

The Story of Israel
OT 3310—Course Syllabus, Fall 2018
Austin Graduate School of Theology

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Office Hours: Mon., Tues., Thurs., 10:00–12:00; Wed., 1:00-3:00 PM.

Class Meeting Time: Tues. 1:00–3:40 PM.

BA Course Goals:

The student will show mastery of the biblical story and familiarity with various genres of biblical literature (law, wisdom, prophecy, poetry, etc.) and basic methods and principles of biblical exegesis.

Course Objectives:

- 1) The student will acquire knowledge of the theological themes in the first 12–15 books of the Old Testament.
- 2) The student will be able to locate in Israel’s history names, dates, and events important to a grasp of the text and significance of these books.
- 3) The student will be able to distinguish between various literary genres of the Pentateuch and Historical Books and be able to articulate important theological themes of each.
- 4) The student will be able to relate the themes of the Pentateuch and Historical Books to the life of faith and practical ministry today.

Nature and Scope of the Course:

In this course we will be concerned primarily with the books of Genesis through 2 Kings, commonly referred to as the “Torah” or “Pentateuch” (Genesis-Deuteronomy) and the “Historical Books” (Joshua–2 Kings). As time allows, we will try to also look at Chronicles–Esther, classified as "Historical Books" in our English Bibles. The literature and theology of these books will be the primary focus of the course, but we will also be looking at historical questions and

concerns as we move through the course.

Required Texts:

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

Wenham, Gordon. *Exploring the Old Testament: A Guide to the Pentateuch*. Vol. One. Downer's Grove: IVP, 2003.

Satterthwaite, Philip, and J. Gordon McConville. *Exploring the Old Testament: A Guide to the Historical Books*. Vol. Two. Downer's Grove: IVP, 2007.

ATLA Database and Book Reviews:

The American Theological Library Association (ATLA) maintains a massive bibliographic database of theological journals and books. Please use this resource to find previously published reviews of the book on which you wish to write a book review. See the librarian for training and access to this database.

Online Helps:

Helps have been posted online for all students in *Story of Israel*: maps, timelines, study guide, book review template, etc. The website is: www.dropbox.com/home/Public/StoryofIsrael. You can download any of those files to your own computer.

Course Requirements and Means of Assessment:

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 the beginning of class. Tardiness and absences will lower your letter grade for the course. See student handbook for unexcused absences/tardiness policy.

Exams: There will be three exams in the course of the semester: one after a survey of Genesis-Numbers, one after 1 Samuel, and the final exam after 2 Kings or Chronicles-Esther, depending on how far we get.

Book Review: Each student will read and prepare a 3 page critical book review of an important book dealing with Old Testament studies. These reviews are due no later than Tuesday, December 4. The following are a few samples, but you may wish to do a review of another book. You will need to clear alternative suggestions

through me.

- **Achte-meier, Elizabeth and Paul. *The Old Testament Roots of Our Faith*. Revised ed. Peabody: Hendrickson Press, 1994 (*preferred text*).
- Clines, David. *The Theme of the Pentateuch*. Second ed. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1997.
- Fretheim, Terence. *Deuteronomistic History*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1983.
- Heschel, Abraham. *The Prophets*. Volume One. New York: Harper and Row, 1962.
- Kidner, Derek. *The Wisdom of Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes*. Downer's Grove: IVP, 1985.
- Mann, Thomas. *The Book of the Torah*. Louisville: W/JKP, 1988.

You will need to find one or two published reviews on the *ATLA* database and refer to these in your own book review (see above on *ATLA* database).

Also, see "Guide for Written Work" under section III, "The Book Review" On the http://austingrad.edu/images/Resources/student/guide_for_written_work.htm website. You will follow the format indicated in the preparation of your review.

Three Exams: 75% (25% each)
Book Review: 25%

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

AGST Plagiarism Policy:

Plagiarism and citation of sources: Plagiarism is the representation of another person's work as your own and is a form of theft. This includes material composed by other students, purchased from an online paper service, or copied from published books and articles or from the Internet. If in any assignment you employ material written by someone else, you must give the author proper credit, documenting the source with an appropriate citation and marking any words directly quoted with quotation marks (or with indentation if four or more lines are quoted). Failure to appropriately credit the sources you use will result in a reduction in your grade for the assignment in question and/or the

requirement that you revise the assignment. Intentionally representing another person's work as your own will be grounds for academic discipline, including your possible dismissal from the School. For more information on how to acknowledge sources properly and avoid plagiarism, refer to the School's "Guide to Written Work" (http://www.austingrad.edu/images/Resources/student/guide_for_written_work.htm).

Schedule of Classes.

8/28: Introduction and Genesis: the Primeval History.

Readings:

Genesis 1–26.

Wenham, 1–34.

9/4: Genesis: the Primeval History and the Patriarchs (cont.).

9/18: Genesis: the Patriarchs (cont.); Exodus.

Readings:

Genesis 27–50.

Wenham, 35–56.

9/25: Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers.

Readings:

Exodus 1–24.

Leviticus 1–18 and Numbers 11–25.

Wenham, 57–121.

10/2: Deuteronomy; Exam #1 (covering Genesis-Numbers).

Readings:

Deuteronomy 1–11, 26–34.

Wenham, 123–144.

10/9: Joshua.

Readings:

Joshua.

Satterthwaite, 1–72.

10/16: Joshua (cont.) and Judges.

Readings:

Judges.

Satterthwaite, 73–104.

10/23: The Rise of the Monarchy.

Readings:

1 Samuel.

Satterthwaite, 105–121.

10/30: The United Kingdom of David and Solomon; *Exam #2 (covering Deuteronomy-1st Samuel)*

Readings:

2 Samuel–1 Kings 11.

Satterthwaite, 122–153.

11/6: The Divided Kingdom.

Readings:

1 Kings 12–2 Kings 10.

Satterthwaite, 154–164.

11/13: The Divided Kingdom and Judah Alone.

Readings:

2 Kings 11–25.

Satterthwaite, 165–198.

11/20: No class; Thanksgiving Holiday.

11/27: Ezra-Nehemiah, Esther, 1–2 Chronicles (as time allows)

Readings:

1 Chronicles 10-29; 2 Chronicles.

Satterthwaite, 266–290.

12/4: Ezra-Nehemiah, Esther, 1–2 Chronicles (continued, or catch-up as necessary).

12/11: *Exam. #3*, covering 2 Samuel through Chronicles, + Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther if we get that far.