



Online Course Syllabus
OTS 101 W.I.LI
Old Testament Survey I: Genesis - Esther
Winter 2019

Contact Information

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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 his people Israel from the time of the patriarchs to Israel's return after the Babylonian exile.

Course Objectives

- A. Locate the major regions, topographical features, countries, bodies of water, and cities on maps of Israel and the ancient Near East;
- B. Identify and describe major biblical characters and events;
- C. Describe the occasion, theme, and structure of each book;
- D. Explain how each book fits into the historical context of its location on the OT timeline and in the history of redemption;
- E. Identify and describe the basic interpretative and critical issues, including authorship and date, in the books;
- F. Apply biblical principles from the OT to contemporary situations.

Required Textbooks

- A. The Holy Bible.
- B. Hill, Andrew E., and John H. Walton. *A Survey of the Old Testament*. 3d ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009. (ISBN 9780310280958)

Recommended Reading

Copan, Paul. *Is God a Moral Monster? Making Sense of the Old Testament God*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2011. (ISBN 9780801072758)

Course Requirements and Assignments

- A. **3 exams.** The exams come from the lectures and notes (not the textbook) and are in multiple-choice, true-false, and matching format. You have access to the tests on Blackboard through your student portal. Tests are late after 12:00 midnight at the end of the due date (see the schedule below). You are permitted 60 minutes for each one. They are **not open-book exams**:
1. Canon, geography, history, Genesis
 2. Exodus through Judges
 3. Ruth through Esther
- B. **Discussion Boards:** Student-to-student discussions on Blackboard over three issues from this part of the OT. The complete descriptions and rubric are available on Blackboard. Original threads are due on Thursday night, responses by Sunday night.
- C. **Bible Reading.** Read Genesis through Esther in a version of your choice and report the reading on the Bible Reading Log available on Blackboard. If undistracted this reading takes approximately 25 hours. Approximately four chapters make one percent of the assignment.

If you have read the entire OT in the past year, you may opt to read Copan's book and write a 5-page, double-spaced summary of the more significant concepts you learned. The due date is the same as for the Bible reading,

- D. **Reading Hill and Walton.** Read pages 21-369 and report the reading on the Textbook Reading Report available on Blackboard.
- E. **OT characters list.** Compose a list of 50 OT characters found in Genesis through Esther along with a short description of them. Instructions are on Canvas.
- F. Write a double-spaced, five- to seven-page **research paper** on a select OT topic. See the list of topics on Canvas. Follow the guidelines for format in the *Criswell College Manual of Style (2007)*, which is on Canvas (and at www.criswell.edu/academics/Wallace Library/research resources/Criswell College Manual of Style) (CCMS). Use the footnote/bibliography reference method, not the parenthetical reference/works cited method.

The assignment is to be done in the following three stages:

1. Statement of TOPIC and presentation of BIBLIOGRAPHY
2. Provision of introductory matter:
 - a. THESIS statement,
 - b. REASON for the importance or interesting nature of the topic, and
 - c. OUTLINE
3. FINAL PAPER

For the grading of the paper, see the rubric on Canvas.

Notice the following requirements:

