

**NELC/JWST 150 / RELS 125. INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE
Fall, 2008**

Instructor: Jeffrey H. Tigay
712 Williams Hall
Tel. 898-6339 (if no answer: 898-7466)
Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 3:00-3:50 or by appointment
E-mail: jtigay@ccat.sas.upenn.edu Website: <http://www.sas.upenn.edu/~jtigay/>
TA: Yehuda Kraut, krautj@sas.upenn.edu

Class meeting time: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4:30-6:00.

NOTE: Class will not meet on Sept. 30, Oct. 9, and Oct. 21. Instead, extra classes will be held on three Mondays, from 6:00-7:30 PM. The dates are Oct. 6, Oct. 27, and Nov. 3; location TBA.

This course will introduce students to the Hebrew Bible (the "Old Testament"), its major themes and ideas, and the methods, discoveries and theories of modern Biblical scholarship. Special attention will be paid to the historical background of the Bible, archaeology, ancient Near Eastern parallels to the Bible, and Biblical criticism; the narratives and civil and religious laws of the Torah; the historical books; prophecy; the Psalms; wisdom literature, including Job; Biblical religion; postbiblical Jewish and Christian interpretation of the Bible; and the Bible in Western civilization. The course is truly introductory: no prior knowledge of the subject matter is presupposed.

The format of the course will be lecture and discussion based on the reading assignments. The main formal requirements of the course are the reading assignments, two tours of the University's Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, two quizzes, two brief essays, and a final exam. Doing the readings in advance of class is required. Study questions that follow each assignment below, and others listed on the Blackboard website (see below), can help you prepare for class as well as quizzes and exams, but they are only meant as examples; by no means should you limit your studying to them.

In the quizzes you will be asked factual questions or essay questions about the reading assignments, the lectures and discussions in class, and the Museum tours. Sample questions are given on the Blackboard website. Each quiz will mainly, but not exclusively, cover the material covered since the last quiz. (By "not exclusively" I mean that that questions might include or presuppose knowledge of material covered before the preceding quiz; in short, there are no cut-off dates after which you can confidently forget information covered previously.) The quizzes will help you prepare for the final exam by exemplifying the kinds of questions that will appear on it. In preparing for quizzes and exams, you would probably find it helpful to study in small groups and quiz each other, especially for identifying quotations, since that is the type of question with which some students have the most difficulty. (Quotations on the quizzes and exams will be drawn from passages assigned on the syllabus or those to which attention is called in class lectures/discussions.)

NOTE: (1) The quizzes will be given at the beginning of the period on Sept. 25 and Nov 6. The essays will be due at the beginning of the period on Oct. 16 and Nov. 20. There will be no make-up quizzes or extra time given if you are late or absent for any reason (including obligations for other courses or extracurricular activities) unless you have a written medical excuse; the same applies to the essays and the final exam. (2) The quiz average will constitute **30%** of the final grade for the course, the essay average **10%**, and the final exam **60%**. (3) No extra assignments or make-up quizzes/exams or essays will be given to improve one's grade. (4) The course is not graded on a curve, but on the basis of your absolute grade. (5) The final exam is cumulative; it covers everything from the entire semester. (6) In preparing to write the essays, students may

study and discuss the reading together, but they may not share with each other any stage of the written work for this assignment, from outline, notes, drafts, or final product.

The tours of the museum will cover highlights of the Museum's Israelite, Canaanite, Egyptian, and Mesopotamian collections, which are among the largest in the world. For details on where to meet, WEBSITE, Announcements. It will start at the Kress Wing entrance at the eastern end of the Museum, just off of Spruce Street, across from Franklin Field.

For a map and instructions on entering the museum see

http://www.facilities.upenn.edu/mapsBldgs/view_map.php3?id=345. Note the circled number 1 and the arrow extending from it.

For information about two of these exhibits (by no means all you will learn from the tours), see

<http://www.museum.upenn.edu/Canaan/index.html> (Israel and Canaan) and

http://www.museum.upenn.edu/new/exhibits/online_exhibits/egypt/egyptintro.shtml (Egypt).

