

Asbury Theological Seminary
ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange

Syllabi

eCommons

1-1-2003

OT 520 Old Testament Introduction

Lawson G. Stone

Follow this and additional works at: <http://place.asburyseminary.edu/syllabi>

Recommended Citation

Stone, Lawson G., "OT 520 Old Testament Introduction" (2003). *Syllabi*. Book 1693.
<http://place.asburyseminary.edu/syllabi/1693>

This Document is brought to you for free and open access by the eCommons at ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in Syllabi by an authorized administrator of ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange. For more information, please contact thad.horner@asburyseminary.edu.

OT 520 OLD TESTAMENT INTRODUCTION

Fall 2003—A Three Hour Course Instructor: Lawson G. Stone

Digital Coordinates: (on campus) Lawson Stone
Off Campus: lawson_stone@asburyseminary.edu
Phone: 859-858-2271

Physical Coordinates: Office: BC 335
Open Office Hours: TBA
Appointments are Also Available

Course Aspirations and Place in the Curriculum

Aspirations: OT 520 seeks to equip students for ministry by providing selected tools fundamental to responsible interpretation of the OT. The course neither offers a comprehensive approach, nor emphasizes direct textual study, but *enhances* both by developing a framework within which competent interpretation can take place. Students explore contemporary approaches to the literary character, historical and cultural setting, composition, authorship, and literary unity of these books, their various literary types, settings, and functions, and how these affect Christian reading of the OT. A central axiom of the class is that the OT emerges from a cultural and ethnic setting that is radically different from those of any contemporary culture. Thus to study the OT in connection with the settings of its emergence is to learn to *receive* God's word cross-culturally, which forms a necessary preparation for *testifying* to the message of God's word cross-culturally. Thus the very act of responsible and holistic interpretation involves grasping, affirming, and moving creatively between the text's ethnic and cultural framework and our own.

Students who realize these aspirations will be able to :

1. Show how a close reading of the the OT itself provides the stimulus and basis for OT studies;
2. Illustrate how a knowledge of Hebrew and sensitivity to the OT's literary character enhance OT study by providing an exercise in *listening* to voices of testimony from another culture as a preparation for *speaking* a word of witness cross-culturally;
3. Recognize specific information concerning the ethnically diverse and culturally alien historical and cultural setting of selected OT books, traditions, and personages as it is applied to understanding OT;
4. Recognize how the social and cultural location, assumptions, claims, procedures and conclusions of selected types of contemporary OT study affect interpretation. Methods covered include: archeology, Textual criticism, Source criticism, Form criticism, Redaction criticism, Selected contemporary literary approaches
5. Identify, clarify, and strengthen essential convictions regarding *biblical theology and authority* in a manner that is faithful to the framework of the text and relevant to the contemporary practice of ministry;
6. Discover study, especially study of the text's pre-Christian and pre-western character, as a stimulus for spiritual growth.
7. Embrace and seek to exemplify certain integrative aspirations distinctive of ATS, including:
 - a. The implications of our commitment to the *Bible* as the foundation, controlling center and formative concern of the entire curriculum;
 - b. The centrality in ATS' history, identity, and destiny of the *doctrine and experience of Entire Sanctification*.
 - c. The lost art of *expository preaching* as the norm and standard for pulpit ministry;
 - d. In opening prayers and openness to God's grace, seeking renewal in learning by the *revival spirit* which birthed this institution. Far from obstructing the full use of critical reason, revival should rather energize and focus it!

The instructor prays this course fosters theological, intellectual, and spiritual renewal at ATS.

Means of Realizing Course Aspirations (AKA "Course Requirements")

To accommodate a variety of learning styles and to promote generally wholesome learning habits, the course grade will derive from a wide range of learning activities.

READING in the literature of OT studies from many perspectives, from “mainstream” (i.e. non-conservative) OT criticism as well as evangelical scholars. Some readings *are difficult* and not always *obviously* relevant to, say, sermon preparation or youth ministry.

Dillard, R. B. and Tremper Longman, *An Introduction to the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994.

A traditional OT introduction written by two evangelical scholars. An “introduction” to the OT is not a guide to the uninformed, but is a summary of current scholarly opinion about the authorship, date, origins, and composition of each OT book and the issues involved in their interpretation. It follows the book-by-book order of the OT.

John Drane. *Introducing the Old Testament*. Fortress. 2001. Not redundant at all with Dillard-Longman, this book follows the history of Israel chronologically and includes discussions of the material as it fits that pattern. The last chapters are a very nice introduction to the faith of the OT.

W. W. Klein, C. L. Blomberg, R. L. Hubbard, *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. Waco: Word, 1993.

Introduces essential issues involved in biblical interpretation and the methods employed with specific types of material. Our assignments skip sections dealing explicitly with the New Testament.

