



EARLY HEBREW HISTORY (BI 1512-1&4)

SYLLABUS & COURSE SCHEDULE, Fall 2000, M-W-F, (1) 8-8:50 a.m., (4) 2-2:50 p.m.

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Part I, Syllabus

Course Description

“A historical survey of the Old Testament period from the creation through Judges and Ruth.”

General Course Goals

This course has been designed so that you will:

1. Gain an appreciation for Old Testament (OT) scriptures as canon.
2. Become familiar with approaches to the study of the OT.
3. Acquire an introductory knowledge of major themes in the OT books from Genesis to Ruth in the traditional arrangement of the English Bible.
4. Grow in your familiarity with and confidence in the OT scriptures.
5. Deepen your understanding of the means divine communication through history, the appropriation of divine history for contemporary benefit, and therefore your relationship with God and his creation.

Specific Course Objectives

In that this course proposes to introduce you to Hebrew history contained in the books from Genesis to Ruth, you should be able to

1. Identify key events in Hebrew history and their theological significance.
2. Explain the interaction of various sources in a canonical method of scripture study.
3. Address the function of the OT in the Christian life.
4. Apply acquired knowledge in and experience learning project.
5. Memorize and make relevant contemporary application of OT texts.

Course Requirements

1. Attend Class Lectures. To prepare students for the fulfillment of the objectives of this course, lectures are given Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, August 23 - December 6, 2000. The topics of the lectures are listed on the Course Schedule provided with this syllabus. Attendance at each of the lectures is required. Up to four absences for illness or other conflicts may be excused without notification. In cases of prolonged illness or injury that will cause you to miss several class sessions, you should consult with the professor for options regarding your status in the course. Otherwise, absences in excess of four class sessions will be reflected in the course grade.

a. "Handouts"-- Photocopied or electronic media will be made available to the class from time to time. **Lecture Outlines** must be brought to class. If you do not receive a copy of or the electronic address of a document, please see the professor. Note: These materials are for your personal use only. Do not copy or distribute them to individuals not registered for this course. Any requests for these materials by persons not registered for this course should be directed to the professor.

b. Taping--You may tape class lectures for your personal study only. Do not distribute these tapes to anyone not registered for the course.

2. Read the following in the manner described below:

a. Required:

Bible. Contemporary Language Translation, i.e., NASB, NIV, NKJV, NRSV.

Gilbert, Kevin James. "Lecture Outlines for Early Hebrew History." (Handouts)

House, Paul. *Old Testament Theology.* (Course Textbook)

b. Optional (for selected ELC Projects):

Boyd, Gregory A. *God at War.*

Sanders, John. *The God Who Risks.*

c. Disclaimer: Course materials may or may not reflect the views of the instructor, faculty, staff, or administration. Course materials are chosen for their potential instructive value, which includes the analysis and critique of alternative interpretations.

d. Readings are to be completed and recorded by units. Units are whole articles, groups of articles, whole chapters, or groups of pages within a chapter. The units which you are to read are listed on the Course Schedule and on the "Reading Assignment Grade Sheets" (RAGS). These units must be read prior to the class hour on which they are due. Late readings are not accepted for credit except in extreme circumstances of lengthy incapacitation which requires extension of all course requirements beyond the end of the semester.

i. In order to report a unit of reading, you must have read its contents in their entirety, intelligently, and critically. "Entirety" means that all of the unit

must be read before credit will be assigned. Partial completion of a reading unit will not be credited. "Intelligently" means understanding what you are reading when you are "reading" it. (This may involve looking up words in a dictionary!) It means being able to follow the author's train of thought including any arguments that are presented. "Critically" means judging the strength or soundness of the author's presentation. **Note: To receive credit for reading from assigned lecture outlines you must look up and read major Scripture texts cited in that reading.**

ii. How to report reading assignments for credit. On the Reading Assignment Grade Sheet, keep a record of reading units which you have completed in the manner described above (see "i" above). Be sure to write your name and date submitted on the form. Write the total number of units completed in the space provided and sign your name on the signature line confirming your completion of the assigned units. Turn in the forms at each exam (i.e., RAGS I at exam 1; RAGS II at exam 2; RAGS III at the final exam).

