

**BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**ANDREWS AFB EXTENTION CENTER**  
**SYLLABUS**  
**SEMESTER: Fall 2001**  
**Department of History and Government**  
**Philosophy 204. Introduction to the Old Testament**

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. Ronald P. Davis, Sr.  
**OFFICE HOURS:** MWF 9am-10am 1:00pm -3:00pm  
**OFFICE LOCATION** MLK 0203  
**OFFICE EXTENSION** 3612  
**E-mail** rpdavis@bowiestate.edu.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The primary objective of this course is to provide the student with a working knowledge of ancient, and contemporary understanding of the documents of the Old Testament. Particular attention will be paid to foundational elements. The student will survey, the various scientific methodologies implored by biblical scholars to interpret, analyze and reconstruct the content as well as the context that surrounds the composition of the Old Testament. The use of these methodologies include textual/literary, historical, form and redaction criticisms.

Students will learn to distinguish between reading the Old Testament as a faith document and reading it as an objective observer. Representative writings from various theological perspectives such as liberation, black, and feminist theologies will be examined to demonstrate how diverse segments of society have interpreted the Old Testament in light of their own existential realities. The intent of the course is not to offend the student of any particular perspective, but rather to enrich their understanding by exposing them to these other perspectives found both in the classroom and the community at large..

**REQUIRED TEXT**

Anderson, Bernhard W. Understanding the Old Testament. Fourth Edition. Prentice-Hall. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1986.

**Secondary reading material**

Cain Hope Felder. Troubling Biblical Waters: Race, Class, and Family. Orbis Books: Maryknoll, N.Y., 1989.

Cone, James H. God of the Oppressed. The Seabury Press: New York, 1975.

Oxford Annotated, Revised Standard Version, NRSV, New English or The Jerusalem Bible.

**STUDENT OUTCOMES:**

Students Will:

1. develop critical writing and essay skills;
2. acquire a general understanding of the Old Testament as a historical document;
3. develop effective public speaking skills through class participation in group discussions/debate
4. attain an understanding of how Biblical Scholars interpret scriptures using redaction, form, source, and textual criticism,
5. develop the analytical ability to distinguish between statements of fact and faith statements contained in the Old Testament writings.
6. attain an understanding of the role of theology in the formulation and interpretation of the Old Testament,
7. attain an understanding of how liberation, feminist, and black theology proponents interpret these ancient documents when addressing contemporary concerns.

Competency in the above areas will be demonstrated by attaining a “C” or above according to the grading system outlined in this syllabus.

SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES: Students are expected to demonstrate competency in Introduction to Old Testament by:

1. identifying the major parts of the Old Testament in short answer questions,
2. distinguishing between statements of fact and faith statements in the Old Testament documents in essay assignment,
3. identifying, what certain marginal social groups (women and African-Americans) have interpreted as, liberation/domination motifs in the Old Testament, and discussing their implications for the larger society in general and the Church in particular in an essay assignment,
4. interpreting the creation story by comparing readings from the Ancient Near East on the beginning of humankind in an essay assignment.
5. identifying the various genres of the Old Testament on quizzes and exams consisting of multiple choice questions and true or false statements.

<u>CURRICULUM THEMES:</u>	<u>Corresponding Outcome or Objective</u>
Academic Scholar	outcome 1,2,3 all objectives
Multicultural and Global Perspectives	outcome 4-7 objectives 3,4.
Personal and Interpersonal Perspective	outcome 3,7 objectives 2,3,
Technological Applications	outcome 7

### TEACHING MODES

The teaching modes include lectures followed by class discussions.

This major teaching strategy will be supplemented by:

student participation in group discussions, in class debates, and audiovisual materials.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. **Homework Assignments** are graded and therefore mandatory. These are intended to demonstrate that the student has comprehended and retained the information from the required text and class lectures.
2. **Term Paper.** Students must review one book or one of the major divisions of the Old Testament providing the five elements of good journalism. Students must provide at least the following: who wrote it , why, when , where and what is the significance for an understanding of Israel’s history? Students must make use of at least (2) authoritative sources (commentaries devoted specifically to the book chosen) other than the Bible. This paper should consist of at least 5 typed double spaced pages with a bibliography which does not count as a page.
3. **Final Exam.** The Final exam will be comprehensive from the mid-semester period to the time of the final exam. It is an assessment of the student’s achievement of the learning objectives. This exam must be taken on the date and time indicated in the class schedule.
4. No make up or late work will be accepted without prior permission from the instructor.
5. Instructor reserves the right to modify the organization and grading of this course to adjust for any unforeseen circumstances.

### The Grading System:

Homework Assignments	15%
Class Discussions	10%
Term Paper	20%
Quizzes(3)	30%
Final Exam	<u>25 %</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

A=90-100, B=80-89, C=70-79, D=60-69, F= below 60.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: Attendance is part of your grade calculated as follows: 0-1 absence: A=90-100, 2 absences B=80-89, 3 absences C=70-79.

### FINAL EXAM POLICY:

This exam must be taken on the date and times listed for class in the published semester schedule.

**PLEGIARISM POLICY:**

Plagiarism will result in a Zero(F) grade for essay or term paper assignments. Please give appropriate credit to your sources by using references with author, date of publication, and page numbers for direct quotations

**English Proficiency Requirement:**

After completing ENGL 101 and 102, Composition and Literature I and II, students must take and successfully pass Bowie State University English Proficiency Examination. Transfer students who completed their English composition requirements at another university should take the English Proficiency Examination during their first semester of enrollment at the University.

