



Course Syllabus Wycliffe College Toronto School of Theology

This description is intended to assist in the course approval process and to assist students in determining whether this course will help them achieve their educational objectives and the learning goals of their program. It is not a learning contract. The details of the description are subject to change before the course begins. The course syllabus will be available to the class at the beginning of the course.

Course Identification

Course Number: WYB1008HS
Course Name: Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture for the Church
Campus: Online

Instructor Information

Instructor: Gordon Oeste, PhD
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Office Hours:

Teaching Assistant:
E-mail:

Course Prerequisites or Requisites

NA

Course Description

This course will introduce the student to the history, literature, theology and genres of the Old Testament with an emphasis on application to the life of the Church. Students will encounter the Old Testament in its ancient Near Eastern setting in order to better understand the historical and sociological context of the biblical of the Old Testament.

Course Methodology

This course will include the use of lectures, online discussions, reading notes, inductive study, an exegetical paper, and a final exam.

Course Outcomes

COURSE OUTCOMES	COURSE ELEMENT	PROGRAM OUTCOMES
By the end of this course, students	This outcome will be demonstrated through these course elements:	This course outcome corresponds to these aspects

		of Wycliffe's statements of outcomes (MTS, MDiv)
Demonstrate basic knowledge of the content of particular books in the Old Testament: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther	Lectures, readings, and assignments	MTS: 1.1 MDiv: 1.1
• Exercise basic exegetical skills necessary for interpreting Old Testament passages effectively and faithfully today through successful completion of an OT Theme paper	Lectures, readings, inductive study, theme paper	MTS: 1.2 MDiv: 1.2
• Identify historical and current issues in Old Testament scholarship, particularly different kinds of methodology	Lectures, readings, final exam	MTS: 1.1 MDiv: 1.1
• Identify major events and periods in Israelite history and the influence of the major powers of the Ancient Near East on the Old Testament	Lectures, readings, inductive study, final exam	MTS: 1.1 MDiv: 1.1
• Understand how knowledge of the biblical world influences one's reading of the Old Testament	Lectures, readings	MTS: 1.1 MDiv: 1.1

Course Resources

Required Course Texts

Copies of required and books for the term have been ordered in stock at Crux Books, located underneath Leonard Hall at Wycliffe. It is the bookstore for all of TST, and we encourage you to buy your books from them. You can visit their store from 10-7 M-F, or order from them online at www.cruxbooks.com.

- Hess, Richard S. *The Old Testament: A Historical, Theological, and Critical Introduction*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 2016. 801 pp. ISBN-13: 9780801037146. \$62.49hb, \$39.99 Kindle edition on amazon.ca.
- Bartholomew, Craig G. and David J. H. Beldman, eds. *Hearing the Old Testament: Listening for God's Address*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012. 475 pp. ISBN-13: 9780802865618. \$42.99pb, \$31.04 Kindle edition on amazon.ca.

- Fee, Gordon D. and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible Book by Book: A Guided Tour*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009. 448pp. ISBN-13: 9780310518082. \$24.99pb, \$3.99 Kindle edition amazon.ca.
- Longman, Tremper III and John H. Walton. *The Lost World of the Flood: Mythology, Theology, and the Deluge Debate*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2018. ISBN-13:9780830852000. \$23.99pb. \$10.90 Kindle edition on amazon.ca

Course Website(s)

- Quercus website: <https://q.utoronto.ca/>
- This course uses Quercus for its course website. To access it, go to <https://q.utoronto.ca/> and login using your UTORid and password. Students who have trouble accessing Quercus should ask Jeffrey Hocking (jhocking@wycliffe.utoronto.ca) for further help.

Class Schedule

For Readings: Hess is abbreviated H, Bartholomew and Beldman as BB. The full bibliographic details of other readings can be found below in the "Assigned Bibliography" section. Your other suggested textbook is also a vital part of the course, even though it has not been assigned specific readings in the schedule. Reading the Bible Book-by-Book is meant to be read alongside your various Bible readings as a supplement. The authors wonderfully introduce each book and provide helpful hints and strategies for reading. It is meant to complement the more technical focus of your Hess textbook. Books of the Bible will play an important role in your final exam (cf. the final exam section below).

