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OT 520 Old Testament Introduction

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Course: OT520 X2 (SP 2009)
Title: Old Testament Introduction
Hours: 3.00
Published: Yes, on 01/23/2009
Prerequisites: None
Department: Old Testament
Faculty: Dr. Sandy Richter

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Office: AD
SPO: 1320

Meetings:
During 02/09/2009 to 05/22/2009 Online via ExL.

Maximum Registration: 27
Catalog Description: An introduction to (1) the literature of the Old Testament in its socio-historical, literary, and canonical contexts; and (2) critical study of the Old Testament.

Objectives:

FOUNDATIONS OF OLD TESTAMENT STUDY

Spring 2009

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, and Joseph and the Egyptians awaits you. Together we will cross "the great barrier" 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 of you 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 relational structures from which they emerge.
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.
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, canon, authorship) in order to equip the student to respond to these same questions for those they are called to serve.

BASIC ORIENTATION:

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

Module…. A new module will be accessible every Monday by 12 noon (ET). Upon opening each module, you will find detailed instructions pertaining to the particular focus of that week of study. 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.

I encourage you to take advantage of the course resources, and particularly to utilize 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 22, 2009 at 12 midnight (ET).

Online Section Descriptions and Communication Guidelines

The Virtual Classroom is built upon the open-source Moodle platform. By logging into http://one.asburyseminary.edu and clicking on the Virtual Campus tab (upper right corner) you will have access to this course and be able to collaborate with participant-colleagues and me throughout the course.

The following are functions with which you should familiarize yourself:
1. The Course Information Center contains many features to be used throughout the semester: a) Course News and Announcements, where I will post items important for the entire class; b) Syllabus, where a copy of the syllabus is provided; c) To Professor, which is a way for you to post a message directly to me and we can discuss an issue privately; d) Course Questions, which is a public forum where you can publicly post any questions you have regarding the course so others may see your message and respond. Anytime you have a question or comment about the course, the schedule, the assignments, or anything else that may be of interest to other participants and me you should post it to the Course Questions Forum; e) Prayer Forum, which is a public forum where you can post prayer concerns and praises for all to see. This is a way for us to build community; f) Open Forum, which is a public forum where you can post anything that is not course-related for all to see … birthdays, discussions on topics not course-related, etc.
2. Modules, which are located below the Course Information Center, will contain forums where group discussions will take place, documents or other files to download or view online, and assignment links where you will post your assignments to me. Modules will be clearly labeled so you can follow along during the semester.

Virtual Support Contact Information

For technical support, library research support, library loans and virtual media contact Information Commons:
mailto:Info.Commons@asburyseminary.edu
http://private.asburyseminary.edu/Info.Commons@asburyseminary.edu
Phone: (859) 858-2393; Toll-free: (866) 454-2733

For general questions and administrative assistance regarding the Virtual program, contact Dale Hale:
mailto:ExL.Office@asburyseminary.edu
http://private.asburyseminary.edu/ExL.Office@asburyseminary.edu
Phone: (859) 858-2393

Accessing Information Commons Materials

1. General Questions: The Information Commons is a "one-stop shop" for all student research, circulation and technical needs. The Information Commons hours are posted here: http://private.asburyseminary.edu/information-commons

2. Materials Requests:
   a. To search the library catalog for available materials, click here: http://private.asburyseminary.edu/information-commons
   b. Virtual Students may request books, photocopies or emailed attachments of journal articles/portions of reference books from Asbury Seminary’s Library. Please allow 3-10 business days for all requests to be filled. Contact the Information Commons for costs and instructions on how to make requests.
   c. Virtual students are encouraged to make use of local library resources. Students who live within a 50 mile radius of either the Florida or the Kentucky campus should come to campus to obtain their materials.
3. Research Questions: Virtual students are encouraged to contact the Information Commons for research assistance including help determining the best sources to use for a paper, finding book reviews, or research questions about using the online databases or any other library materials.

