

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Degree Completion Program
Springfield, Missouri

BOTD 530 OLD TESTAMENT INTRODUCTION
June 10-July 18, 2004
(4 Credits)

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COURSE SYLLABUS

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides a survey of the Old Testament, its literature, history, geography, and culture as well as introducing the students to the critical issues and methodologies pertaining to the study of the Old Testament.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to introduce the student to the Old Testament text and world. Attention is given to the historical, literary, geographical, and cultural settings and aspects of the Old Testament. Students are introduced to modern critical theories and issues relating to the study and interpretation of the Old Testament. The introductory nature of the course will focus particularly on the historical and literary structure of the Old Testament. The first week of the course will expose the student to the importance and challenge of archaeology for the study of the Old Testament as well as the process of canonization that led to the production of the Old Testament cannon. The second week the discussion will shift to discussing the Torah (five books of Moses) where the student will analyze the Creation and Flood stories within their Ancient Near Eastern context. The central historical events within Israelite history are examined, the covenant with Abraham and the Exodus from Egypt. The student will discuss and evaluate the historical and archaeological issues and challenges related to the story of the patriarchs and the Exodus story as well as the theological significance of these events within Israelite thought and history. The third week outlines and explains the development of the nation of Israel from a tribal confederation into a united monarchy. The student will evaluate the differing scholarly theories and biblical presentations of the conquest of the land of Canaan as recorded in the books of Joshua and Judges. Moreover, the student will examine and assess the development of the monarchy and the careers of Israel's first three kings. The fourth week will examine the history of the divided monarchy and the downfall of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah and the subsequent Babylonian exile and the return to Jerusalem. The student will explain the role of the prophets and their theological significance within ancient Israelite society. The final week of the course will discuss the literary genres of poetry and wisdom literature. The student will compare and

assess these genres with their counterparts within the Ancient Near East. At the completion of this course the student will:

1. Trace and assess the history of the Israel and its literary product, the Old Testament, within the context of the Ancient Near East, its history and literature.
2. Assess the Old Testament as a literary work of Israelite culture and understand the interaction between story and history as related in the biblical text.
3. Integrate the importance of geographical setting for a contextual understanding of the Old Testament texts.
4. Explain the literary genres of the Old Testament (narrative, prophetic, poetry, and wisdom literature) within their ancient contextual setting with the intent of summarizing them within the modern world.
5. Analyze the importance and challenges of archaeological discovery for interpreting the history of Israel and the biblical narratives.
6. Explain and assess various modern scholarly theories and methods for studying the Old Testament.

III. TEXTBOOKS

REQUIRED TEXTS

V. H. Matthews and J. C. Moyer, *The Old Testament: Text and Context* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997) [OT:TC]

Yohanan Aharoni, *The Land of the Bible: A Historical Geography* (2d. ed.; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1979) [ALB]

V. H. Matthews and D. C. Benjamin, *Old Testament Parallels: Laws and Stories from the Ancient Near East* (2d. ed.; New York: Paulist Press, 1997) [OTP]

James M. Monson, *Regions on the Run: Introductory Map Studies in the Land of the Bible* (Rockford, Illinois: Biblical Backgrounds Inc., 1998) [MRR]

Steven P. Lancaster and James M. Monson, *Regional Study Guide: Introductory Map Studies in the Land of the Bible* (version 2.6; Rockford, Illinois: Biblical Backgrounds Inc., 1999-2003) [RSG: available at www.bibback.com or http://bibback.com/PDF/Guide_current.pdf]

IV. COURSE PROCEDURES

- Lectures over scheduled course topics
- Class discussions over specific topics derived from the course schedule
- Individual reading and research
- Weekly research projects

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Class Participation:

Students should plan to attend each class session. The attendance policy of the seminary will be followed in this class. Due to the nature of this course, it is essential for students to attend class having completed the assignments **beforehand**. Students should come to class prepared to ask questions and make comments contributing to the positive learning environment of the class. Failure to complete assignments prior to class will affect the learning environment of the class. Know that lectures and discussion topics will assume the completion of the assigned work. Finally, the learning experience of this class is a shared experience. You are here to learn, so feel free at anytime to ask questions of the instructor.

