



On-Campus Course Syllabus

OTS 101 L01.A

Old Testament Survey I

Fall 2019

Class Information

Day and Time: Tuesday, 8:00 am — 10:30 am

Room Number: E208

Contact Information

Instructor Name: Dr. Joel Reemtsma

Instructor Email: jreemtsma@criswell.edu

Instructor Phone: 907.690.1423

Instructor Office Hours: NA: meet by appointment

Course Description and Prerequisites

A study of the books of Genesis through Esther with an emphasis on the interpretive problems of the Pentateuch and the tracing of God's providential dealings with Israel from the time of the patriarchs to Israel's return after the Babylonian exile.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course you should be able to:

1. Know the content, background, and significance of Hebrew legal and historical writing;
2. Articulate the occasion, theme and structure of each book;
3. Describe the literary genres present and explain their significance;
4. Explain biblical theological themes that constitute each book and how they contribute to the theology of the Old Testament as a whole; and
5. Apply scriptural truths from these books to contemporary situations.

Required Textbooks

The Holy Bible. Use your preferred version as long as it is a translation, not a paraphrase.

Hill, Andrew E., and John H. Walton. *A Survey of the Old Testament*, third edition. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009 (978-0310280958)

Course Requirements and Assignments

A. Bible Reading (20%)

You are responsible to read Genesis through Esther in a Bible version of your choice. If you minister in another language, you may read the text in that language (e.g., Spanish, Korean, Russian). You will report the percentage of reading in CANVAS weekly. It is also acceptable to listen to an audio recording of the Bible, but you must do this while you are able to pay attention (not sleeping, watching TV, playing video games, reading/studying something else, etc.).

B. Quizzes (30%)

There will be 12 quizzes over the reading from Hill and Walton (HW) to help prepare students for class and hold them accountable for the material. These quizzes are multiple choice, and they will be posted on Canvas for completion during the week. Quizzes are due by the beginning of the class for which that reading has been assigned. They are open-book and open-note, but beware, they are timed! The lowest two quiz grades will not be included in your average. Please refer to the course schedule for the assigned chapters of Hill and Walton (HW) in order to prepare for the quizzes.

C. Exams (30%)

There will be two exams: a mid-term and a final. They will be based primarily on the class notes and discussion and to a lesser extent on the textbook. A study guide with all potential questions will be distributed prior to the exams. The dates of the exams are as follows:

Mid-Term Exam	Oct 8
Final Exam	Dec 10

D. Application Paper (20%)

Students will submit an application paper in two stages: a draft and a final paper. The draft will be worth 5% of the overall grade, and is designed to help students achieve their full potential in the final draft (worth 15% of the overall) by receiving early feedback. The grading rubric for each will be the same (provided separately by the professor). For the assignment, select one of the following topics for an application paper of 5-7 double-spaced pages. Students are encouraged to pick a topic early, so that they can take specific notes in class related to their project, as we will be discussing each one throughout the term.

Draft Paper due October 29.

Final Paper due December 3.

1. The Rule of God on Earth

Explain the continuities and discontinuities between God's work in Creation, his interaction with Israel, and his interaction with the Church. Discuss the great historical acts of God and the symbolism that accompanies them. How has God demonstrated a constant purpose through history? How have his means and method changed? Incorporate key OT texts in your investigation and exposit them. Identify some major implications for the Christian life.

2. The Hebrew Worldview and Its Ancient Antitheses

Explain the major differences between a Yahwistic Hebrew worldview and an ancient pagan worldview (Canaanite, Mesopotamian, Egyptian). Identify superficial similarities and essential

differences. (You may want to consult Oswalt's *The Bible Among the Myths*, though we will discuss these things in class.) What Israelite practices, events, or writings best illustrate the differences between the Hebrew and pagan outlook? In what form(s) do both of these worldviews manifest today? How should Christians defend against a pagan mindset?

3. Applying the Law

Describe some of the benefits of law in general for society and the individual; next, add benefits specific to the Mosaic law. Name and explain some similarities and differences between the Law of Moses and other ancient legal systems. What theological insights does the Law of Moses provide? What is the relationship of the Christian to the Law of Moses (you may need to review Romans 6–8, probably with a commentary in hand)? Given that relationship, how can the Law prove useful for Christians today? Apply some specific texts from the Law to Christian life.