4. Online Databases: To access the online library resources including the library catalog and full-text journal databases, go to http://www.asburyseminary.edu/information and enter your 10-digit student ID# number in the login box. Your student ID# is provided on the biographical information section of the student registration webpage. Add a 2 and enough 0's to the front to make a 10-digit number (20000XXXXX where XXXXX = your student id).

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COURSE PROCEDURES & REQUIREMENTS:

Where 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 discussions/assignments should be posted to your individual "tribe" forums, Reuben, Simeon, and Levi; entire class assignments will be posted to the Open Forum; written assignments turned in to the professor are to be sent directly to me. *All written assignments must be saved in Microsoft Office/Word format. Please be sure that the files you forward are virus-free.

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: DVD, 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!

TEXTBOOKS: All of the books/articles you will need for this class are available for purchase in our bookstore. Required texts are books that I believe are critical for your pastoral library, recommended texts are excellent, but not necessary to your pastoral library, so consider borrowing them from a local library. The Course Packet is required. There will be numerous handouts for this class, which will be available as needed in their respective module folders.

**Required**


**Recommended**


Course Requirements:

10% Quizzes. There will be two quizzes. One will launch the semester (geography), and one right after the midterm (timeline).

20% Midterm and Final "Identifications" quizzes. A list of id's is available in the Course Information Center. At the midterm and the final, students will be tested online regarding these id's in a "matching" format. Students are encouraged to collaborate with their colleagues in establishing a file of definitions for each. In preparation, the student should think in terms of defining each term in two-to-three sentences, identifying why it is significant (within the confines of this course) and give an example if appropriate.

20% Collaborative Discussion of Assigned Reading. Each module will require a collaborative discussion of an assigned question. The goal for these discussions is the integration of readings with lecture. Each team will be responsible for presenting a one paragraph synopsis of their discussion to the Open Forum for further class synthesis (I suggest rotating this responsibility!). There will be the potential of extra credit within this component of the class.

10% Book Review. A three-four page book review of Jon Levenson’s *Sinai & Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible*. 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 one third of a grade per day, weekends included! Remember this is not a "book report"! Rather, summarize content, and intelligently choose a few items with which to engage and interact. Selecting your favorite and most unfavorable parts is a good way to do this. “Standard form” and further instructions are available in “How to Write a Book Review” in the “Resources” folder. This book review is due by midnight, Monday, April 20th.

40% Integrative Essays. For each module, there will be a written, two-to-three page, formal, double-spaced, integrative essay assigned. These will be due at midnight on the Monday that the new module opens. Students are encouraged to interact with each other in their preparation for writing this essay, but each student will turn in their own work (please do not plagiarize each other!). An "A" essay will be one that integrates information from the assigned reading and classroom presentation (reading material must be cited), is stylistically clean, has a clear thesis and conclusion, and, of course, answers every aspect of the question posed. The best way to approach these essays is to restate the question as your introduction, structure your major points around the lecture outline for that particular topic, plug in references to each of your assigned readings as appropriate, and conclude by restating the question you answered. You MUST cite the readings and lecture; essays that fail to do so will receive a grade no higher than a "C." The citations should simply be (author's name, page number). Students will be offered the opportunity to write 7 of these essays, but are only required to write 5. The five highest grades will be taken. A grading rubric and a sample of an “A” essay is posted in the “resources” folder.

CLASS 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.

PART ONE: THE BIG PICTURE

2/9 MODULE ONE

Introduction & The Bible as the Story of Redemption

No required reading, but *Epic of Eden*, 15-46 recommended

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
*Epic of Eden*, 47-68

The Concept of Covenant

Frank Cross, “Kinship and Covenant in Ancient Israel” in *From Epic to Canon*, pp. 3-21
*Epic of Eden*, 69-91
(Recommended: “Covenants & Treaties,” Readings from the Ancient Near East, ed, Bill Arnold and Bryan Beyer, 96-103)

More on Covenant

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

2/23 MODULE TWO

God’s Original Intent: Eden

Genesis, chapters 1-4, Psalm 8
LaSor, pp. 15-31, “Genesis: Primeval Prologue”
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)

