



Exploring the Old Testament (Online)
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
Division of Biblical Studies
Summer Online, 2017
May 29-July 21

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Mission Statement

The mission of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries.

Course Purpose

This course is an introduction to the literary, historical, and theological contents and contexts of the Old Testament. Significant interpretive issues are noted, major theological themes covered, and their relevance for Christian living addressed.

Core Value Focus

The seminary has five core values.

1. **Doctrinal Integrity:** Knowing that the Bible is the Word of God, we believe it, teach it, proclaim it, and submit to it. This course addresses Doctrinal Integrity specifically by preparing students to grow in understanding and interpreting of the Bible.
2. **Spiritual Vitality:** We are a worshiping community emphasizing both personal spirituality and gathering together as a Seminary family for the praise and adoration of God and instruction in His Word. Spiritual Vitality is addressed by reminding students that a dynamic relationship with God is vital for effective ministry.
3. **Mission Focus:** We are not here merely to get an education or to give one. We are here to change the world by fulfilling the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries. This course addresses Mission Focus by helping students understand the biblical foundations for fulfilling the Great Commission and the Great Commandments.
4. **Characteristic Excellence:** What we do, we do to the utmost of our abilities and resources as a testimony to the glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Characteristic Excellence is addressed by preparing students to excel in their ability to interpret Scripture, which is foundational to effective ministry.
5. **Servant Leadership:** We follow the model of Jesus and exert leadership and influence through the nurture and encouragement of those around us. Servant Leadership is modeled by classroom deportment.

The core value focus for this academic year is **Characteristic Excellence**.

Curriculum Competencies

NOBTS faculty members realize that all ministers need to develop specific competencies if they are going to have an effective ministry. To increase the likelihood of NOBTS graduates having an effective ministry, the faculty developed a competency-based curriculum after identifying seven essential competencies necessary for effective ministry. All graduates are expected to have at least a minimum level of competency in all of the following areas:

1. **Biblical Exposition:** to interpret and communicate the Bible accurately.
2. **Christian Theological Heritage:** To understand and interpret Christian theological heritage and Baptist polity for the church.
3. **Disciple Making:** To stimulate church health through mobilizing the church for missions, evangelism, discipleship, and church growth.
4. **Interpersonal Skills:** To perform pastoral care effectively, with skills in communication and conflict management.
5. **Servant Leadership:** To serve churches effectively through team ministry.
6. **Spiritual and Character Formation:** To provide moral leadership by modeling and mentoring Christian character and devotion.
7. **Worship Leadership:** To facilitate worship effectively.

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the literary, historical, and theological contents and contexts of the Old Testament. Significant interpretive issues are noted, major theological themes covered, and their relevance for Christian living addressed.

Student Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of the semester, the student will:

1. The student will read and comprehend the Old Testament noting the structure and content of the various books contained within.
2. The student will apply principles of interpretation (Biblical Hermeneutics) to the text of the Bible in order to glean its meaning and importance for the Christian community of faith in the 21st century.
3. The student will explore materials related to cultural and religious practices among the ancient Israelites and other ethnic cultures of the Ancient Near East.

Course Texts

Contemporary English Bible (a good translation such as the revised NASB, NKJV, HCBS, NRSV)
 W. LaSor, D.A. Hubbard, F.W. Bush, and L.C. Allen. *Old Testament Survey: The Message, Form and Background of the Old Testament*, 2nd edition, (Eerdmans, 1996). (*OTS*)

Recommended reading

[Bill T. Arnold](#), [Bryan E. Beyer.](#), *Readings from the Ancient Near East Primary Sources for Old Testament Study*. (Baker, 2002)

[Philip J. King](#), [Lawrence E. Stager](#). *Life in Biblical Israel*, (Westminster John Knox Press, 2001)

Course Requirements and Grading

1. Weekly Quizzes (15)	30% (300 points, 20 pts each, 2 pts off for each day late)
2. Mid-Term Examination	20% (200 points) – Closed book
3. Final Exam	20% (200 points) – Closed book
4. Discussion Participation	10% (100 points)
5. Research Paper	20% (200 points)

Note the dates for the Midterm, Quizzes, and Assignments.
Exceptions must be approved by the professor prior to due date
Quizzes - 2 Points off for each day late, after 4 days a Zero will be given

- *****NOTE: Discussion Boards*****
- Each student must post their own discussion thread on each of the 10 areas.
- Each student must also comment on at least two other student's posts for each area.
- A reduction in percentage for each day late, after 4 days no credit given.

