

SYLLABUS FOR TRS 200 (8/20/11)
INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT

Information Relevant to the Course

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Email: jensen@cua.edu. Information and links for course can be found on CBA web page (cba.cua.edu); see last item (JJclass) under "Additional Links" (or, more directly, cba.cua.edu/web.cfm). The class meets 11:10-12:00 in Pangborn G024; it is a 3-credit course.

The procedure is lecture with ample discussion. Office hours: usually available M-W-F, 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM, and most of Tuesday; other times by appointment.

The course is an introduction to the books and theologies of the Old Testament. It will cover the Pentateuch, deuteronomic history, the Prophets, and Wisdom literature. Examines methods for interpreting the Old Testament, especially in the light of the Second Vatican Council's decree on Revelation.

At the conclusion of the course the student should be able to read any part of the Old Testament with understanding and profit, should have knowledge of the principal stages of Israel's history, of the principal teachings of the prophets and the wisdom books, be able to deal with problems relating to biblical inspiration and inerrancy, be able to answer objections based on a faulty interpretation of the Bible.

The textbook is J. Jensen, God's Word to Israel (2nd ed.; Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1986), ISBN 0-8146-5289-1, available at CUA bookstore.

In addition, each student is expected to have her/his own Bible and to bring it to class; it should be one of the reliable translations (e.g., New American Bible [NAB], New Revised Standard Version [NRSV], or Revised Standard Version [RSV]); **not** Today's English Version [TEV], CEV, Today's Good News, etc., for reasons to be explained in class. The New International Version [NIV], although a good translation, cannot be used because it does not contain the deuterocanonical books. If you use the NRSV or other Protestant translation, be sure it is an edition that includes "The Apocrypha." For additional recommended reading. See the end of this syllabus.

Academic honesty (see CUA website at this link:

<http://policies.cua.edu/academicundergrad/integrityprocedures.cfm>) will be rigidly observed by all.

Daily preparation for class is required by way of careful and thoughtful reading of the text and the Scripture passages assigned for each class (see below). From time to time quizzes will be given in class, and take-home exercises may be given.

Weighting of various components of course:

daily work (class participation, assignments exams, quizzes):	30%
midterm	20%
research report	20%
final exam	30%

Daily quizzes will normally be of the "objective" sort; midterm and final exams will be essay questions, in which Bibles may (will need to be) used, but no other written or electronic helps will be permitted (see above on academic honesty).

The research report will be due two weeks before the last class, on an OT topic chosen by the student with professor's approval, and will be in the format of a scientific paper according to an accepted style manual, with citations in footnotes or endnotes (not in the body of the text). Detailed instructions and possible topics will be given out in class.

Policy on attendance: class participation (and therefore attendance) is given a high priority. If a student expects to be absent, he/she should inform the professor beforehand; when this is not possible, the reason for absence should be explained promptly afterward. For every absence beyond five, 3 points will be subtracted

from the final grade. (Exempted from this last will be any absences required for sporting events and illness, provided the student brings an excuse in writing from the appropriate coach, faculty advisor, or doctor.)

N.B. The following sheets indicate the material to be covered, the order in which it will be covered, and suggestions for background reading; they do not necessarily indicate what will be covered each period. Note that while the text, God's Word to Israel, 2nd edition (GWI), lists "Recommended Scripture readings" at the beginning of many chapters, the readings listed are, in practice, too extensive for most to manage; therefore this syllabus gives recommended Scripture readings of a more modest scope at the beginning of most sections [in brackets], beginning with #7. While the assigned pages from GWI for each section are required reading, the other titles (given in parentheses) at the end of each section are recommended, but, unless otherwise noted, not required reading. The "Focus Points" suggest areas in the text for particular attention. In any given class you may be asked to write a paragraph or more on the "Question for Discussion" given for the material to be covered.

I. INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS

- 1) Orientation. Aim and scope of the course; requirements; procedure. Fundamentalist and Catholic approaches. Diversity of contents and theologies in OT. Biblical translations: qualities wanted. Discussion of some modern Bible translations (NAB, RSV [& OAB], NRSV, NEB, REB, NJB, NIV). Examples of modern interpretative technique. Literary criticism. (Ronald Witherup, Biblical Fundamentalism, esp. 49-64.) (**Question for discussion: What do you hope to get from this course on the Old Testament?**)
- 2 & 3) Slide lectures. Geographical and historical overview of biblical lands and the OT period. Topography of the Holy Land. Techniques of modern archaeology. Selected sites: Jerusalem, Tell Dan, Qumran, Masada, etc. (GWI, 22-28; H. G. May, Oxford Bible Atlas; 3rd ed. [1984]; A. Mazar, Archaeology, 1-26.)
- 4) Concluding introductory questions: revelation, inspiration, inerrancy. The canon of Scripture. Interpretation of Scripture. Literary forms. Historical-critical method. Church documents relevant to Scripture study (available on the class webpage). (GWI, 7-21, 259-75; Vatican II Dogmatic Constitution, "Dei Verbum" [see webpage link]; "Divino Afflante Spiritu" [see link]; R. E. Brown and S. M. Schneiders, "Hermeneutics," NJBC 71 [1146-65].)

FOCUS POINTS: 1) literal sense and more-than-literal sense; 2) Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish Canons of Scripture; 3) Vatican II and the truth of Scripture. (Discussion question: What do you think of the claim that NASA has proved there is a missing day in elapsed time, thereby verifying the account in Joshua 10 of the sun standing still?)

II. THEOLOGIES OF THE PENTATEUCH

- 5) Composition of the Pentateuch. Importance of the Pentateuch in the Jewish and Christian traditions. Evidence of complexity as indication of multiple authorship. Earliest form of documentary hypothesis ("theory of documents") and development; role of Wellhausen; later modifications. Chronology and dating of the source-traditions. The four source-traditions and their theologies. (GWI, 29-42; G. von Rad, Genesis, 13-30; D. Coogan, The Old Testament, 21-29.)

FOCUS POINTS: 1) Indications of diversity of authorship of Pentateuch; 2) Diverse characteristics of J and P; 3) Contents of source-traditions: ancient or recent? (Discussion question: Does the suggestion that Moses did not write the [whole] Pentateuch impinge on belief in inspiration?)

- 6) Primeval history (I). [Gen 1:1-2:4a] Overview of pentateuchal materials and place of Genesis 1-11 therein. Question of sources available to the author and literary form employed. Character of myth; role of symbolism. Overview of materials in Genesis 1-11. Detailed discussion of first creation account (Gen 1:1-2:4a). The artificial character of the literary schema and conclusions therefrom. Ancient Semitic cosmology. Positive teaching and polemical aspects. Comparison with Enuma Elish. (GWI, 43-51; **required reading: J. L. McKenzie, "Myth**

and the OT," Myths and Realities, 182-200 [link on webpage]; "Enuma Elish" [see webpage link].)

FOCUS POINTS: 1) What is the character of myth? 2) The scheme of a week in which the first creation account is cast; 3) Should we try to reconcile this account with what science teaches? (Discussion questions: Is myth alive and well today? Is the "Big Bang" theory of the origin of the universe compatible with God as Creator?)

7) Primeval history (II). [Gen 2:4b-3:24] Second creation account and the fall (Gen 2:4b-3:24). Problem of evil for religious systems in general; the dualist solution; approach to the problems in the fall narrative. OT anthropology and OT concept of death. Presentation of woman in the narrative. Disruption of human community and of cosmic order occasioned by fall. Contrast with life/death teaching of Epic of Gilgamesh. (GWI, 51-58; J. L. McKenzie, "Literary Characteristics of Genesis 2-3," Myths and Realities, 146-81; J. J. Collins, Intro. to Hebrew Bible, 67-77.)

FOCUS POINTS: 1) What we do mean when we speak of "evil"? 2) What theme(s) pervade(s) this account of creation and fall? 3) How does the concept of God in this account differ from that of the Mesopotamian deities? (Discussion question: visualize a world without sin and the effects of sin and describe what it would be like.)

