use of each of the items which appear in the OT520X folder, let me summarize the manner in which I intend to use them this semester:

The Course Center will contain a copy of the syllabus as well as all class modules. The Discussion Center will be used for all public communications. Anytime you have a question or comment about the course, the modules, the assignments, or anything else which would be of interest to your classmates and me, you should post to the Discussion Center.

The OT520 Office is for private correspondence between you and me. This will contain items that you do not want to appear publicly before all of your classmates or items that you think may embarrass me if they were to appear publicly.

The Archives Center will be used for storing conversations that have already taken place during the course of the semester. This keeps the Discussion Center tidy.

The Chat Center is intended primarily for real-time interaction among students. You can get together with other members to study, ask questions, or to explore topics. None of the conversations carried on in this location are ever saved.

The Resource Center provides access to a number of specific tools available to all ExL students. These include access to the B.L. Fisher Library, the Services in Estes Chapel, ExL Updates, Guidelines for Success, Helpful Hints, Interesting Links, a Powerpoint Viewer (which you can use to view my overheads) as well as a Real Audio player.

Take advantage of all these resources, especially the chapel access in order to connect with the seminary's on-campus opportunities for spiritual growth.

Endings ....

Our course will officially end (communication will come to a close) on May 20, 2004. You will receive an exit correspondence from me on that day. In terms of ExL jargon, we are turning the lights out in our class on May 20, 2004 at 12 midnight (ET).

CONTACT INFORMATION:

General Information about ExL Kevin Osborn [exl\\_director@asburyseminary.edu](mailto:exl_director@asburyseminary.edu), (859) 858-2191.

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ExL Tech Support (hardware or software questions): Jared Porter  
exl\_support@asburyseminary.edu , (859) 858-2373  
Bookstore (ordering textbooks and coursepackets): Jill Lindenberg  
textbooks@asburyseminary.edu , (859) 858-4242; or toll free 1-866-855-8252  
Library Assistance Hannah Kirsch hannah\_kirsch@asburyseminary.edu; interlibrary loan  
information Dot James dorothy\_james@asburyseminary.edu

#### How to Contact Me:

You may always contact me by posting questions to our class discussion center. You may also contact me for private questions via my online "office." If you feel more contact is needed to clarify your question, I am also happy to make phone appointments. Know that each of us in this class will probably be on different schedules, so go ahead and post anytime night or day, and folks will get back to you as they are able. I will be checking your discussions and e-mail to me Tuesday through Friday, one hour per day. In case of emergencies, simply use my "office" or personal e-mail address and mark such messages with a subject line saying "urgent." I can almost always work around crises.

#### COURSE PROCEDURES & REQUIREMENTS:

##### How to hand in assignments:

Some course assignments will be turned in to your small groups, some to the entire class, and some just to me, the professor. Small group assignments will be posted to your individual "tribe" icons, Judah, Ephraim, Manasseh, Gad and Levi; entire class assignments will be posted to the Discussion Center; assignments turned in to the professor are to be posted to the Office icon. Quizzes will be taken online (complete instructions will be posted to the Course Center).

\*All written assignments turned into the Office icon must be saved in Office 97/Word 97 format. If your word processing program is older than these versions, please save in .rtf \* Please be sure that the files you forward are virus-free.

[Image: File7.png]

##### Method of Instruction:

Each module comes complete with the materials and directions needed to complete the assignments. There will be a variety of mediums through which information will be communicated to you: video, Powerpoint, documents you will need to download, transcribed lecture, and (a lot) of reading of pertinent articles and books.

Reading assignments may be found in the required and recommended texts, and in the Course Packet. Each module will include written and discussion assignments.

I am envisioning an ongoing, lively discussion regarding the material we are considering. One of the advantages of an on-line environment is that each class member can (and must) interact with class-members and -material on a regular basis. So let's take advantage!