<i>Week</i>	<i>Lecture</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>Bible Readings</i>	<i>Assignments</i>
Week 1 January 7-13	Understanding the Biblical Storyline	BB: Dempster, "Canon & OT Interpretation" Beale, "Eden, The Temple, and the Church's Mission"		
Week 2 January 14-20	Foundations for Studying the OT: The OT, its Ancient Context, and Meaning	BB: Longman, "History and OT Interpretation" Walton, "Cosmology"		
Week 3 January 21-27	The Beginning (Genesis 1-11)	H: 25-54 Sailhamer, "Exegetical Notes on Gen 1:1-2:4a"	Genesis 1-11	Review of Longman and Walton, <i>The Lost World of the Flood</i> (Jan 25)
Week 4 January 28-February 3	The Patriarchs (Genesis 12-50)	BB: Wenham - "Hearing the Pentateuch" Moberly, "Living Dangerously"	Genesis 12-50	

Week 5 February 4-10	The Exodus from Egypt (Exodus 1-18)	H: 55-78 Seitz, “The Call of Moses”	Exodus 1-18	
Week 6 February 11-17	Israel at Mt. Sinai (Exodus 19-Num 11)	H:102-122 Hays, “Applying the Old Testament Law”	Exodus 19-40; Leviticus 1-16;	
Week 7 February 18-24	Reading Week			
Week 8 February 25- March 3	On the Road to the Promised Land (Deuteronomy)	H: 123-153 BB: Carroll – “Ethics and OT Interpretation”	Numbers 20-36; Deuteronomy	
Week 9 March 4-10	Conquest – Joshua & Judges	H: 161-219 Oeste, “Butchered Brothers”	Joshua, Judges, Ruth	
Week 10 March 11-17	1-2 Samuel	H: 236-274 Sailhamer, “The Messiah & the Hebrew Bible”	1-2 Samuel	
Week 11 March 18-24	1-2 Kings	H: 275-316 Fokkelman, “The Art of Reading”	1-2 Kings	
Week 12 March 25-31	1-2 Chronicles	H: 317-347 BB: “Provan - Heading the Historical Books”	1-2 Chronicles	Thematic Paper: Due: March 29
Week 13 April 1-7	Ezra-Nehemiah & Esther	H: 348-387 BB: Spears – “Preaching the OT”	Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther	Bible Reading Journal Due: April 5
Week 14 April 8-15	Final Exam			Due: April 14-15

A Sample Week (and Timeline) for Online Discussions

- (1) Previous Friday at 8:00AM (EST): The introductory video, lecture, and readings will be posted onto Blackboard in the appropriate unit folder.
- (2) Tuesday night by midnight (EST): Students will post their answer to the weekly discussion board. Answers will be 200-250 words (Please stick to the word-count limits for this assignment).
- (3) Friday morning at 8:00AM (EST): The unit for the next week of the course will be posted, giving students the weekend to prepare, if they so choose.
- (4) Friday night by midnight (EST): Starting on Thursday, students will be given a few days to respond and interact with each other's posts. Your responses to posts will make up a part of your total participation mark. Typical responses can range in length, from 100-200 words.
- (5) Friday night by midnight (EST): Bigger assignments, such as papers will be due during the appropriate week, as noted in the schedule above.

Evaluation

Requirements

This is an online course which will be administered through the University of Toronto's Portal (Blackboard) system. Students are expected to log into the course website regularly (<http://portal.utoronto.ca>), where one can access class lectures and the forum for discussing material throughout the course (further instructions for online contribution will be provided).

Each week the instructor will post a short video introducing the material for the course, as well as a written lecture. Participation in the course is very important and is encouraged through online discussion of assigned readings. On top of these, students will also be evaluated through a thematic paper, a book review, weekly quizzes, and a final exam.

All assignments will need to be submitted as DOCX files to the instructor at his email address.

