

RELIGIOUS STUDIES 201
HEBREW BIBLE: HISTORY AND INTERPRETATION
COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON
Fall 2007

Dr. John Huddlestun
4-B Glebe, Room 203 (use sidewalk entrance)
Office hours: MW 2:00-4:00 or by appointment
Office phone: 953-4996 (Dept. 953-5687)
E-mail: Huddlestunj@cofc.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course, the student is introduced to the academic study of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, examining issues of its composition, historical development, and interpretation (ancient and modern). Particular genres or types of biblical literature are considered against their wider ancient Near Eastern context (creation and cosmos, legal material, wisdom traditions, etc.). In reading and analyzing selected portions of the Hebrew scriptures, students will be exposed to various historical-critical, literary, and archaeological interpretations of the text. Topics covered include the covenant theme in Genesis and beyond, kingship in ancient Israel, the exodus event (history and archaeology), the role of prophets and the nature of ancient Israelite prophecy, the Davidic messiah-king and messianic expectation, biblical wisdom literature, and love poetry.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- 1) A translation of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. The following translations are acceptable for this course:

The New Revised Standard Version (NRSV; 1991). This comes in a variety of study editions, including the *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha* (3rd edition, 2001), and *The HarperCollins Study Bible* (rev. ed., 2006).

TANAKH (Jewish Publication Society translation, 1986; 2d ed. in 1999). Study edition: *The Jewish Study Bible*, eds. Adele Berlin and Marc Z. Brettler. Oxford University Press, 2004.

The Revised English Bible (REB, 1989). Study edition in *The Oxford Study Bible: Revised English Bible with the Apocrypha*, eds. M. Jack Suggs, Katherine D. Sakenfeld, and James R. Mueller (Oxford University Press, 1992)

New American Bible (NAB, 1991). Study edition: *The Catholic Study Bible: New American Bible*, 2nd edition, eds. Donald Senior and John J. Collins (Oxford University Press, 2006).

- 2) Frank S. Frick, *A Journey through the Hebrew Scriptures*. 2nd edition (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, 2003).
- 3) A collection of readings, available on electronic reserve. Go to CofC Home, then click on Library, to Electronic Reserves, to Electronic Reserves and Course Materials, then enter in a search term to pull up the class readings.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Three exams (25% each = 75% of final grade). These consist of multiple-choice, passage identification, and essay. It is imperative that the student notify me in advance if he or she is unable to take an exam. You may call me at my office (953-4996 w/ voicemail) or leave a message at the Department of Religious Studies (953-5687). Make-up exams may be of increased difficulty and must be taken as soon as possible after the original exam time, preferably within a day or two at the most. Only those who provide a valid excuse will be allowed to make up an exam.

Weekly quizzes/homework assignments (15%). It is expected that each student will come to class prepared (having done the readings and assignments) and ready to participate in class discussion. As part of your weekly work, I will give either an in-class quiz over the readings or a homework assignment. The quizzes (announced beforehand) are designed simply to motivate you to keep up with the readings. You will be allowed to miss two of these (late assignments will not be accepted via e-mail). Any number beyond this will count as a zero, regardless of why you missed class or did not turn in the assignment. In class quizzes cannot be made up. Exceptions to these policies are possible only in cases of severe illness or other grave circumstances (I'll accept death). In each case, suitable documentation is required.

Class Participation (10%). I assume students will attend regularly, ready and eager to discuss the material that *they've carefully read before class*. If only a few participate, I will randomly call on individuals to answer questions. If you are consistently unable to respond, particularly if you are rarely in class, or it is clear you've not done the readings, this will be noted by me in my little black book of languid, lethargic, and generally listless students. Those who are conspicuous by their absence, physically or mentally, may be subject to a lower final grade. Should you miss class, it is *your responsibility* to obtain notes on material covered that day (so make friends in class!). Please do not ask me via e-mail to update you on what happened in class.

Honor Code Policy (see attached sheet)

GRADING

Final grades are determined in accordance with the following scale:

A = 100-94	C = 75-73
A- = 93-90	C- = 72-70
B+ = 89-86	D+ = 69-66
B = 85-83	D = 65-62
B- = 82-80	D- = 61-60
C+ = 79-76	F = 59-

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

(Please bring all relevant materials - Bible, ER readings, and Frick - to class!)