Several articles are in electronic form and will be in the Course Conference icon which will appear in your ATS e-mail window during the first 2 days of class.

Recommended Bibliographical Resource: Bauer, David. *Biblical Resources for Ministry*. Wilmore, Revised 2nd Edition, 1995.

Mere completion of the reading constitutes 10% of the grade. While readings are correlated to specific days, it is recognized that students will not always be able to read the exact assignments for each day. What is **required** is completion of certain worksheets and a final reading report in which you will *indicate your completion of reading assigned to that date as a percentage*.

A piece of advice: due to the scheduling of this class, you would probably do well to leave one of the books to the 4th week when class is not meeting. I suggest you defer on completing Matthews/Benjamin until the 4th week. This book covers material that overlaps Bruce and lecture, but in a different way, and your day-to-day class experience will not be unduly disrupted by saving that book until last.

10 WORKSHEETS will be filled out and submitted. These will be brief review questions related to certain assigned readings and should be fairly easy to complete immediately after finishing the reading. Some will be tailored very closely to the reading, others will be more generic. They will be submitted and evaluated either acceptable or unacceptable. The worksheet score is a simple percentage of acceptable worksheets submitted.

LECTURES are a vital component of the course. Note that instead of directly expounding readings, lecture often presents *analyses* of issues and supplementary material.

Due to the professor's absence during the last week of June, there will be no class sessions that week. Students may use this time to complete readings, prepare for the final exam, and take the final exam.

The missed lecture time will be made up by extending class sessions to 11:50 AM except on chapel days. Students unable to stay this extra time may listen to audio recordings of the lecture and will not be counted absent for having to leave.

Attendance Policy: Occasional absences are a normal part of academic life, but attendance is vital. Attendance will be taken daily.

Student attendance will be calculated as a percentage of all classes. For example, assuming there are 24 class sessions, if you attend 19 sessions, this is 79% and will be entered in as 10% of the student's final grade. All absences count, and all may be made up, therefore no distinction between "excused" and "unexcused" will be observed.

Any absence can be made up by contacting the instructor for a written assignment to be completed by the student. Request for make-up work must be made by the student either ahead of time, or by Friday of the week in which the absence occurred. The make up work must be submitted within 7 days of the professor giving the student the make-up assignment. Completion of the make-up work will remove the absence.

Two Examinations will be given. The format will be machine gradable, multiple choice questions. The questions themselves, however, will range in function from simple factual items, to questions asking for a more integrative application of material.

The Final exam will be comprehensive, but at least 2/3 of the questions will be from "new" material, and about 1/3 will be "old" material.

Exams will be based primarily on *lecture* material. Lecture, however, assumes a reading of the assigned material, and students Any questions that involve the textbooks will be of a sort that quotes a statement from the book, and then asks the student to analyze the statement in the light of some other course content. *I do not go browsing through the books looking for arcane details to "catch" students on.* Focus in your study on the lectures, and as you read the textbooks in a timely fashion, be aware of how the class content and the textbooks interact.

A generous set of sample questions will be posted in the online Course Center and students completing those are free to raise any questions they might have about the questions, answers, and evaluations involved. Note that the sample questions represent about half the total set of questions that might be used on the tests, so prepare accordingly. The procedure for taking the tests will be as follows:

Procedure for Mid-Term

1. The questions will be posted on the Course Center icon online
2. Students can pick up a machine gradable answer form either from my office or from the Beeson Center Faculty Secretary's office
3. The mid-term is to be taken privately in a location of the student's choosing in one single, continuous, 75 minute "sitting" as if in a regular class setting
4. **No notes, books, consultation, or helps** of any kind may be used while taking the test. Students who, after starting the exam, wish to make some notes from memory are allowed to do so. Note that international students for whom English is a second language are allowed to have a dictionary to assist in reading exam items.
5. International students for whom English is a second language, and others with documented learning disabilities may request additional time for the test. Please contact the instructor in advance in these situations
6. The completed answer form will be turned in at the next class session.

Final Exam: The final exam will be taken in class on the regularly scheduled examination day..

Two Open Book/Notes Essays will be assigned, each of which will be 6-8 page not counting front or back matter. These papers will be concrete exercises in which students will work with a passage of scripture or problem of biblical interpretation posed by the instructor in the light of specific issues focused in class. Students may consult class notes and textbooks, but no other sources unless the instructions so direct, for writing these essays. These are to represent your *very best thought and work*. Essays are to be the *student's own work* and students are asked not to consult, give, or receive any advice in conjunction with these essays. *The essay topic and instructions will be posted on the Intranet "lectures" folder 2 weeks before it is due, per the schedule below. They will not be distributed in class.* Assignments will be in the form of PDF documents, which can be read on any workstation on campus and printed out.