## **Course Units and Reading Assignments**

### **Week One**

**There will be a study guide distributed for each chapter and students are expected to answer all questions and turn in upon completion.**

Introduction to the Course.

Discussion on the use of historical critical, redaction criticism, and form critical methods in understanding the Old Testament

The formulation of the Canon of the Old Testament

### **Week Two**

The Beginnings of Israel

Introduction : The Old Testament as the Story of a People.

Chapter One: The Creation of a People

Chapter Two: Liberation from Bondage

### **Week Three**

Assignment: Read Genesis 1-3 & 12-50

Yaweh Liberates from Bondage

The Call of Moses

The Exodus as a Defining Event in the Life of Israel

How was the world created?

The Origin of life.

Chapter Three: Covenant in the Wilderness

Chapter Four: The Promised Land

Chapter Five: The Formulation of An All Israelite Epic

### **Week Four**

Chapters Six: The Struggle Between Faith and Culture

Chapter Seven: The Throne of David

Chapter Eight: Prophetic Troublers of Israel

### **Week Five**

Chapter Nine: Fallen Is Virgin Israel

Chapter Ten: Judah's Covenant with Death.

Chapter Eleven: The Rediscovery of Mosaic Torah

### **Week Six**

Chapters Twelve: The Doom of the Nation

Chapter Thirteen: By the Waters of Babylon

Chapter Fourteen: The Dawn of the New Age

### **Week Seven**

Chapter Fifteen: A Kingdom of Priests

Chapter Sixteen: The Praises of Israel

Term Papers Due.

### **Week Eight**

Chapter Seventeen: The Beginning of Wisdom

Chapter Eighteen: The Unfulfilled Drama

Final Exam .

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Anderson, G.W. The History and Religion of Israel  
Felder, Cain Hope. Troubling Biblical Waters.  
Hayes, John H. An Introduction to Old Testament Study.  
Fackenheim, Emil L. God's Presence in History: Jewish Affirmations and Philosophical Reflections  
Russell, Letty M. Feminist Interpretation of the Bible.  
Soulén, Richard N. Handbook of Biblical Criticism.

**Course: Phil. 204.201: Introduction to Old Testament**  
**Instructor: Dr. Ronald P. Davis, Sr.**  
**Second Quiz-December 8, 2000**

**Multiple Choice Questions (3) points each**

1. What is a canon?  
a. a sacred message b. authoritative books c. secret writings d. scroll
2. What language is the Old Testament written in?  
a. Greek b. Hebrew c. Latin d. King James English
3. Who is the editor of the First five books of the Old Testament?  
a. Elijah b. Abraham c. Moses d. Joshua
4. What is another name for the five books of the Old Testament?  
a. Decalogue b. Ten Commandments c. canon d. Pentateuch
5. What is another name for Torah?  
a. Dead Sea Scrolls b. Words of Moses c. covenant d. Law
6. Another name for the "editors" of the Old Testament is:  
a. patriarchs b. seers c. redactors d. scribes
7. Under which monarchy was the tribes of Israel unified into a nation?  
a. Saul d. Solomon c. David D. Nebudchednezzar
8. What form was the Old Testament first transmitted?  
a. legend b. scrolls c. stories d. oral
9. How many books are there in the Old Testament?  
a. 66 b. 27 c. 37 d. 39
10. What does the term Yahweh refer?  
a. the Hebrew designation for the deity b. Lord c. Canaanite god d. power
11. What does theology mean according to its Greek roots?  
a. God's Word b. God's Message C. Words about God d. Words of Wisdom
12. What does the Hebrew word Mosheh mean?  
a. river b. Moses c. to lift d. to draw out
13. What is a theophany?  
a. an angel b. a flame of fire c. a cloud d. an appearance of God
14. In Israelite thought, to be bound by a sacred agreement with deity is to be in:  
a. church b. congregation c. relationship d. covenant
15. What does the term Ephraim refer to in your text?  
a. Jacob's brother b. Southern Kingdom c. Northern Kingdom d. divine warrior
16. What is a sign, according to our text?  
a. a theophany b. a day of rest c. a secret message d. a demonstration of God's power
17. What does the term Judah refer to in your text?  
a. lion of the tribe b. Southern Kingdom c. Northern Kingdom d. Levites
18. What does the term Man hu' mean in Hebrew?  
a. manna b. bread c. what is it? d. food
19. How does the author of our text define "covenant"?  
a. sacrifice b. divine favor c. binding agreement d. testament
20. What is the "Decalogue"?  
a. way of worship b. Ten commandments c. written words of God d. law of Moses'
21. Who anointed Saul to be King?  
a. Eli b. Hezekiah c. Samuel d. David
22. What is meant by "divine charisma"?  
a. ability to prophesy b. one who sees the future c. one who possesses the spirit of Yahweh d. a leader
23. Define the term "messiah".  
a. a messenger b. one anointed by God to serve as Israel's perfect King c. a prophet d. royal theology
24. Define the English word prophet, according to your text.  
a. one who predicts the future b. a special person c. one who speaks for God d. a priest
25. One of the first (3) kings of Israel was:  
a. Samuel b. David c. Josiah d. Aaron
26. This King allowed the religion of his wives to cause trouble in his dynasty:

a. Samuel b. Saul c. David d. Solomon

27. This strand of tradition uses the name Yahweh for God:

a. J b. E c. D d. P

28. Most of the material for this strand of tradition is found in the book Deuteronomy:

a. J b. E c. D d. P

29. What does the author mean by "royal theology"?

a. Yahweh is king in Israel

b. the belief that Yahweh had made a special covenant with David

c. the belief that God had promised Abraham's seed an everlasting Kingdom

d. the belief that a messiah, a perfect King would one day rule a perfect Kingdom

30. What are some of the features of the "ideal King"?

a. his kingdom would endure forever

b. he was Yahweh's servant

c. he would be a great warrior

d. he would live a steadfast life

**True or False (2) points each**

31. \_\_\_\_\_ The Hebrew word for prophet is Nabi.

