



OTEN 5351 Interpreting the Old Testament I: Genesis—Esther

**New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
Biblical Studies Division**

Fall 2022

Semester-Length Internet Course

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Mission Statement

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Leavell College prepare servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission.

Course Description

This course introduces the content and major interpretive issues of Genesis–Esther. The course covers literary, historical, and theological contexts as well hermeneutical principles related to reading the OT genres of law and historical narratives. This course complements OTEN5352 OT Interpretation II: Job–Malachi.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. The student will be able to understand the development and position of the historical books of the OT (Authorship, Date, Content, Analysis, etc.).
2. The student will define significant OT themes, characters, nations, and historical events (and their relationship to the NT whenever appropriate).
3. The student will be able to discuss the basic structure and content of the historical OT books.
4. The student will demonstrate comprehension of the literary structure (macro & micro) of the historical books of the OT as literature.
5. The student will identify selected methods currently employed in the study of the historical books of the OT & understand the implications of the various theories.
6. The student will be able to discuss a variety of issues related to the historical books of the OT.

Textbooks

Required Texts for Classroom Discussion:

Hess, Richard. *The Old Testament: A Historical, Theological, and Critical Introduction*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016.

Motyer, Alec. *A Christian's Pocket Guide to Loving the Old Testament*. Scotland, Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications, 2015.

Any modern translation of the Old Testament.

For the final required book, you must choose between one of the following books listed below. The **first** book is preferred for students seeking **vocational ministry** positions. The **second** book is preferred for all students majoring in **counseling**.

Longman, III, Tremper. *Old Testament Essentials: Creation, Conquest, Exile and Return*. Downers, Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2014.

Or

Green B. Joel and Jacqueline E. Lapsley. Editors. *The Old Testament and Ethics: A Book-By-Book Survey*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013.

Highly Recommended Resources:

Mariottini, Claude F. *Rereading the Biblical Text: Searching for Meaning and Understanding*. Wipf & Stock, 2013.

Mitchell, Eric and Archie England. *Old Testament Survey: A Student's Guide*. 2nd edition. Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2007.

Ryken, Leland. *How Bible Stories Work: A Guided Study of Narrative Literature*. Wooster, OH: Weaver Book Company, 2015.

Any audio Bible app (such as Bible.is)

Course Teaching Methodology

This course will utilize the following methodologies:

1. Given the introductory nature of this course, lecture presentations will be the primary teaching methodology.
2. Readings from the Old Testament and the textbooks will be used to supplement the student's knowledge gained during classroom lectures.
3. Weekly readings questions assignments completed by the student in order to develop and/or enhance the student's research and critical thinking skills.

Course Requirements

1. Read the required **Old Testament books** in preparation for the forthcoming lecture.
2. Read your **Hess textbook** for the forthcoming lecture.
3. Complete **online quizzes** on the Blackboard shell for this course. The quizzes will cover the Bible reading as well as questions from the textbook. Quizzes will be available weekly beginning after class until 11 pm on Friday. *There will be a practice quiz available for the first full week of classes. Each student MUST complete this quiz in order to show proficiency in using the Blackboard quiz system.* Two quiz grades will be dropped.
4. Students will answer **weekly questions** related to the third required textbook of their choice. If the student chose *Old Testament Essentials*, they submit a response to the “Reading Study Guide” section of each chapter. If the student chose *The Old Testament and Ethics*, they will use the following rubric to respond to each assigned reading section:

The Old Testament and Ethics:
Weekly Reading Response Questions
(1-2 pages, single-spaced)

1. What important ethical issues are discussed in this particular Biblical book?
2. Explain why at least one ethical issue is of interest to you.
3. Pick one of these issues and explain how you might use this information in counseling someone.
4. Explain which approach best fits the scholar’s ethical reading of this particular book (see pgs., 30–35)
5. Pick one passage located within this Biblical book and explain some of its ethical implications.
6. Imagine you are on an ethics committee of a church or Christian organization. How might one of the ethical issues raised by this particular book affect the policies of this committee?
7. How does the ethical implication of your selected passage relate to your view of God?
8. Was there a particular statement or ethical issue that you disagree with? Why?