1. Approval of the topic by the teacher.
2. Topic must relate directly to the books of the Bible we are discussing in class.
3. No less than five pages of text in length, no more than seven pages of text.
4. Include both a title page and bibliography page—neither one counts toward the five-page minimum.
5. Sources must include at least:
 - a. Six scholarly sources,
 - b. One of the six sources must be a Bible dictionary or Bible encyclopedia,
 - c. At least four of the sources must have a publishing/copyright date after 1970, and
 - d. At least one of the sources must be a journal article.
 - e. Note that the Bible is assumed, and is not one of the six sources.
 - f. Do not use magazines, newspapers, websites, or any online source other than those accessed through the Criswell Wallace Library databases.
6. Note that the introduction to the paper must be no more than one-half page and include:
 - a. a statement of the subject of the paper (about what you are writing);
 - b. a statement of why you are writing on this subject (why it is important/significant/interesting);
 - c. a brief statement of either the thesis you are seeking to prove or the question you are trying to answer—this may be the same as the statement of the subject above, and, if so, need not be repeated;
 - d. a brief statement, in one or two sentences, of how you are going to cover the topic in the paper (i.e., a brief outline of the stages/sections of the paper; e.g., “After first presenting the different interpretations of the Angel of the Lord in the Old Testament and the evidence for each interpretation, this study evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of each interpretation and then shows which interpretation is most defensible”; or, “The study discusses topographical features of the land of Canaan from Galilee in the north to the Negev in the south”; or “The discussion to follow first recapitulates the critical arguments against the existence of David, then recounts the archaeological evidence for David, and finally shows how archaeology refutes the critical arguments.”).
7. Regarding the body of the paper:
 - a. Most papers follow one of the following structures—and this relates to the proposed structure mentioned in the “how” section of the introduction above. You may find that one of these organizational methods is best for your subject:
 - (1) Cause-and-effect (here is what happened A and here were the results B and this is how we know A really caused B, and here is what happened X and here were the results Y and this how we know X really caused Y);
 - (2) geographical sequence (territory/city/country/region A, then the adjacent territory/city/country/region B, then the adjacent...);
 - (3) chronological sequence (A happened, then afterwards B happened, then C happened, etc.);
 - (4) comparison-and-contrast (this is A and see how it compares/contrasts to B, then this is C and see how it compares/contrast to D, then this is E...);
 - (5) exposition (the text says ABCDE, and A means this, and B means this, and C means...; or people used to do ABCDE, and here is what A was and why they did it, here is what B was and why they did it ...).
 - b. You must interact with the sources of information you use. Report what you learn from the sources, use the information, cite the sources in footnotes, draw conclusions from it, and if appropriate critique it. See the rubric.
8. The paper must have a conclusion section, which might be as short as one paragraph or as long as two. The conclusion must include at least a and b:
 - a. a brief summary concisely stating the two or three major points you made in the body of the paper;
 - b. your conclusion (i.e., the statement of your thesis, how and how well you have proved it; or, the answer to your question and how fully it has been answered);

- c. a practical, theological, or philosophical application of your study; and
 - d. mention of areas of further study that surfaced in the research.
9. Select your topic from the list here (which is duplicated in the Research Paper Topics list on Canvas):
- a. Survey the different interpretations of the Creation account in Genesis
 - b. The Flood, was it local or universal (worldwide)?
 - c. Survey the covenants in the OT
 - d. Canaanite mythology (stories and/or descriptions of the gods/goddesses; e.g., Baal, Asherah, Ashtoreth, Anat)
 - e. ANE warfare (e.g., armor, weapons, armies, strategies)
 - f. Survey of the history of Assyria (or Babylon, Persia, Philistia, or Egypt)
 - g. Why ancient Jewish books were omitted from the canon
 - h. Family structure and relationships
 - i. ANE beliefs about death and the afterlife
 - j. The names of God in the Pentateuch
 - k. Archaeology or Jericho (or Jerusalem, Hazor, Megiddo, or Tell Dan)
 - l. Geography of Canaan
 - m. Personal history and accomplishments of Sennacherib (or Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Xerxes, or Artaxerxes)
 - n. Survey of one set of ancient literature: Dead Sea Scrolls, Nuzi Tablets, Nippur Tablets, Amarna Letters, or Code of Hammurabi

Attendance

Students are responsible for enrolling in courses for which they anticipate being able to participate weekly during the weeks appearing on course schedules, and then making every effort to do so. Such participation may include the following: completing quizzes or exams; emailing faculty or class members as part of an assignment; discussion board posting or response; turning in an assignment; or other communication reflecting ongoing learning in the course. When unavoidable situations result in non-participation, 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 participation affects students' ability to meet course learning objectives and whether participation affects course grades.