THE TOURS WILL START ON TIME, SO PLEASE BE PROMPT.

Textbooks

At the Bookstore:

- Norman C. Habel, *Literary Criticism of the Old Testament*
- N.M. Sarna, *Understanding Genesis*
- N.M. Sarna, *On the Book of Psalms: Exploring the Prayers of Ancient Israel*
- **A Bible.** I recommend either *The Jewish Study Bible* (abbreviated JSB) or the *New Oxford Annotated Bible* (abbreviated NOAB; use the one with the *Revised Standard Version* translation, not the one with *The New English Bible*), both published by Oxford University Press. See the WEBSITE, "Announcements," for details. (You may use certain other translations if you prefer, but please check with me to be sure you have chosen an acceptable alternative [avoid translations that merely paraphrase, such as the *Contemporary English Version*, and avoid *The New English Bible*, which in my opinion is less reliable]. For information on other annotated Bibles see "Study Bibles and Reference Works" on the WEBSITE, toward the end of the Course Documents.)

At Campus Copy, 3907 Walnut St.:

NELC/JWST 150. Introduction to the Bible (referred to below as READINGS).

Bring your Bible translation and READINGS to class each time.

Several readings and other information are found on the Blackboard Academic Suite website for this course (referred to below as WEBSITE). Access it at <https://courseweb.library.upenn.edu/>. Click on "NELC 150" (even if you are registered for "JWST 150" or "RELS 125") and you'll be taken to its website. Choose "Course Documents," and then the appropriate reading. For fuller instructions on using the website, go to: <http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/bb/bbhandout.html>.

A few additional assignments will be found in books in the Van Pelt Library, either in the Weigle Judaica & Ancient Near East Seminar, Room 401 in 4th floor east (abbreviated "JANES" below; see the floor plan at <http://www.library.upenn.edu/locations/wireless/vpfourth.html>) or in the Undergraduate Study Center on the ground floor of the library (referred to below as "Rosengarten").

*Assignments***Sept. 4 INTRODUCTION****Sept. 9 THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE BIBLE: A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF ISRAELITE HISTORY**

- Learn the following terms from the glossary in READINGS: Akkadian, Aramaic, B.C.E., C.E., Hebrew(s), Israel(ites), Jew, Jewish, Judaism, Judah(ites), Mari, Mesopotamia, Nuzi, Palestine, Patriarchs, Sumerian, Ugaritic.
- In READINGS: (1) "Israelite Chronology"; (2) "The Geography of the Bible" and "CULTURAL CONTEXTS" through "The Persian Period (539-333 BCE)," ending on p. "515 Essays" and (3) S.W. Baron and M. Greenberg, "Judaism, History of." Note that (2) focuses more on social and political history, while (3) focuses on religious history.
- On the BLACKBOARD WEBSITE, in the item entitled "Maps": (4) on the map "The Fertile Crescent and Egypt" locate the following: Mesopotamia, Sumer, Babylonia, Syria, Canaan; (5) on the map "Ancient Israel and Environs" locate Phoenicia, Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistine Plain, Gilead, Damascus, Jericho, Jerusalem, Samaria; (6) on the map "Abraham's Journey" locate Mesopotamia, both Ur's, Haran, Tigris, Euphrates, Mari, Nuzi, Ugarit, Syria.

Questions:

- Comparing readings (2) and (3), what differences do you detect between them in the way they treat the question of the historical credibility of the Biblical narratives?
- Be prepared to answer such questions as: When, approximately, did the Hebrew Patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) live? Where was Babylonia? Ur? What route did Abraham follow from Ur to Canaan? What is the most likely date for the Exodus? Why was the monarchy established and who were Israel's earliest kings? What was the main thrust of religious reforms in ancient Israel? When did the Babylonian exile begin? When and how did it end? Sketch the history of ancient Israel from the beginnings through the end of the Babylonian exile, including the approximate date for events and periods you mention.