Posted Online Reflections	15 %	Weekly
Book Review	20%	January 25
Thematic Paper	25%	March 29
Bible Reading Journal	15%	April 5
Final Exam	25 %	April 11-12
Total Grade	100 %	

Grading System

Letter Grade

Numerical Equivalents Grade Point

Grasp of Subject
Matter

A+	90–100%	4.0	Profound & Creative
A	85–89%	4.0	Outstanding
A-	80–84%	3.7	Excellent
B+	77–79%	3.3	Very Good
B	73–76%	3.0	Good
B-	70–72%	2.7	Satisfactory
FZ	0–69%	0	Failure

Grades without numerical equivalent:

CR	Designates credit; has no numerical equivalent or grade point value
NCR	Designates failure; has no numerical equivalent, but has a grade point value of 0 and is included in the GPA calculation
SDF	Standing deferred (a temporary extension)
INC	Permanent incomplete; has no numerical equivalent or grade point value
WDR	Withdrawal without academic penalty
AEG	May be given to a final year student who, because of illness, has completed at least 60% of the course, but not the whole course, and who would not otherwise be able to convocate; has no numerical equivalent and no grade point value

Policy on Assignment Extensions

The two term papers, reading notes, and final exam will all be due by Midnight (EST) on the day noted in the course schedule. Any late online participation results in a mark of zero. Extensions must be sought before the due date and will only be given in exceptional circumstances. **Do not ask me for an extension the night before or the day an assignment is due.** For the two term papers and reading notes, a 5 % deduction will be taken off a student's assignment for each day late (including weekends). There are no deductions for the **final exam: you must take it during the open time or receive a zero.**

Basic Degree students are expected to complete all course work by the end of the term in which they are registered. Under **exceptional circumstances**, with the written permission of the instructor, students may request an extension (SDF = “standing deferred”) beyond the term. An extension, when offered, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. An SDF must be requested no later than the last day of classes of the term in which the course is taken. The request form is available on the college website or from the Registrar’s office.

One percentage point per day will be deducted on the course grade if an extension has not been requested by the stated deadline.

Course grades. Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor’s college before being posted. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University grading policy (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/grading.pdf>) or college grading policy.

Policies

Accessibility. Students with a disability or health consideration are entitled to accommodation. Students must register at the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

Plagiarism. Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* (linked from <http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks> and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>), a student who plagiarizes in this course. Students will be assumed to have read the document "Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing" published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges (http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm).

Turnitin.com. Students may be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.

Other academic offences. TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>).

Writing Style. The writing standard for the Toronto School of Theology is Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, 8th edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), which is available at Crux Books.

Bibliography

Assigned Bibliography

Beale, Gregory K. "Eden, The Temple, and the Church's Mission in the New Creation." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 48 (2005): 5-31.

Hays, J. Daniel. "Applying the Old Testament Law Today." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 156 (2001): 30-35.

Fokkelman, Jan P. "Introduction: The Art of Reading, Components I and II." Pages 20-45 in *Reading Biblical Narrative: An Introductory Guide*. Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox, 2000.

Moberly, R. W. L. "Living Dangerously: Genesis 22 and the Quest for Good Biblical Interpretation." Pages 181-197 in *The Art of Reading Scripture*. Edited by Ellen F. Davis and Richard H. Hays. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2003.

Oeste, Gordon K. "Butchered Brothers and Betrayed Families: Degenerating Kinship Structures in the Book of Judges." *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 35 (2011): 295-316.

Sailhamer, John. "Exegetical Notes: Genesis 1:1-2:4a." *Trinity Journal* 5 (1984): 73-82.

_____. "The Messiah and the Hebrew Bible." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 44 (2001): 5-23.

Seitz, Christopher. "The Call of Moses and the 'Revelation' of the Divine Name: Source-Critical Logic and Its Legacy." In *Word Without End: The Old Testament as Abiding Theological Witness*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1998, pp. 229-247.

Walton, John H. "Cosmology and Cosmogony." Pages 147-170. *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament: Introducing the Conceptual World of the Hebrew Bible*. Revised ed. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 2018.

For preaching (and reading with an eye towards preaching) the Old Testament, a number of excellent books have been published in recent years. We would recommend *The Art of Reading Scripture* (eds. Ellen David and Richard Hays; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003); *Preaching the Old Testament* (ed. Scott Gibson; Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2006);

For a brief overview of modern OT commentaries, see Tremper Longman III, *Old Testament Commentary Survey* (5th edition; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013), as well as Brevard S. Childs, *Old Testament Books for Pastor and Teacher* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977). A good introduction to the various critical methodologies employed in both Old and New Testament studies is *To Each Its Own Meaning: An Introduction to Biblical Criticisms and their Application* (ed. Stephen R. Haynes and Steven L. McKenzie; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1993). We would also recommend John Barton, *Reading the Old Testament: Method in Biblical Study*, Revised and Expanded (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1997). For those seeking to delve deeper into the history of OT criticism, an excellent resource written at an introductory level is Mark S. Gignilliat, *A Brief History of Old Testament Criticism: From Benedict Spinoza to Brevard Childs* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012).