Grading Scale

A	97-100	4.0 grade points per semester hour
A-	93-96	3.7 grade points per semester hour
B+	91-92	3.3 grade points per semester hour
B	88-90	3.0 grade points per semester hour
B-	86-87	2.7 grade points per semester hour
C+	83-85	2.3 grade points per semester hour
C	80-82	2.0 grade points per semester hour
C-	78-79	1.7 grade points per semester hour
D+	75-77	1.3 grade points per semester hour
D	72-74	1.0 grade point per semester hour
D-	70-71	0.7 grade points per semester hour
F	0-69	0.0 grade points per semester hour

The following are the proportions of your grade for each type of assignment

1. Tests	40%
2. Discussion Boards	15%
3. Bible Reading	5%
4. Hill & Walton	10%
5. Character list	10%
6. Research paper	
a. Topic and bibliography	4%
b. Introductory matters	2%
c. Final paper	14%

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

In order to ensure full class participation, any student with a disabling condition requiring special accommodations (e.g., tape recorders, special adaptive equipment, special note-taking or test-taking needs) is strongly encouraged to contact the instructor at the beginning of the course, or if a student has a learning disability, please inform the professor so assistance can be provided.

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

Blackboard and CAMS: Criswell College uses Blackboard as its web-based learning tool and CAMS for student data. Students needing assistance with either of these resources should contact the Campus Software Manager at cbutler@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 Jeff Campbell, at jcampbell@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, students can email the Wallace Library at library@criswell.edu or call 214.818.1348.

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.

Distance Education

Students participating in courses through Distance Education, with or without live interaction, must complete the academic requirements for those courses with the integrity and commitment necessary to participate in and benefit from all of the exercises provided by the professor for learning the subject matter of the course. Therefore, credit for Distance Education courses is the same as credit for courses taken on campus.

Distance education students can access information about Criswell College's Wallace Library at http://www.criswell.edu/current_students/library/. The Wallace Library manual is available at http://www.criswell.edu/current_students/library/library_handbook/.

Course Outline/Calendar

Week	Dates	Content	Reading Assignments HW is Hill & Walton	Written Assignments
1	Dec 16 – 19	Canon, geography, history	HW: chapters 1 – 5 Lecture: Canon, geography, history	Discussion Board 1: Geography
2	Dec 20 – 22	Genesis	HW: chapters 6 – 7 Lecture: Genesis	Test 1: Canon through Genesis
3	Dec 23 – 26	Exodus – Leviticus	HW: chapters 8 – 9 Lecture: Exodus - Leviticus	Paper: topic and bibliography; Discussion Board 2: Leviticus and Sacrifice
4	Dec 27 – 29	Numbers – Deuteronomy	HW: chapters 10 – 11 Lecture: Numbers – Deuteronomy	Paper: introductory matters
5	Dec 30 – Jan 2	Joshua – Judges	HW: chapters 12 – 14 Lecture: Joshua – Judges	Test 2: Exodus – Judges
6	Jan 3 - 5	Ruth – 2 Samuel	HW: chapters 15 – 16 Lecture: Ruth – Samuel	Discussion Board 3: Davidic Covenant
7	Jan 6 – 9	1 Kings – 2 Chronicles	HW: chapters 17 – 18 Lecture: Kings – Chronicles	Research Paper
8	Jan 10 – 12	Ezra – Esther	HW: chapters 19 – 20 Lecture: Ezra-Nehemiah and Esther	Character List; Reading Reports; Test 3: Ruth – Esther

Selected Bibliography

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- Kaiser, Walter C. *A History of Israel: From the Bronze Age through the Jewish Wars*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1998.
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- Wegner, Paul D. *The Journey from Texts to Translations: The Origin and Development of the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1999.
- Wood, Leon. *A Survey of Israel's History*. 2d edition. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986.
- Yamauchi, Edwin M. *Persia and the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1990.
- Young, Edward J. *An Introduction to the Old Testament*. 2d edition. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964.