


RLGN 1301—Old Testament History
Wayland Baptist University
Virtual Campus
February 24 – May 17, 2014
Ben D. Craver, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Religion

Office: Wayland Baptist University, San Antonio Campus

Contact only via email: craverb@wbu.edu

Hours: Monday – Thursday, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm; Friday, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Class Time and Location: *Virtual Campus*



Course Description an introductory survey of the historical literature with special attention to the institutions, religion, and national life of the Hebrew people

Outcome Competencies

Upon completion of this course, you should be able to demonstrate . . .

- 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.

Requirements & Grading Scheme

Here's what we will do during this course:

- **Read** the Old Testament (OT) when prompted in the major textbook, *Exploring the Old Testament*; **yes, there's lots of reading!**
- **Read** the posted lecture notes (**major exam questions** will come **ONLY** from the lecture notes—trust me!)
- **Respond** to **Discussion Board (DB)** questions on a weekly basis; one original response and two responses to your colleagues are required for each of the 10 DBs.
- **Write** a brief response related to three (3) **activities** on topics identified and described in the syllabus below. **Send your completed assignments to me via email.**
- **Pass** seven quizzes (available Friday – Sunday of each week except the week of examinations, see schedule); all questions will come from the *assigned readings* in **Exploring the Old Testament** for *the week pertaining to the respective quiz* (e.g., **Quiz 1**, EOT, chap 3-5; **Quiz 2**, EOT, chap 6-9; **Quiz 5**, EOT, chap 27-28)
- **Pass** three examinations

Required Resource Materials

- **Encountering the Old Testament: A Christian Survey (EOT)**, by Bill T. Arnold and Bryan E. Beyer; Baker Academic (2nd ed., 2008), ISBN-10: 0801031702.
- **A personal Bible** of your own or one to which you have access. The **NIV** is the preferred translation and will be the one referenced in the class lecture notes.

Schedule of Readings, Quizzes & Examinations:

PART ONE: The Foundations of the Old Testament			
w/o* 24 Feb	Introduction Lecture 1: Formation and Canon of the Bible	EOT [^] , chap 1-2	
w/o 3 Mar	Lecture 2: The Early History of the Hebrews (Part 1)	EOT, chap 3-5	Quiz #1
w/o 10 Mar	SPRING BREAK		
w/o 17 Mar	Lecture 3: The Early History of the Hebrews (Part 2)	EOT, chap 6-9	Quiz #2
PART TWO: God and Old Testament History			
w/o 24 Mar	Lecture 1: Deuteronomistic History	EOT, chap 10-14	EXAMINATION #1
w/o 31 Mar	Lecture 2: Priests, Kings and Exile	EOT, chap 15-18	Quiz #3
w/o 7 Apr	Lecture 3: Calamity and Song	EOT, chap 19-23	Quiz #4
PART THREE: God and Old Testament Hope			
w/o 14 Apr	Lecture 1: The Wisdom Literature	EOT, chap 24-26	EXAMINATION #2
w/o 21 Apr	Lecture 2: The Prophets (Part 1)	EOT, chap 27-28	Quiz #5
w/o 28 Apr	Lecture 3: The Prophets (Part 2)	EOT, chap 29-30	Quiz #6
w/o 5 May	Lecture 4: The Prophets (Part 3)	EOT, chap 31-34	Quiz #7
w/o 12 May	EOT, Epilogue		FINAL EXAMINATION
*w/o = week off			
[^] EOT = Encountering the Old Testament			
This is REALLY a reading-intensive course! Do your BEST!			

Three Activities—each activity is worth 15 points.

1. Bill Cosby on Noah

- Read carefully the passages in Genesis related to Noah and the Ark (Genesis 7 – 9)
 - Listen to Cosby's performance: <http://www.godtube.com/watch/?v=WL7YYLNX>
- Now, write a brief paper, no more than two pages single-spaced, addressing:
 - What are the biblical accuracies and inaccuracies you discover in Cosby's skit?
 - It has been said that Cosby's skit "is an attempt by someone who believes the tale [of Noah] to come to terms with the parts of the story that don't make any sense to a skeptical mind." Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?
 - Do you find the routine irreverent or sacrilegious? Why or why not?

DUE DATE: Friday, 21 March, before midnight CST

2. Job's Wife

- Under the **TOOLS** header on the left, click on the link entitled "**Job's Wife.**"
- At the top of the page, click on a link entitled "Job's Wife Mocks Him" which will open up a jpg painting depicting the account found in Job 2:1-10.
- Read Job 2:1-10, concentrating especially on Job's wife's comment in v9.
- Now, write a brief paper, no more than two pages single-spaced, and address:
 - What exactly does she mean by her comment?
 - Is her comment one of derision for his faith and patience, or one of sympathy and love (i.e., that he would die and be spared grief and pain)? Why do you think this?
 - In Job 19:17, Job states: "My breath is offensive to my wife . . ." What inferences do you draw from that statement?
 - At the end of the book, Job's fortunes are restored and he has more children. Presuming that the same wife is the mother of the "new" children, do you think that perhaps her attitude changed? Why or why not?

