**Wayland Baptist University**

**School of Religion and Philosophy ¤ WBU Online**

**RLGN 1301 VC04 Old Testament History ¤ Fall 2017**

Wayland Baptist University exists to educate students in an academically challenging, learning-focused, and distinctively Christian environment for professional success and service to God and humankind.

***Instructor***

Dr. David Howle

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***Catalog Description***

An introductory survey of the historical literature with special attention to the institutions, religion, and national life of the Hebrew people. Prerequisites: None.

***Expanded description***

The Old Testament (Jewish Bible) not only contains the history of a distinct people group which has had a worldwide influence, it has a history itself. This collection of writings, brought together over centuries, is diverse, literary, and informative for understanding Western history. An investigative study of its various histories, literary genres, and ideologies broadens one's grasp of the dominant worldview of the western hemisphere.

***Class time, location, and method of instruction; attendance requirements***

This class will meet via Blackboard with weekly assignments from August 21 through November 4, 2017. In an online class, attendance is assessed by weekly participation. Students participating in less than 75% of weekly assignments will not be able to pass the course.

***Resources***

Required text:

*The NIV Study Bible*. Zondervan, 2011. ISBN 9780310437321 (or 9780310437338, paperback). Also available on Kindle.

Supplementary materials:

Lectures and website links available through Blackboard site

***Student Learning Outcomes***

The student will be able to

 Demonstrate knowledge of the historical, religious, and social context of the Old Testament world.

 Demonstrate knowledge of some of the critical methods used in Old Testament studies.

 Demonstrate an understanding of the basic content of the Old Testament and its main teachings (theological content).

 Demonstrate knowledge of the canonical process producing a more complete understanding of the Old Testament.

In this class we will approach those outcomes in such a way that, upon completion of this course, you should be able to

 Describe how the following shaped Israel's understanding of the identity of God and the identity of Israel: the covenants with Abraham, Moses, and David; the concept of salvation history; the Exodus and the Exile; the prophetic movement; wisdom literature.

 Analyze the effect of Israel's faith on her history and vice versa.

 Clarify the different perspectives of Israel's priests, prophets, and sages.

 Distinguish the components of Israel's worship and the elements of her theology.  Outline the historical development of the nation and the faith of Israel.

 Describe accurately the more prominent critical methods used in Old Testament studies.

 Outline the canonical process.

***Disability statement***

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), it is the policy of Wayland Baptist University that no otherwise qualified person with a disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational program or activity in the university. The Coordinator of Counseling Services serves as the coordinator of students with a disability and should be contacted concerning accommodation requests at (806) 291- 3765. Documentation of a disability must accompany any request for accommodations.

***Learning Activities/ Assessment Methods***

**Lecture and textbook reading**.

Assigned reading as indicated in the schedule must be completed on a weekly basis in order for you to participate meaningfully in discussion board activities and to succeed in the weekly reading quizzes. Discussions of the readings will have a deadline for submitting comments and questions.

**Reading quizzes** (30%).

There will be weekly three-question quizzes dealing with the textbook readings. These will be timed for five minutes, so be sure you have read the materials ahead of time. You will not have sufficient time to go searching for the answers during the quiz. The reading quizzes will be available through Monday midnight (Central Time) following each of the first ten weeks of the term. (For example, the quiz for Week One, August 21-26, is due August 28.)

**Discussion board** (30%).

Each week I will post five discussion questions on the discussion board forum dealing with the lectures and the textbook readings. Your participation will be evaluated for relevance, accuracy, and clarity. To receive credit for participation, you will need to post at least three responses to either my questions or comments made by your classmates. Extra points are awarded for additional responses.

**Journal** (15%).

Each student will keep an online journal (blog) in Blackboard. The journal will record **your** observations and questions on the cultural and religious perspectives of Israel's people throughout the historical periods we will examine. For full credit, you will need to post at least fifteen entries.

**Summary** (10%).

At the end of the term, you will submit a four-to-five-page summary of what you have learned in this course. Give attention to historical facts, theological concepts, cultural understanding, literary analysis, and Israelite faith. No footnotes are required. All biblical quotations may be referenced in parenthetical style. For example: "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one" (Deut. 6:4).

**Final exam** (15%).

A final exam will be given during the last week of class. The comprehensive final exam will include questions over materials presented in the lectures and discussed in the discussion board forums. **Please note that the final exam must be proctored**. Each student is responsible for securing the services of a proctor.