Essays may be submitted two ways. *First*, you can print it out, double-spaced, with 1" margins, and submit it on the due date by 5:00 PM, either in class, or at my office. Electronic submissions must be dated by this time by the First Class system. Comments and grade will be written on the paper and it will be returned via the SPO. Electronic submissions might be commented on the document and returned as an e-mail attachment.

Second, work may be submitted electronically. At this time, I can only accept work produced on Microsoft Word, not Word Perfect, Works, or any other word processing program (Mac or Wintel is fine). If you can submit a document in MS Word, there are several advantages to you. *First, submission is easier.* Just attach your document to an e-mail and send it to me via your ATS FirstClass free e-mail account. Remember, I make no guarantees, nor do I accept any responsibility, for work submitted any other way. *No submissions on disk, please.* A second advantage is that I will usually place my comments and grade on your paper via MS Word's "Comments" feature, which allows direct commenting on a document. I then return your paper via an E-mail attachment and you open it in MS Word and you'll see some words are highlighted. Placing your mouse pointer over the highlighted word will reveal the comment.

Grade Calculation: Attendance, worksheet, and reading scores are entered as percentages, just like test scores:

Attendance-----	10%
Reading Report -----	10%
Worksheets-----	10%
Exam 1 -----	15%
Exam 2-----	15%
Essay 1-----	20%
Essay 2-----	20%

Office Hours will be announced, but you are welcome at any time to speak to me personally, call or e-mail me with a question or to make an appointment. As a courtesy, I ask you not to try to see me about course business prior to the start of the class session.

The Course Conference. As soon as possible early in the first week of class, students will find an OT 520 Conference icon on their FirstClass desktop in the ATS e-mail system. This conference serves several functions:

1. It is where several articles, worksheets, and other course materials will be posted
2. A discussion forum is held there to allow for your questions, further discussion of issues raised in class, etc. You are encouraged to make the most of this opportunity. I check this several times per day and usually can respond immediately to issues raised. This is also a forum in which you can "take me on" if you want to debate course content issues.

Periodically I will be posting "polls" to find out student opinion and reaction to various topics relevant to the conduct of the course.

3. Announcements to the class as a whole will be made here
4. Tests will be posted to the Course Center

These materials *will not be available elsewhere*. Therefore it is essential for students to have an ATS e-mail account (free) and avail themselves of the computing services offered at ATS if they do not have e-mail access from home.

Course Assignment Due dates

The outline of the course and modules of study are listed below. It is very important for students to establish a regular discipline of work and study. This is graduate school, brothers and sisters! It will require of all of us discipline and effort, but working together we can achieve great things.

Sequence of Lecture Unit Topics

The outline below provides a picture of the structure and flow of the course's lecture topics. We will try to integrate covering the basics of interpretation and the overall history of the OT with a very general conceptualization of the OT material.

Note that not all blocks of lecture are the same length, and so some will be combined in due-dates. The schedule of online assignments and turned-in work is on the last page. The assignments are sequenced so that much reading is done early in the course, gradually tapering a bit toward the end as you collapse in complete exhaustion.

- I. THE QUEST: DIVINE REVELATION IN HUMAN LITERATURE**
 - A. Who Needs the Old Testament? (Unit 1)
 - B. Who Needs This thing called "Criticism?" Covered by Reading (Unit 2)
 - C. Reading in A Strange Language: A Hebrew Teacher Looks at Creation (Unit 3)
 - D. Reading in a the Old Testament (Unit 4)

- II. FORMATION OF THE FELLOWSHIP: A JOINING OF TENSIONS**
 - A. Promise: From Among the Nations (Unit 5)
 - B. Sinai: A Peculiar People (Unit 6)
 - C. Zion: Like All the Nations (Unit 7)
 - D. Listening for the Diversity in the OT: Source Criticism (Unit 8)

- III. BREAKING OF THE FELLOWSHIP: DIVISION AND DECLINE**
 - A. The Breaking of the Company (Unit 9)
 - B. The Failure of the Promise Bearer (Unit 10)
 - C. Listening for The Life (Lives?) Behind the Literature: Form Criticism (Unit 11)

- IV. RENEWAL OF THE FELLOWSHIP: REINVENTING THE PEOPLE OF GOD**
 - A. The Empire Strikes Back: The Furnace of Exile (Unit 12)
 - B. Return of the Judean (Unit 13)
 - C. Hearing the Voice in the Voices: Redaction Criticism (Unit 14)
 - D. Hearing the Word in the Words: From Literary to Canonical Reading (Unit 15)

Schedule of Units and Assignments

Sept 2-Unit 1: Course Introduction: "What do we Make of the Old Testament?"

Drane, 11-35.