#### Resources:

TEXTBOOKS: All of the books/articles you will need for this class are available for purchase. "Required" texts are books that I believe are critical for your pastoral library, "recommended" texts are books I feel are excellent, but not necessary to your pastoral library. These textbooks and a Course Packet are available for purchase at the bookstore. If you have local library access, I'd recommend that you consider checking-out, as opposed to purchasing, the recommended texts. There will be numerous handouts for this class which will be available in the Course Center.

#### REQUIRED:

LaSor, Hubbard & Bush, Old Testament Survey: The Message, Form and Background of the OT, 2nd edition (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996).

James B. Pritchard, ed. The HarperCollins Concise Atlas of the Bible (HarperSanFrancisco, 1997).

Roland de Vaux, Ancient Israel Its Life and Institutions in the Biblical Resource Series (Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans/Livonia: Dove Book Sellers, 1997).

WJ Dumbrell, Covenant and Creation: A Theology of OT Covenants (Paternoster Press, 2000 [1984]).

RECOMMENDED:

Jon Levenson, Sinai & Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible (HarperSanFrancisco, 1985).

Brevard S. Childs, OT Theology in a Canonical Context (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985).

LIBRARY:

Email: Ats Reference@asburyseminary.edu

Toll-free Reference Help Line: 1-866-454-2733

ExL students are encouraged to make use of local libraries whenever possible; however, library services are also available to students through Asbury's B.L. Fisher Library. All requests for books and journal articles should be e-mailed to the Reference Desk. The Reference workers (Hannah, Robbie, and Joy) are also available to assist ExL students with reference requests, use of the online databases, or formation of research strategies.

To request material from the B.L. Fisher Library, begin by searching the library catalog or one of the restricted journal databases available on the library's website ([www.asburyseminary.edu/library](http://www.asburyseminary.edu/library) - choose "library catalog" or "restricted databases"). Then, send an email to the reference desk citing the sources that you would like to request. Students who live within a 50 mile radius of either the Florida or the Wilmore campus should come to campus to obtain their materials.

[Image: File4.png] Requests normally take 1-2 business days to process. Books are mailed media rate and normally require 5 business days for shipping (longer for addresses in the West). This service is free. Students who need items delivered more quickly may pay for priority or express mail services. Articles and excerpts from reference materials may be scanned and delivered via email for 10 cents per page, or photocopied and mailed media rate for 5 cents per page. Plan ahead and allow enough time for processing and shipping of your requests! We look forward to helping you!

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Requirements:

20% Quizzes. Each week students will be briefly quizzed on assigned reading. Of these quizzes, the lowest grade will be dropped. There will be no make-ups. In addition, most of the quizzes will have an "extra" question drawn from the recommended readings. Students will be able to gain 5 additional percentage points over the course of the semester by correctly answering these "extra" questions.

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10% Collaborative Discussion of Assigned Reading Each module will require a collaborative discussion of an assigned question. The goal for these discussions is integrative work that interacts with readings and classroom presentation. Each team will be responsible for presenting a one paragraph synopsis of their discussion to the Discussion Center for further class synthesis.

10% Book Review. A three-four page book review of Jon Levenson's Sinai & Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible must be posted to the Office. This review should answer the following three questions: (1) What is the content of this book?; (2) How does this content interact with other course material?; (3) What is the student's response to the information and arguments presented in this book? This book review must be well-written, presented in standard form, clean and critical. Reviews received after the posted hour will be penalized half a grade per day, weekends included! Further instructions are available in "How to Write a Book Review" on the e-mail desktop page under "Resources" and on the Intranet.

40% Integrative Essays For each module, there will be a one-to-two page, written, integrative essay assigned. Students are encouraged to interact with each other in their preparation for writing this essay, but each student will turn in their own work. An "A" essay will be one that integrates information from reading and classroom presentation (reading material must be cited), is stylistically clean, has

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a clear thesis and conclusion, and, of course, answers every aspect of the question posed.

20% Midterm and Final "ID"'s A list of id's is available in the Course Center. At the midterm and the final, students will be tested online regarding these id's. Students are encouraged to collaborate with their colleagues in establishing a file of definitions for each. On the exam, an "A" id will be two-to-three sentences, define the item, identify why it is significant (within the confines of this course) and give an example if appropriate.