***Grading***

Final grade will result from assessment of the assignments as follows:

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Assignment | Number of items | Percentage of final score  |
| Discussions | 10 | 30% |
| Journal | 1 | 15% |
| Reading quizzes | 10 | 30% |
| Summary | 1 | 10% |
| Final exam | 1 | 15% |

See final grading scale below (after the schedule).

***Student rights***

Students shall have protection through orderly procedures against prejudices or capricious academic evaluation. A student who believes that he or she has not been held to realistic academic standards, just evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course by using the student grade appeal process described in the Academic Catalog. Appeals may not be made for advanced placement examinations or course bypass examinations. Appeals are limited to the final course grade, which may be upheld, raised, or lowered at any stage of the appeal process. Any recommendation to lower a course grade must be submitted through the Executive Vice President/Provost to the Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee for review and approval. The Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee may instruct that the course grade be upheld, raised, or lowered to a more proper evaluation.

***Schedule of assignments***

NIV = NIV Study Bible; DB = discussion board; Q = quiz

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| **Week/ Date** | **Topic** | **Assignment** | **Tasks** |
| 18/21-26 | Intro; OT as Christian Bible; Patriarchs | NIV, pp. xv-xviii, 3-9; Genesis 12-50 | DB 1Q 1 |
| 28/28-9/2 | History of Israelites between Exodus and entry into Canaan | NIV, pp. 92-95, 197-200; Exodus 1-20; 24; 30; Leviticus 16; Numbers 13-14; 17; 20:1-13; Deuteronomy 6-7; 29-30 | DB 2Q 2 |
| 39/4-9 | Transition from nomadic life to monarchy | NIV, pp. 256-259, 309-313, 350-355; Deuteronomy 20; 31:1-8; 34; Joshua 1-11; 24; Judges 2:6-7:25; 13-16; 1 Samuel 1; 2:11-4:1; 7:2-8:21; 9:1-10:24; 13:1, 19-22; 28; 31 | DB 3Q 3 |
| 49/11-16 | King David | NIV, pp. 402-406, 457-458; 1 Samuel 15-20; 24-27; 29-30; 2 Samuel 1:1-2:11; 3:1-5; 5-7; 11-15; 18:1-19:15 | DB 4Q 4 |
| 59/18-23 | Monarchy in decline | NIV, pp. 502-508; 1 Kings 1-5; 8-9; 11-12; 14; 15-19; 2 Kings 6:8-7:20 | DB 5Q 5 |
| 69/25-30 | 8th century: two kingdoms | NIV, pp. 1109-1114; 1440-1443, 1469-1471, 1498-1501; 2 Kings 16-20; Amos 1-9; Isaiah 1; 5-6; 9:2-10:22; 30-32; Micah 1-7 | DB 6Q 6 |
| 710/2-7 | Exile | NIV, pp. 1216-1221, 1320-1323, 1518-1520, 1526-1527, 1334-1338; 2 Kings 18-25; Jeremiah 1; 23:1-32; 24-28; 31; 36-38; 46; Zephaniah 1-3; Habakkuk 1-3; Lamentations; Ezekiel 1-3; 6; 12; 33; 37 | DB 7Q 7 |
| 810/9-14 | Post-Exile and Restoration period | NIV, pp. 1534-1536, 1541-1543; Isaiah 40:1-41:4; 42:1-4; 44:1-20; 49-55; 61-62; 66; Haggai 1-2; Zechariah 1-8 | DB 8Q 8 |
| 910/16-21 | Persian and Greek periods | NIV, pp. 719-722, 769-771, 1414-1415, 1460, 1486-1487, 1561-1563; Ezra 1; 3-7; 8:21-10:17; Nehemiah 1-2; 4:1-7:3; 8-9; 10:28-39; 13; Obadiah; Joel; Malachi; Esther; Daniel 1-9; Zechariah 9-14 | DB 9Q 9 |
| 1010/23-28 | Wisdom and other Kethubim | NIV, pp. 391-394, 786-791, 1096-1099, 1490-1493; Ecclesiastes 1:1-3:22; 12; Proverbs 1-3; 8-9; 15-16; 26; 30-31; Job 1-7; 38-42; Ruth; Jonah; Song of Songs | DB 10Q 10 |
| 1110/30-11/4 | OT worldview and worship | NIV, pp. 156-158, 841-851, Genesis 1-11; Leviticus 4-7; Psalms 1; 2; 12; 22-23; 66; 84 | Summary Final exam Journal |

***Grading scale***

The following scale of points will determine your final grade:

A = 90-100 Exhibits excellent scholarship, takes initiative in exploring studies, motivates others in cooperative efforts, improves consistently.