Timely completion of scheduled readings:

This course is designed to cover a lot of material in a brief amount of time; therefore, it is essential that reading assignments be completed prior to their assigned class. Your reading of the material beforehand will enable class times to develop into group discussions and critical assessments built upon our shared knowledge gained through foundational readings. **Important: readings assigned for the first week are to be completed before coming to the first class.**

Weekly Papers:

Every week each student will write a five-page paper upon an assigned topic. These papers will be short research papers on the selected topic. The papers are to be five pages in length. Students will be penalized for papers shorter or longer than five pages. The papers should follow Turabian style for papers (see Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (6th ed.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996)). Footnotes are to be used instead of endnotes. Each paper should include a minimum of five sources: two sources must be journal articles and three are to be books (Bible Dictionaries, Encyclopedias, or Commentaries **do not** count toward the three book sources—they may be used for the papers after the three book requirement has been met). Papers should be double-spaced in 12 point Times New Roman font. Each paper should have 1” to 1.25” margins on the sides with 1” top margins. A cover sheet should include the student’s name, course number, title, etc. Every paper should simply be stapled in the upper left hand corner—*please do not put papers in folders or plastic slipcovers*. There is no paper assigned for the first week of class

Map Materials:

One of the principle goals of this course is to help the student place the Old Testament within its historical and physical context. In order to facilitate the student’s understanding of how the geography of the Bible directly bears upon our understanding of its history and message, the materials developed by Jim Monson, *Regions on the Run* and

the *Regional Study Guide*, will be used. The *Regional Study Guide* provides the instructions for marking the maps that are in the packet with the *Regions on the Run*. All maps are to be completed and turned in by the end of the course. Completion of the maps is worth 125 points. In the schedule, the student will notice map assignments in weeks one, three and four. While the maps are not technically due at the class times, the lectures and discussions will assume the completion of the assigned map materials for that particular week. **All map materials are due on the final class period (7-08-04)—NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED.**

Final Project:

For the final project, the student will prepare a five-week curriculum either for a sermon series or to be taught in an adult Sunday school setting that integrates the geography and history of the Old Testament world with the biblical text. The student will select five biblical passages (narratives, prophecies, or poetry—you can mix them up over the five-week course) that he or she will prepare for preaching or teaching. Assignments are to be submitted in a three-ring binder notebook and should include: outlines of each week's lesson (including biblical text, geographical and historical setting, and exegesis), visual aides (transparencies, PowerPoint presentations, pictures, etc.), and a brief (three to four page) description of each lesson integrating historical and physical setting with exegetical understanding and theological application. This curriculum needs to be coherent and develop in a logical progression. This final project is worth 200 points. Any questions should be directed to the instructor.

VI. GRADING

The student's grade will be determined based upon the following:

Class Participation	50 points
Weekly Papers (4)	400 points
Map Assignment	125 points
<u>Final Project</u>	<u>200 points</u>
TOTAL	775 points

VII. COURSE OUTLINE AND OBJECTIVES

WEEK	ASSINGNMENTS	OBJECTIVES
<p style="text-align: center;">WEEK 1</p> <p>Geography, Archaeology, Canon, and Canonization</p>	<p>Read: <i>OT:TC</i>: 1-42; <i>ALB</i>: 3-104; <i>MRR</i> 5-11; and <i>RSG</i> 3-19 (maps)</p>	<p>At the conclusion of this week, you will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the major geographical regions of the land of Israel. 2. Explain the geographical (and theological) role of Israel within the physical setting of the Ancient Near East (the Land Between). 3. Discuss the issues and challenges relating to the study and use of archaeology and the Old Testament. 4. Analyze the process of canonization and assess how the Old Testament canon came into being. 5. Describe the principle modern theories for studying the Old Testament: Textual Criticism, Historical Criticism, Source Criticism, Form Criticism, and Redaction Criticism.
<p style="text-align: center;">WEEK 2</p> <p>Creation, Covenant, Exodus, and Wilderness Wanderings</p>	<p>Read: <i>OT:TC</i>: 43-67; <i>ALB</i>: 133-209; and <i>OTP</i>: 3-51, 86-93, 101-113, 124-126, 129-133, and 137-140// Genesis 1-4, 6-9, 16-19, 21-34, and 37-45; Exodus 1-4, and 20-22; Numbers 13, 16, 20, and 22-24; and Deuteronomy 1-8, 21-22, and 34</p> <p>Paper Topics: (pick one)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compare the Genesis Creation account with the <i>Enuma Elish</i> Creation account. Evaluate the worldview of the ancient Israelites as compared to that preserved in the <i>Enuma Elish</i>; be sure to discuss the views of the God(s), humans, and their interactions. 	<p>At the conclusion of this week, you will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evaluate the Genesis accounts of Creation and the Flood within the larger context of the Ancient Near East. 2. Discuss the historical and archaeological challenges of the Patriarchal narratives. 3. Summarize the theological significance of the life of Abraham and the Exodus and Sinai covenant for ancient Israelite society. 4. Describe the two theories regarding the “early” and “late” dates for the Exodus, and evaluate these two theories. 5. Assess the significance of the

VII. FINAL THOUGHTS

Students should feel free to contact the instructor with questions, ideas, or concerns throughout the duration of this class. I am here to help you, so please let me know how I can help you make this experience an enriching time.