Course Outline & Schedule

UNIT I: THE PENTATEUCH

May 29--June 10

- Introduction by
- Reading Assignments: Genesis thru Deuteronomy
- For sections/quizzes #2-3, also read in *Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible* article on "Sacrifices and Offerings."

Quizzes and Discussion Lists:

Discussion Board:

1. Contribute information about yourself in the Introduction by May 30
2. Contribute a comment to Genesis - Creationism by June 2
3. Contribute a comment to Exodus – Deuteronomy by June 8

Quizzes:

- QUIZ #1 - Genesis, *OTS*, Chs. 1-3; Due Date June 3
- QUIZ #2 - Exodus & Leviticus, *OTS*, Chs. 4-6; Due Date June 7
- QUIZ #3 - Numbers & Deuteronomy, *OTS*, Chs. 7-8; Due Date June 10

UNIT II: THE FORMER PROPHETS

June 11-24

Quizzes, Exam, and Discussion Areas:

Discussion Board:

4. Contribute a discussion to Joshua – Judges by June 14
5. Contribute a discussion to Samuel – Kings by June 18

Quizzes:

- QUIZ #4 - Joshua- Judges, *OTS*, Chs. 9-11; Due Date June 15
- QUIZ #5 - 1-2 Samuel, *OTS*, Chs. 12-13; Due Date June 19
- QUIZ #6 - 1-2 Kings, *OTS*, Chs. 14-15; Due Date June 24

MIDTERM: Must take the Mid-Term Exam by June 25th, Midnight

UNIT III: THE LATTER PROPHETS

June 25-July 8

Quizzes, Exams, and Discussion Lists:

Discussion Board:

6. Contribute a comment to the 8th century BC prophets by June 28
7. Contribute a comment to the 7th-6th century BC prophets by July 4
8. Contribute a comment to the Post-Exilic prophets by July 8

Quizzes:

- QUIZ #7 - Prophets I: Amos & Hosea OTS, Chs. 16, 18-19; Due Date June 28
QUIZ #8 - Prophets II: Micah, Isaiah OTS, Chs. 20-22; Due Date July 1
QUIZ #9 - Prophets III: Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Jeremiah, OTS, Chs. 23-24
Due Date July 3
QUIZ #10 - Prophets IV: Ezekiel, Obadiah, Daniel, OTS, Chapters 25-27, 43
Due Date July 6
QUIZ #11 - Prophets V: Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, OTS, Chapters 28-30
Due Date July 8

UNIT IV: THE WRITINGS

JULY 9-21

Quizzes, Exams, and Discussion Lists:

Discussion Board:

9. Contribute a comment to the Poetry Section by July 14
10. Contribute a comment to the Wisdom Section by July 20

Quizzes:

- QUIZ #12 Writings, Poetry & Psalms, OTS, Chapters 17, and 31-32
Due Date July 12
QUIZ #13 Wisdom & Proverbs, OTS, Chapters 33-34; Due Date July 14
QUIZ #14 Job & Ecclesiastes, OTS, Chapters 35-36; Due Date July 17
QUIZ #15 Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah
OTS, Chapters 37-42; Due Date July 20

Research paper posted on BB by July 21

Note final exam by July 21! Blackboard course will close at Friday midnight on the 21nd. Any requests for late submissions, testing, or otherwise must be submitted through the Registrar's Office

Course Teaching Methodology

This course is primarily a reading course which involves three major activities:

First - is the reading the Old Testament in its entirety following the three-fold organization of the Hebrew Bible: Torah (Pentateuch) Former and Latter Prophets (Joshua-Kings and Isaiah-Malachi), and the Writings (Psalms, Wisdom, Megilloth, Chronicles-Ezra/Nehemiah). The exception is reading Daniel which is found in the Writings, along with the reading of the Book of Ezekiel). The reading assignments are outlined in the "Course Syllabus" according to a date schedule which has corresponding "Discussion Board" postings and quizzes in the "Test" section.