8) Primeval history (III). [Genesis 4-11] From the fall to the tower of Babel. Cain & Abel and early generations according to J; antediluvian patriarchs (early generations according to P); the flood; Mesopotamian parallels. Theology of the Yahwist (J) as seen in these narratives and hints of future hope. (GWI, 58-63; M. Coogan, The Old Testament, 31-42; J. Collins, Hebrew Bible, 78-81; Flood story from "Epic of Gilgamesh" [link on webpage].)

FOCUS POINTS: 1) Cain and Abel story as sequel to the fall; 2) The astounding ages of Genesis 5; 3) Overall thrust of primeval history. (Discussion question: What would you say of attempts to locate Noah's ark on top of Mount Ararat?)

9) Patriarchal narratives [Genesis 12; 15-16; 21-22; 24; 27; 29; 39-46] Theme of the promise. The literary artistry and interest of these narratives. The Joseph cycle [not covered in any detail in the text: draw on your own insights]. Narrative as drama and vehicle for religious teaching. Ways in which divine providence shapes events; interplay of human and divine. (GWI, 65-72; J. Collins, Hebrew Bible, 83-104.)

FOCUS POINTS: 1) The dominant theme [the promise] and how it shows up; 2) How do the patriarchal narratives prepare for Israel's later history? 3) A basic difference between Genesis 12-36 and 37-50; 4) What principles do you see illustrated in these narratives? 5) What is the aim or goal of the story as preparation for the exodus? (Discussion Questions: Which of the wives [Sarah, Rebekah, Leah, Rachel] is the strongest character? What development do you see in the personalities of Joseph and Judah through these chapters?)

10) Exodus and the Sinai event (I). [Exodus 1-3; 5:1-6:13; 11-12; 14-15] Formulation and transmission of exodus traditions: the importance of the liturgy for this. The exodus and Israel's unique historical perspective. Problems of historicity. Signs and wonders. (GWI, 74-82; M. Coogan, The Old Testament, 85-103; J. Collins, Hebrew Bible, 107-119.)

FOCUS POINTS: 1) God's self-revelation; 2) Import of the plague narratives. (Discussion question: Why does the Christian Easter celebration contain so many references to the Passover of Exodus?)

11) Exodus and Sinai event (II). [Exodus 19-24; 32-34] Covenant as analogy. Covenant ceremony and renewal. Israel's legislative tradition. The law codes (collections); import of all of Israel's legislation being situated in Sinai context. Comparison with other ancient Near Eastern legislative traditions; common features and unique features. (GWI, 82-91; M. Coogan, The Old Testament, 105-118; M. Coogan, Hebrew Bible, 121-136; M. Coogan, The Oxford History of the Biblical World [henceforth Oxford History], 58-88.)

1) Concept of covenant; why analogy? 2) Covenant as presented by Pedersen; 3) Israelite legislation:

what features does it have in common with other ancient Near Eastern legislation? how is it unique? (Discussion question: Is it proper to refer to marriage as a covenant? How is it comparable to covenant?)

III. THEOLOGY OF DEUTERONOMY & DEUTERONOMIC HISTORY

12) The book of Deuteronomy: structure and contents. [2 Kings 22; Deuteronomy 1-5; 7; 12; 20; 28:1-14] Literary setting. The origin of Deuteronomy and its traditions. Who were the deuteronomists? Deuteronomy and deuteronomistic (or deuteronomistic) history: relationship of Deuteronomy to rest of Pentateuch and to the books which follow Deuteronomy. Main features of deuteronomistic theology. (GWI, 100-109; M. Coogan, Hebrew Bible, 159-173.)

FOCUS POINTS: 1) Relationship of Deuteronomy to rest of Pentateuch; 2) Spirit of Deuteronomy; 3) How is it related to books that follow? (Discussion question: What are the advantages/disadvantages of the "unity of sanctuary" that the deuteronomists advocated so strenuously?)