Abraham
Genesis 12:1-36:43
Atlas, 14-17
Childs, “The Recipients of God’s Revelation,” 92-107
Reread Weinfeld TDOT, 270-72

Excursus: The Tabernacle:
G.R. Osborn, “Type, Typology,” pp. 1117-19
Exodus 24-34 (some review here)
LaSor, 80-98, “Leviticus”
Dumbrell, “Exodus; Leviticus; Numbers,” 32-56
(Recommended: de Vaux, pp. 274-311: “Semitic Sanctuaries,” “The First Israelite Sanctuaries”)

David
1 Samuel 16:1-2 Samuel 12:31
LaSor, “Deuteronomy-Former Prophets,” 111-37

The New Covenant

Midterm Quiz and Essay due by 12:00 midnight, EST.
PART TWO: CLOSE UPS

3/23 MODULE FOUR

The Pentateuch: Structure & Authorship
The Book of Numbers
LaSor, pp. 3-14 “Pentateuch
“JEDP-in-a-nutsheell” Handout
(Recommended: Face, pp. 116-144, “Pondering the Pentateuch: The Search for a New Paradigm”)

The Patriarchs
Genesis 25:1-37:36
LaSor, “The Chronological Puzzle,” 632-640
“Reread LaSor, pp. 32-51
K. Kitchen, “The Patriarchal Age: Myth or History?” BAR (March 1995): 48-57; 88-95 (this article is available through the online Biblical Archaeological Review archive)
[Review Atlas, pp. 14-21, “Abraham’s Migration” etc; LaSor, pp. 32-51]
(Recommended: J. Hackett, “Women’s Studies & the Hebrew Bible,” 141-164

The Exodus: Myth or History?
Reread Exodus 13:1-19:6

Spring Reading WEEK: March 30- April 6

4/6 MODULE FIVE

The Deuteronomistic History: Structure & Authorship
Dumbrell, “Deuteronomy-Judges,” 57-80
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
de Vaux, pp. 91-99, “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, 156-196 “Birth of Monarchy,” “Golden Age”
Dumbrell, “Samuel-Kings,” 81-104
“David Found at Dan” BAR 20/2 (Mar/Apr 1994): 74-87 (this article is available online through the Biblical Archaeology Review Archive)
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 Reconstructionists,” 47. These two articles are available through the BAS archive)

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
Dumbrell, “Psalms-Proverbs,” 245-73
LaSor, 231-42, 425-70
ANET Readings: “I Will Praise the Lord of Wisdom,” “The Instructions of Amenhotep,” and “Dialogue of Pessimism”
(Recommended: LaSor, pp. 470-519 [read selectively]; de Vaux, “The Temple at Jerusalem,” pp. 312-330)

4/20 MODULE SIX
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. 100-138, "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. 122-144
Theodore Mullen, "Divine Assembly" ABD 2:214-17; 1 Kgs 22:1-40; Isa 6; Jer 23:18, 22; Amos 3:7, 8; Malachi 3:1
(Recommended: Review TDOT, "berit," pp. 276-279)

The Writings of the Prophets: Content & Hermeneutics
Dumbrell, "Isaiah," 107-32
LaSor, "Jeremiah," 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: The books of Jonah & Nahum)

5/4 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 (available through the BAS archive)
Atlas, pp. 88-89, "Nebuchadnezzar"; LaSor, "Daniel," 566-582; Dumbrell, "Ezekiel," 151-70;
Ezekiel chptrs 1-3, 10; Daniel chptrs 1-4, 7

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"

Reading for the Intertestamental Period (i.e., the "id's):
LaSor, Hubbard & Bush, "Formation of the Old Testament," pp. 606-618
Atlas pp. 92-103; 1 & 2 Maccabees (read selectively);
(Recommended: de Vaux, pp. 372-405 "The Priesthood Before & After the Temple)

Final Quiz: is due on Wednesday, May 20th at 12:00 midnight, EST