Sept. 11 SURVEY OF THE CONTENTS OF THE BIBLE

- Learn the following terms from the glossary in READINGS: Apocrypha, Bible, Canon, the Law, New Testament, Old Testament, Tanakh, Torah, Wisdom Literature
- In READINGS: (1) "The Books of the Hebrew Bible;" (2) "The Order of the Books in Jewish and Christian Bibles;" (3) the following two sections from the *Oxford Annotated Bible*: "Introduction to the Old Testament" and "The Pentateuch."
- In the *New Oxford Annotated Bible* itself, read the brief introductions preceding each of the books of the Bible ("Old Testament" only). Those who own the NOAB may read this in their copies; others may use copies of the older *Oxford Annotated Bible* in the library (BS/191/A1/1962/N4 and BS/191/A1/1965/N4, which can be found in the stacks, "Rosengarten," in JANES, and in the Middle East Seminar [Room 523]). – The introductions in JSB are equally acceptable, but they are considerably longer than those in the *Oxford Annotated Bible* and are not necessary for this assignment. If you prefer them instead (perhaps to save a trip to the library), you are of course welcome to use them.

Questions:

- Be prepared to list all the books of the Hebrew Bible in the order in which they appear in your translation.
- Be prepared to explain the terms "Torah," "Bible," "Old Testament," "Tanakh," and understand the differences between them. (In particular, know the difference between "Torah" and "Bible.")
- Be prepared to explain what different theological emphases are reflected in the different order of the books in Jewish and Christian Bibles.
- Be prepared to answer such questions as: Which book of the Bible describes the life of King David? Which book of the Bible describes, in poetry, the destruction of Jerusalem? What is the subject matter of the book of...? Which book describes/discusses ...?

Sept. 16 TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS OF THE BIBLE

- Learn the following terms from the glossary in READINGS: Criticism, critical; Dead Sea Scrolls; Masoretic Text; Qumran; Samaritan Pentateuch; Septuagint; Targum; Variant/Variant reading; Versions; Vulgate
- For the appearance of the Bible text in different periods, see the following in READINGS: (1) Modern Torah reading manual, (2) Isaiah chaps. 39 and 40, (3) Deuteronomy 31 and 32, and (4) Exodus chapter 1. These will be explained in class.
- In your Bible, read either (1) "Textual Criticism," in NOAB essays section in the back of the book, 460-464 (through the paragraph beginning "Latin") or (2) "Textual Criticism of the Bible," in JSB, 2067-2072.
- In READINGS see "VARIANT READINGS OF THE TEXT OF THE HEBREW BIBLE." Notice how the ancient translations (called "versions") and manuscripts sometimes differ from the traditional Hebrew text. The causes of these different readings will be discussed in class.
 - Note: The footnotes in JSB and especially NOAB often call attention to variant readings. They each treat variants differently: JSB translates the traditional Hebrew text and cites the variants in the footnotes. NOAB does the reverse: it translates the text according to the variants that it considers superior, and cites the traditional Hebrew text in the footnotes. In class I will explain why the JSB and NOAB do things in opposite ways.
 - For the terminology and abbreviations used in the footnotes, see JSB pp. xix-xxiii or NOAB "List of Abbreviations" (the page numbers differ in different editions of NOAB).
- "Translation of the Bible into English: Principles of Translation," in NOAB essays, 466-468 top (through line 8). For those who don't have NOAB, there is a copy of this reading on the WEBSITE.
- In READINGS, see "COMPARISON BETWEEN TRANSLATIONS OF THE BIBLE." In class we will discuss the differences between various translations and try to explain why different translators render the same passage in different ways.

Sept. 18 THE TORAH: THE UNIVERSAL HISTORY AND ITS ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN LITERARY COUNTERPARTS.

- Genesis 1-9:17
- N.M. Sarna, *Understanding Genesis*, chaps. 1-2
- WEBSITE: "Long Lives and Chronology in Genesis."
- Optional reading on WEBSITE: H.L. Ginsberg, "Ugaritic Studies and the Bible" (this is It's the first scholarly article about the Bible I ever read).