13) Settlement in the Holy Land. [Judges 1; Joshua 1-6; 9-10; 24] Historical problems. Biblical data. Extra-biblical data. Habiru, the Amarna Letters, and Mendenhall's theory. The Book of Joshua as "epic history"; Holy War concept; deuteronomistic theology in action. (GWI, 110-118; J. Collins, Hebrew Bible, 183-200; M. Coogan, The Old Testament, 191-209; A. Mazar, Archaeology, 328-355; Oxford History, 90-126.)

FOCUS POINTS: 1) The historical problem; 2) Israel's interaction with Canaanites; 3) The Book of Joshua as part of deuteronomistic history. (Discussion question: In terms of modern principles of ethics, would we justify the Israelite invasion of the land of Canaan?)

14) The period of the Tribal League. [Judges 3:7-30; 4-5; 5-7; 13-14; 16] Historical background of the period. The Book of Judges: early traditions and deuteronomistic framework; deuteronomistic teaching. Narrative art in these early stories. (GWI, 119-21; J. Collins, Hebrew Bible, 203-214; M. Coogan, The Old Testament, 211-226; Oxford History, 132-162.)

FOCUS POINTS: 1) Stories of tribal heroes and deuteronomistic framework; 2) Stories of Deborah, Gideon, and Samson; 3) Import of the appendices. (Discussion question: try to list all the points on which you can contrast Deborah and her story with Samson and his story.)

15) From Tribal League to monarchy. [1 Samuel 1; 3; 4; 8; 9-10; 15; 31] Philistine military advance and failure of Tribal League to meet it. Israel's resistance to monarchy: ideology of kingship in the ancient Near East. Samuel, Saul, and David. (GWI, 123-25; J. Collins, Hebrew Bible, 217-226; Oxford History, 165-203.)

FOCUS POINTS: 1) Significance of Philistine pressure on the events of the period; 2) Saul's rise and fall; 3) David's success and failure. (Discussion question: authors often give Saul as an example of a "tragic hero." Is this an accurate assessment? Why?)

16) David as king. [1 Samuel 16-17; 19:1-17; 24; 2 Samuel 2:1-7; 5; 6-7; 11-15] Saul and David; David as King. Divine approval: the dynastic oracle. Throne Succession Narrative as history and as literature. (GWI 125-27; R. N. Whybray, The Succession Narrative, 19-47; M. Coogan, The Old Testament, 231-264; J. Collins, Hebrew Bible, 226-242; Oxford History, 206-240.)

FOCUS POINTS: 1) Hidden providence? 2) David's character; 3) Artistry of the Succession Narrative. (Discussion question: Is David's character truly complex? How many facets can you point to that make it complex?)

17) Judgment on and destruction of the monarchy. [1 Kings 1-2; 9; 11-12] 1-2 Kings as deuteronomistic composition; sources. Deuteronomistic theology of history: covenant and response. Diverse aims of first and second editions of deuteronomistic history. Theme of hope. (GWI, 137-47; J. B. Pritchard, Solomon & Sheba; J. Collins, Hebrew Bible, 245-257; M. Coogan, The Old Testament, 268-285.)

FOCUS POINTS: 1) Solomon's reign, success and fall (reasons); 2) Criteria for judgment on kings; 3) goal of deuteronomistic history. (Discussion question: Contrast Solomon's character with those of Saul and David.)

IV. NARRATIVE AS VEHICLE OF RELIGIOUS TEACHING

18) Books of Ruth and Tobit. [Ruth 1-4; Tobit 2-3; 5; 7-8; 11] Not covered in textbook, but good material is found in the introductions to these books in the NAB or any good study Bible. Importance of Ruth: illustrates rewards for family loyalty, relates to treatment of a Moabite (untypical in this case), gives an example of functioning of "levirate law" (cf. Deut 25:5-10; Genesis 38), and introduces David's genealogy. Tobit tells of Jews living in the diaspora (dispersion), God's answer (in dramatic form!) to prayers of those in need, contains folkloric elements. (On these book, briefly, see M. Coogan, The Old Testament, 525-536; J. Collins, Hebrew Bible, 529-548.)

