

BIBL 6120-I1-S2-09
Robert L. Hubbard, Jr.
Office: Nyvall N-36
10/22/09

Phone: 773-244-6246
rhubbard@northpark.edu

INTERPRETING OLD TESTAMENT I: SYLLABUS

Description

This course covers the content and message of the Old Testament's Torah and Former Prophets and their application to Christian living today. At the end of the course, the student will:

1. Know the content of the books concerned including their major events, characters, and themes.
2. Understand the main critical problems with which scholars have wrestled in studying the books and for which they have proposed solutions.
3. Know the basic cultural background which illumines the meaning of the books.
4. Appreciate the literary beauty of the OT and the relevance of that appreciation for Bible study.
5. Know how to use the principles of hermeneutics and inductive Bible study methods for ministry.
6. Know the main narrative literary genres and how properly to interpret them.
7. Love the OT and its unique contribution to the life and theology of the Church.

Textbooks

Required

The Holy Bible (preferably a modern translation)

William W. Klein, Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard, Jr., *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (2nd ed.; Nashville: Nelson, 2004). ISBN 785252258 [IBI]

J. Gordon Wenham, *Exploring the Old Testament Vol. 1: A Guide to the Pentateuch* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2008). ISBN 0830825517 [EOT1]

J. Philip Satterthwaite and J. Gordon McConville, *Exploring the Old Testament Vol. 2: A Guide to the Historical Books* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2008). ISBN 0830825525 [EOT2]

R.L. Hubbard, Jr. "OT Faith I Lecture Notes" (posted on Blackboard under each week's folder).

Recommended

Y. Aharoni and M. Avi-Yonah, *The Macmillan Bible Atlas* (rev. ed.; New York: Macmillan, 1977).

D.A. Baker and B.T. Arnold, eds., *The Face of Old Testament Studies* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999). (on reserve; below listed as FOTS)

S. Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art in the Bible* (JSOTS 70; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989), 218-237 (on reserve)

John Bright, *A History of Israel* (4rd ed.; Philadelphia: Westminster, 2000).

Hope Cain Felder, *The Stony Road We Trod: African American Biblical Interpretation* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991).

Terence E. Fretheim, *Deuteronomistic History* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1983).

_____. *The Pentateuch* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996).

John Goldingay, *Models for Interpretation of Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995).

Justo L. González, *Mañana: Christian Theology from a Hispanic Perspective* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1990).

Isaac Kalimi, *Ancient Historian: Studies in the Chronicler, His Time, Place and Writing* (Studia Semitica Neerlandica 46; Assen: Van Gorcum, 2005). (On reserve; below listed as *Ancient Historian*).

Thomas W. Mann, *The Book of the Torah* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1988).

Iain Provan, Tremper Longman III, and V. Philips Long, *A Biblical History of Israel* (Louisville: Westminster, 2003).

G. von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, Vol I (New York: Harper & Row, 1962).

Letty M. Russell, ed., *Feminist Interpretation of the Bible* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1985).

R.S. Sugirtharajah, ed., *Voices from the Margin*. *Interpreting the Bible in the Third World* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1991).

Phyllis Trible, *Texts of Terror* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984).

R. Norman Whybray, *Introduction to the Pentateuch* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995).

V. Wimbush, ed., *African Americans and the Bible* (New York: Continuum, 2000).



Office Hours (Nyvall 33A)

The professor welcomes extended conversations with students outside of class. He will gladly arrange appointment times, but the following are his office hours this term:

Tuesday 1-3:30 p.m. & Wednesday and Thursday 3-5 p.m.

Course Procedures

Blackboard: the course has a course site on Blackboard available. The professor will post lecture notes and announcements there, and exams will be taken there. Some inductive Bible study groups may choose to meet in a chat room there.

Threaded Discussion: Students are required to **read postings** on the Discussion Board and **add at least two significant postings each week**. A “significant posting” is one which contributes additional thoughts or objections, raises new questions, gives an alternative opinion or

perspective—in other words, items that advance the discussion rather than simply applaud or critique it. The instructor will judge the significance of postings.

