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BS 504 W1 Introduction to Biblical Studies: Old Testament

David Loren Thompson

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Syllabus

Course: BS504 W1 (SP 2009)

Title: Intro to Biblical Studies: Old Testament

Hours: 2.00

Published: Yes, on 02/02/2009

Prerequisites:

None

Department: Biblical Studies

Faculty: Dr. David Thompson



Email: david.thompson@asburyseminary.edu

Office:

SPO: 929

Meetings:

During 02/09/2009 to 05/22/2009 on Wednesday from 8:00a to 9:45a in M306.

Maximum Registration: 32

Catalog Description: This course orients the students to the discipline of Old Testament studies, stressing contemporary approaches to the historical and cultural settings, composition, authorship, and literary characteristics of the OT books. Attention will be given to the significance of the study of the Old Testament for the ministerial vocation represented in the master of arts programs.

Objectives:

BS504 Introduction to Biblical Studies: Old Testament (2 hrs)

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Asbury Theological Seminary

Spring 2009

Instructor: David L. Thompson, Ph.D.

David_thompson@asburyseminary.edu

BC318 859-858-2278

Office hours:

Course Description

This course orients the students to the discipline of Old Testament studies, stressing contemporary approaches to the historical and cultural settings, composition, authorship, and literary characteristics of the OT books. Attention will be given to the significance of the study of the Old Testament for the ministerial vocation represented in the master of arts programs, other than those specializing in Bible and theology.

Goals

Each student will:

1. Understand the theological story line in the Old Testament, and the theological connection between the OT and the NT.
2. Understand the major issues in OT interpretation and the basic historical-cultural background of the OT, and use this knowledge in the interpretation of the OT.
3. Begin integrating competent and responsible reading of the Bible, particularly the OT, into the student's vocation.

Resources

1. Required textbooks:
 - a. Revised Standard Version of the Bible, or some other contemporary translation.
 - b. Drane, John. Introducing the Old Testament. Revised and updated. Fortress Press, 2001.
2. Other resources available on the course web page

Class Assignments

1. Essays. Two integrative essays will put to work your thoughtful attention to the assigned readings in John Drane's *IOT*. The essays are due March 4 and May 6 and count 25% and 30% respectively toward the semester's grade. Essays will use double space, standard margins and headings, 12 pt font, no less than nine full pages, no more than ten pages in length. Standard English and correct grammar required. Select a standard research paper format and follow it for documentation and citation purposes.

We will divide the readings in *IOT* into five sections of the Old Testament's big story defined and grouped as follows:

Group A

- ¥ Creation through Joseph. *IOT*, chs. 1-3, 9-13
- ¥ Exodus and Conquest. *IOT*, chs. 1-3, 9-13
- ¥ Judges through Solomon. *IOT*, chs. 1-4, 9-13

Group B

- ¥ Divided monarchy through fall of Jerusalem. *IOT*, chs. 4-13.
- ¥ Exile and Restoration/Post Exilic period. *IOT*, chs. 4-13.

Essay #1. Select from Group A one major section of the OT story. Discuss John Drane's integrative presentation of a) biblical content, b) critical study of issues pertinent to the major section selected, and c) related cultural-historical data. Show how Drane's presentation helps a serious Christian reader better understand and appropriate the First Testament. All the chapters of *IOT* cited for each section will be considered germane to the essay, but your essay should demonstrate familiarity with specific examples of Drane's work in chapters especially related to the section of the OT story you have chosen.

Essay #2. Select a major section from Group B and Discuss Drane's presentation following the instructions given for Essay #1.

2. Historical-cultural Context Exam. An objective exam administered April 15 will test familiarity with major

events, dates, persons and their correlations in the historical-cultural context of the Old Testament. Particular attention should be paid to the integrative chronological charts scattered throughout IOT and also to Dr. Richter's chronological chart. The exam counts 20% of the semester grade.

3. Biblical Readings. Using a contemporary translation of their own choosing, students will read significant stretches of the Old Testament as indicated in the course schedule. Rapid reading will be fine; brain-dead reading will not be. Students will take notes on these readings covering the following topics *for each biblical book* read:

- a. Features of each book that surprised you?
- b. Aspects of each book particularly illuminated by your readings in Drane?
- c. Spiritual insights? Inspirations? Whatever?

The notes need not be extensive, but should be sufficient to show meaningful reading. Tie statements to specific biblical references (at least chapter level).

Notes due at class time on dates indicated in the course schedule. Together the readings as annotated will count 25% of the semester grade.