32. \_\_\_\_\_ Elijah was the uncle of Elisha.

33. \_\_\_\_\_ The Hebrew verb for the English phrase "to prophesy" means to behave like a prophet.

34. \_\_\_\_\_ When Elijah charges the people with "limping between two different opinions", he means that they wanted to keep one foot in the traditional faith of Israel and the other in the worship of Baal.

35. \_\_\_\_\_ The prophet, according to the text, is one who speaks or acts for another.

- 30.** What is the septuagint?  
a. Old Testament in Greek b. Roman bible c. the Latin version of the bible d. seventy
- 31.** Throughout Israel's history they were defined as what type of community, according to the author of our text?  
A. rebellious B. warrior C. worshipping D. unfaithful
- 32.** According to the author, where does the term Psalter originate?  
A. the New Testament B. Old Testament  
C. psalterion the title used in the Greek Bible D. the book of Psalms
- 33.** In Israel's faith, worship is a:  
A. public affair? B. public affair C. sacrifice D. covenant
- 34.** In order for a person to gain access to God what must they do in Israel's faith?  
A. seek God at the appointed time and place B. bring offerings  
C. keep the commandments D. pray
- 35.** During the process of the psalms being completed what centuries are covered?  
A. sixth-fourth century B.C.E. B. fifth-second century B.C.E.  
C. seventh-eighth century B.C.E. D. ninth-eleventh century B.C.E.
- 36.** How many collections of books are covered in the Psalms?  
A. ten B. two C. five D. one hundred fifty
- 37.** How many of the Psalms are attributed to David?  
A. 150 B. 78 C. 73 D. 90
- 38.** This literary genre or type of Psalm involves the worshipping in the celebration of the majesty of God:  
A. lament B. hymn C. thanksgiving D. doxology
- 39.** This type of Psalm involves petition and presupposes a problematic situation:  
A. lament B. hymn C. thanksgiving D. doxology
- 40.** What does Philosophy mean, according to our text?  
A. words about God B. divine revelation C. the love wisdom D. sage
- 41.** What does the search for wisdom involve, according to the author of our text?  
A. the search for the meaning of life B. Counsels of Wisdom  
C. the search for God D. the search for truth
- 42.** Wisdom literature focuses on:  
A. the individual B. the community C. the past D. the future
- 43.** Wisdom literature that probes the depth of human anguish about the meaning of life:  
A. prudential literature B. reflective literature  
C. historical literature D. practical literature
- 44.** What is one example of wisdom writings found in the Old Testament?  
A. Psalms B. Job C. King Solomon D. the Torah
- 45.** Who was considered the fountainhead of Israel's wisdom?  
A. David B. Solomon C. Job D. Ecclesiastes
- 46.** How many proverbs were Solomon said to have uttered?  
A. one thousand and five B. one hundred and fifty  
C. three thousand D. five hundred
- 47.** Job is concerned with a deeper question than human suffering, according to the author of our text. What is that question?  
A. the character of a person's relationship with God B. human sinfulness  
C. the patience of Job D. theodicy
- 48.** Who was the melancholy teacher of the wisdom examples mentioned in your text?  
A. Job B. Malachi C. Ecclesiastes D. Solomon
- 49.** What is the greatest monument to wisdom literature found in the Old Testament?  
A. Job B. Malachi C. Ecclesiastes D. Proverbs
- 50.** What does the term "theodicy" mean, according to our text?  
A. words about God B. the problem of evil  
C. divine providence D. human suffering

**Course: Phil. 204.201: Introduction to Old Testament**  
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**Final Examination-December 15, 2000**

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 A. words about God    B. the problem of evil  
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**True or False (2) points each**

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35. \_\_\_\_\_ The prophet, according to the text, is one who speaks or acts for another.
30. What is the septuagint?  
 a. Old Testament in Greek    b. Roman bible    c. the Latin version of the bible    d. seventy

## Introduction to The Old Testament

Begin by asking the following questions.

What is the Bible?

What is the first book of the Bible?

What is the last book of the Bible?

Who wrote the first book of the Bible?

Who wrote the last book of the Bible?

Who told these writers what to write? Or why did they write what was written?

Has anyone heard the statement: "The Bible says"?

If so where did you hear it?

When someone uses the phrase "the bible says" in what capacity is the Bible functioning?

Has anyone ever said or heard it said that the Bible contradicts itself? What is meant by this statement?

For those of you that responded the Bible is the word of God, your next question is what role did humans play in the compilation of the bible?

For those of you who responded that the last book of the Bible is Revelation, what Bible were you referring to?