Questions:

- Describe the literary structure of the account of creation in Genesis 1:1-2:4 and its implications for the meaning and theology of the account.
- What is implied by the fact that in Genesis 1 God is said to have created plants, birds, fish, and animals "of every kind," whereas that phrase is absent from the account of the creation of humanity?

Sept 23 THE TORAH: THE UNIVERSAL HISTORY AND ITS ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN LITERARY COUNTERPARTS (continued)

- In READINGS: (1) Tikva Frymer-Kensky, "The Atrahasis Epic and its Significance for Our Understanding of Genesis 1-9;" (2) Tatian, "Oration to the Greeks"
- Describe the Biblical view of the nature and character God as reflected in the accounts of the creation and the flood and compare this to the viewpoint of Mesopotamian religion. How do the Mesopotamian myths exemplify Sarna's statement that "the birth of the gods implies the existence of some primordial, self-contained realm from which the gods themselves derive. The cosmos, too, is fashioned from the same element..." (p. 11)?
- Discuss the plot of the Atrahasis Epic and the major differences between its account of the flood and that in Genesis. Explain how those differences grow out of the theological premises of Mesopotamian religion and the Bible, respectively.

Sept. 25 SOURCE CRITICISM AND THE DOCUMENTARY HYPOTHESIS

- QUIZ 1.
- Before reading any other part of today's assignment, review Genesis 1-2 and 6:5-9:17. What is puzzling about the coherence and consistency of these narratives?
- Learn the following term from the glossary in READINGS: Documentary Hypothesis
- Norman C. Habel, *Literary Criticism of the Old Testament*, pp. 1-42.
- In READINGS: (1) Tigay, "The Lord;" (2) Richard E. Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible*, pp. 15-28 and 234-245; (3) *The Bible with Sources Revealed*, pp. 42-47; (4) S.R. Driver, *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*; selections from Preface, pp. vii-xiii; (5) "Franz Rosenzweig's Way of Reading the Bible." (Optional reading: For a similar position in statement by the Roman Catholic Church, see "The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church" on the WEBSITE)
- Optional readings: "Dissents from the Documentary Hypothesis" on the WEBSITE.

Questions:

- Describe the main types of evidence that source critics believe justify the theory that the Torah was woven together out of originally separate literary sources. What are the four main sources that the Documentary Hypothesis postulates? What, in Friedman's view, did the redactor contribute to the narratives by combining them? Exemplify your points by means of the flood narrative and any others that you wish to add.
- What is God's name in the Bible and what does it mean? What is the origin of the English form "Jehovah"?
- What is the common idea shared by Driver and Rosenzweig regarding Biblical criticism and a religious understanding of the Bible.

Sept. 30 NO CLASS

Oct. 2 ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE BIBLE

- WEBSITE: (1) "Archaeological slides" and (2) "Archaeological slides categorized."
- WEBSITE: (3) "Israel" in inscription of Merneptah, king of Egypt; (4) Inscription of Mesha, King of Moab; (5) Tel Dan Inscription (please rotate the image for "Fragments A and B" 90 degrees to the left). Read both items that have this title. (6) "City gates."
- J.B. Pritchard, *Archaeology and the Old Testament*, pp. 1-52, 91-159, 207-227, 246-49 (call numbers BS 1180 P84 [in JANES, on the stack shelves and possibly more on the JANES reserve shelf] and 210.93 P935 [one copy each in JANES stack shelves and the Museum Library reserve desk]). **NOTE:** Since the number of copies is limited, it would be advisable to get started on this assignment early. (NB regarding Pritchard's comment on pp. 124-25 that ancient Canaanite religion included "sacred harlots/prostitution" [pp. 123-25] -- there is actually no convincing evidence that this is true; students wishing to read about this subject may see pp. 480-81 of my commentary on Deuteronomy [*The JPS Torah Commentary: Deuteronomy* (BS1225.3 J67 v.5 in JANES; BS1275.3.T54.1996 in the stacks)].)
- These assignments on archaeology and the Bible will be supplemented by the two tours of the Museum.