Breaking Down the Assignments: Book Review (Due Friday, January 25) – 20% of final mark

Students will read through Longman & Walton's book, *The Lost World of the Flood*, and will write a 5-6-page review of the book (double spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins). The first half of the book review will summarize the key points made by Longman & Walton. This summary should cover the entire book and include key points throughout the work (rather than incidental points of information).

The second half of review will evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the book. In this part of the review, students should focus upon the arguments that Longman & Walton make in various parts of the book and evaluate their effectiveness. The focus should be upon the main ideas presented in the book as opposed to dwelling upon incidental points. For points that students agree with, they should not only mention their positive stance towards the point(s), but also explain why they agree, based upon other information in the the flood narrative or elsewhere. On points where Longman & Walton could strengthen their arguments or where students believe that they are wrong, they should note such disagreements. But more importantly, they should also explain why they disagree, giving further evidence from the Bible or elsewhere to support their rationale. Both positive and negative evaluations are expected in an excellent review.

In either case, whether students agree or disagree (or both), they should briefly explain what they believe are Longman & Walton's contributions to our reading of the flood narrative.

Note that the student would do well, in reviewing the book, to mention the author's full names and the title of the book at the outset of the paper. Subsequent references to the authors in book reviews usually just refer to his/her last name(s). In summarizing and evaluating the book, students would also do well to indicate where the information they are referencing comes from in the book (i.e. give page numbers).

Make sure to also review the accompanying handout (posted on the class website): ***Writing Theological Book Reviews***

Reviews will be evaluated on the following criteria: 1) ability to follow the instructions, 2) ability to summarize the main points of the book correctly and succinctly, 3) the depth of interaction with Longman & Walton's main points, as seen in the quality of their arguments for and/or against those made by Longman & Walton, 4) the use of proper spelling, grammar, and sentence structure.

Breaking Down the Assignments: Online Participation (due weekly) – 15% of final mark

Each week there will be an online participation portion of the course in which the students will reflect on questions related to the readings or lectures. Questions could come from a specific biblical text, an essay, or topic or theme mentioned in the textbooks. Students will typically be asked to post their answer to a discussion board and then respond to the answers of their peers. The instructor will likely divide the class into small groups for discussion, switching the groups around at reading week. Your mark for this portion of the course will be calculated by gaging your timeliness in posting, as well as your engagement with other students. Videos, lectures, readings, and questions will become available on Friday morning at 8:00am for the next week. For instance, the questions for Week 2 (January 14-20) will be posted on Friday, January 12, at 8:00 am. This will allow for weekend participation for those of you constrained by work commitments. During most weeks, initial posts on the discussion board will be due on Tuesday by midnight (EST), with follow-up responses due Friday by midnight (EST). For further clarification, see the Discussion Group Rubric on the course webpage.

Breaking Down the Assignments: Thematic Paper (due Friday, March 29) – 25% of final mark

The paper should be about 10 pages long, double spaced, in 12-point font (either Times Roman or Arial) with 1-inch margins.

The call of Abram in Genesis 12:1-7 is pivotal passage for understanding the OT. Your paper will trace the development of the theological themes that develop from this passage and contain the following sections:

- 1) In the first section discuss Genesis 12:1-7 and outline the Lord's promises to Abram.
- 2) In the second section discuss how the promises from Genesis 12:1-7 are both prefigured/anticipated in Genesis 1-11 *and* how they are developed in Genesis 12:8-50:26.
- 3) In the third section, discuss how each promise from Genesis 12:1-7 is further developed and expanded in Exodus-Deuteronomy.
- 4) In the fourth section, discuss how each promise from Genesis 12:1-7 is further developed in Joshua-2 Kings.
- 5) In the fifth section, discuss how each promise from Genesis 12:1-7 is further developed in the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther.
- 6) In the sixth section, discuss how each promise from Genesis 12:1-7 relates to the NT
- 7) In a concluding section, explain why an understanding of the promises of Genesis 12:1-7 are important for understanding the teaching of the OT. Make sure to also discuss how they are important to the life of a Christian in the 21st century.
- 8) For #'s 2-6 above, make sure to give an example of how each promise from Genesis 12:1-7 is exhibited in that section of biblical books (i.e. you do not have to show how each promise

is developed in each book, but how each promise is developed in that section or cluster of books).