In this course which is entitled, An Introduction to the Old Testament, I will make an effort to provide you, the student with concrete answers to many of the historical as well as contemporary concerns surrounding and at times impeding an understanding of the Old Testament. You will discover that many of these questions arise from the fact that the Old Testament is a very complex body of knowledge covering over 2500 years. It involves diverse groups of people and nations. We will discover that there are many competing ideologies and theological persuasions both inside and outside the Old Testament. As to the issue of what the bible says, we will discover that the Bible says many things, and it articulates its message or messages in many different ways and through diverse literary expressions. For example, we have in the pages of the Old Testament prose types such as speeches, records, narratives saga, tales, and sayings. Of the foregoing speeches would be most consonant and congruent with real life. Next in importance, in terms of reliability, would be records and finally contracts. A few examples are in order.

**Speeches:** Speeches played an major role in the life Israel because there was not a great reliance upon written documents as would be the case today since this is basically an oral tradition. Men and at times women who could speak fluently and persuasively were held in high esteem. King David, for example, in addition to his many other laudable characteristics, was also a great speaker. Some have suggested that this is why Saul urged him to become a part of his court or cabinet. See: I Samuel 16:18.

Woman who spoke well were also held in high esteem in the Israelite community although they were limited in many other ways because they existed in a patriarchal, male dominated society. For example: When Joab wanted to influence King David to pardon Absalom the crown prince he makes use of a wise woman. See II Samuel 14: 1-24.

Also worth noting, in this regard, is the Exodus account of the Call of Moses. One of Moses' arguments favoring his own disqualification for the task of becoming the human vehicle of the divine liberation of Israel as a people was that he was not an eloquent speaker or more specifically "slow of speech" Aaron, you may recall, was chosen to accompany Moses in the encounter with Pharaoh, because Aaron spoke well. See: Exodus 4:10-14.

**Farewell Speeches** are also very important in Israel. It usually involved the farewell message or final discourse of a political or religious leader. These messages were revered and at times functioned authoritatively within the faith community. One of the oldest examples of the farewell speech is found in Joshua 24, the final words of Joshua.

**Sermons:** Are also speeches. These were very numerous and useful in antiquity. These were religious in nature. The most common use of the sermon is demonstrated in the Prophets of Israel. The book of Deuteronomy is steeped with sermonic materials. Chapters 1-11 29-31. Older sermons are found in Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Micah.

Another type of sermon is the prayer/speech. See Judges 16:28 Solomon's Prayer I King 3: 6-9.

Records: see II Sam. V.3 David makes a covenant

Contracts: also a part of records. i.e. II Sam. 11:15

Narratives include: myths, fairy tales, sagas, legends, anecdotes, and tales.

If a narrative is concerned with the world of the gods or if the gods are involved to a considerable extent we may speak of it as a myth.

In this connection one Old Testament scholar has noted " a real myth presupposes as least (2) gods, the one contesting with the other. But Israel believed in only one God.

Therefore, in a technical sense Israel does not really have myths.

Fairy Tales, Fables: I Kings 17:7-16 II Kings: IV: 1-7 Ravens feeding Elijah I Kings 17: 1-6.

We can see from the foregoing that there is rich diversity of material, and I have but scratched the surface. We are able at this point to suggest that when one makes appeal to the Old Testament as a source of authority, it becomes necessary to be clear, explicit, and exact. This you will find involves more than the mere ability to quote bible chapter and verse. One must say not only what the bible says, but just where does it say it, and how does it say it. In other words, Is it a narrative, Sermon? Speech? Record? Legend? Or Record? or Contract?

As we shall shortly demonstrate, not all portions of the Old Testament scriptures should be given equal weight as authoritative. The issue of what scriptures are to be viewed as

authoritative is not new but was faced by the early church fathers through the development of a Canon. We will discuss the closing of the Old Testament Canon.

First, **what is a canon?** The term canon comes from a Semitic word meaning "reed" and the "rod" "rule" or "norm". When this is applied to sacred scripture we begin to see how the notion of scripture as authority or authoritative source evolved. It was first applied to scripture in the fourth century by the early church fathers. Prior to this the biblical materials were simply referred to as scriptures or sacred scriptures.

The concept of Canon implies the existence of a collection of writings which are accepted as authoritative and as unchangeable and as normative for religious faith and practice. Thus, canon, as it regards scripture carries with it both positive and negative implications.

**Negatively:** A canon excludes or leaves some books or scriptures out. For example some books that are found in the Roman Catholic Canon but not in the Hebrew or Protestant canon are: Tobit, Judith, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, I and II Maccabees. These books were once a part of the Hebrew tradition.

**Positively:** On the positive side a canon denotes certain works that are included in the category of sacred and authoritative. This is an important safeguard because it prevents religious communities from constantly changing the content of sacred writing. Religious people could, if there were no canon, constantly add to the list of sacred books.

Discussion on the closed canon.

### **The Closing of the Old Testament or the Canonization of the Old Testament.**

The Bible as most of us are accustomed to seeing it is but one of three canonical forms.

These (3) canonical forms are as follows, (Hebrew), Roman Catholic (Orthodox), and Protestant Canons. The Canon of the Roman Catholic Church accepts forty six (46) as Canonical Old Testament. Protestantism has (39) books in its Old Testament Canon. Jewish or Hebrew Bible has (26). These are the same as the (39) books in the Protestant canon but in a different grouping. For example: in the Jewish canon you will find Kings as (1) book rather I & II Kings. The same is true about Samuel and Chronicles.