Questions:

- What did Petrie refer to as "the essential alphabet of archaeology," and what did he mean by that?
- What is the subject of the inscription found in the Siloam tunnel in Jerusalem, and when was it written? What is its relationship to the Bible?
- What is depicted in the reliefs in Sennacherib's palace that show the city of Lachish, and what have scholars learned from those reliefs? How does this information relate to the Bible?
- What are the Lachish letters and which period of Biblical history do they illuminate? How does this relate to the Bible?
- Who discovered the Dead Sea Scrolls and how did he discover them? When were they written, and to whom did they belong in ancient times?
- What is the Mesha Inscription, where was it found, and what is its significance for the Bible? What important new reading has been found in the inscription? Where else has the same phrase recently been discovered?
- What are the Ugaritic tablets? Where and how were they found, what are their contents, and what is their importance for the Bible?
- What are some possible interpretations of the figurines of nude females found by archaeologists?
- What events recorded in the Bible are also mentioned in inscriptions of Sargon, and what do the inscriptions add to what the Bible reports?
- What is the significance for the Bible of the monuments and inscriptions of the Assyrian kings Shalmaneser III, Tiglath-Pileser III, and Sennacherib (for the latter, see both chaps. I and IV)?
- Name six law "codes" from ancient Mesopotamia, and give some examples of topics they have in common with Biblical law.

Oct. 6 (Monday evening) THE TORAH: ABRAHAM

- Gen 9:1-25:10
- Sarna, chaps. 4-5 (minus p. 103), 7, 8, 9
- In READINGS: (1) Greenberg, "Biblical Attitudes toward Power," pp. 102-103; compare Genesis 18:17-19; (2) for the covenant ceremony in 15:9-17, see (a) "Land Grant AT 456* (2.137)" and (b) the 2 pages with heading "Covenants and Treaties" – see the underlined passages (compare Sarna, p. 126).

Questions:

- What are the major themes of the biography of Abraham in Genesis? What development is evident in the portrayal of Abraham from chap. 12 to chap. 22?
- What is the nature of the covenant between God and Abraham?
- What are the purposes for which God chose Abraham and his descendants? What are the reasons Genesis suggests for why it was Abraham in particular that God chose for this purpose?
- What is implied by the frequent birth of children to infertile mothers, and the frequent supplanting of eldest sons by younger ones, in Genesis?
- Cite examples of ancient Near Eastern social practices discovered by archaeologists that help explain unusual practices and themes in the lives of the Hebrew patriarchs.

Oct. 7 THE TORAH: ENSLAVEMENT AND EXODUS

- Exodus 1-18
- In READINGS: (1) "Daily Life - Building;" (2) "The Report of a Frontier Official;" (3) "The Pursuit of Runaway Slaves;" (4) "Asiatics in Egyptian Household Service;" (5) "Egyptian Prophecy;" (6) N.M. Sarna and H. Shanks, "Israel in Egypt" (NB: on page 41, last par. line 3, 1 Kings 1:6 should be 6:1); (7) Sarna, "The Ten Plagues;" (8) U. Cassuto, "XIV, 21;" (9) Tigay, "Moses and Monotheism."
- WEBSITE: (1) in the item entitled "Maps," see the map "The Route of the Exodus;" (2) "Israel" in inscription of Merneptah, king of Egypt.

Questions:

- What are the major themes of the narratives about Moses in Exodus 2, prior to God's summoning him to lead Israel, and what is their function in preparing the reader for his being called to leadership?
- What are the major themes of the narratives about the ten plagues? What does the structure imply about the meaning of the plagues.
- What is Hort's theory about the sequence of the plagues?
- When does God begin to harden Pharaoh's heart and why does He do so repeatedly after that?
- What are the arguments pro and con about whether or not the Israelites once lived in Egypt as slaves and escaped in an exodus? What documents and artifacts from Egypt serve as evidence in this discussion?
- When do those who affirm the historicity of the exodus date the event?
- What is the significance of the exodus event for Israelite religion?
- What is the evidence that Moses taught monotheism?