4. The Lessons of Israel's History

Narrate the history of Israel from Exodus to Exile in broad strokes, relating its development to its geographic and socio-political context. What does this history tell us about God's nature, purpose, and methods? What does it tell us about people? What does it tell us about how the world works and why things happen the way they do? Take these theological and social insights and apply them to the Church today. What lessons emerge?

Class Attendance

Students are responsible for enrolling in courses for which they anticipate being able to attend every class session on the day and time appearing on course schedules, and then making every effort to do so. When unavoidable situations result in absence or tardiness, students are responsible for acquiring any information missed. Professors are not obliged to allow students to make up missed work. Per their independent discretion, individual professors may determine how attendance affects students' ability to meet course learning objectives and whether attendance affects course grades.

Grading Scale

A	93-100	4.0 grade points per semester hour
A-	90-92	3.7 grade points per semester hour
B+	87-89	3.3 grade points per semester hour
B	83-86	3.0 grade points per semester hour
B-	80-82	2.7 grade points per semester hour
C+	77-79	2.3 grade points per semester hour
C	73-76	2.0 grade points per semester hour
C-	70-72	1.7 grade points per semester hour
D+	67-69	1.3 grade points per semester hour
D	63-66	1.0 grade point per semester hour
D-	60-62	0.7 grade points per semester hour
F	0-59	0.0 grade points per semester hour

Incomplete Grades

Students requesting a grade of Incomplete (I) must understand that incomplete grades may be given only upon approval of the faculty member involved. An "I" may be assigned only when a student is currently passing a course and in situations involving extended illness, serious injury, death in the family, or employment or government reassignment, not student neglect.

Students are responsible for contacting their professors prior to the end of the semester, plus filing the appropriate completed and approved academic request form with the Registrar's Office. The "I" must be removed (by completing the remaining course requirements) no later than 60 calendar days after the grade was assigned, or the "I" will become an "F."

Academic Honesty

Absolute truth is an essential belief and basis of behavior for those who believe in a God who cannot lie and forbids falsehood. Academic honesty is the application of the principle of truth in the classroom setting.

Academic honesty includes the basic premise that all work submitted by students must be their own and any ideas derived or copied from elsewhere must be carefully documented.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- cheating of any kind,
- submitting, without proper approval, work originally prepared by the student for another course,
- plagiarism, which is the submitting of work prepared by someone else as if it were his own, and
- failing to credit sources properly in written work.

Institutional Email Policy

All official college email communications to students enrolled in this course will be sent exclusively to students' institutional email accounts. Students are expected to check their student email accounts regularly and to respond in an appropriate and timely manner to all communications from faculty and administrative departments.

Students are permitted to setup automatic forwarding of emails from their student email accounts to one or more personal email accounts. The student is responsible to setup and maintain email forwarding without assistance from college staff. If a student chooses to use this forwarding option, he/she will continue to be responsible for responding appropriately to all communications from faculty and administrative departments of the college. Criswell College bears no responsibility for the use of emails that have been forwarded from student email accounts to other email accounts.

Disabilities

Criswell College recognizes and supports the standards set forth in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and similar state laws, which are designed to eliminate discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities. Criswell College is committed to making reasonable accommodations for qualifying students, faculty, and employees with disabilities as required by applicable laws. For more information, please contact the Student Services Office.

Intellectual Property Rights

Unless otherwise specifically instructed in writing by the professor, students must neither materially nor digitally reproduce materials from any course offered by Criswell College for or with the significant possibility of distribution.

Resources and Support

Canvas and SONIS: Criswell College uses Canvas as its web-based learning tool and SONIS for student data.

Students needing assistance with Canvas should contact the Canvas Help Support line at (844) 358-6140. Tech support is available at this number, twenty-four hours a day. Students needing help with SONIS should contact the Campus Software Manager at studenttechsupport@criswell.edu.