Also, in the Jewish Old Testament all of the minor prophets are grouped together as the Book of the 12. We will now turn to a discussion of the major divisions of the Old Testament

### **The Major Division of the Old Testament.**

The Jewish Scripture are called Tanak from Torah Nebi im Kethubim (Writings)

#### **I. Torah or (Pentateuch) Law or Teachings**

Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy

## II Prophets

Joshua, Judges, Ruth, I & 2 Samuel, 1& 2 Kings, 1&2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah Micah, Nahum Habakkuk, Zephania, Haggia, Zechariah and Malachi

## III Writings

Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ruth, Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes, Lamentation, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, I&2 Chronicles

## Tools of The Trade

How do we know what we know about the Old Testament?

**Textual Criticism:** Has (2) basic goals

1. to gain an understanding of the transmission of the text in its various forms throughout history
2. the reconstruction of the text in its most authentic and original form

These goals present certain problems listed below:

a. No single verse of ancient literature has come to us in an original manuscript, written by a biblical author or by a contemporary of his or even by a scribe who lived immediately after the time of the author.

Even the very earliest manuscripts at our disposal either in Hebrew or any translation are removed by hundreds of years from the date of origin of the literature recorded by them.

b. There is probably no other extant text, ancient or modern, which is witnessed to by so many diverse types of sources, and the history of which is so difficult to elucidate as that of the Old Testament.

c. The further back the textual tradition of the Old Testament is followed, i.e. the Older the biblical manuscripts perused, and the more ancient the records which come to the knowledge of scholars, the wider is the over-all range of textual divergence between them... In other words, the later the witness, the more pronounced their conformity, and the fewer their divergences, both in number and type.

2. **Redaction Criticism** is the effort to recover the leading ideas, theological and otherwise, of those later persons who pulled together and gave shape to the earlier materials.

Redaction criticism followed on the crucial observation that the redactors or editors who composed the larger literary units out of smaller ones **themselves** had something to say, their editing had purpose and direction.

Questions which arise from redaction criticism are as follows:

Why did the editor edit?

What corresponding overriding problems were he and the community facing?

What questions were the community asking which the editor was trying to address?

An Introduction to the course.

This is an eight week accelerated course with 5 hours scheduled meeting time with at least (4) breaks per period.

Class format will a similar pattern each week.

Lecture,

Reading of Old Testament Passages,  
Reading of the Required Text and classroom assignments and homework review.

B.C.E. Before the Common Era formerly called A.D. which means Anno Domini (year of the Lord).

Primary to any understanding of the Old Testament is some sophistication as to the many ways in which the Old Testament is read.

The Old Testament may be read as history, the history of a particular people, Hebrews or Jews . Some would contend that Israelite history is different from history as an unbiased chronicling of significant events. They argue that Israelite history is religious or sacred history. Sacred history has to do with God and God's interaction with God's people.

Still others suggest that the Old Testament could be read simply as literature. Diverse literary techniques and expressions are apparent throughout the Old Testament. Writers of the Old Testament make frequent use of hyperbole, metaphor, symbolism, allegory, personification, irony, wordplay and parallelism.

Students of the Old Testament are admonished early to recognize that these various genres exist and that the exact meaning and interpretation of an Old Testament document is greatly enhanced by a knowledge of the genre of the text in question. For example, in the Hebrew Bible there are narratives, prophecies, laws, hymns, proverbs, genealogies, sermons and many other types. Understanding the genre of a text I underscore again, greatly enhances interpretation and comprehension.

The Old Testament can also be seen as theology since it contains Israel's affirmations about God and God's liberation of them as a people. Since we will read the Old Testament primarily as theology in this course it might prove advisable to gain a clear understanding of the discipline for it will assist us in deciphering the message of the Old Testament.

Theology in its most fundamental sense is the science of reasoning about God, humans and the interaction between these two realities. In the book of Genesis 1:1 we find the words "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." This is a theological statement about God". The writer, editor or redactor asserts without empirical proof that the creation as we know it springs forth from one source, God. These words represent the faith or belief system of a worshipping community. Theology is best understood from its basic Greek roots. Theos plus Logos. Words or reasoning thinking about God. When we read the Old Testament we will do so from a theological perspective. When one reads the Bible from a theological perspective this must be distinguished from reading it from a faith perspective. You may have heard someone say, "God said it, I believe it and that settles it".

When we read the Old Testament from a theological standpoint it is sometimes very unsettling to persons who use it as the standard for their faith. We will like biblical detectives probe and explore what the Bible says, why it says what it says and who helped to say it. Hence, from our point of departure nothing is settled except the fact that we have a collection of writings before us that were some 2500 years in the making, written in a different language than our own, a different time a different worldview and a different culture.





## **Old Testament Study Guide for Chapter One**

1. What is meant by the term Source or Documentary Hypothesis?
2. What is a canon?
3. What language is the Old Testament written in?
4. Who is the editor of the First five books of the Old Testament?
5. What are these five books in item 4 called?
6. What is another name for Torah?
7. Define each of the traditions represented by JEDP.
8. Why is it appropriate to speak of editors of the Old Testament rather than authors?
9. What does the term 'Apiru refer to.
10. Although, Genesis appears first in the Old Testament why is it likely that Exodus was probably first in terms of chronological history?
11. What form was the Old Testament first transmitted?
12. How many books are there in the Old Testament?
13. Which source represents the Old Epic tradition?
14. Which source utilizes the name Yaweh for God?
15. What does theology mean according to its Greek roots?
16. The designation of El came from where, according to your text?
17. What do the following names for God signify in the Canaanite religion?  
A. El 'Elyon B. El Olam C. El Roi D. El Shaddai.