FOCUS POINTS: 1) family loyalty; 2) unselfish and selfish behavior; 3) different ways God rewards fidelity. (Discussion questions: 1) How does the story of Ruth relate to the question of Israelite-Moabite relations in general? 2) What is meant by "folkloric elements" in Tobit?)

19a) Book of Judith. [Judith 1-2; 5; 8; 10-13] Not in textbook, but see note above, #18. Question of historical verisimilitude. Matter of Israel's bravery in peril. Importance of Melchior's speech. Judith introduced only in chapter 8. Her stratagem and success.

FOCUS POINT: In what way is Melchior's speech central to the story? (Discussion questions: 1) Why is the question of "historical verisimilitude" raised? 2) How does its answer help us interpret the thrust of the story? 3) In what way can it be said that Judith "uses" Melchior's speech?)

19b) Book of Esther. [Esther 1-9] Not in textbook, but see note above, #18. Story of Jews living in the diaspora (dispersion). Deadly peril to their race. How a Jewish heroine delivers them. [Note: Greek & Hebrew versions differ.]

FOCUS POINTS: God, prayer, never mentioned; why would that be? Are there unlikely elements in the story? (Discussion question: How is Haman an interesting character study? How many example of "reversals" can you find in the story?)

V. THEOLOGIES OF THE PROPHETS

20) The prophetic vocation. [Book of Jonah 1-4; 1 Samuel 10:1-8; 1 Kings 17-19; 21-22; 2 Kings 2; 10] Origins and development of prophetism. Ecstatic groups; early individual prophets. Difference between early and classical (canonical) prophets. The prophetic vocation. Samuel, Nathan, Ahijah, Elijah, and Elisha: political and religious aspects of their ministries. (GWI, 148-57; G. von Rad, The Message of the Prophets, 9-101.)

FOCUS POINTS: 1) Difference between early and classical prophets; 2) Accomplishments of early prophets; 3) Deficiencies? (Discussion question: What sort of judgment would you pass on Samuel and Nathan and their interventions in the workings of the monarchy?)

21) Amos. [Amos 1-9] Why treated first. Historical background: reign of Jeroboam II and Israel's situation. Prosperity and oppression of the poor. Amos and social justice; hypocritical worship. Day of the Lord. (GWI, 158-63; J. Collins, Hebrew Bible, 286-295; G. von Rad, The Message of the Prophets, 102-109.)

FOCUS POINTS: 1) Relationship of each prophet's message to his historical circumstances; 2) What is "social justice"? 3) Prophet of God's justice? 4) False securities. (Discussion question: Give some examples of ways in which Amos' message is relevant today.)

22) Hosea. [Hosea 1-6; 11; 13; 14] His marriage and its import. Baal worship and fertility cult; essential differences between Yhwh and Baal. Restoration and new order: the "messianic pattern." (GWI, 163-67; F. I. Andersen & D. N. Freedman, Hosea; von Rad, The Message of the Prophets, 110-17; J. Collins, Hebrew Bible, 296-304.)

FOCUS POINTS: 1) Comparison with Amos; 2) Marriage: fact or allegory? 3) Prophet of God's mercy? (Discussion question: How does Hosea's message relate to today's world?)

23)Isaiah (I). [Isaiah 1:1-16; 5-8; 10:1-15; 20; 30:1-5] Historical situation: Assyrian power and its impact. Three crises in Isaiah's career: 1) the Syrian-Israelite attack on Judah ["Syro-Ephraimitic War"]; 2) Judah's temptation to join Ashdod's revolt; 3) Judah's revolt under Hezekiah. Vocation narrative. Isaiah and social justice. Demand for faith and its relation to "political policy." (GWI, 167-72; von Rad, The Message of the Prophets, 118-44; J. Collins, Hebrew Bible, 307-321.)

FOCUS POINTS: 1) Relationship of message to historical circumstances; 2) Who are "the wise" who oppose him? (Discussion question: Isaiah's demand to Ahaz was to renounce both submission to Assyria and appeal to Egypt for help. Was he being unrealistic, utopian in this?)