I. INTRODUCTION

8/21-23: The Literature of the Hebrew Bible, Its Ancient Near Eastern Context, and An Overview of Israel's History (read Frick, pp. 1-65; Biblical texts: Genesis 12 and 15, Deuteronomy 26:1-11, and Joshua 24:1-18). E-Reserves #1-3 contain relevant maps and charts to orient you to the region and its chronology. ER #3a ("Coarse Language") deals with the issue of Bible translations.

II. TORAH (PENTATEUCH)

8/28-30: By Way of Preface: The Case of Genesis 1-11 (read Genesis 1-11, Exodus 3:13-15, 6:2-9; Frick, pp. 87-143). Please print out materials in ER #4-6 for this section. The Assyrian Treaty in ER #7 is relevant to the covenant ritual in Genesis 15.

9/4-11: The Fathers and Mothers of Israel: Abraham and the Covenant Theme
(read Genesis 12-50; Frick, pp. 144-183)

9/13: The Exodus in Israelite Tradition and the Archaeological Evidence (read Exodus 1-18; Frick, pp. 184-209, 233-37)

9/18: Israel at Sinai: The Covenant and Israelite Law Codes (Exodus 19-24, 34:10-26; Frick, pp. 222-233, plus handout in class)

9/20 Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic History (Deuteronomy–2 Kings) (read Deut. 1-8, 12, 18, 28-30; review Frick 232-33)

*****9/25 - EXAM 1*****

III. NEVIIM: THE FORMER PROPHETS (the story continues)

9/27: Gods, Temples, and Sacrifices: Religion in Ancient Israel and Canaan (read Leviticus 1-9 and 16 [Yom Kippur]; for Canaanite religion, see Frick, pp. 264-270 and Smith's comparative discussion in ER #8. For changing conceptions of Israel's God in the Hebrew Bible, see Hurowitz in ER #8. ER #9 contains plans of the tabernacle/temple and other relevant materials.

10/2: Entrance into the Land of Canaan (read Joshua 1-12, 22-24 and Judges 1--3:6; Frick, pp. 240-263)

10/4: "We want a king like those of other nations": The Formation of the Monarchy (skim Judges, read 1 Samuel 3-17; Frick, pp. 280-294)

10/9: Israel's Golden Age: The United Monarchy under David and Solomon (2 Samuel 5-8, 11--12:24, 1 Kings 1-11; Frick, pp. 294-315)

10/11: The Divided Monarchy down to the Destruction of the Northern Kingdom; the Rise of Prophecy (1 Kings 12-22, 2 Kings 9-11; Frick, pp. 318-334, 340-348; note prophecy/fulfilment theme on p. 318). ER #7 contains some inscriptions relevant to this period.

10/16: NO CLASS (Fall Break)

10/18: Judah's Last Days: Josiah's Discovery and its Consequences (2 Kings 17--25; Frick, pp. 334-340). ER #7 contains inscriptions relevant to this period.

IV. NEVIIM: THE LATTER PROPHETS

10/23: Amos, Micah, and the Prophetic Critique (read the books of Amos and Micah; Frick, pp. 350-363, 370-373)

10/25: Isaiah of Jerusalem ("First Isaiah" - 8th century) (Isaiah 1-12; Frick, pp. 373-382)

*****10/30 - EXAM 2*****

11/1: Jeremiah and the Problem of False Prophets (Jeremiah 23-33; Frick, pp. 384-403)

11/6-8: Second Isaiah: "God the Master Puppeteer" (read Isaiah 40-51 and note "Servant Songs" listed in Frick, pp. 407-8; also Frick, pp. 403-412)

V. KETHUVIM (THE WRITINGS)

11/13: Wisdom Tradition: Introduction and The Book of Proverbs (read Proverbs 1-9 and Frick, pp. 492-503)

11/15: The Book of Job (read Job 1--14, 28-42 [skim the rest]; and Frick, pp. 503-513)

11/20: Qohelet (Ecclesiastes) (read the book of Ecclesiastes and Frick, pp. 513-516)

11/22 - No Class - Happy Thanksgiving!