## **Chapter Two**

1. According to your text, where do we get our knowledge of Moses?
2. What does the Hebrew word Mosheh mean?
3. What is a theophany? Give one example mentioned in our text.
4. What are the elements of the divine call?
5. When a people of faith enter into a personal relationship with the deity, what is this called?
6. Why does Israel view their God as a "divine Warrior?"
7. What is the role of Moses in the liberation of Israel from bondage?
8. What member of Pharaoh's court helped to raise Moses?
9. In Israelite thought what is the significance of the name?
10. When Moses ask God to disclose his divine name, what is the response?
11. What is a sign, according to our text?
12. What does the Passover represent in Israelite thought?
13. According to our text, what happened at the Reed Sea?
14. What does the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night signify in Israel's journey?
15. What are the ten plagues inflicted on Egypt?
16. What is the reason given by Moses for wanting the Israelites to go free?
17. What is Pharaoh's response according to Exodus 8:25
18. What is another name for the land of Rameses?
19. Why is that the Hebrews did not leave Egypt by the most direct route?
20. What was the tenth plague inflicted on the Egyptians?

## **Chapter Three**

### **Covenant In the Wilderness**

1. What does the term Man hu' mean in Hebrew?
2. How does the author of our text define "covenant?"
3. What is the Eagles' Wing Passage in Exodus?
4. What does the author mean by conditional elements of the covenant?
5. What is the "Decalogue?"
6. What are unconditional elements in the covenant?

7. What are "ordinances" and how do they differ from the "ten words" given to Moses?
8. What is an absolute law in the covenantal code?
9. List the "ten words" originally given to Moses.
10. List the six elements of the suzerainty covenant.

#### **Study Questions for Chapter Four**

1. According to the ancient view what does "milk and honey" represent when found in abundance?
2. The number 40 is used in the Old Testament to indicate what? According to your text?
3. What two sacred objects in the life of Israel signified the presence of Yaweh?
4. What were the two theologies represented by the two sacred objects mentioned above?
5. What took place at the Tent of Meeting?
6. What was the Ark of the Covenant?
7. What is the second major division of the Hebrew Bible?
8. List the former prophets of the Old Testament.
9. List the latter prophets.
10. What is the first book of the former prophets? Although this book is mostly historical narrative it is listed among the former prophets. Why is this? According to the text.

#### **Study Questions for Chapter Five.**

1. What does the author mean by an "All-Israelite Epic"?
2. The formation of the All-Israelite epic most likely influenced by what political and social realities of the monarchy?
3. What was the oral period par excellence in Israel's history?
4. Describe the Primeval History in detail as outlined in your text.
5. Describe the Ancestral History in detail as outlined in your text.
6. Describe the People's History in detail as outlined in your text.
7. What is the meaning of the Hebrew word "adam"?
8. Adam is described as a three-dimensional being existing in three relationships. What are these relationships?
9. What does the great flood symbolize?
10. Define "Blessing", according to the text.

## Chapter Six Review: The Struggle Between Faith and Culture

1. According to your text, when did the decisive phase of Israel's occupation of Canaan take place? In what century?
2. How did diversity in Israel lead to a relapse from the stern demands of the Mosaic faith? P. 182.
3. Where is the Deuteronomist's theology of history" found in capsule form? P.183
4. What does the title "Baal" mean? P. 185
5. What does the title "Balaalath" mean?
6. What was the role of the Judge? P. 195
7. What does it mean to be a "charismatic leader" in Israel? P.195
8. What are the two traditions concerning the rise of the monarchy in Israel? P. 207
9. How was Samuel different from other Judges? 207
10. How did Samuel try to change judgeship to a political situation?

### Review Questions for Chapter 7

1. List the first (3) Kings of Israel.
2. Who anointed Saul to be King?
3. What is meant by "divine charisma"?
4. What is the Hebrew word for King?
5. Why is there an initial reluctance on the part of Israel to have a King?
6. Under which monarchy was the tribes of Israel unified into a nation?
7. What does the author mean by "royal theology"?
8. What are some of the features of the "ideal King"?
9. Define the term "messiah".
10. How does Solomon's wives lead to a weakening of his dynasty?

### Review Questions for Chapter 8

1. Define the English word prophet, according to your text.
2. What is the Hebrew word for prophet?
3. What is the Hebrew verb for the English phrase "to prophesy"?
4. What were the (3) acceptable channels for ascertaining the divine will mentioned in your text?
5. What does the term Ephraim refer to in your text?
6. What does the term Judah refer to in your text?
7. How was Micaiah's form of prophecy different from that of previous ages?
8. Why does the author say that Elijah repaired the abandoned altar of Yaweh?

9. Why does Elijah charge the people with "limping between two different opinions"?
10. Who was Elisha in relationship to Elijah?

## **Chapter 9 Fallen Is the Virgin Israel.**

1. Which of the two Kingdoms Northern or Southern were most stable?
2. The political differences between the two Kingdoms' were rooted in different "ideologies". What were they?
3. Describe the "Unmoved Mover" of classical Greek Philosophy.
4. How does the God of Israel differs from the "Unmoved Mover" mentioned above?
5. The Prophet Amos did his work in what century?
6. Amos carried out his prophecies in which Kingdom?
7. During the time of Hosea and Amos there existed a class of teaching priests. What were they called?
8. What are some characteristics of the "Elohists" tradition in Israelite tradition?
9. Why does Amos reply to King Amaziah that he is not prophet?
10. If Amos is not a prophet why does he prophesy?
11. What does it mean to "repent" according to the text?
12. What were the two eras that Hosea's prophetic career overlapped?
13. Who is Gomer?
14. Hosea's wife had three children. What were their names?
15. How does Hosea's marriage illustrate Israel's relationship to Yahweh?
16. What does the term "HESED" mean?