\*Remembering that "A" work is defined at Asbury as "Exceptional work: outstanding or surpassing achievement of course objectives" (Asbury Catalog, p. 28), know that to score an "A" on any written assignment, the midterm, and final exam the student must show evidence of having critically synthesized reading material and class presentations and must display familiarity with the bulk of the recommended readings.

#### READING & MODULE SCHEDULE

This portion of the syllabus gives you a bird's-eye-view of the class schedule. Don't forget that each module has its own set of directions for discussion and assignments. So make sure that you check in at the Course Center for each module.

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#### PART ONE: THE BIG PICTURE

#### 2/9 MODULE ONE: Introduction & The Bible as the Story of Redemption

##### The OT in Time & Space

De Vaux, pp. 3-61, "Nomadism & Family Institutions"

LaSor, "Geography," pp. 619-631; Atlas, pp. 8-13, 36, 60-61

(Recommended: L. Stager, "The Archaeology of the Family in Ancient Israel" BASOR 260 [1985]: 1-35).

##### The Concept of Covenant

M. Weinfeld, "berit" TDOT, pp. 253-79 (\*265-276)

Frank Cross, "Kinship and Covenant in Ancient Israel" in From Epic to Canon, pp. 3-22

Kenneth Kitchen, Ancient Orient and Old Testament, 90-102.

(Recommended: W. Moran, "The ANE Background of the Love of God in Deuteronomy," CBO 25 [1963]: 77-85.)

##### More on Covenant

"The Book of the Covenant" Exodus 19: 1-23: 19; Deuteronomy 1: 1-6: 25; 28: 1-30: 20;

Isaiah 1: 1-31; Jer 34: 18-20

(Recommended: Deuteronomy 6: 26-34: 12 [i.e. the rest of Deuteronomy]; LaSor, "Deuteronomy," pp. 111-127) (56)

#### 2/23 MODULE TWO:

God's Original Intent: Eden

Genesis, chapters 1-4, Psalm 8

H. Blocher, "Approaching Genesis" & "The Week of Creation" in In the Beginning, pp. 15-59

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LaSor, pp. 15-31, "Genesis: Primeval Prologue"  
(Recommended: ANET, "The Mesopotamian Creation Epic," pp. 31-39; Childs, "Male & Female as a Theological Problem," 188-192)

God's Final Intent: The New Jerusalem  
Exodus 24:12-26:37 (looking for cherubim); Ezekiel 47:1-12 (if this is the first time you've read Ezekiel, read a summary of the book and this particular section of the book in a Bible handbook, Eerdmans is excellent); Revelation 19:11-22:21  
LaSor, "The Authority of the OT," "Revelation," "Canon," pp. 585-605 (34)

Noah

Genesis 5:1-11:32

LaSor, pp. 32-51, "Genesis: Patriarchal History"; Atlas, 58-59  
Dumbrell, "The Covenant with Noah," pp. 11-43  
(Recommended: ANET, "The Gilgamesh Epic," pp. 40-75)

Abraham

Genesis 12:1-36:43

Atlas, 14-17; Dumbrell, "The Covenant with Abraham," pp. 47-79  
Childs, "The Recipients of God's Revelation," 92-103  
(Recommended: Weinfeld, "The Covenant of Grant in the OT and in the ANE," JAOS 90 [1970]: 184-203)

3/8 MODULE THREE

Moses

Genesis 37, 39-41, 47:1-Exodus 18:27

LaSor, pp. 63-79, "Exodus: Message"; Atlas, pp. 34-35, "Exodus & Wanderings";  
Childs, "The Theological Significance of the Decalogue," pp. 63-83  
(Recommended: Dumbrell, "The Sinai Covenant," pp. 80-126)

Excursus: The Tabernacle: "So that I may dwell among them..." Exodus 25:8

Exodus 24-34 (some review here)