3. Take Three Exams.

a. These exams will cover all assigned readings except the optional reading for Experience Learning Components (ELCs) discussed in requirement 4 below, as well all class lectures. All exams will be multiple choice. The final will be comprehensive and 10% of it will cover material from your University Bible classes.

b. Study questions will be provided to guide your preparation. Do not use or consult exams given in this course in previous years. You should think carefully about how the class reading or lecture presentation answers the study questions. Compare and contrast issues, ideas, and names with one another to make sure you have a grasp on the material. Note the specific terms, vocabulary, and grammar of the author as you study any particular issue. Note especially biblical texts and the language of those texts which are taken up by the author in developing a theological position, idea or issue. The study questions guide you to specific areas in the class readings and lectures which you are to study and master. The multiple choice questions on the exam are designed to test how well you understand them.

c. The exams must be taken in class on the dates for which they are scheduled unless an alternate time has been approved by the professor. Rescheduling due to out of town travel must be made during the first two weeks of class (emergency travel for critical illness or funeral services exempted). In such cases, the exam must be taken by the fifth class day following the exam. Exams may not be taken prior to their dates listed on the Course Schedule or the Final Exam Schedule. Other alternate arrangements for taking an exam late are allowed only in the case of physical incapacitation at the time of the exams and must be made by the class period following the scheduled exam. As a rule of thumb, an acceptable last minute excuse from an exam will be equivalent to an acceptable last minute excuse from a preaching assignment or from your own wedding.

d. If the average of your first two exams is below 80, you will have an opportunity to be reexamined over the combined material of those first two exams in order to raise that average up to an 80. (A score of 80 or higher on this retake exam will raise the

average of your first two exams to an 80.) This reexamination will be given during the second hour of the final exam period. The exam format will be the same as in "3a" above. Use the same study questions that were distributed for exams 1 and 2 to guide your preparation.

e. Usually, the grades for the first two exams will be posted outside the classroom the first class day following the exam next to a confidential "password" provided to the professor by the student (Not acceptable are Social Security Numbers, ID numbers, Dorm Room numbers, and other easily identifiable "codes.") Students may refrain from participating in this exam grade listing and wait to receive their exam grades on the review days (times for reviewing questions missed on the first two exams will be announced during a regular class). Do not contact the professor about exam grades prior to these review days.

f. All exams are the property of the professor. You are not to take your exam from the examination or reviewing session. You are not to make any copy of the exam or exam questions.

4. Complete Two Experience Learning Components.

Journaling

Group Project

a. Report on Each Project.

i. **Journaling.** Keep a hand-written spiritual journal in which you include the fruits of your active and contemplative study of the OT this semester. It must include the following: (a) An OT position essay, i.e., what you think about the OT at the beginning (more below); (b) why you have planned to study the OT; (c) how you proceeded; (d) struggles, victories, insights, and/or newfound aspect(s) of the OT's place in your life, the church and the world; and particularly, (e), notes related to reading assignments compiled in preparation for the class at which they are due. Bring the journal with you to one review meeting with the professor (to be scheduled).

(a) **Old Testament Position Essay.** Write this section of your journal in the first person and include the following: Your current view of the OT, including its significance, place, and applicability in the church; your background in OT studies; circumstances leading to your formal study of the OT in this class; significant persons, experiences, and developments which influenced your views of the OT; and finally, define to the best of your ability your view of the direction the church needs to take regarding the OT. Supported this last element by personal confirming experiences and the comments of others regarding the OT. The version in your journal should be viewed as a draft which you will develop into an 8-10 page

double-spaced paper to be viewed by the professor only.

(b) Confidentiality. Your journal is for you and God alone, though you are free to share with the class or professor at your discretion. It will be graded generally by volume, i.e., at your private journal appointment with the professor, he will quickly flip through it to see the number of pages with writing. Pages on which information exists that you do not wish him to see inadvertently should be folded over prior to the appointment. Consider that your ability to be vulnerable and transparent about the process of Christian growth occurring in your personal life can serve to encourage others on their own pilgrimage. The journal must be brought to class daily and may be collected at the professor's discretion at any time during the semester to check progress.

ii. Group Projects.

(a) Choose **one** of the following:

(1) Reading and Reflection: Each student will read, reflect on, and dialogue with the group in at least 4 meetings during the semester regarding the related OT portions of one of the following books: John Sanders, *The God Who Risks* or Greg Boyd, *God at War*.

(2) Attend Synagogue Services. Each student will participate in group which will attend (4) synagogue services. Up to two services may be replaced by interviews with rabbis (questions must be related to themes/texts from biblical books studied in this course). As much as possible the synagogues and/or rabbis should represent different points in the Jewish theological spectrum (i.e., orthodox/conservative, progressive, etc.).

(3) Group Discussion. Each student will participate in a group which will meet at least 4 times during the semester and whose focus is the discovery, exploration, and development of a consensus position regarding appropriate, biblically supportable Christian/Jewish cooperation.