DUE DATE: Friday, 11 April, before midnight CST

3. Hank and Hosea

- Read Hosea 1 – 3.
- Now, click the following link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bvYDQBlokzo>
- Now, write a brief paper, no more than two pages single-spaced, addressing:
 - How would you describe the marriage of Hosea & Gomer?
 - What similarities do you find between Hosea & Gomer and Hank Williams and his love? (Lyrics for Hank Williams song may be found at: <http://www.asklyrics.com/display/hank-williams/you-win-again-lyrics.htm>)
 - Who has the power in both of these situations? What words do you find the biblical text and the song to substantiate your answer?
 - What counsel would you offer Hosea and Hank?
 - Finally, read Isaiah 54:7-8. Does God's strong love for his people cause any change of mind for you?

DUE DATE: Friday, 9 May, before midnight CST

NOTE for above: Use your imagination on these assignments. Don't worry about how I will grade it. Respond to the questions and you'll receive full credit. Search the web for responses. For the most part, there are no right or wrong answers. I want to know what you think about the passages and how they impact your understanding and feelings. **Send all ACTIVITIES assignments to me via email.**

The following penalties will be imposed for **assignments submitted after the due date:**

- Submissions one minute to seven days late - 5 points
- Submissions eight to fourteen days late - 10 points
- **NO SUBMISSIONS will be accepted more than 14-days late!**

Seven Weekly Quizzes—each quiz is worth 10 points.

- **ALL the questions for the weekly quizzes will come from the readings in EOT.**
- All quizzes will consist of 10 questions and in the form of T/F, multiple choice, or possibly a fill-in-the-blank; no review on these quizzes.
- **No quiz may be made up beyond 7-days of the original due date!**
It will be closed at that point, not to be reopened.

Three Exams—each exam is worth 50 points.

- **ALL exam questions will come from the posted lecture notes.** NOTHING will come from the assigned readings in **EOT**, so don't worry about it. Look up your answers in the lecture notes.
 - Each exam will have twenty-five objective questions, each worth two points.
 - Format for the exam will be T/F, multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer.
 - It is for all purposes an open-book exam. Do not consult with family or utilize others in helping you. **God is your proctor!**
- No review will be given; be familiar with your notes and where to find information.
- You're on the honor system; just do the work yourself!
- You will have a total of 90 minutes to complete the exam. Any time over and above 90 minutes will be penalized as follows:

♦ 91-95 minutes --2 points	♦ 106-110 minutes --7 points
♦ 96-100 minutes --4 points	♦ 111 minutes and above --10 points
♦ 101-105 minutes --5 points	
- The point is to be familiar with the material before you attempt to take the exam.
- **No exam may be made up beyond 14-days of the original due date!**
It will be closed at that point, not to be reopened.



Ten Discussion Boards—each DB is worth 5 points.

DBs will be posted every week except for the week of the final exam. They are the only means of recording attendance in class. You will be graded on a week to week basis. If the instructor senses that you are not participating substantively, you will be contacted via email. As noted on page 1, you are to respond each week with an original posting and comment on two of your colleague's posts. It is NOT necessary to respond to everyone.

Reading of Textbook and Old Testament—worth 30 points.

Estimate how much of the total assignment you were able to read during the course; this includes both the textbook and the OT when prompted. This is totally on the honor system; one of the questions on the final exam will ask you for honest estimate.

Estimate of 85%-100% of all reading	26-30 points
Estimate of 65%-84% of all reading	20-25 points
Estimate of 50%-64% of all reading	15-19 points
Less than 50% of all reading	0 points

COURSE EVALUATION—Method of Determining Final Course Grade)

Of a TOTAL of **350** possible points:

A	350-315 points	I	INCOMPLETE**
B	314-280 points	WP	WITHDRAWAL PASSING
C	279-245 points	WF	WITHDRAWAL FAILING
D	244-210 points	W	WITHDRAWAL
F	BELOW 210 points		



**A grade of incomplete is changed if the deficiency is made up by midterm of the next regular semester; otherwise, it becomes "F". 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 "CR" indicates that credit in semester hours was granted but no grade or grade points were recorded.

Tips for Better Grades

Here are a few pointers for earning good grades in this class.

- For the **DISCUSSION BOARDS**, keep your focus on the topic. I welcome discussions of moral or ethical issues, but make sure that you give attention to the matter at hand.
- Check your grades online about a week after you complete the assignments. If you don't have a grade, send me an email. This is especially critical as final exam time approaches.
- Keep me posted on absences of a week or more, ideally **before** you have to be absent.
- Check the **ANNOUNCEMENTS** regularly; read and act on all of the announcements.
- Don't wait until the last minute to submit assignments and/or take tests. Always allow for the possibility of some emergency.
- Please let me know whether you understand the subject matter. Just reading the textbook and lecture notes, doesn't necessarily mean you really comprehend it. When you don't understand, ask questions, by posting them in the **Questions** item in the **DISCUSSION BOARD** (*maybe others are wondering the same thing*).

Academic Honesty

University students are expected to conduct themselves according to the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, forgery, or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's work as one's own work. See current [Wayland Baptist University Catalog](#), for penalties that may be applied to individual cases of academic dishonesty.)

It is University policy that no otherwise qualified disabled person be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational program or activity in the university.

One last thing; you'll enjoy this class better . . . if you value:

- **Questions** more than answers . . .
- **Humor** more than whatever its opposite is, and . . .
- **Hard work** with our readings and biblical texts . . .



Did I mention this is a reading-intensive course?