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OT 520 Old Testament Introduction

Edwin C. Hostetter

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OT520.X3 Old Testament Introduction

summer 2005

Asbury Theological Seminary

Edwin C. Hostetter (410) 242-0983

edwin_hostetter@asburyseminary.edu

Welcome:

Hello there! I'm Edwin Hostetter, or you may call me Ed. I live just outside Baltimore, Maryland in the United States, and I'll be your instructor for Asbury Seminary's extended learning subject titled Old Testament Introduction, that's OT520.

My life's motto comes from Ezra 7:10. Personalized, it runs "I have devoted myself to the study and observance of the Law of the Lord, and to teaching its decrees and laws." Ezra was a priest and scribe, who lived around 2500 years ago in Jerusalem. He struggled to help the Jewish people improve their religious community after they had rebuilt God's temple. Since we too must exert effort to maintain our individual and group faith, it's great to be able to observe how somebody from the past (namely, Ezra) dealt with his situation.

Thus, as you can see, the Old Testament does have contemporary significance for us as God's Word. In this Introduction course we will encounter people and events and themes found throughout the Hebrew Scriptures. The biblical content includes stories, songs, laws, letters, and more—about ancient Israel's relationship with God. Hopefully we can learn a lot to enhance our own spiritual standing.

Please let me know how I can help you on the class journey. As in my other web-based courses, I'm eager to work with you. It will be fun to get to know each other and to glean many insights from the Bible. You heard in my motto how much I truly enjoy teaching the Old Testament!

Office Hours:

Wednesday, 9:00-10:00 pm ET (I'll be in the chat center.)

ExL Contact Information:

For **general questions regarding the ExL program**, contact [Dale Hale at ExL Office@asburyseminary.edu](mailto:Dale.Hale@asburyseminary.edu)

For **technical support**, contact [Alex Miller](mailto:Alex.Miller@asburyseminary.edu) or [Jared Porter](mailto:Jared.Porter@asburyseminary.edu) at [ExL Office@asburyseminary.edu](mailto:ExL_Office@asburyseminary.edu)

For **library research support**, contact [the Information Commons](mailto:Information.Commons@asburyseminary.edu) at Information.Commons@asburyseminary.edu

For **library loans**, contact [Dot James](mailto:Dot.James@asburyseminary.edu) at Library.Loan@asburyseminary.edu

Obtaining Library Materials and Assistance

1. General Questions: Information_Commons@asburyseminary.edu, or Toll-free 1-866-454-2733

- This is the best place to start when you have questions about library resources. Help is available Monday-Thursday from 8am – 7pm and Friday and Saturday from 8am - 5:45pm. If the people at the Information Commons desk cannot answer your questions, they will direct you to the person or department who can.

2. Materials Requests: Library_Loan@asburyseminary.edu, or Toll-free 1-866-454-2733

- ExL Students may request books, photocopies or email attachments of journal articles/reference books from Asbury Seminary's Library. Please allow 3-10 business days for all requests to be filled. Contact the library loan office for information on costs and instructions on how to make requests.

- ExL students are also encouraged to make use of local library resources. Students who live within a 50 mile radius of either the Florida or the Wilmore campus should come to campus to obtain their materials.

3. Research Questions: Information_Commons@asburyseminary.edu

- Or call the toll-free number and then **Information Commons x2233**.

- ExL students are encouraged to contact Hannah Kirsch (x2189) for advanced research assistance including help choosing a paper topic, determining the best sources to use for a paper, finding book reviews, or research questions about using the online databases or any other library materials.

4. Online Databases:

- To access the online library resources including the library catalog and full-text journal databases, go to <http://www.asburyseminary.edu/icommons/index.shtml> and enter your 10-digit student ID# number in the login box. Your student ID# is provided on the biographical information section of the student registration webpage. Add a 2 and enough 0's to the front to make a 10-digit number (20000XXXXX where XXXXX = your student id). If you have questions, contact the Information Commons desk.

Windows and Icons:

The Course Center will contain a copy of the syllabus as well as all class modules (No interaction takes place here. This is where the prof. posts course materials only).

The Discussion Center will be used for all public, class communication. Anytime you have a question or comment about the course, the modules, the assignments, or anything else which would be of

interest to your classmates and the professor, you should post to the Discussion Center.

The OT520-XL-EH Office is for private correspondence between you and the professor. This will contain items that you do not want to appear publicly before all of your classmates, including assignments, papers, projects, and personal correspondence. This should not be used to ask general course-related questions.

The Archives Center will be used for storing conversations that have already taken place during the course of the semester. This keeps the Discussion Center from becoming too unmanageable.