24)Isaiah (II). [Isaiah 7-8; 9:1-6; 11:1-9; 2:1-4] Future hope. Connection between weal and woe in Isaiah: response to Yhwh's torah. Development of royal messianism since dynastic oracle. Isaiah on future king and pilgrimage of the nations. (GWI, 172-74; J. L. McKenzie, "Royal Messianism," Myths and Realities, 203-31.)

FOCUS POINTS: 1) Immanuel oracle; 2) Characteristics of future hope; What will have changed? (Discussion question: Is it more correct to say that Isaiah foretold the coming of Jesus Christ or that in Jesus we can see things foreshadowed in the words of Isaiah?)

25)Jeremiah (I). [Jeremiah 1-2; 5:1-11; 7:1-20; 16:1-9; 20; 27:1-11] Historical background: decline of Assyria and rise of Babylon; Josiah's reform; revolts by Jehoiakim and Zedekiah against Babylon. Vocation narrative. Temperament and personality; struggles with leaders and people. His "confessions." (GWI, 177-84; von Rad, The Message of the Prophets, 161-88; J. Collins, Hebrew Bible, 334-347; M. Coogan, The Old Testament, 366-376.)

FOCUS POINTS: 1) Reasons for unpopularity of message; 2) Import of his "confessions." (Discussion question: Jeremiah is sometimes called "the weeping prophet." Does this seem a proper characterization?)

26)Jeremiah (II). [Jeremiah 3:11-18; 29:1-15; 31-32] Message of hope. Groups to which message of hope was directed. Qualities of restoration; emphasis on "heart." New covenant oracle.

FOCUS POINTS: 1) Groups to whom promise directed and why; 2) Importance of heart for Jeremiah; 3) New Covenant oracle. (Discussion question: How does the Christian dispensation relate to the "new covenant" oracle of Jeremiah?)

27)Ezekiel (I). [Ezekiel 1:1-3:15; 4:1-8; 9:1-10:15; 16:1-43] Judah in exile. Ezekiel's vocation; his personality and temperament. Division of his ministry and of the book. Bizarre aspects: his allegories and visions. Different use of the bridal imagery (from Hosea and Jeremiah). (GWI, 187-94; von Rad, The Message of the Prophets, 189-205; J. Collins, Hebrew Bible, 353-374.)

FOCUS POINTS: 1) Organization of book and correspondence to phases of his ministry; 2) "Jerusalem must fall": why?

28)Ezekiel (II). [Ezekiel 34:1-16; 36:21-32; 37:1-13; 38-39; 47] Teaching on individual retribution; qualities of the restoration; "utopian vision" in 40-48. Prophecies against Gog and relevance to "popular" apocalyptic writings, such as "Left Behind" series.

FOCUS POINTS: 1) Future hope: Ezekiel's oracles of hope. 2) Gog oracles in historical context in dealing with passages such as Gog oracles. (Discussion question: Are there any good reasons or justification for the harshness discernible in many of Ezekiel's oracles?)

29)Deutero-Isaiah (I). [Isaiah 40-41; 43; 45; 52:1-10; 54] Rise of Cyrus and Persia as historical background for his message. Skill as a poet; innovative use of Israel's theological traditions. Yhwh's word as force in history. Consoling message of restoration. New exodus theme. New use of bridal theme. Goal of restoration: Yhwh's enthronement in Jerusalem. (GWI, 194-206; R. Clifford, Fair Spoken and Persuading: An Interpretation of Second Isaiah; J. L. McKenzie, Second Isaiah [Anchor Bible 20]; G. von Rad, The Message of the Prophets, 206-28; J. Collins, Hebrew Bible, 380-389.)

FOCUS POINTS: 1) Connection between historical background and message; 2) Power of God's word; 3) New exodus theme. (Discussion question: To what extent can we justify Deutero-Isaiah's conviction about the word of the Lord being a force in history?)

30) Deutero-Isaiah (II). [Isaiah 43; 45; 42:1-4; 49:1-6; 50:4-9; 52:13-53:12] Polemic against pagan gods; explicit monotheism. Israel's vocation. Servant of the Lord oracles and their interpretation.