5. **Review** *A Christian’s Pocket Guide to Loving the Old Testament*. Reviews should be 6-7 pages, double-spaced (12 pt, Times New Roman font). Students should provide a title page (1 p.), an adequate summary of the book (3 pp), and a critical evaluation (2-3 pp).

| Book Review Rubric | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|-----------|--------|
| Section | Content | Length | Points |
| 1 | Title Page | (1 p.) | 5 |
| 2 | Suitable Summary | (3 pp.) | 20 |
| 3 | Critical Reflection | (2-3 pp.) | 20 |

| | | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|-----------|----|
| 4 | Grammar, Formatting, and Spelling | | 10 |
| | Total | (6-7 pp.) | 55 |

6. **Final Exam.** Students will be given a comprehensive final exam. This exam will be available through Blackboard. The exam will be open book and will require students to respond to various types of questions: multiple-choice, multi-select, true/false, open response, and constructed response. The exam questions will be taken from the readings assigned in Hess, Motyer, and the Old Testament.

Evaluation of Grade

The student's grade will be computed as follows:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|------------|
| Participation (logging in weekly) | 10% |
| Weekly Reading Responses (1.6% each) | 20% |
| Weekly Reading Quizzes (1.6% each) | 25% |
| Book Review | 15% |
| <u>Final Exam</u> | <u>30%</u> |
| Total | 100% |

Grading Scale

| | |
|---|--------|
| A | 100–93 |
| B | 92–85 |
| C | 84–77 |
| D | 76–70 |
| F | 0–69 |

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to engage regularly with course content through the learning management system and other course delivery methods. Students who fail to participate consistently in course activities may receive a grade of “F” for the course.

Technical Assistance

For assistance regarding technology, consult ITC (504-816-8180) or the following websites:

1. Selfserve@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the Selfserve.nobts.edu site (Access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, etc.)
2. Canvas.NOBTS.com Click on the “Help” button for technical questions/support requests regarding the NOBTS Canvas System. You can also email questions to Canvas@nobts.edu.
3. ITCSupport@nobts.edu - Email for general technical questions/support requests.
4. www.NOBTS.edu/itc/ - General NOBTS technical help information is provided on this website.

Make-Up & Extra Credit:

No make-up or extra Credit is allowed on an individual basis beyond what is stipulated in the syllabus. Online quizzes CANNOT typically be taken after the scheduled time. Any assignment turned in after the due date will receive no **higher than a 70%** unless the student has made prior assignments with the professor.

Extra Credit:

- Students will be allowed to complete up to two extra credit worksheets. Each worksheet will be comprised of four (4) questions, each pertaining to a specific issue/area of the OT and will require additional reading and research. Answers should be adequately researched and include well-reasoned arguments when necessary. Your responses should be single-spaced, typed, 12 pt, Times New Roman font, with footnotes or parenthetical citations (according to Turabian 7th ed.). Under no circumstances should you submit more than eight (8) pages per worksheet; this is critical analysis and not reflective rambling. These responses can add up to 20 points to your final exam grade.
- Students will also be allowed to write a critical review of Hess for extra credit (around 5-6 pp). This review must compare Hess’s OT introduction to at least one other OT introduction approved in advance. This review will allow a student to recover some missing points related to the participation or quiz part of their grades.

Fulfilling the Terms of the Syllabus:

No student will receive a passing grade in this course if all assignments are not attempted & completed. Failure to submit any major assignment (worksheets, etc.) will result in failure of the course. Even if late work is allowed, there could be as much as a letter grade drop per day.

Help for Writing Papers at “The Write Stuff”

NOBTS maintains a Writing Center designed to improve English writing at the graduate level. Students can receive writing guides, tips, and valuable information to help in becoming a better writer. A copy of the approved NOBTS Style Guide can be found in the course Blackboard shell, or can be located online at the Writing Center’s page on the seminary website at:

<https://www.nobts.edu/resources/pdf/writing/StyleGuide.pdf>

Plagiarism on Written Assignments

NOBTS has a no tolerance policy for plagiarism. Plagiarism in certain cases may result in expulsion from the seminary. See the NOBTS Student Handbook for definitions, penalties, and policies associated with plagiarism.