LaSor, 80-98, "Leviticus"; Childs, pp. 155-172, "Benefits of the Covenant: the Cultus"  
(Recommended: de Vaux, pp. 274-311: "Semitic Sanctuaries," "The First Israelite Sanctuaries")

David

1 Samuel 16:1-2 Samuel 12:31

Atlas, pp. 46-51, "The Kingdom of Saul," "David's Rise to Power," "David's Consolidation"

Dumbrell, "The Covenant with David," pp. 127-163

(Recommended: Childs, pp. 108-119, "Agents of God's Rule: Moses, Judges, Kings") 55

The New Covenant

G. R. Osborn, "Type, Typology," pp. 1117-19

Scott Hafemann, Paul, Moses and the History of Israel: "The Meaning of the 'New Covenant' in Jeremiah 31," pp. 129-40

Dumbrell, "The New Covenant," 164-200

Matt 1:1-3:17; 21:1-11 Gal 2; 3:15-29

Luke 1 1 Corinthians 15

John 1:1-34; 14:1-7 Hebrews, chptrs 9-11

(Recommended: Jon Levenson, The Death & Resurrection of the Beloved Son, pp. 1-17; \*25-31; N. T. Wright, The Climax of the Covenant [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991], 231-257)

3/24 Midterm Exam and Essay due Wednesday by 12:00 midnight, EST.

[Image: File6.png]PART TWO: CLOSE-UPS

4/25 MODULE FOUR

The Pentateuch: Structure & Authorship

The Book of Numbers

LaSor, pp. 3-14 "Pentateuch"

"JEDP-in-a-nutshell" Handout

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Frank M. Cross, "The Priestly Work," *Canaanite Myth & Hebrew Epic*, pp. 291-324 (Recommended: Face, pp. 116-144, "Pondering the Pentateuch: The Search for a New Paradigm")

READING WEEK March 29-April 2

The Patriarchs

Genesis 25: 1-37: 36

K. Kitchen, "The Patriarchal Age: Myth or History?" *BAR* (March 1995): 48-57; 88-95; [Review Atlas, pp. 14-21, "Abraham's Migration" etc; LaSor, pp. 32-51] (Recommended: LaSor, "The Chronological Puzzle," 632-640; J. Hackett, "Women's Studies & the Hebrew Bible," 141-163)

The Exodus: Myth or History?

Reread Exodus 13: 1-19: 6

LaSor, pp. 52-62 "Exodus: Historical Background"; pp. 641-57 [skim 658-87] "Archaeology"; Kevin D. Miller, "Did the Exodus Never Happen?" *Christianity Today* 42/10 [Sept 1998]: 44-51; Atlas, pp. 18-21, review p. 34 (Recommended: J. Hoffmeier, "Egypt, Plagues in" *ABD* 2: 374-78; de Vaux, "Slaves," pp. 80-90)

4/12 MODULE FIVE

The Deuteronomistic History: Structure & Authorship

LaSor, pp. 131-137 "Former Prophets"

Frank Cross, "The Themes of the Book of Kings and the Structure of the Deuteronomistic History," *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, pp. 274-289.

Review Deuteronomy chptrs 1-4; Joshua chapters 1, 12 (summary of conquest battles) and 23; Judges 2: 11-23; 1 Samuel 12; 1 Kgs 8: 12-51; 2 Kgs 17 (the peroration of Samaria); 2 Kgs 22 & 23 (Josiah's reform), 25 (the fall of the southern kingdom). (Recommended: Face, "Historiography of the OT," pp. 145-75)

The Conquest & Settlement: The Era of the Judges & the Tribal League  
The Books of Joshua, Judges, and Ruth

Atlas, pp. 38-45, "Conquests," "Occupation," etc.; LaSor, pp. 138-164 "Joshua" "Judges"

de Vaux, pp. 91-98, "The Israelite Concept of State"

(Recommended: Wm. Dever, "Is There Any Archaeological Evidence for the Exodus?" in *Exodus: The Egyptian Evidence*, pp. 67-86)

The Rise of the United Monarchy & Israel's Golden Age

1 Kings 1: 1-9: 9

LaSor, 165-196 "Birth of Monarchy," "Golden Age"

"David Found at Dan" *BAR* 20/2 (Mar/Apr 1994): 74-87

de Vaux, pp. 312-330, "The Temple at Jerusalem"

Atlas [review pp. 48-51], pp. 52-57, "The Economy of Solomon's Kingdom," etc.

