

Reading the Old Testament

Fall 2009—OT 6301

Course Syllabus

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Office Hours: Th, Fri 10:00-12:00 A.M., Mon, Tues, Wed 1:00-4:00 P.M.

Class Meeting Time: Thursday 3:00-6:00 P.M.

Course Goals:

- 1) Students will identify and engage in informed discussion of major issues in the interpretation of the Old Testament in its literary, theological and historical context.
- 2) All students will prepare presentations on a passage from the Old Testament which reflects awareness of literary and historical issues which the Old Testament raises and conduct research for these presentations using appropriate indices and databases.
- 3) The student will relate foundational Old Testament theological perspectives to the practice of ministry.

Course Objectives:

- 1) To introduce the student to the text of the Old Testament in its literary styles and sections.
- 2) To familiarize the student with the “Old Testament story,” its main characters and events.
- 3) To introduce the main theological concerns of the Old Testament.
- 4) To familiarize the student with some of the more important critical issues in Old Testament studies.
- 5) To show how the Old Testament texts and theology inform the New Testament, the life of faith, and the practice of ministry today.

Required Texts:

All students are encouraged to make use of all relevant scholarly helps in their pursuit of the understanding of the text of Holy Scripture (see bibliography). The following are intended to orient you, but you may wish to consult other books and articles.

The New Oxford Annotated Bible of the New Revised Standard Version, or another good study Bible.

Drane, John. *Introducing the Old Testament*, revised edition. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001.

Shipp, R. Mark. *Reading the Old Testament Handbook*, revised 2007.

Steussy, Marti, ed. *Chalice Introduction to the Old Testament*. St. Louis: Chalice, 2003.

Recommended Text:

Gorman, Michael. *Elements of Biblical Exegesis: A Basic Guide for Students and Ministers*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 2001.

Software, Database, and Internet Resources:

There are several application software and database resources which Austin Graduate School of Theology provides which are especially helpful for the graduate student. All students in OT 6301 are expected to become familiar with these resources and utilize them especially in the research and preparation of papers:

Bible Search software: Computer concordances, Bibles, and Bible-related databases and search engines. Available on the library computers, or you may elect to use your own Bible search software. *For the Mac: Accordance, Logos Libronix, OnLine Bible. For the PC: Bible Windows, BibleWorks for Windows, Gramcord, Libronix, OnLine Bible.*

Online Periodicals: Through EBSCO, Austin Graduate School has access to over hundreds of full-text journals on the web. See the librarian for access.

ATLA Database: The American Theological Library Association maintains a massive bibliographic database of theological journals and books. Please use this resource for identifying important books and articles for writing the exegesis paper. See the librarian for training and access to this database.

In addition, there are numerous Bible and Bible-related internet sites on the Internet which may help your research. *The Bible Gateway* is one such site. Please see the librarian for a list of other sites.

Course Requirements:

Regular *class attendance and participation* is required. All students should come prepared to discuss the particular section of scripture assigned for the day. This involves reading the relevant sections in the textbook and the Bible. Students should be in class and ready to begin promptly at 7:00 P.M. on Tuesdays. Tardiness and absences will lower your letter grade for the course. See student handbook for unexcused absences/tardiness policy.

1–1 1/2 hour *midterm*.

2–3 hour *final exam*.

Five 20 point map and list *quizzes*.

One five to seven page, typed *exegesis paper*. No more than one person will be assigned per passage. This paper is due December 3.

Mid-term:	30%
Final:	30%
Five 20 point Quizzes:	20%
Exegesis Paper:	20%

See the student handbook or course catalog for the grading scale.

Preparation of Paper:

At the Austin Grad. website www.austingrad.edu/academics_student_resource.html you will find a guide for doing exegetical work. Exegesis papers must use the proper research style as laid out in K. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers* (latest edition). Exegesis papers should pay careful attention to the literary context (extended and immediate), use of important terminology, and historical setting. You may wish to structure your paper along these lines. Most importantly, students are expected to use *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*, Whitaker's *NRSV Concordance*, and/or a Hebrew concordance in order to determine the author's use of words and phrases. For historical background, you will find John Bright, *A History of Israel* (4th edition), particularly helpful. While I am most interested in your own exegesis of the texts, you should be aware of and make use of important commentaries, dictionaries, word books, introductions, etc.

Schedule of Classes.

8/27: Intro. to the Course, Syllabus, and Genesis 1-12.

Readings:

Genesis 1–26.

Steussy pp. 1-28.

9/3: Genesis 13-50.

Readings:

Genesis 27–50.

Drane pp. 1-46, 253–276.

Steussy pp. 29-46.

9/10: The Exodus and Covenant at Sinai.

Readings:

Exodus 1–24.

Drane pp. 306–337.

Steussy pp. 47-62.

9/17: The Exodus and Covenant at Sinai (continued).

Readings:

Leviticus 1–7, 16–27; Numbers 10:11–25:18.

9/24: Deuteronomy; the Conquest and the Period of the Judges.

Readings:

Deut. 1-11, 27-34; Joshua 1–11; Judges; Ruth.

Drane pp. 62–85.

Steussy pp. 63-96.

10/1: The United Kingdom.

Readings:

1 Samuel; 2 Samuel 1-6; Psalms 1–41.

Drane pp. 87–101.

Steussy pp. 97-112.

10/8: The United Kingdom (continued).

Readings:

2 Samuel 7–1 Kings 1–11; Proverbs 1–15; Job 1–14, 28–42; Ecclesiastes.
Drane pp. 101–119.

10/15: The Divided Kingdom. Mid-Term Exam.

Readings:

1 Kings 12–2 Kings 17.
Drane pp. 120–146.
Steussy pp. 112–118.

10/22: 8th Century Prophets, the Fall of North Israel, and the Invasion of Judah.

Readings:

2 Kings 18–20; Amos; Hosea; Isaiah 1–12, 28–33; Micah.
Drane pp. 147–157.
Steussy pp. 135–15, 169–182.

10/29: 8th Century Prophets (continued).

11/5: The Deuteronomistic Reform and the Fall of Judah.

Readings:

2 Kings 21–25; Deuteronomy 1–11, 27–34; Zephaniah; Nahum; Habakkuk; Jeremiah 1–33.
Drane pp. 157–172.

11/12: The Exile of Judah.

Readings:

Ezekiel 1–15, 33–48; Obadiah; Isaiah 40–55; Lamentations.
Drane pp. 173–206.
Steussy pp. 153–167.

11/19: The Restoration of Judah.

Readings:

Ezra; Nehemiah; 1 Chronicles 10–22, 28–29; Haggai; Zechariah 1–8; Isaiah 56–66; Malachi;
Joel.
Drane pp. 452–480.
Steussy pp. 119–133.

11:26: No class—SBL, Thanksgiving.

12/3: Israel and the Nations; the Greek Period; Apocalyptic Literature.

Readings:

Jonah; Esther; Daniel; Zechariah 9–14.
Drane pp. 207–227.
Steussy pp. 237–247.

Papers due.

12:10: Final Exam.