FOCUS POINTS: 1) Earliest expressions of explicit monotheism; 2) Place of the nations in Deutero-Isaiah's thought; 3) Israel's election and vocation revisited; 4) Servant of the Lord. (Discussion question: Ought we to relate description of the Servant of the Lord to the career of Jesus?)

31) Restoration period. [Ezra 1; 3; 4:1-5; 7:1-5, 25-26; Nehemiah 2; 8:1-6; 11:1-2; Haggai 1; Zech 6:9-15] History of the period. Problems for the returning exiles: squatters, hostile neighbors, famine, identity crisis. The split with the Samaritans. Teaching, work and reforms of Haggai and Zechariah. (GWI, 208-17; J. Collins, Hebrew Bible, 427-442; M. Coogan, The Old Testament, 401-408, 419-436; D. Bossman, "Ezra's Marriage Reform: Israel Redefined," Biblical Theology Bulletin 9 [1979] 32-38; Oxford History, 276-315.)

FOCUS POINTS: 1) Relevant historical background; 2) Problems faced by the returnees; 3) Ezra's and Nehemiah's reforms; 4) A new kind of prophetic intervention. (Discussion question: What do you think of the policy of Ezra and Nehemiah of insisting that men reject the "foreign wives" that they have married?)

VI. THEOLOGIES OF WORSHIP AND WISDOM

32) The songs of Israel. [Psalms 1; 2; 8; 73; 98; 103; 110] Worship as response. Modern study of the psalms: light on poetic structure (rhythm and parallelism); form criticism. Types of psalms. Import of royal psalms and wisdom psalms. (GWI, 219-29; J. Collins, Hebrew Bible, 461-480; M. Coogan, The Old Testament, 546-468; C. Stuhlmüller, Psalms [OT Message 21 & 22; A. Weiser, The Psalms.)

FOCUS POINTS: 1) Contributions of modern psalm study; 2) Varieties of Israel's prayer; 3) Particular themes: royal psalms and Israel's messianic hope. (Discussion question: What do you think is the best use that can be made of the psalms whether in public or private prayer?)

33) Wisdom (I). [Proverbs 1-3; 8-9; Sirach 1; 6; 24] International character of wisdom movement; writing systems and scribal schools. Israel's relationship to wisdom in Egypt and Mesopotamia. Role of Solomon. The instruction and the proverb. Ethical content. Some samples of Egyptian wisdom. (GWI, 232-35; M. Coogan, The Hebrew Bible, 468-475; Roland E. Murphy, The Tree of Life [New York: Doubleday, 1990], 1-13.)

FOCUS POINTS: 1) Wisdom circles in Israel and ancient Near East; 2) Nature and acquisition of wisdom. (Discussion question: The instruction given to those who were to administer justice was notably slanted in favor of the poor and weak. Do you think the same is true in our culture?)

34) Wisdom (II): the proverb collections. [Proverbs 10; 20; 22:17-23:35; Sirach 4:1-19; 26:1-18; 38:1-23] Ancient Near Eastern wisdom in general and specifically Israelite traits. The question of "whence comes wisdom" and its solution(s). The problem of retribution and the traditional answer. (GWI, 235-38; R. Murphy, Tree of Life, 15-32, 65-81.)

FOCUS POINTS: 1) Conservative and practical nature of wisdom in these books; 2) Ethical standards; 3) Connection between good conduct and prosperity. (Discussion question: What is the relationship of a college education to the acquisition of wisdom?)

35) Wisdom (III): the problem books. [Ecclesiastes 1-4; 8:10-9:5; 14; Job 1-3; 21; 31; 38; 42] "Liberal" approach to problem of retribution. Questioning of Qoheleth; his quest. Job's problems: God's justice; sense of estrangement. (GWI, 239-44; J. Collins, Hebrew Bible, 505-526; M. Coogan, The Old Testament, 479-495; R. Murphy, Tree of Life, 33-63, 83-96.)