The Chat Center is intended primarily for real-time interaction among students. You can get together with other members to study, ask questions, or to explore topics. *Remember:* None of the conversations carried on in this location are ever saved.

The Resource Center provides access to a number of specific tools available to all ExL students. These include access to the B.L. Fisher Library, chapel services in Estes Chapel, ExL Updates, Guidelines for Success, Helpful Hints, Interesting Links, a Powerpoint Viewer, and a Real Audio Player.

Course Description:

An introduction to (1) the literature of the Old Testament in its socio-historical, literary, and canonical contexts; and (2) critical study of the Old Testament.

Course Objectives:

At the end of the course, you should be able to

- 1) Itemize the major events of Old Testament history in relative chronological order, as well as the salient features of ancient Near Eastern history.
- 2) State the general content of each section of the Old Testament.
- 3) Identify key theological motifs as they run through the Old Testament.
- 4) Analyze several interpretive techniques to the Old Testament in general.
- 5) Evaluate current scholarly positions on such critical matters as the authorship, date and unity of the Pentateuch, the nature of the Deuteronomistic History, etc.
- 6) Apply the Old Testament to Christian life and ministry.

Course Requirements:

1. Three term papers of up to 1200 words apiece (not counting notes or bibliography). You should select a topic and develop a thesis from the Law, Genesis through Deuteronomy, for your first research paper. You should select a topic and develop a thesis from the Prophets, Joshua through Malachi, for your second research paper. You should select a topic and develop a thesis from the Writings, Psalms through 2 Chronicles, for your third research paper. Read the *Tanakh* [see required reading list below] to get started on these projects.

2. Twelve answers of up to 200 words apiece and twelve reactions of up to 100 words apiece. Every week/module lists a question based on a chapter in Drane's textbook [see required reading list below]. You must write an essay in response to it. Then you must also select another student's answer and prepare a critique of it.

Expectations:

In order to fulfill your assignments properly, you will need to access the course at least once if not twice a week.

My aim is to check in every day or two, but I will never go longer than one week without reading your communication.

Online Etiquette:

I suggest you consult such webpages as

<http://www.onlinenetiquette.com/> OR

<http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html> for guidelines on how to conduct yourself within an Internet environment. I don't vouch for these particular sites!

Grading:

Each of the two requirements above counts for one-half of your course grade.

The four-point system is used to compute grade point standing. The grading system is

A 4.00 Exceptional work: surpassing, markedly outstanding achievement of course objectives

A-

B+

B 3.00 Good work: strong, significant achievement of course objectives

B-

C+

- C 2.00 Acceptable work: basic, essential achievement of course objectives
C-
D+
D 1.00 Marginal work: inadequate, minimal achievement of course objectives
D-
F 0 Unacceptable work: failure to achieve course objectives

How To Submit Work:

Send your term papers, requirement 1, to OT520-XL-EH Office.

Post your answers and reactions, requirement 2, at the Discussion Center.

Both assignments must be inserted within a message/document rather than attached as a file.

Required Reading:

John Drane, *Introducing the Old Testament*, rev. ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001)

Tanakh: The Holy Scriptures, student edition (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1985)

Recommended Reading:

none

Course Schedule:

Summer 2005 session begins June 6 and ends August 26.

MODULE ONE

1. Term paper requirement - Although not due until July 1st, begin researching and drafting on the Law.

2. Answer and reaction requirement -

A. Between June 6 & 8 eastern time write 200 words or less based on Drane's first chapter to address the following question: "Why do you think books like Tobit or Prayer of Manasseh should or should not be included in the Christian Bible?" This essay should be an original post by you and should directly answer my question.

B. Between June 6 & 10 eastern time write 100 words or less to critique somebody else's submission about the question. This essay

should respond to another student's answer and hence should be a reply within an already existing thread.

MODULE TWO

1. Term paper requirement - Although not due until July 1st, continue researching and drafting on the Law.

2. Answer and reaction requirement -

A. Between June 11 & 15 eastern time write 200 words or less based on Drane's second chapter to address the following question: "How did the Hebrew slaves become an Israelite nation?" This essay should be an original post by you and should directly answer my question.

B. Between June 11 & 17 eastern time write 100 words or less to critique somebody else's submission about the question. This essay should respond to another student's answer and hence should be a reply within an already existing thread.

MODULE THREE

1. Term paper requirement - Although not due until July 1st, continue researching and drafting on the Law.

2. Answer and reaction requirement -

A. Between June 18 & 22 eastern time write 200 words or less based on Drane's third chapter to address the following question: "How was political power exercised in Judah and Israel during the period of the judges?" This essay should be an original post by you and should directly answer my question.