Academic Policies and Grades

1. Use of secondary sources, research and peer consultation figure prominently in this class. The use of secondary sources (formal and informal) is encouraged, indeed required. But when secondary sources are used, clear documentation will appear. This is sufficiently important from methodological and instructional, not to mention moral perspectives that unacknowledged appropriation of significant information and ideas from secondary sources will be considered plagiarism. Plagiarism will certainly lead to a grade of zero for the specific project involved and may constitute grounds for failure in the course and other disciplinary action as provided in institutional policy.

This same principle also excludes undocumented use of any previous student's work in the course and undocumented use of lecture notes from any previous semester of BS504 or other related courses. It is assumed that the student's notes and all work submitted for this course is the student's own work, done specifically for BS504, and not previously submitted as part of any other course's requirements.

2. Format and Submission of Research/Reflection Papers

To facilitate handling by my office and especially by SPO personnel:

- a. **Each paper will carry the cover sheet posted on the course icon, stapled to the paper. No paper will be accepted without the cover sheet and/or unstapled.**

On succeeding pages you need only put your last name and the page number.

The plain title page is important also for student privacy issues.

- b. Please write/print on one side only. Staple every multi-sheet work submitted. (You may want to purchase your own stapler.) Submit hard copy; no guarantee on email attachment preservation.

3. Course Requirements and Attendance Policy.

- a. Completion of all assignments is required for credit in the course.
- b. The class has a "no-fault" attendance policy. There are no excused absences in the course, since lack of participation, not the reason for the absence, is the learning issue. To avoid a negative impact on the course grade, students who find it necessary to be absent should arrange with the professor to complete a "make up" assignment for each session missed. Students who are "virtually absent" may also be asked to do such work.

4 Grades

- a. Components

¥ Research/reflection essays #1 and #2, 25% and 30% respectively

¥ Required reading notes, 25%.

¥ Historical-cultural context exam, 20%.

b. Grading Criteria and Criteria of Excellence

Stated course objectives and the specific, written directions for each assignment become basic grading criteria.

c. Assessment Reflected in Grades

(See Seminarian: The Catalogue Edition for grade values.)

A = Exceptional work: surpassing, markedly outstanding achievement of course or assignment objectives

B = Good work: strong, significant achievement of course or assignment objectives

C = Acceptable work: basic, essential achievement of course or assignment objectives

D = Marginal work: inadequate, minimal achievement of course or assignment objectives

F = Unacceptable work: failure to achieve course objectives.

d. Late work.

Except in cases of emergency or by previous arrangement with the instructor, work submitted late may be accepted for credit but will not normally be graded.

2. Tentative Schedule

WEEK	DATE Wednesday	ASSIGNMENTS
1	2/11	Why OT and OT Criticism? IOT, 13. From Hebrew Bible to OT, 338-362 (25)
2	2/18	IOT, 1. Introducing the OT, 11-35 (25) IOT, 9. The Living God, 228-251 (24) IOT, 10. God and the World, 253-276, (24) [Tapestry 1. Long Ago]
3	2/25	IOT, 2. The Founding of the Nation, 36-61 (26) IOT, 3. A Land Flowing with Milk and Honey, 62-86 (25) [Tapestry 2. Prince of Egypt] Biblical reading: Two books from Genesis to Deuteronomy
4	3/ 4	IOT, 11. Living as God's People, 277-305 (28) Essay #1
5	3/11	[Tapestry 3. Godfather] IOT, 4. A King Like Other Nations, 87-119 (33) IOT, 12. Worshiping God, 12. 306-330 (25)
6	3/18	[Tapestry 4. Blues Brothers] Biblical Reading: Two books from Judges to 2 Kings
7	3/25	IOT, 5. The Two Kingdoms, 120-146 (27)
March 30 – April 3 READING WEEK		
8	4/8	Biblical Reading: <i>Isaiah or Jeremiah</i>
9	4/15	[Tapestry 5. A New Hope! Judean State] IOT, 6. Judah and Jerusalem, 147-172 (26) Exam: Historical-Cultural Context
10	4/22	Biblical Reading: <i>Hosea through Jonah</i>
11	4/29	[Tapestry 6. Empire Strikes Back] IOT, 7. Dashed Hopes and New Horizons, 173-306 (34)
12	5/6	Essay #2

13	5/13	[Tapestry 7. Return of the Judean]
		IOT, 8. The Challenge of a New Age, 207-227 (21) <i>Biblical Reading: Ecclesiastes and the Psalms</i>
14	5/20	FINALS WEEK
		All make-up work due Friday, May 22, 5:00 p.m.

Reading List (See list posted on web site.)