Article: NEEDOT.PDF which is G. Ernest Wright, "The Church's Need for the Old Testament" from *The God Who Acts*

Article: RISE.PDF which is Rowan Greer, "The Rise of a Christian Bible" from *Early Biblical Interpretation*.

Complete Worksheets 1 and 2 on these two articles, respectively, due Sept 11.

Unit 2: Why Interpretation? (Complete by Sept 16)

Note this unit is *not an in-class lecture*, but a reading and reporting assignment. Read the following:

Blomberg-Klein-Hubbard, pages xxi-51, and Dillard-Longman, pages 17-36

Article: ROBSMITH.PDF William Robertson Smith, "Biblical Criticism and the Theology of the Reformation" in the Course Center file

Article: WHYCRIT.PDF Stone, Lawson, "Why OT Criticism" (printed lecture)

Complete worksheets 3 and 4 on these two articles, due Sept 16

Sept 4, 9: Unit 3: A Hebrew Teacher Looks at Creation

Read: Drane, 253-276; Dillard and Longman, 37-56; Blomberg, Klein, Hubbard, 53-151;

Sept 11 : Unit 4 Textual Criticism

Klein/Blomberg/Hubbard 401-426

Dillard/Longman, 17-36

Sept 16, 18: Unit 5: Setting the Stage: A Long Time Ago, in a Civilization Far, Far, Away

Read: Drane, 36-47a; Klein/Blomberg/Hubbard 152-183; Dillard/Longman 57-90

Sept 23, 25: Unit 6: Sinai: A Peculiar People

Drane 47b-86, 277-305; Klein/Blomberg/Hubbard 184-214; Dillard/Longman 91-128

Essay One Assignment Posted on Sept 23

Sept 30, Oct 2: Unit 7: The Godfather? David and the Birth of the Kingdom

Drane 87-119, 306-337; Klein/Blomberg/Hubbard 259-284; Dillard/Longman 129-168, chapters on Psalms, Proverbs

Oct 7, 9: Unit 8 Unity and Diversity in the OT: Source Criticism

Article: PLACE.PDF -a section from J. Wellhausen's *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel*.

Complete Worksheet 5 on PLACE.PDF due Oct 9

Essay One Assignment Due October 7

Oct 14, 16: Unit 9: The Blues Brothers: Who's Really on a Mission From God?

Drane 120-146; Klein/Blomberg/Hubbard None (Do I hear "Amen!";

Dillard/Longman: Amos, Hosea, Micah

Mid Term Test Questions Posted October 15

Oct 21, 23: Unit 10: A New Hope: Judean Resurgence

Drane 147-172; Klein/Blomberg/Hubbard, 284-322

Dillard/Longman, Chapters on: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Nahum, Habbakuk, Zephaniah

Mid Term Due October 23

Mid Term Reading Report Due October 23

Oct 28, 30: Unit 11 The Life Behind the Literature: Form Criticism

Article: GUNKEL.PDF "Fundamental Problems of Hebrew Literary History" H. Gunkel
Complete Worksheet 6 on Gunkel.PDF Due Oct. 30

Nov 4, 6: Unit 12: The Empire Strikes Back: The Babylonian Exile

Drane 173-185; Klein/Blomberg/Hubbard, 377-400

Dillard/Longman, Chapters on Lamentations, Ezekiel, Obadiah, Jonah, Job, Ecclesiastes

Article: ISAIAH.PDF which is from George Adam Smith's *Isaiah* in the *Expositors Bible* commentary

Complete Worksheet 7 on ISAIAH.PDF Due Nov. 6

Nov. 11, 13: Unit 13: Return of the Judean: Moments in the Restoration

Reading: Drane 186-207; Dillard/Longman, chapters on Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Hag., Zechariah, Malachi

Article: COMMUNITY.PDF (no worksheet on this article required)

Nov 18, 20 Unit 14 Hearing the Voice in the Voices: Redaction Criticism

Drane: 338-360.

Article: WORDINHISTORY.PDF Gerhard Von Rad's discussion of how Israel experienced God's word in history, and how their experience of God's word shaped their witness to the word.

Article: REDCRIT.PDF an article by the Professor explaining the basic concepts behind redaction criticism as a method of biblical study

Article: PROCESS.PDF continues the previous reading, laying out in concrete detail with examples how the redaction critic works through the text.

Complete Worksheet 8 and 9 on WORDINHISTORY and REDCRIT Due by Nov. 20

Essay Two Assignment Posted Nov 18

November 25, 27 Reading Week

Dec 2, 4: Unit 15 The Rhetoric of Divine Rule? Literary Criticism

Klein/Blomberg/Hubbard, 427-458.

Article: CANONPROPH.PDF

Complete Worksheet 10 on this article, due Dec. 4

Essay Two Assignment Due Dec. 4

Reading Report is Due With the Final Exam

FINAL EXAM