B. Between June 18 & 24 eastern time write 100 words or less to critique somebody else's submission about the question. This essay should respond to another student's answer and hence should be a reply within an already existing thread.

MODULE FOUR

1. Term paper requirement - Turn your Law project in by July 1st.

2. Answer and reaction requirement -

A. Between June 25 & 29 eastern time write 200 words or less based on Drane's fourth chapter to address the following question: "What were arguments for and against Yahweh's people having a human monarch?" This essay should be an original post by you and should directly answer my question.

B. Between June 25 & July 1 eastern time write 100 words or less to critique somebody else's submission about the question. This

essay should respond to another student's answer and hence should be a reply within an already existing thread.

MODULE FIVE

1. Term paper requirement - Although not due until July 22nd, begin researching and drafting on the Prophets.

2. Answer and reaction requirement -

A. Between July 2 & 6 eastern time write 200 words or less based on Drane's fifth chapter to address the following question: "Who were among those individuals confronting the northern and southern kings?" This essay should be an original post by you and should directly answer my question.

B. Between July 2 & 8 eastern time write 100 words or less to critique somebody else's submission about the question. This essay should respond to another student's answer and hence should be a reply within an already existing thread.

MODULE SIX

1. Term paper requirement - Although not due until July 22nd, continue researching and drafting on the Prophets.

2. Answer and reaction requirement -

A. Between July 9 & 13 eastern time write 200 words or less based on Drane's sixth chapter to address the following question: "Who led religious reforms from their throne in Jerusalem?" This essay should be an original post by you and should directly answer my question.

B. Between July 9 & 15 eastern time write 100 words or less to critique somebody else's submission about the question. This essay should respond to another student's answer and hence should be a reply within an already existing thread.

MODULE SEVEN

1. Term paper requirement - Turn your Prophets project in by July 22nd.

2. Answer and reaction requirement -

A. Between July 16 & 20 eastern time write 200 words or less based on Drane's seventh chapter to address the following question: "Where did Judahites spend their captivity after 597 BCE?" This essay should be an original post by you and should directly answer my question.

B. Between July 16 & 22 eastern time write 100 words or less to critique somebody else's submission about the question. This essay

should respond to another student's answer and hence should be a reply within an already existing thread.

MODULE EIGHT

1. Term paper requirement - Although not due until August 12th, begin researching and drafting on the Writings.

2. Answer and reaction requirement -

A. Between July 23 & 27 eastern time write 200 words or less based on Drane's eighth chapter to address the following question: "What postexilic challenges faced faithful Jews?" This essay should be an original post by you and should directly answer my question.

B. Between July 23 & 29 eastern time write 100 words or less to critique somebody else's submission about the question. This essay should respond to another student's answer and hence should be a reply within an already existing thread.

MODULE NINE

1. Term paper requirement - Although not due until August 12th, continue researching and drafting on the Writings.

2. Answer and reaction requirement -

A. Between July 30 & August 3 eastern time write 200 words or less based on Drane's ninth chapter to address the following question: "When in Scripture was God hidden?" This essay should be an original post by you and should directly answer my question.

B. Between July 30 & August 5 eastern time write 100 words or less to critique somebody else's submission about the question. This essay should respond to another student's answer and hence should be a reply within an already existing thread.

MODULE TEN

1. Term paper requirement - Turn your Writings project in by August 12th.

2. Answer and reaction requirement -

A. Between August 6 & 10 eastern time write 200 words or less based on Drane's tenth chapter to address the following question: "Why does Genesis contain two creation stories?" This essay should be an original post by you and should directly answer my question.

B. Between August 6 & 12 eastern time write 100 words or less to critique somebody else's submission about the question. This essay

should respond to another student's answer and hence should be a reply within an already existing thread.

MODULE ELEVEN

1. Term paper requirement - None is due any longer this semester.
2. Answer and reaction requirement -
 - A. Between August 13 & 17 eastern time write 200 words or less based on Drane's eleventh chapter to address the following question: "Where did the ancient Hebrew sages find wisdom?" This essay should be an original post by you and should directly answer my question.
 - B. Between August 13 & 19 eastern time write 100 words or less to critique somebody else's submission about the question. This essay should respond to another student's answer and hence should be a reply within an already existing thread.

MODULE TWELVE

1. Term paper requirement - None is due any longer this semester.
2. Answer and reaction requirement -
 - A. Between August 20 & 24 eastern time write 200 words or less based on Drane's twelfth chapter to address the following question: "When did Yahweh's people celebrate major harvest festivals?" This essay should be an original post by you and should directly answer my question.
 - B. Between August 20 & 26 eastern time write 100 words or less to critique somebody else's submission about the question. This essay should respond to another student's answer and hence should be a reply within an already existing thread.