Inductive Bible Study: students are required to participate in a small group chosen by the instructor. The group is expected to meet at least twice outside of class to discuss each of the three assigned biblical passages and to submit a written report. For details, see below and the instructions posted on Bb under Course Information.

Chat Room: If it become necessary, the instructor reserves the right to schedule an occasional plenary chat room to clarify course matters. To the extent possible, it will be scheduled at a time convenient for class members.

Exams: students are expected to meet deadlines listed below for papers and examinations or to arrange an alternate option with the instructor in advance. If an emergency intervenes, the student should notify the instructor as soon as possible.

Course Requirements

Students are required to complete the following requirements for the class:

- a. **Assigned Readings.** Students are expected to complete all of the required readings listed above. They are required to report in writing the percentage of the reading completed (point value: **50 points**). **Due: reported on the final examination.**
- b. **Inductive Bible Study Group.** Students must participation in at least 90% of the discussions of a small group in order to share in the grade its three written reports earn (point value: **75 points** [25 points per paper]).
- c. **One Short Paper.** Students may select a paper from among the options discussed below (point value: **50 points**).
- d. **Midterm and Final Examinations** (point total: **200 points** [100 points per exam]).
- e. **Discussion Board.** Students must complete the assignment described above (point value: **112 points**).
- f. **All course work** must be completed by 5:00 p.m. on **Tuesday May 4th**.

The student's final grade is based upon the percentage of the total points possible (375) that the student earn. The grade scale is as follows:

A = 348 (93%)

B = 322 (86%)

C = 292 (78%)

D = 262 (70%)

Short Paper Options (Choose One)

The required short paper is a research paper 5-7 pages in length (double-spaced). It will be graded on both the quality of its composition (e.g., conciseness, use of proper English, use of

inclusive language) and of its contents. The types of papers include the following:

A. Comparison Paper. In this paper, the student: 1) describes the observed similarities and differences between the parallel texts; 2) discusses possible literary explanations—the student’s own and those of scholars—that account for the similarities and differences; 3) interprets the purpose (i.e., literary, ideological, theological, etc.) for the uniqueness of each; 4) draws any conclusions concerning the relationship (if any) between the two texts. Texts to be compared include:

1. The creation accounts in Genesis 1 and the Egyptian and Babylonian creation accounts
2. The flood accounts in Genesis 6-9 and the Gilgamesh Epic
3. The Ten Commandments in Exodus 20:1-17 and in 34:1-28
4. The Ten Commandments in Exodus 20 and in Deuteronomy 5
5. The report concerning Manasseh in 2 Kings 21:1-18 and in 2 Chronicles 33:1-20

Paper Due Date: Monday of week 6.

B. Negotiated Alternative. The instructor will consider any proposal for an alternative short paper submitted by a student in writing no later than the last class of Week 3. **Paper Due Date: Monday of week 6.**

C. Short Exegesis Paper. This is a written report on the student’s exegesis of a specific short passage of scripture from a list provided by the instructor. As a minimum, it must cover the following: 1) the main point of the original text; 2) a homiletical “big idea” (i.e., the main point for a sermon); 3) an application for Christian living today; 4) a bibliography. Students who’ve studied Hebrew or who can use computer programs (e.g., BibleWorks, Logos, etc.) are encouraged somehow to integrate a brief word study in their report. **Paper Due Date: Monday of week 9.**

D. Book Report. This paper is an interaction paper on a book or section of a book (300 pages minimum length) from the “Recommended” readings in the syllabus. In content, the paper must: 1) summarize the book’s contents; 2) critique it (i.e., discuss its strengths and weaknesses); 3) draw out its relevance for ministry. **Due Date: Monday of Week 11.**

E. Bibliography: Besides the Brandel Library catalogue, a good OT bibliography is available at <http://www.denverseminary.edu/dj/articles2006/0100/0101.php>