This paper follows the theological development of an OT theme. Thus, for each of the sections above, make sure to show how the promises of Genesis 12:1-7 are developed. The development of the promises may be seen by considering questions like:

- Are the promises applied in the same way in every section of the Bible?
- Are the promises reinterpreted or reapplied to new contexts not foreseen in the original passage?
- What sorts of changes may be seen in how these promises are applied in subsequent biblical passages?

The primary purpose of this thematic study is for you to independently synthesize and trace the development of this theme throughout the OT corpus. Make sure to give concrete examples from the various biblical books you refer to in order to illustrate your point. You may use your course textbooks as resources, but make sure to footnote all of the instances when you either quote from or use ideas that come from these books. However, you do not need to use any other books in order to successfully complete this assignment. It may be helpful to use an online Bible search engine to look for examples of the promises from Gen 12:1-7 in the biblical books you will be studying. One helpful resource is: <https://www.blueletterbible.org>.

Due: Friday, March 29, 2019

Breaking Down the Assignments: Bible Reading Journal (due Friday, April 5) – 15% of final mark

Students are expected to read the assigned Bible readings (see the course outline of the syllabus for weekly Bible readings) in a modern translation (Not a paraphrase like the Living Bible or The Message). Students will indicate the date of the completion of the readings, and the thoroughness with which the readings were completed. Thus, for each week students will indicate:

- 1) The percentage of assigned Bible reading completed **as well as**,
- 2) Whether the text was read using one of the following evaluative categories:
 - i. very carefully and thoughtfully,
 - ii. carefully,
 - iii. focusing on the main ideas,
 - iv. skimming the text or
 - v. the pages turning in the fan (really not at all)
- 3) For each week's Bible readings, students will reflect upon how one key theme found in that reading relates to another part of the Old Testament and/or how life in the 21st century church (250 words max for each reflection (a total of 10 reflections for the semester).

You can do this by opening a word processor file, recording all of the relevant information, and then saving it so that the entire, completed file can be e-mailed to the professor on (or before) Friday, April 5, 2019.

Breaking Down the Assignments: Final Exam (due Thursday, April 11-Friday, April 12) – 25% of final mark

Your final exam will take place on Quercus. I will give you a 48-hour window within which to write the exam: April 11-12. Within this window, once you start the exam, you will be given a time limit in which you must complete the exam (no more than 2 hours, likely less). You can only take the exam one time, and once you start the exam you must complete it during that session. It is highly recommended that you do not take the exam over a Wifi connection since that connection may drop out. Take the final exam using a wired connection if at all possible.

The exam itself will be closed book and closed note; that is, you cannot use anything but your brain to take the exam. This is an honour system: you are in seminary writing an exam on the Old Testament; don't cheat. And do not help your friends who might be writing the exam after you. The goal of the exam is to test your introductory knowledge of the content of the Old Testament, not to stump you. Focus will be on key themes, major characters, important events, and significant places. If you pay attention to your readings and lectures (take good notes) and study for the exam, you should do just fine. The exam will be broken down into several parts:

- (1) (40%) A multiple-choice portion based on the content of the Old Testament. Questions will mostly be pulled from your readings of Hess (*The Old Testament*).
- (2) (15%) A matching portion based on biblical methods. I will list several OT methodologies you encountered this term. You will match these with a biblical text, and then tell me why that method would be helpful for that text in 2-3 sentences. I want to see that you know what the method is and why it is particularly suited to the study of that passage.
- (3) (10%) A True/False section based upon your Bible reading. I will not be looking for a detailed knowledge of every book, but a general understanding of key biblical figures and events. These questions will be drawn from your reading of the biblical text.
- (4) (35%) A short answer portion of the exam will cover key ideas from the class lectures.