## **Chapter 10 Judah's Covenant with Death**

1. Elijah, Elisha, Micaiah, Amos and Hosea were active in what Kingdom?
2. Which of the two Kingdoms were able to maintain a single dynasty?
3. Under which dynasty did Judah reach the peak of its economic and military power?
4. At what time in history did Isaiah receive his call?
5. How long does Isaiah's prophetic career last?
6. What did Isaiah see as his role as a prophet?
7. The writings of the prophets are contained in how many major scrolls?
8. List the books found in the major scrolls mentioned above.
9. Distinguish between "First" and "Second" Isaiah.
10. According to the text, where are the genuine writings of Isaiah located?
11. According to the text, What is the significance of the time of Isaiah's being linked to the death of King Uzziah?
12. What is the significance of Isaiah's vision happening in the Temple?
13. What does the "sign of Immanuel" signify in Isaiah's theology?
14. How does the New Testament period make use of the sign of Emmanuel?
15. For who did the prophet Micah speak?
16. In what way was the message of Micah similar to the message of Amos?
17. In what century does Micah prophesy.
18. Micah is described as "filled with the divine charisma as opposed to some other prophets. What was the difference between Micah and the other prophets?
19. In what period of Israel's history was Hezekiah's reign?
20. What were some of Hezekiah's accomplishments?

## Study Guide for Chapter 11 The Rediscovery of Mosaic Torah

1. According to the text, "the significant development within Judah during the seventh century B.C.E." was what?
2. What event during the life of Israel provided them with their knowledge of God?
3. According to the Deuteronomistic historian who was the arch-villain of the whole gallery of David kings?
4. Once you have identified the "arch-villain" in item (3) above describe some of the evils this associated with this person's reign.
5. According to our text a portion of Deuteronomistic History there are two theological themes interwoven. Describe each of these two themes in detail.
  
6. What was Manasseh's political policy with the powerful Assyrian empire of his day?
7. Is there any evidence to indicate that Manasseh's policy mentioned above was a success?
8. Describe what the author means by the paganization of Israel's worship under Manasseh's.
9. Manasseh revived the old practice of "necromancy". What does this term refer to?
10. What did Manasseh do to his son that followed a precedent set by Ahaz?
  
11. The author suggests that there was a difference between the time of Ahab and the time Manasseh. What was that difference?
12. Why does the author suggest that the prophets of Manasseh's day were weak?
13. Why is Manasseh's reign referred to as "the dark age" for Judah?
14. What is the central theme of Zephaniah's message?
15. According to Zephaniah, where can refuge be found for those who wish to escape the wrath of Yahweh?
  
16. In what year did Jeremiah begin his prophecy?
17. In retrospect Jeremiah looked back over his life and came to what conclusion as to its meaning?
18. Why did Jeremiah initially resist Yahweh's will for his life?
19. What do we learn about Yahweh's word from the prophet Jeremiah?
20. What does the author mean by "God is watching over his word"?
  
21. In Jeremiah's early preaching, what is the charge against Israel?
22. During the time of Josiah, what was found in the Temple of Jerusalem that later served as the basis of reform?
23. According to our text Israel was "separated from something" and "separated for" something else. What?
24. Although Jeremiah favored Deuteronomistic reform in the beginning he changes over time. What is Jeremiah's charge against these reforms?
25. The author suggests that Deuteronomistic History sounded much like the "success philosophy" which is the basis of much popular religion today. What does he mean?
  
26. The author refers to a healthy spiritual "materialism". What does he mean by this?
27. How did Josiah die?
28. How does the death of Josiah challenge the notion of Yahweh's justice/
29. What is the time of Habakkuk's prophecy?
30. What is Habakkuk's complaint?

## Study Guide for Old Testament Chapter 12: The Doom of a Nation

1. What is redaction criticism?
2. What two things are redaction criticism concerned about?
3. What do the two prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel have in common?
4. What roles did each of the prophets listed above play in the life of Israel?
5. Who was Baruch?
6. What are the (3) levels of tradition found in Jeremiah's work?
7. What was King Jehoiakim's reaction to Jeremiah's written message?
8. According to the text, who were some of Jeremiah's greatest adversaries?
9. How did Jeremiah's message differ from the message of his adversaries?
10. What does it mean to "repent" according to Jeremiah's theology?
11. What were the signs of "enacted words" performed by Jeremiah that concretely demonstrated what was about to happen to Israel?
12. What does the author mean by the term "via dolorosa" as it relates to Jeremiah?
13. Discuss the final clash between Jeremiah and the popular prophets of his day.

14. What was the significance of the "yoke of iron" which Jeremiah wore?
15. Why was Jeremiah thrown into prison?

## **Introduction to the Old Testament**

### **Chapter 16 "The Praises of Israel"**

1. Throughout Israel's history they were defined what type of community, according to the author of our text?
2. According to the author, where does the term Psalter originate?
3. In Israel's faith is worship a private or public affair?
4. In order for a person to gain access to God what must they do in Israel's faith?
5. During the process of the psalms being completed what centuries are covered?
6. How many collection of books are covered in the Psalms?
7. How many of the Psalms are attributed to David?
8. List and define the 3 literary genre or types of Psalms mentioned in your text.
9. Outline the 5 characteristics of the lament listed in your text.
10. Outline the characteristics of the Songs of Thanksgiving.
11. Outline the various parts of the Hymn of Praise.

