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BS 504 Introduction to Biblical Studies: Old Testament

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BS 504 Introduction to Biblical Studies: Old Testament

Fall 2007, WF 8:00–8:50, M 305

Instructor: John A. Cook
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BC 336; 859–858–2292
T/W 10–11; Th 2:30–3:30

Description

BS 504 introduces the student to OT study, stressing contemporary approaches to the historical and cultural setting and literary characteristics of the OT. Attention is given to the significance of the study of the OT for ministerial vocations represented in the Master of Arts programs, other than those specializing in Bible or Theology.

The OT emerges from a cultural setting that is *different from those of contemporary culture*. Therefore, to study the OT is to learn to *receive* God's word cross-culturally, which prepares us to *testify* to the message of God's word cross-culturally.

Responsible and holistic interpretation involves moving creatively between the text's and cultural framework and our own.

Goals

1. Understand the theological story line in the Old Testament, and the theological connection between the OT and the NT.
2. Understand the major issues in OT interpretation and the basic historical-cultural background of the OT, and use this knowledge in the interpretation of the OT.
3. Begin integrating competent and responsible study of the Bible, particularly the OT, into your vocation.

Procedures

1. Reading of extensive portions of the OT (and supplementary materials) and discussion of key passages in their historical, cultural, and literary contexts (10%).
2. Writing a commonplace book from your Bible reading (30%).
3. Writing two research papers, one on an OT-wide topic, the other on the interpretation of an OT book (30%).

Resources

1. Required textbooks (available at the book store):
 - a) *The New Oxford Annotated Bible* (3rd augm. ed., 2007; ISBN 9780195288803)
 - b) *The Oxford Bible Atlas* (4th ed., 2007; ISBN 9780191001581)
2. Other resources are available on the course web page:
 - a) Grading scale and academic policies
 - b) Guidelines for commonplace book (30% of grade)
 - c) Guidelines for academic writing and two research papers (30% ea.)
 - d) Course bibliography (for further research)

Schedule (tentative)

Date	Topic	Reading Due (10%)
Week 1		
	Introduction	
09/05	Introductions	
09/07	Overview: the OT and story	OAB [Essays 453-58, 471-505]; OBA 3-62
Week 2-6		
	The Primary History	
09/12	Beginnings (Genesis 1-11)	Genesis 1-11
09/14	Ancestors (Genesis 12-50)	Genesis 12-50; OBA 65-76
09/19	Creation of Israel (Exodus)	Exodus 1-34; OBA 77-82
09/21	Constitution of Israel (Numbers-Leviticus)	Leviticus 1-10, 16-26; Numbers 10-25;
09/26	Reconstitution of Israel (Deuteronomy)	Deuteronomy
09/28	Israel takes the land (Joshua)	Joshua 1-12, 23-24; OBA 83-87
10/03	Israel fails in the land (Judges)	Judges; OBA 87-88
10/05	Rise of kingship (Samuel)	1-2 Samuel; OBA 88-95
10/10	Fall of kingship (Kings)	1-2 Kings; OBA 95-108
10/12	Summing up/loose ends/unfinished conversations	
Week 7-9		
	The Prophetic Voice, Part 1	
10/17	Assyria and Israel (Amos, Hosea)	Amos, Hosea; OBA 109-114
10/19	Assyria and Judah (Micah, Isaiah 1-39, Nahum)	Micah; Isaiah 1-12, 24-27; Nahum 1-2; OBA 115-21
10/24	Babylonia and Judah (Habakkuk, Zephaniah)	Habakkuk 1:1-2:5; Zephaniah; OBA 122-26
10/26	Last days of Judah (Jeremiah, Obadiah)	Jeremiah 1:1-8:3, ch. 15-18, 25-34, 42-44; Obadiah)
10/31	Babylonia and exiled Judah (Ezekiel, Isaiah 40-55)	Ezekiel 1-6, 8-11, 16, 18, 23-24, 33-34, 37; Isaiah 40-48, 52-55
11/02	Summing up/loose ends/unfinished conversations	
Week 10		
	The Age of the Chronicler	
11/07	Starting over (Ezra-Nehemiah)	Ezra, Nehemiah; OBA 127-30
11/09	History according to the Chronicler (Chronicles)	1 Chronicles 10-2 Chronicles 9

Week 11***The Prophetic Voice, Part 2***

11/14	Persia and Yehud (Haggai, Zechariah 1-8, Isaiah 56-66, Malachi)	Haggai, Zechariah 1-8, Isaiah 56-66, Malachi; OBA 131-36
11/16	. . . and beyond (Zechariah 9-14, Joel, Jonah)	Zechariah 9-14, Joel, Jonah; OBA 137-40

Week 12***Reading week/Thanksgiving*****Week 13-14*****The Individual***

11/28	Piety in praise/petition (Psalms, Lamentation)	Psalms 1-6, 19, 23, 30, 46-48, 73, 89, 93-100, 113-36, 150; Lamentations 1, 3, 5
11/30	Piety under duress (Ruth, Esther, Daniel)	Ruth, Esther, Daniel
12/05	Wisdom (Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes)	Proverbs 1-22, Job 1-14, 28-31, 38-42; Ecclesiastes
12/07	Love (Song of Songs)	Song of Songs