

LIDLAW COLLEGE

Te Wananga Amorangi

120.515 Old Testament Introduction Course Assessment and Delivery Outline

NQF Level: 5
Credit Value: 15

Campus: Distance Learning (BTC)
Tutor: Owen Haring

Semester 2, 2015

COURSE OVERVIEW

1. Overview of the Old Testament, the historical geography of Ancient Israel, and sources and approaches used in studying the Old Testament
2. Creation and the Primeval Prologue (Gen 1-11)
3. The Patriarchal Narratives (Gen 12-50)
4. The Exodus and the Sinai Covenant
5. Conquest and Settlement
6. The monarchy from Saul to Solomon
7. The divided kingdoms of Israel and Judah
8. The eighth century prophets
9. The exile and its impact on Israel's faith
10. Exilic and post-exilic prophecy
11. Restoration and reconstruction
12. Wisdom literature

ASSESSMENT TASKS AND DUE DATES

Assessment tasks involve the following:

i. Online discussion

The online discussion requires you to engage with various themes and topics. Typically these tasks will require you to prepare an initial post of 200 words, followed by a response to another post of about 50 words. Specific instructions will accompany each online discussion task. Students are expected to complete all online discussions in a timely manner.

Due dates: Sunday 11.55pm, end of weeks 2, 3, 6, 7, 8 and 11
Weighting: 20%
Time allocation: 20 hours
Learning outcomes: 1,2,3,4

ii. Take-home Tests A & B

The student will complete **two** take-home tests, each worth 20% of the final grade. Test A will cover topics selected from Lessons 1 – 6. Test B will cover topics selected from lessons 7 – 12. Each test will consist of 4 short essay-type questions of 500 words each. The expected time of

completion of the test is approximately 2 hours – that is, 30 minutes per question. Students are expected to footnote references and supply a brief bibliography. Tests will be submitted on Moodle by the due date.

Due dates: Sunday 11.55pm end of week 8 and exam week (1).
Weighting: 40% (20% each test)
Length: 500 words per question.
Time allocation: 40 hours (20 per test, 18 hours preparation, 2 hours completion)
Learning outcomes: 1, 2, 3

iii. **Essay**

Due date: Sunday end of semester week 10 , 11.55 pm
Length: 2000 words
Weighting: 40%
Learning outcomes: 2, 3, 4
Expected Sources: Minimum 5, mostly taken from Indicative Bibliography

Choose ONE of the following four topics, and write a 2000 word essay on it, following the instructions given, and making use of the indicative bibliography provided for your chosen topic.

1. Discuss the four major covenants of the Old Testament (Noah, Abraham, Moses, David). In your survey, look at the important formal features of each covenant, including attention to such issues as whether these covenants are “conditional” or “unconditional”. Explore their respective contexts and meaning, and the contribution of each to the development of the idea of covenant throughout the Old Testament.

For this topic, you will need to read carefully and study the biblical material about the four covenants. As well as your own study of the covenants as recorded in the Old Testament, a good place for further information will be Bible dictionaries and theological dictionaries (obviously start by looking up “covenant”). When you are ready to dig deeper, you may find the following helpful as well:

Faley, Roland J. *Bonding with God : a reflective study of biblical covenant*. Mahwah NJ.: Paulist Press, 1997.

Mckenzie, Steven L. *Covenant*. St Louis, MO.: Chalice, 2000.

McComiskey, Thomas Edward. *The covenants of promise: a theology of the Old Testament covenants*. Nottingham: InterVarsity, 1985.

Meadors, Edward P. *Creation, sin, covenant, and salvation : a primer for biblical theology*. Eugene, Or.: Cascade, 2011.

Nicholson, Ernest W. *God and his people: covenant and theology in the Old Testament*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1986.

Horton, Michael Scott. *God of promise : introducing covenant theology*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006.

2. Explore the ethical difficulties associated with the conquest of the Promised Land, and discuss the idea of ḥērem (devoted) as justification for these. How do we reconcile these difficulties with our wider understanding of the character of God?

This is quite a complex topic, so you will need to be prepared to do some careful thinking as you interact with the biblical material (particularly in Joshua) and also as you do your wider research through reading. The best place to start will be to look carefully at exactly what commands God gives to the Israelites as they enter the promised land. You will also need to do a brief study of the word ḥērem (this is the Hebrew word which is translated as ‘devoted’ in Joshua 6:17, 18, 21 and in a number of other places in Joshua). Bible

dictionaries will be a good place to start for this. Many commentaries on Joshua will address this issue, and will also be a useful resource. The following resources will also help you dig deeper into this topic:

- Cowles, C. S. et al., *Show them no Mercy – 4 views on God and Canaanite Genocide*. Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan, 2003.
- Earl, Douglas. *The Joshua Delusion? Rethinking Genocide in the Bible*. Eugene, Or.: Cascade, 2010.
- Green, Joel B. and Jacqueline E Lapsley, eds. *The Old Testament and Ethics – A Book-by-book Survey*. Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker Academic, 2013.
- Lind, Millard C. *Yahweh is a Warrior – The Theology of Warfare in Ancient Israel*. Scottdale, PA.: Herald Press, 1980.
- McDonald, Patricia M. *God and Violence – Biblical resources for living in a small world*. Scottdale, PA.: Herald Press, 2004.
- Niditch, Susan. *War in the Hebrew Bible – A Study in the Ethics of Violence*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Seibert, Eric A. *The Violence of Scripture – Overcoming the Old Testament’s Troubling Legacy*. Minneapolis, MN., Fortress Press, 2012.
- Von Rad, Gerhard. *Holy War in Ancient Israel*. Grand Rapids, MI.: Eerdmans, 1991.

3. Compare and contrast Moses and David as national and religious leaders of Israel. How are they alike in their responses to those who oppose them? How are they different? Discuss what each contributes to our understanding of leadership in the Old Testament. Also comment briefly on how each can be seen as a fore-runner to Christ.

To answer this question, you will need to spend some time reading carefully about the lives of these two leaders. Be sure to look carefully throughout the Old Testament for information about both Moses and David as leaders, as well as reading the main narrative of their life story. You may find it helpful to consult the following resources:

- Fischer, James A. *Leaders and people in biblical stories*. Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2004.
- Hutton, Rodney R. *Charisma and authority in Israelite society*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994.
- Stevens, Marty E. *Leadership roles of the Old Testament: king, prophet, priest, and sage*. Eugene, OR.: Cascade, 2012.

4. Discuss the function of ‘the prophet’ in Israel from the time of the monarchy through to the post-exilic period. To what degree does this carry over into the New Testament period, and what implications might this have for Christians today?

(N.B. At least 1200 words should be devoted to addressing the Old Testament portion of this question).

Structure your essay so that the Old Testament section is dealt with first, and this is then followed by a brief look at how the subject carries over into the New Testament period, first of all with Jesus himself, and then the early church. The application section should come last.

When focusing on the Old Testament section, note such concepts as: the nature and purpose of Old Testament prophecy; what the Old Testament prophets actually did and who their audience were; the relationship between prophesy and the Holy Spirit; how one might tell a true prophet from a false prophet; the prophet in relation to the covenant; the prophet in relation to the king; and the widening definition of prophecy into the 2nd temple period.

When focusing on the New Testament briefly consider the prophetic nature of Jesus’ ministry and that of the apostles, and the function of prophesy in the early church.

In light of your investigation, consider what might it mean to speak prophetically into church and society today?

You may find it helpful to consult the following sources:

Begin by consulting the following works from the *Anchor Bible Dictionary*. You will find these on your CD-Rom and posted up on Moodle.

Schmitt, John J., "Pre-exilic Hebrew Prophecy", and J. Barton, "Post-Exilic Hebrew Prophecy", *Anchor Bible Dictionary*. Vol 5, pp. 482-502.

It is also worthwhile to look up "Prophets" and "Prophecy" in the *New Interpreters' Dictionary of the Bible*.

It is strongly recommended that you also consult:

Grudem, W.A. 'Why Christians Can Still Prophecy', *Christianity Today*. Sept 16, 1988, 29-35.

Petersen, David L., 'False Prophecy' and 'Prophet, Prophecy' in *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. 4. Eds. Sakenfeld, K.D., et al. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2009, 620-21, 622-25, 628-36.

Wright, N.T. "The Praxis of a Prophet", in *Jesus and the Victory of God*. London: SPCK, 1996, 162-197 only.

Other works you may wish to consult:

Aune, D.E. *Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean World*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003

Blenkinsopp, J. *A History of Prophecy in Israel*. London: SPCK, 1996

Grudem, Wayne A., *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today*. Westchester: Crossway Books, 2000.

Hill, C. *Prophecy Past and Present*. Guildford, Surrey: I.P.S., 1995.

Houston, G. *Prophecy Now*. Leicester: IVP, 1989.

Witherington III, B. *Jesus the Seer: The Progress of Prophecy*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1999.

CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

Online discussion:

- Constructive participation: good engagement with class; use of open ended questions or clear consideration of others' questions.
- Engagement with course material: clear argument related to topic; evidence that new thinking has taken place or new connections made.
- Timeliness of contributions to forum: deadlines met; posts are made in time for others to engage with.
- Clarity and structure of contributions: logical and descriptive titles and structure; accurate spelling and grammar.

Take-Home Tests A & B:

- a. Accuracy in answering the question
- b. Coverage of significant points
- c. Coherent and logical presentation
- d. Fluency, grammar, vocabulary, referencing, bibliography.