(Recommended: Philip Davies, "'House of David' Built on Sand," 54-55; Anson Rainey, "'House of David' and the House of the Reconstructivists," 47; de Vaux, "The Temple at Jerusalem," pp. 331-344)

[Image: File9.png]

4/26 MODULE SIX

The Poets & Sages of Israel:

The Book of Psalms & the Wisdom Literature

Psalms: 1, 2, 3, 8, 44, 46, 73, 88, 95, 96, 111, 150 (note divisions of five Books); Proverbs: 1, 2, 3, 22: 17-23: 11 (note ANE parallels), 30, 31; Ecclesiastes

LaSor pp. 231-242 "Hebrew Poetry," pp. 447-459 "Wisdom Literature"

Face, "Wisdom Lit" 295-328

(Recommended: LaSor, pp. 460-519 [read selectively])

\*reviews due on Friday at midnight EST

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The Divided Monarchy

1 Kings 11: 1-22: 53 (Ahijah & Elijah); 2 Kgs 18-23: 27 (Hezekiah, Manasseh & Josiah)  
LaSor, pp. 197-220, "The Divided Monarchy"  
de Vaux, pp. 100-137, "The Person of the King," etc.  
(Recommended: Face, "The Historical Study of the Monarchy: Developments & Detours," pp. 207-235)

The Office of the Prophet:

Reread: Deuteronomy, chptrs 13 & 18  
Read: LaSor, pp. 221-230 (see chart, pp. 224-226); 243-269.  
Childs, "The Office & Function of the Prophet," pp. 122-142  
[Review TDOT, "tyrb," pp. 276-279]

The Writings of the Prophets: Content & Hermeneutics

LaSor, pp. 289-312; 328-355  
Hosea chapters 1-4: Hosea  
Isaiah 1, 3-9: 7, 36-38, 40: Isaiah  
Jeremiah chapters 1-5; 7 and 31 (cf. Hebrews chptrs 8 & 9): Jeremiah  
(Recommended: YHWH's prophets sent to Assyria: Jonah & Nahum)

5/10 MODULE SEVEN

The Collapse of the Monarchy & the Exilic Community: Daniel & Ezekiel  
A. Malamat, "Caught Between the Great Powers: the Fall of Judah" BAR (Ju/Au 1999):  
34-41, 64; Atlas, pp. 88-89, "Nebuchadnezzar"; LaSor, "Ezekiel," "Daniel," "  
356-369; 566-582  
Ezekiel chptrs 1-3, 10; Daniel chptrs 1-4, 7  
(Recommended: Face, "Recent Studies in OT Apocalyptic," 369-390)

The Chronicler's History:

The Return & Restoration of the Post-Exilic Community  
1 Chronicles chptrs 1-14, 23; 2 Chron 1, 9, 36; Ezra chptrs 1-6; Nehemiah 8-9  
LaSor, pp. 532-565, "Chronicler," "Ezra-Nehemiah," "Esther"  
Atlas, pp. 90-91, "The Persian Empire"  
(Recommended: Face, "The Exile & After: Historical Study," pp. 236-265)

Reading for the Intertestamental Period (i.e., the "I'd's): LaSor, Hubbard & Bush,  
"Formation of the Old Testament," pp. 606-618  
Atlas pp. 92-103; 1 & 2 Maccabees (read selectively); Dumbrell, "Epilogue," pp.  
201-206; Recommended: de Vaux, pp. 372-404 (the priesthood before & after the  
Temple)

Final Exam: Is due in the Office on Wednesday, May 19th at 12:00 midnight, EST