Oct. 9 NO CLASS

Oct. 14 FALL BREAK, NO CLASS

Oct. 16 THE TORAH: THE COVENANT AT MT, SINAI AND THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

- Learn the following terms from the glossary in READINGS: Halakhah; Motive clause; The Rabbis, Rabbinic
- Exodus 19-20 and 24
- WEBSITE: Greenberg, "Decalogue."

- WEBSITE: in the item entitled “Maps,” see the map “The Route of the Exodus” and locate the various proposed sites of Mount Sinai.
- In READINGS: (1) Sarna, “The covenant concept,” “Near Eastern parallels,” and “Israelite innovations;” (2) “Hittite Diplomatic Texts” – note the underlined passages; (3) M. Greenberg, “The Biblical Grounding of Human Value”

Questions:

- What is the Bible's concept of the origin of its laws, and how does that differ from other ancient views about the origin of law? How does the Biblical view affect the notion of duty and sin?
- Describe the order, style, and literary structure of the Ten Commandments and the implications of these characteristics.
- ESSAY 1: Write an essay of ca. 700 words about Sarna’s chapter on the covenant concept, focusing on the following questions:

(1) Which are the three main groups of ancient Near Eastern treaties (identify them by date and geography)?

(2) What are the two main types of ancient Near Eastern covenants?

(3) What are the six main elements in the Hittite treaties?

(4) Which features of the Biblical covenant between God and Israel parallel each of these elements in the Hittite treaties, and where are they found in the Torah?

(5) Identify at least three ways in which the Israelite concept of the covenant differs from ancient Near Eastern treaties.

Cite chapter and verse in referring to the Biblical phenomena you mention parts 3 and 4. You need only give the chapter and verse numbers – don’t quote the verses themselves. If you wish to quote them, put them in footnotes so that they will not count in the 700 word limit).

Oct. 21 NO CLASS

Oct. 23 THE TORAH: CIVIL LAW

- Exodus 21-23; Leviticus 24:17-21; Lev. 25; Numbers 35:9-34; Deuteronomy 15:1-18; 16:18-20; 17:1-7; 17:14-20; also 7:1-6 and chap. 20.
- In READINGS: (1) M. Greenberg, “Biblical Attitudes Toward Power” (also, review Greenberg's “The Biblical Grounding of Human Value”); see the comment to Deut. 20:1-18 in “Notes on Biblical Laws” on the Blackboard Website; (2) Tigay, Excursus 18 “The Proscription of the Canaanites.”
- In READINGS: (2) “Hittite Laws 1-4” and (3) “Laws of Hammurabi,” paragraphs 6-8, 21-25, 117, 129, 195-201, 206-214, 229-231, 250-252. See footnote 39, and compare each of these laws with the Biblical laws mentioned in footnotes 45, 49, 91, 98, 134, 137, 147.
- WEBSITE: (1) “Notes on Biblical Laws;” (2) for the stele containing the text of Hammurabi’s laws, see “Archaeological slides,” numbers 48 and 49.

Questions:

- What is the punishment for murder in the Laws of Hammurabi? What are some of the punishments for theft? How do these differ from punishments of those crimes in the Bible?
- In the Laws of Hammurabi, under what circumstances is a person who maims another punished with talion (see Glossary) and under what circumstances with a monetary fine? What is the case in the Bible?

- Describe the basic postulates and underlying values of Biblical law, and how they affect the contents of the law, according to Greenberg's article "The Biblical Grounding of Human Value?" How do these values differ from those of other ancient Near Eastern legal systems? How are those differences rooted in theological differences that we studied in connection with the creation of the world and the in connection with the covenant?
- How do the Biblical laws about debt and interest differ from those of today? What is their aim?
- How does the political authority envisaged in Deuteronomy compare to the American concept of separation of powers?
- What are the social and political aims of Biblical law according to Greenberg's article "Biblical Attitudes Toward Power"? Cite specific laws as examples.