FOCUS POINTS: 1) Does "good conduct > prosperity" stand up to empirical observation? 2) Does the Book of Job solve the problem of God's justice? (Discussion question: Does the question of innocent suffering find a solution in Job or any other book? Is there any answer we can give to it?)

36) Wisdom (IV). [Psalm 37; 73; Daniel 12; 2 Maccabees 7; Wisdom 1-5] Review of Psalms 37 and 73. Judgment and afterlife in Book of Wisdom; preparation in Daniel and 2 Maccabees. (GWI, 244-47; J. Collins, Hebrew Bible, 589-595; M. Coogan, The Old Testament, 518-522.)

FOCUS POINTS: 1) Preparation in Psalm 73, Ecclesiastes, and Job? 2) Hebrew anthropology and resurrection; 3) Contribution of the Book of Wisdom. (Discussion question: Does the belief in an afterlife solve the problem of suffering? Does it at least alleviate it?)

VII. ESCHATOLOGY AND APOCALYPTIC

37) The Greek period (I). [1 Maccabees 1-2; 4; 2 Macc 2:19-32; 3] Advent of Alexander the Great and end of the Persian period; Alexander, apostle of Greek culture. Persecution under Antiochus IV and the Maccabean uprising. 1 & 2 Maccabees; their diverse literary characters. (GWI, 249-52; C. Collins, Hebrew Bible, 573-579; M. Coogan, The Old Testament, 499-511; A. Saldarini & A.-J. Levine, "Antiochus IV and the Maccabean Crisis, Oxford Companion, 346-394; Oxford History, 317-350.)

FOCUS POINTS: 1) Alexander's policy of hellenization; 2) Antiochus IV's enforcement of the policy its and threat to Jewish identity; 3) Diverse Jewish reactions; 4) Hanukkah: history and cult. (Discussion question: By the end of this period the Jewish political situation was totally different from the time of David and Solomon. Is it still possible to see their history being guided by the hand of God?)

38) The Greek period (II). [Daniel 1-2; 3:1-24, 91-97; 6; 7-9] Book of Daniel and relation to Maccabean period. Characteristics of apocalyptic. Apocalyptic and eschatology. The message of the book; discussion of selected passages. (GWI, 252-57; J. Collins, Hebrew Bible, 553-572; M. Coogan, The Old Testament, 536-543.)

FOCUS POINTS: 1) Distinction between historical context and literary context of the book; 2) Central message of the book; 3) Diverse ways of presenting it in the narratives and in the visions; 4) Character and aim of apocalyptic. (Discussion question: Is apocalyptic the only way questions of the end time can be addressed? Can this mode of expression speak to us today?)

RESERVE LIST TRS 200, Section 1 (Fall, 2011)

INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT

On reserve in Central Reserve, 1st floor, Mullen Library:

B. W. Anderson, *Understanding the Old Testament* (4th ed.; Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1986)

E. F. Campbell & D. N. Freedman, eds., *The Biblical Archeologist Reader*, 3 (Garden City: Doubleday, 1970)

Bruce Chilton, et al., eds., *The Cambridge Companion to the Bible* (2nd ed.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997)

John J. Collins, *Introduction to the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004)

Michael Coogan, *The Old Testament: A Historical and Literary Introduction to the Hebrew Scriptures* (New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006)

_____, et al., eds., *Scripture and Other Artifacts* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1994)

J. L. McKenzie, *Myths and Realities* (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1963)

Amihai Mazar, *Archaeology of the Holy Land* (New York/London/Toronto: Doubleday, 1992)

R. E. Murphy, *The Psalms are Yours* (Mahwah: Paulist, 1993)

J. B. Pritchard, ed., *The Ancient Near East: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958)

G. von Rad, *The Message of the Prophets* (New York: Harper & Row, 1967)

The following useful titles are on reference in the Rel.St/Phil Library, Mullen 314

R. E. Brown, et al., *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*

Harper's Bible Commentary

Harper's Bible Dictionary

J. L. McKenzie, *Dictionary of the Bible*

The New Catholic Encyclopedia (2nd edition)

Oxford Bible Atlas

The Anchor Bible Dictionary (six volumes)