B = 80-89 Exhibits accurate scholarship, benefits class with achievements, works effectively with others, improves noticeably.

C = 70-79 Completes most assignments, contributes to discussions, exhibits some interest in studies, improves somewhat.

D = 60-69 Does not meet most assignments, exhibits indifference to studies, does not advance the progress of the class, improves unremarkably if at all.

F = 0-59 Misses assignments excessively, absent from class involvement, shows no improvement, **plagiarizes\***.

I = Incomplete This grade is given only if circumstances **beyond the student's control** prevented completion of work during the semester enrolled **and** attendance requirements have been met. A grade of incomplete is changed if the deficiency is made up by midterm of the next regular semester; otherwise, it becomes "F".

*\*****Academic honesty***

Your professors expect you to be honest about the origin of your writing. Using the thoughts and phrases of others without clarifying the source is called plagiarism. I have found the following types of plagiarism in student papers:

* Footnoted the source but failed to use quotation marks to indicate the extent of the quote.
* Attempted to paraphrase by changing one or two words in an otherwise direct quote (whether attributed or unattributed).
* Directly quoted a source giving no indication of citation.

All of these qualify as plagiarism and they are the scholar’s equivalent to shoplifting. You should be diligent about avoiding plagiarism.

Here are examples to help you.

**The right way:**

Due to the “heavy-handed administration of justice, the burden of taxation, and the occasional indiscretions by governors or their soldiers, [many Jews] rejected the legitimacy of Roman rule.”1 Instead, the people hoped for the true king of the Jews to arise from among their ranks.

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1 David A. DeSilva, *Introducing the Apocrypha: Message, Context, and Significance* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 55.

The portion of the sentence that came directly from the source is enclosed in quotation marks. The student added some words for clarity; these are enclosed in square brackets. If the student left out some words, this would be indicated by using ellipsis points (. . .). The footnote number follows the quote immediately. Now look at examples of plagiarism.

**Several wrong ways:**

*No quotation marks*

Due to the heavy-handed administration of justice, the burden of taxation, and the occasional indiscretions by governors or their soldiers, many Jews rejected the legitimacy of Roman rule.2 Instead, the people hoped for the true king of the Jews to arise from among their ranks.

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2 David A. DeSilva, *Introducing the Apocrypha: Message, Context, and Significance* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 54-55.

The lack of quotation marks leaves the reader wondering how much of the writing should be credited to DeSilva or whether this is a paraphrase.

*Inadequate paraphrase*

Because the Romans were heavy-handed in their administration of justice, and due to the burden of taxation, and the occasional indiscretions by governors or their soldiers, many Jews rejected the legitimacy of Roman rule. Instead, the people hoped for the true king of the Jews to arise from among their ranks.3

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3 David A. DeSilva, *Introducing the Apocrypha: Message, Context, and Significance* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 54-55.

Even though the student cited the resource, this attempt at paraphrase is still primarily direct quote and would be considered plagiarism. It is misleading to place the footnote number after the student’s sentence.

*Direct quote with no citation*

Due to the heavy-handed administration of justice, the burden of taxation, and the occasional indiscretions by governors or their soldiers, many Jews rejected the legitimacy of Roman rule. Instead, the people hoped for the true king of the Jews to arise from among their ranks.

This is blatant theft. The student did not even acknowledge that the information came from a source, much less that the phrasing is not the student’s own words.

*Expectations for this course*

You are not required to write a research paper for this course. However, you will need to post comments in the discussion board as well as write a summary of what you learned at the end of the semester. Avoid plagiarism in both instances. It is perfectly admissible to submit a quote in the discussion board, but you must cite the source as illustrated above. For the summary, because it should consist of what **you** learned (not simply a digest of the content of the class), reference to sources should be limited, if used at all.

If you have read this syllabus thoroughly, send me an email with the last word in the paragraph on student rights as the subject line and I will give you bonus points equivalent to full credit for a reading quiz.