Student Services: The Student Services Office exists to foster and encourage success in all areas of life—physical, intellectual, spiritual, social, and emotional. Students are encouraged to reach out for assistance by contacting the office at 214.818.1332 or studentservices@criswell.edu. Pastoral and certified counseling services are also available to Criswell students. Appointments are scheduled through the Dean of Students, at deanofstudents@criswell.edu.

Wallace Library: Students can access academic resources and obtain research assistance by visiting the Wallace Library, which is located on campus. For more information, go to the library website, or email the Wallace Library at library@criswell.edu.

Writing Center: Students are encouraged to consult with writing tutors to improve and enhance their skills and confidence by practicing techniques of clear and effective writing. To consult with a tutor, students can visit the Writing Center located on the first floor near the Computer Lab, or they can schedule an appointment by emailing writingcenter@criswell.edu or calling 214.818.1373.

Course Outline/Calendar

Date	Topic/Event	HW Chapter(s) Due
Aug 20	Intro to OTS101, Intro to the OT	
Aug 27	Intro to Pentateuch	Chs. 1–3
Sept 3	Genesis	Ch. 4
Sept 10	Exodus	Ch. 5
Sept 17	Leviticus–Numbers	Chs. 6–7
Sept 24	Deuteronomy	Ch. 8
Oct 1	Joshua–Judges	Chs. 11–12
Oct 8	Mid-Term Exam	
Oct 15	Historical Overview	Chs. 9–10
Oct 22	1 Sam	Ch. 14
Oct 29	2 Sam (Draft Application Paper Due)	

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Date	Topic/Event	HW Chapter(s) Due
Nov 5	1–2 Kings	Ch. 15
Nov 12	1–2 Chronicles	Ch. 16
Nov 19	Ezra-Nehemiah	Ch. 17
Nov 26	<i>Fall Break (No Class)</i>	
Dec 3	Ruth-Esther (Final Application Paper Due)	Chs. 13; 18
Dec 10	Final Exam	

Selected Bibliography

- Archer, Gleason L., Jr. *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*. New edition. Chicago: Moody Press, 2007.
- Arnold, Bill T. *Encountering the Old Testament: A Christian Survey*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015.
- Chisholm Jr., Robert. B. *Interpreting the Historical Books: An Exegetical Handbook*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2006.
- Dillard, Raymond B., and Tremper Longman, III. *An Introduction to the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994.
- Gower, Ralph. *The New Manners and Customs of Bible Times*. Chicago: Moody, 1987.
- Gignilliat, Mark S. *A Brief History of Old Testament Criticism: From Benedict Spinoza to Brevard Childs*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012.
- Hess, Richard S. *The Old Testament: A Historical, Theological, and Critical Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016.
- Hamilton, Victor, *Handbook on the Pentateuch: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy*. 2nd Ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005.
- Hoerth, Alfred J., Gerald L. Mattingly, and Edwin M. Yamauchi, eds. *Peoples of the Old Testament World*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1999.
- House, Paul R. *Old Testament Survey*. Nashville: B & H Academic, 2007.
- Kaiser, Walter C. *A History of Israel: From the Bronze Age through the Jewish Wars*. Rev. ed. Nashville: B & H Academic, 2017.
- King, Philip J. and Lawrence E. Stager. *Life in Biblical Israel*. Library of Ancient Israel. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2001.
- Kitchen, K. A. *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.
- LaSor, William Sanford, David Allan Hubbard, and Frederic William Bush. *Old Testament Survey*. 2nd edition. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996.
- Longman III, Tremper and Raymond B. Dillard. *An Introduction to the Old Testament*. 2nd Ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006.
- Merrill, Eugene H., Mark F. Rooker, and Michael A. Grisanti. *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament*. Nashville: B & H Academic, 2011.
- Merrill, Eugene H. *Kingdom of Priests*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987.
- Oswalt, John N. *The Bible Among the Myths: Unique Revelation or Just Ancient Literature?* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009.
- Schultz, Samuel J. *The Old Testament Speaks*. 4th edition. New York: Harper and Row, 1990.
- Soulen, Richard N. and R. Kendall Soulen. *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*. 4th Ed. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2011.
- Walton, John H. *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament: Introducing the Conceptual World of the Hebrew Bible*. 2nd Ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018.