Essay:

- a. Breadth of understanding
- b. Depth of treatment
- c. Critical judgment
- d. Skill and appropriateness of application
- e. Cohesion, logic and flow of the argument
- f. Presentation, style, grammar and spelling, referencing, bibliography.

LEARNING HOURS

120.515 is a 15 credit course consisting of 150 learning hours. The assignment tasks and learning hours are as follows.

Task	Weight	Hours
Tutorials and preparation		50 hours
Online discussion	20%	20 hours
Tests A & B (preparation and completion)	40%	40 hours
Essay	40%	40 hours
	100%	150 hours

Although this guideline regarding learning hours is not intended to be applied rigidly, it should help ensure a balanced workload.

COURSE MATERIALS

All students will be provided with access to the Old Testament Introduction course area in Moodle. The resources available there are maintained by the BTC tutor.

The **textbook** for this course is:

La Sor, W. and D.A. Hubbard et. al., *Old Testament Survey*, 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI.: Eerdmans, 1996. (available as e-book)

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Other Highly Recommended Texts

Longman, Tremper, III & Raymond, B. Dillard, *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan, 2006.

Bright, J., *A History of Israel*. 4th ed. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003.

Matthews, Victor H., *Studying the Ancient Israelites: A Guide to Sources and Methods*. Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker Books, 2007.

Surveys and Introductions

Arnold, B.T. & B. Beyer, *Encountering the Old Testament*, 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker Books, 2008.

Craigie, P.C., *The Old Testament*. Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1986.

Drane, John., *Introducing the Old Testament*. Oxford: Lion Publishing, 2000.

Matthews, Victor H., & James C. Moyer, *The Old Testament: Text and Context*. Peabody, MA.: Hendrickson, 1997.

Walton, John H., & Andrew E. Hill, *Old Testament Today*. Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan, 2004.

Histories of Ancient Israel

Provan, I., V.P. Long & T. Longman III., *A Biblical History of Israel*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003.

Shanks, H., ed. *Ancient Israel. From Abraham to the Roman Destruction of the Temple*. Rev. ed. Biblical Archaeology Society, 1999.

Archaeology of Ancient Israel

Mazar, A. *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible, 10,000-586 BCE*. New York: Doubleday, 1990.

Thompson, J. *The Bible and Archaeology*. Grand Rapids, MI.: Eerdmans, 1982.

Society, customs and culture of Ancient Israel

King P.J. and L.E. Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel*. Library of Ancient Israel. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001.

The Ancient Near East

Arnold, B.T. & B.E. Beyer, *Readings from the Ancient Near East*. Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker Books, 2002.

Hallo, W. & K.L. Younger Jr, eds. *The Context of Scripture*, 3 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1997-2002.
Vol 1, *Canonical Compositions from the Biblical World*, 1997,
Vol 2, *Monumental Inscriptions from the Biblical World*, 2000,
Vol 3, *Archival Documents from the Biblical World*, 2002.

Matthews, V.H., & D.C. Benjamin, *Old Testament Parallels: Laws and Stories from the Ancient Near East*. New York: Paulist Press, 1991.

Pritchard, J.B., ed. *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament (ANET)*. Pritchard; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969.

_____, *The Ancient Near East*, 2 vols. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959, 1976.

Walton, J. H., *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament: Introducing the Conceptual World of the Hebrew Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker Books, 2006.

Walton, J.H., *Ancient Israelite Literature in Its Cultural Context: A Survey of Parallels Between Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Texts*. Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan, 1989.

Reference Works

Arnold, B.T. and H.G.M. Williamson., eds. *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Historical Books*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2005.

Bromiley, G., *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 4 vols. Grand Rapids, Eerdmans.

Baker, David W. and T.D. Alexander., eds, *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2003.

Douglas, J.D. ed. *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, 3 vols. Leicester: IVP, 1980.

This work is also available with other resources in *The Essential IVP Reference Collection on CD-ROM*. Version 1.1, 2001. Logos Library System 2.0, 2000. Leicester, UK: IVP, 2000.

Freedman, D.N. et al, eds. *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, Vols. 1-6 New York: Doubleday, 1992.

Longman III, Tremper, and Peter Enns, eds. *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Wisdom, Poetry & Writings*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2008.

The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, Vols 1-3. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2006.
(Volumes 4+ are still to come)

Atlases

Aharoni, Y., Avi-Yonah, M., Rainey, A.F., and Z. Safrai, eds. *The Carta Bible Atlas*. 4th ed. New York: Macmillan Press, 2002.

Beitzel, B. *The Moody Bible Atlas of Bible Lands*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1985.

Dowley, Tim. ed., *The Atlas of the Bible and the History of Christianity*. London: Angus Hudson, 1997.

Commentaries

The following are in order from easiest to hardest:

Tyndale Old Testament commentary series

The NIV Application Commentary

The Expositors Bible Commentary series

New International Commentary on the Old Testament (NICOT) series

Word Biblical Commentary series