(4) Group Leadership. Each student will participate in a group which will learn and conduct an authentic Jewish Passover celebration incorporating the Lord's Supper. The group will lead the class or another group in this service.

(b) Type or Word Process/Machine Print a Report. Record your experience in your journal. Then from your notes, compose a personal report of your experience consisting of not more than 3 typed, double-spaced pages. Each Group must, as a group, compose a consensus position regarding the most important aspects of the experience. This should be a summary statement of about ½ a page (this may be typed or hand written; see "The reporter's responsibility" below). Reports of individual experiences must address the "5 W's and H:" who, what, when, where, why, and how (these elements do not possess equal importance, i.e., do not spend 1/3 of your paper on "who," "when," or "where").

- (1) Whom you worked with: churches, synagogues, people, etc.
- (2) What details of your experience were significant.
- (3) When your group met and/or engaged in the experiences.
- (4) Where your group met, locations of churches, synagogues, etc.
- (5) Why you chose your specific project.
- (6) How you would proceed differently in the future.

(c) Organize your group as quickly as possible. Select one person to function as director and one to serve as reporter. These positions are purely functional and neither positions of honor nor producers of extra credit. Anyone who feels that he or she has talents suited to function as either director or recorder should volunteer to do so. Here and throughout the project or discussion, practice Christian grace-humility, deference to one another, sacrificial service. Before the end of the discussion, the **group** must summarize **its** conclusions. These summary group responses will contribute to the final grade of the project (see below).

(d) The director is not the spokesperson of the group. His or her only responsibility is to pace the discussion so that it does not bog down and waste time. The director should make sure the discussion covers all the questions or otherwise fulfills the directions on the form entitled "Discussion of" Keep things moving by majority consensus, being sensitive to the need of the group to spend more or less time on any one issue.

(e) **The reporter's responsibility** is to record the names of those present at each discussion, to accurately write down the group's official conclusions to its discussions, and to collect individual written work (completed prior to discussion) from each member at the end of the session.

iii. **The grade for each Experience Learning Component** will be as follows:

Hours Completed	Missing both thoughtful written responses and participation in ELC	Missing either thoughtful written responses or participation in ELC	Completed both thoughtful written responses and participation in ELC
0-1.9 hours	F	F	D
2-2.9 hours	F	D	C
3-3.9 hours	D	C	B
4 hours	C	B	A

Outstanding or poor journaling, group conclusions, and individual reflection will affect individual grades in the following manner: high quantity journaling, insightful conclusions/reflections clearly articulated on the group projects will raise the grade to a plus (+); low quantity journaling and missing or superficial conclusions/reflections on the group projects will reduce individual grades to a minus (-).

b. **Participation in the group projects may be excused** only in cases of travel arrangements made prior to the end of the second week of class, infectious disease or paralysis. In such cases, an eight (8) page essay (typed, word-processed/machine printed with normal margins, font, and line spacing) on the group discussion questions, and submitted to the group director or recorder prior to the group meeting, will be accepted as a substitute for verbal participation in the group meeting.

5. **The above requirements may be altered, deleted, or other requirements added at the discretion of the professor.**

Course Grading

1. Factors determining the Course Grade:

The overall grade is a composite of several factors. It is not a measure of personal worth or necessarily of the amount of information that a student feels he or she has learned. Rather it is a cumulative figure that bears a relationship to the student's successful completion of the course requirements.

- a. The three exams** will be averaged together and count as 50% of the course grade.
- b. Two Experience Learning Components (ELC's)** will comprise 30% of the final course grade (15% each).
- c. The reading grade** is the percentage of reading units completed against the number assigned. The reading grade counts as 20% of the final course grade.
- d. Class attendance.** Four absences are excused. Each absence in excess of the prescribed limit will result in a reduction of the final grade by 4%. Contact the professor regarding any prolonged absence.

2. Explanation of Letter Symbols:

A = work of exceptional quality.

B = work of commendable quality. Commendable means praiseworthy. A majority of students usually achieve this quality in their overall course grade.

C = work of an acceptable but not distinguished quality. Such work is deemed a satisfactory and adequate completion of the course objectives.

D = work of a minimal but passing quality.

F = Failure to do minimal work with no credit given.