Second - additional notes and helps in interpretation are posted in the "Course Documents" section which includes such items as outlines of the Biblical books, Biblical Backgrounds information, and articles for reading for which you are responsible (materials maybe on exams).

Third - you will need to enter the "Discussion Board" (DB) section in which ten different sections are posted. Each of the ten sections has a question (or questions) under the subject area for which you will enter your contribution to the discussion. During the prescribed time frame, you will also need to make two responses to those contributions made by fellow classmates or additions I may make to the discussion. One can make more contributions, but two are required. Note the two lowest quizzes are dropped.

Fourth - you will take the given quizzes (about one per week) by the date posted in the syllabus. They are given in Course Documents on Blackboard (you can take them early, hence once you complete one the next will open automatically). Quizzes are based upon reading of both the biblical text and class textbook, so read well, outline the book, noted key dates, geographical movement, key celebrations and events, who did what, etc. notes only can be used but the quizzes are timed (hence must be completed w/in the time allotted). A 2pt per-day point reduction for lateness unless for medical, death in the family or military deployment reasons. Midterm and Final Exams are also posted in the Test section and are to be taken by the given dates per class schedule.

**Note: This is mainly a reading course supplemented by class notes (Posted on BB),
So please read all materials!**

Additional Course Information

Research Paper

1. A 10 -page paper, double spaced, one inch margins, (Note title page and bibliography do not count, 5 point off for each page short), following Turabian format.
2. Research paper must either: 1) address an issue in Old Testament Studies (e.g. Date of the Exodus), 2) discuss a theological concept (e.g. sacrifice), see suggested topics under Information on BB.
3. Research paper is due July 21, by midnight, 5-point reduction per day for late work, after two weeks it will not be accepted.
4. Grading rubric:

Possible Points	Research Paper Rubric
<u>Form</u> = 5%	Mechanics/Turabian
<u>Grammar and Style</u> = 5%	Spelling Punctuation Sentence Structure; clarity
<u>Research and bibliography</u> - (this includes good footnoting) = 5%	Minimum 10 sources, but 30% of bibliography should consist of sources from scholarly journals, a minimum of 8 sources; use first hand sources when possible, textbooks are secondary, demonstrated good interaction with books and articles, hence by a good bibliography one is showing me that you did your homework!
<u>Content and argument</u> = 85%	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A well-organized paper (develop a table of contents if needed), 2. A well stated premise (note intro should only be a paragraph at best with such a short paper), 3. A logical flow of ideas, 4. Good interaction with the sources, 5. Work based upon sound exegesis of biblical passages were applicable, 6. Key sub-points substantiate your premise, sound reasoning, 7. And just plain reads well☺

Suggested Research Topics – other topics on BB in Information

1. Genesis Creation in the Context of ANE Mythology
2. The Concept of Faith in the Life of Abraham and Later Israelite Leaders
3. The Location of Mount Sinai
4. The Law of Moses and the Law Codes of Ancient Mesopotamia
5. The Mosaic Covenant in Light of ANE Covenant Making
6. The Number of Israelites in the Exodus from Egypt and Wilderness Wanderings
7. The Israelite Pilgrimage Festivals and Their Function in the Nation’s History and Worship
8. Principles of Leadership from the Book of Joshua
9. The Conquest of the Promised Land in Joshua and Judges
10. Israelite Kingship: The Rise of David and the Decline of Saul
11. The Rise and Fall of the Solomonic Kingdom
12. Elijah and the Prophets of Baal and Asherah: Prophetic vs. Popular Religion
13. Jeremiah Versus The False Prophets
14. Justice and Righteousness in the Teaching of the Israelite Prophets
15. Prophetic Vision and the Emergence of Messianic Hope Among Israelite Prophets
16. Worship in the Teaching of the Israelite Prophets
17. The Role of the Psalms in Ancient Israel’s Worship
18. Biblical Wisdom and Wisdom in the ANE: Comparison and Contrast

Bibliography: General References

(Note a fuller bibliography is being updated regularly in BB under Information)

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