Reminder. Plagiarism can also result from the following:

- A quotation that is lacking proper citation.
- Summarizing the words of someone else as if they are your own.
- Borrowing an outline, idea, or methodology without proper citation.
- Using an incorrect citation method; “Ignorance of the rules of citation is not an excuse

Course Schedule

| Wk | Date | Topic | Response Reading List | Hess | Assignments |
|----|----------------|-----------------------------------|---|--------------|---|
| 1 | 8/14 8/20 | Introduction Genesis | Essentials, Creation (p. 19–20) Ethics, Genesis (p. 37–45) | 25–54 | Reading Response 1 (Due 8/20) Quiz 1 (Due 8/21) |
| 2 | 8/21 8/27 | Exodus | Essentials, Fall (p. 28–30) Ethics, Exodus (p. 46–48) | 55–78 | Reading Response 2 (Due 8/27) Quiz 2 (Due 8/28) |
| 3 | 8/28 9/3 | Leviticus | Essentials, Abraham (p. 40–41) Ethics, Leviticus (p. 49–51) | 79–101 | Reading Response 3 (Due 9/3) Quiz 3 (Due 9/4) |
| 4 | 9/4 9/10 | Numbers | Essentials, Joseph (p. 62–63) Ethics, Numbers (p. 55–56) | 102–122 | Reading Response 4 (Due 9/10) Quiz 4 (Due 9/11) |
| 5 | 9/11 9/17 | Deuteronomy | Essential, Exodus (p. 74–74) Ethics, Deuteronomy (p. 57–60) | 123–160 | Reading Response 5 (Due 9/17) Quiz 5 (Due 9/18) |
| 6 | 9/18 9/24 | Joshua | Essentials, Wilderness (p. 86–87) Ethics, Joshua (p. 61–69) | 161–193 | Reading Response 6 (Due 9/24) Quiz 6 (Due 9/25) |
| 7 | 9/25 10/1 | Judges | Prepare for Book Review | 194–219 | Motyer Book Review (Due 10/1) |
| 8 | 10/2 10/8 | Fall Break | Fall Break | Fall Break | Fall Break |
| 9 | 10/9 10/15 | Ruth | Essentials, Priest (p. 111–12) Ethics, Judges (p. 70–71) | 220–235 | Reading Response 7 (Due 10/15) Quiz 7 (Due 10/16) |
| 10 | 10/16 10/22 | Samuel | Essentials, Conquest (p. 123–124) Ethics, Ruth (p. 72) | 236–274 | Reading Response 8 (Due 10/22) Quiz 8 (Due 10/23) |
| 11 | 10/23 10/29 | Kings | Essentials, Judges (p. 136–137) Ethics, Samuel (p. 73–75) | 275–316 | Reading Response 9 (Due 10/29) Quiz 9 (Due 10/30) |
| 12 | 10/30 11/5 | Ezra | Essentials, Saul, David (p. 149–150) Ethics, Kings (p. 76–81) | 348–369 | Reading Response 10 (Due 10/5) Quiz 10 (Due 11/6) |
| 13 | 11/6 11/12 | Nehemiah | Essentials, Divided Monarchy (p. 185–186) Essentials, Ezra-Nehemiah (p. 82–84) | 370–392 | Reading Response 11 (Due 11/12) Quiz 11 (Due 11/13) |
| 14 | 11/13 11/19 | Esther | Essentials, Exile (p. 211–212) Ethics, Esther (p. 85–86) | | Reading Response 12 (Due 11/19) Quiz 12 (Due 11/28) |
| 15 | 11/20 11/26 | Thanksgiving | Thanksgiving | Thanksgiving | Thanksgiving |
| 16 | 11/27 12/3 | Final Exam (Open) | | | |
| 17 | 12/4 12/10 | Final Exam (Due Dec 5) | | | |

Selected Bibliography

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Specialized Introductions

Pentateuch

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