3. Numerical and Letter Distribution

100-98 A+	89-87 B	80-78 C	71-69 D
97-95 A	86-84 B-	77-75 C-	68-65 D-
94-93 A-	83-81 C+	74-72 D+	64-0 F
92-90 B+			

Part II, Course Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading Assignments</u>
Aug 23 (W)	Introduction	Syllabus
Aug 25 (F)	LO 1: "Christian" Old Testament: An Oxymoron?	H:P,A,1.
Aug 28 (M)	LO 2: The Canon, Meaning, and Interpretation	
Aug 30 (W)	LO 3: Creator and Creation	G:1-9; H:2
Sep 1 (F)	LO 4: A Context for Holiness I: Individual Election, Fall, Curse, and Renewal	
Sep 4 (M)	LO 5: IEFCR 2: Abraham & Lot, Sodom & Gomorrah	LO:1,2,3,4; G:19-27
Sep 6 (W)	LO 6: IEFCR 3: Isaac & Jacob (Israel)	G:28-36
Sep 8 (F)	LO 7: Yahweh's Appropriation of Joseph	G:37-45
Sep 11 (M)	LO 8: The God of the Future	LO:5,6,7; G:46-50
Sep 13 (W)	LO 9: Israel, Pharaoh, and Moses	E:1-8; H:3
Sep 15 (F)	LO 10: Plagues, Passover, and Deliverance	E:9-16
Sep 18 (M)	LO 11: Community, Covenant, and Commandments	LO:8,9,10; E:17-24

Sep 20 (W)	LO 12: Sanctuary, Service, and Sacrifice	E:25-31
Sep 22 (F)	Review (OT Position Essay Due)	
Sep 25 (M)	Exam (Covering class material up to and including LO 10); RAGS I Due	
Sep 27 (W)	LO 13: Dynamic Relations: God, Man of God, Community	LO: 11,12; E:32-40
Sep 29 (F)	LO 14: The Offerings	L:1-8; H:4
Oct 2 (M)	LO 15: The Priesthood	L:9-16
Oct 4 (W)	LO 16: Atonement	L:17-24
Oct 6 (F)	LO 17: Human Relationships	LO:13,14; L:25-30
Oct 9 (M)	GROUP MEETINGS AND/OR ACTIVITIES	
Oct 11 (W)	LO 18: Preparation for Conquest	N:1-9; H:5
Oct 13 (F)	LO 19: Divine Frustration?	LO:15,16, 17; N:10-18
Oct 16 (M)	LO 20: The New (un)Faithful	N:19-27
Oct 18 (W)	LO 21: Divine Oxymoron: A Good God Who Kills & Hides Killers?	LO:18; N:28-36
Oct 20 (F)	Fall Break-No Class	

Oct 23 (M)	LO 22: A Context for Holiness II: Community Election, Fall, Curse, and Renewal	LO:19,20,21; D:1-11; H:6
Oct 25 (W)	LO 23: Peace, Justice, and Exclusion	D:12-23
Oct 27 (F)	Review	
Oct 30 (M)	Exam 2 (Covering material from LO 11 to LO 21, inclusive); RAGS II Due	
Nov 1 (W)	LO 24: A Blessed Curse	D:24-34
Nov 3 (F)	LO 25: Yahweh's Approved: Holy Harlot vs. Sinning Saint?	J:1-7; H:7
Nov 6 (M)	LO 26: A Failed Divine Conquest?	LO:22,23,24; J:8-16
Nov 8 (W)	LO 27: Promise and Fulfillment?	J:17-24
Nov 10 (F)	LO 28: The Defeat of Yahweh?	Ju:1-7; H:8
Nov 13 (M)	LO 29: A Compassionate Warrior	LO:25,26,27; Ju:8-14
Nov 15 (W)	GROUP MEETINGS AND/OR ACTIVITIES	
Nov 17 (F)	LO 30: Man's Inhumanity to Woman	Ju:15-21; LO:28, 29
Nov 20-24	Thanksgiving Break	

	Nov 27 (M)	LO 31: Ruth, Boaz, and Conflict in Social Justice	R:1-4; H:18; LO:30-31
	Nov 29 (W)	LO 32: Synthesis, Part I: The God of Early Hebrew History	LO:32
	Dec 1 (F)	LO 33: Synthesis, Part II: The People of Early Hebrew History	LO:33
	Dec 4 (M)	LO 34: God and Ancient Relationships: Is There Contemporary Meaning?	
	Dec 6 (W)	Review; ELC Project Reports Due; Journals Due	LO:34
	Dec 8 (F)	Study Day (Dead Day)-No Class	
	Fin. Exam Wk.	Exam 3 (Comprehensive) See final exam schedule	

Reading Key

H:# = House, Old Testament Theology and chapter #

LO:# = Lecture Outline & #

G:# = Genesis and chapter #s

E:# = Exodus and chapter #s

L:# = Leviticus and chapter #s

N:# = Numbers and chapter #s

D:# = Deuteronomy and chapter #s

J:# = Joshua and chapter #s

Ju: = Judges and chapter #s

R:# = Ruth and chapter #s