### **Chapter 17 "The Beginning of Wisdom"**

1. What does Philosophy mean, according to our text?
2. What does the search for wisdom involve, according to the author of our text?
3. Does wisdom literature focus on the individual or the community?
4. Wisdom falls into what two classes, according to the text?
5. What are the three examples of wisdom writings found in the Old Testament?
6. Who was considered the fountainhead of Israel's wisdom?
7. How many proverbs were Solomon said to have uttered?
8. In the personification of Wisdom found in Proverbs 8:22-36 what is the literary structure as outlined by our text?
9. Who was the melancholy teacher of the wisdom examples mentioned in your text?
10. What is the greatest monument to wisdom literature found in the Old Testament?
11. What does the term "theodicy" mean, according to our text?
12. Job is concerned with a deeper problem than human suffering, according to the author of our text is. What is that problem?

1. Throughout Israel's history they were defined as what type of community, according to the author of our text?  
A. rebellious B. warrior C. worshipping D. unfaithful
  2. According to the author, where does the term Psalter originate?  
A. the New Testament B. Old Testament  
C. psalterion the title used in the Greek Bible D. the book of Psalms
  3. In Israel's faith, worship is a:  
A. public affair? B. public affair C. sacrifice D. covenant
  4. In order for a person to gain access to God what must they do in Israel's faith?  
A. seek God at the appointed time and place B. bring offerings  
C. keep the commandments D. pray
  5. During the process of the psalms being completed what centuries are covered?  
A. sixth-fourth century B.C.E. B. fifth-second century B.C.E.  
C. seventh-eighth century B.C.E. D. ninth-elventh century B.C.E.
  6. How many collection of books are covered in the Psalms?  
A. ten B. two C. five D. one hundred fifty
  7. How many of the Psalms are attributed to David?  
A. 150 B. 78 C. 73 D. 90
  8. This literary genre or type of Psalm involves the worshipping in the celebration of the majesty of God:  
A. lament B. hymn C. thanksgiving D. doxology
  11. Outline the various parts of the Hymn of Praise.  
A. El 'Elyon B. El Olam C. El Roi D. El Shaddai.
1. What does Philosophy mean, according to our text?  
A. words about God B. divine revelation C. the love wisdom D. sage
  2. What does the search for wisdom involve, according to the author of our text?  
A. the search for the meaning of life B. Counsels of Wisdom  
C. the search for God D. the search for truth
  3. Wisdom literature focuses on:  
A. the individual B. the community C. the past D. the future
  4. Wisdom literature that probes the depth of human anguish about the meaning of life:  
A. prudential literature B. reflective literature  
C. historical literature D. practical literature
  5. What is one example of wisdom writings found in the Old Testament?  
A. Psalms B. Job C. King Solomon D. the Torah
  6. Who was considered the fountainhead of Israel's wisdom?  
A. David B. Solomon C. Job D. Ecclesiastes
  7. How many proverbs were Solomon said to have uttered?  
A. one thousand and five B. one hundred and fifty  
C. three thousand D. five hundred

8. In the personification of Wisdom found in Proverbs 8:22-36 what is the literary structure as outlined by our text?  
A. El 'Elyon B. El Olam C. El Roi D. El Shaddai.
9. Who was the melancholy teacher of the wisdom examples mentioned in your text?  
A. Job B. Malachi C. Ecclesiastes D. Solomon
10. What is the greatest monument to wisdom literature found in the Old Testament?  
A. Job B. Malachi C. Ecclesiastes D. Proverbs
11. What does the term "theodicy" mean, according to our text?  
A. words about God B. the problem of evil  
C. divine providence D. human suffering
12. Job is concerned with a deeper question than human suffering, according to the author of our text. What is that question?  
A. the character of a person's relationship with God B. human sinfulness  
C. the patience of Job D. theodicy

**Course: Phil. 204**

**Introduction to Old Testament**

1. What is a canon?
2. What language is the Old Testament written in?
3. Who is the editor of the First five books of the Old Testament?
4. What are these five books in item 4 called?
5. What is another name for Torah?
6. Why is it appropriate to speak of editors of the Old Testament rather than authors?
7. Under which monarchy was the tribes of Israel unified into a nation?
8. What form was the Old Testament first transmitted?
9. How many books are there in the Old Testament?
10. Which source utilizes the name Yaweh for God?
11. What does theology mean according to its Greek roots?
12. What does the Hebrew word Mosheh mean?
13. What is a theophany? Give one example mentioned in our text. (5 pts)
14. When a people of faith enter into a personal relationship with the deity, what is this called?
15. When Moses ask God to disclose his divine name, what is the response?
16. What is a sign, according to our text?
17. What did the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night signify in Israel's journey?
18. What does the term Man hu' mean in Hebrew?
19. How does the author of our text define "covenant"?
20. What is the "Decalogue"?
21. Who anointed Saul to be King?
22. What is meant by "divine charisma"?
23. Define the term "messiah".
24. Define the English word prophet, according to your text.
25. What does the term Ephraim refer to in your text?
26. What does the term Judah refer to in your text?
27. Why does Elijah charge the people with "limping between two different opinions"?

Define each of the traditions represented by JEDP. (4 pts)

List the "ten words" originally given to Moses.(10 pts)

List the first (3) Kings of Israel. (3 pts)