11/27: Songs of Songs (read Song of Songs [= "Song of Solomon" in some translations] and Frick, pp. 452-459)

11/29: Lion, Tigers, and Bears!: Daniel and the Apocalyptic Genre (read Daniel 7-12 [skim 1-6]; I Maccabees 1-4 (apocrypha section) and Frick, pp. 525-540)

*****12/11 (12:15 class) or 12/6 (1:40 class) - EXAM 3*****

Honor Code and Academic Integrity

Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of our Honor Code, which, when identified, are investigated. Each instance is examined to determine the degree of deception involved.

Incidents where the professor believes the student's actions are clearly related more to ignorance, miscommunication, or uncertainty, can be addressed by consultation with the student. We will craft a written resolution designed to help prevent the student from repeating the error in the future. The resolution, submitted by form and signed by both the professor and the student, is forwarded to the Dean of Students and remains on file.

Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported directly to the Dean of Students. A student found responsible for academic dishonesty will receive a XF for the course, indicating failure due to academic dishonesty. This grade will appear on the student's transcript for two years, after which time the student may petition for the X to be removed. The student may also be placed on disciplinary probation, suspended (temporary removal), or expelled (permanent removal) from the College by the Honor Board.

It is important for students to remember that unauthorized collaboration--working together without permission-- is a form of cheating. Unless a professor specifies that students can work together on an assignment and/or test, no collaboration is permitted. Other forms of cheating include possessing or using an unauthorized study aid (such as a cell phone, PDA, or other electronic devices), copying from another's exam, fabricating data, and providing unauthorized assistance.

Remember, research conducted and/or papers written for other classes cannot be used in whole or in part for any assignment in this class without obtaining prior permission from the professor.

Students can find a complete version of the Honor Code and all related processes in the *Student Handbook* at http://www.cofc.edu/studentaffairs/general_info/studenthandbook.html.

- Timeline for Hebrew Bible compared to other ancient literatures

2) Chronologies

- Outline for major events related in Hebrew Bible (down to Exile)
- Chronology for kings of Israel/Judah and Last Days of Judah
- Overview of Kings and History of Israel and Judah
- Outline of events for 2d Temple Period

3) Maps

- General map of Regions and Peoples of the ancient Near East
- The ancient Near East up to the Persian period
- Divided Kingdom of Israel and Judah
- Assyrian Empire and campaigns of Tiglath-Pileser III into Levant

3a) Minkoff, "Coarse Language"

- H. Minkoff, "Coarse Language in the Bible? It's Culture Shocking!" (*Bible Review* 5/2, April 1989)

4) Genesis Material

- Orlinsky, "Plain Meaning of Genesis 1:1-3"
- comparison of two creation accounts (P and J)
- illustration of ancient Israelite cosmos
- map of Table of Nations in Genesis 10
- journey of Abraham according to Genesis

5) Friedman on the Flood (10 pages)

- "J and E" from R.E. Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible?* (Chapter 2)

6) Batto on Genesis 2-3

- B. F. Batto, "The Yahwist Primeval Myth"

7) Ancient Near Eastern texts and inscriptions

- passages from Enuma Elish, Adapa, Gilgamesh, Enmerkar, etc.
- Assyrian Treaty between Ashurnirari V (king of Assyria) and Mati'ilu of Arpad (vassal)
- Balaam the Seer (note story of Balaam in Numbers 22-24)
- Inscription from Tell Dan in northern Israel (names of kings mentioned in biblical text)
- passages from Assyrian and other inscriptions relating to Israel and Judah

8) Smith, Religion in Israel

- Mark Smith, "Myth and Mythmaking in Canaan and Ancient Israel" (selections)
- Hurowitz, "From Storm God to Abstract Being" (*Bible Review* 14/5, Oct. 1998)

9) Tabernacle/Temple handouts

- plans of Tabernacle and Temple
- plans of temples in ancient Canaan
- inscriptions and drawings from Kuntillet 'Ajrud
- garments of High Priest (Ephod and Breastpiece)