Oct. 27 (Monday evening) and Oct. 28 THE TORAH: RELIGIOUS LAW

- Learn the following terms from the glossary in READINGS: Cult, cultus, cultic
- Genesis 4:1-5; Exodus 12:1-28; Leviticus 1-7; 16; 18-19; 23; 25:1-23; Deut. 6:4-9; 14:3-21
- In READINGS: (1) Baruch J. Schwartz, "Leviticus. Selections from his commentary on Leviticus;
- (2) Tigay, commentary to Deut. 6:4-9 ("The Duty of Undivided Loyalty to the Lord...") and (3) Excursuses 10-11 ("The Shema" and "Tefillin and Mezuzot"); (4) J. Milgrom, "The Biblical Diet Laws as an Ethical System"; and (5) Tigay, commentary to Deut. 14:3-21 ("Holiness in Diet").
- WEBSITE: (1) Greenberg, "Sabbath;" (2) Booths (sukkahs) (Leviticus 23:42).

Questions:

- According to Genesis 4:1-5, at whose initiative did sacrifice originate and what was the motive for sacrifice? How does this compare to the Babylonian idea expressed in Enuma Elish?
- What were the three principal types of gift offering, and how did they differ from each other? What two additional types of sacrifice were used for expiation of sin, and for what types of sin were they used? What was a "scapegoat," when was it used, and what exactly did it do? What was the purpose of sacrifice and the other laws of purity in Leviticus? What types of law does Leviticus contain in addition to those about priests, sacrifice and purity (see also the chapters from Leviticus in the next assignment)?
- What are the purpose and meaning of the Sabbath (see the Sabbath commands in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5; also Exodus 23:12; 31:12-18)?
- What are the difficulties in determining the original meaning of the "Shema", what was its most likely original meaning, and what additional meanings has it expressed since Biblical times?
- What are *tefillin* and *mezuzot* and what is their function?
- What are the purpose and meaning of the Biblical dietary laws?
- What are the main religious holidays of the Biblical calendar?
- The main holy days (Sabbath, New Moon, Passover [Pesah], Weeks [Shavuot], and Tabernacles [Sukkot]) have themes that are natural and/or historical. Which does each holy day have? How is the increasing emphasis on their historical significance related to the basic theology of the Bible?

Oct. 30 and Nov. 3 (Monday evening) THE HISTORICAL BOOKS: THE PAST JUDGED BY A RELIGIOUS STANDARD

- The entire book of Judges; 2 Samuel 9-20; 1 Kings 1-3; 5; 6:1-14; 7:1, 51; 8:1-9:9; 10-12; 2 Kings 16:21-chap. 19; 21-23; 25
- In READINGS: (1) M. Smith, "The So-Called 'Biography of David' in the Books of Samuel and Kings;" (2) Nahum M. Sarna, "The Biblical Sources for the History of the Monarchy."

Questions:

- What were the aims of the writers of the books of Judges, Samuel, and Kings? How do they resemble those of modern historians and how do they differ from them?
- What are the historiographical methods of the authors of Judges and Kings -- that is, on what do they base their interpretation of the events they narrate?
- Compare the different ways the Torah, Judges, Samuel and Kings describe God's involvement in historical events.

Nov. 4, 6 PROPHECY: THE PRESENT JUDGED BY A RELIGIOUS STANDARD**NOTE: Quiz 2 will be given on Thursday, Nov. 6.**

- On the role of the prophet: Exodus 3:1-4:17; Deuteronomy 18:9-22; Genesis 20:7 and 17; Ezekiel 13:1-7; 22:23-31
- The ideas of the classical prophets:
 - Hosea 1-3 (note the symbolic acts performed by Hosea and what they symbolize)
 - Amos 1:1-3:2; 4:1-5; 5:7-27; 7 (in addition to Amos's message, note the biographical section in chapter 7 and the way it relates to his message)
 - Isaiah 1; 2; 11; chap. 19, verses 1 and 16-24.
 - Micah 6:6-8
 - Jeremiah 1; 7; 18:1-17; 26; 36 (in addition to Jeremiah's message, note the biographical sections and the way they relate to his message)
 - Ezekiel 18 (compare this with Exodus 20:5-6); 33:1-20; 37
 - Second ("Deutero-") Isaiah: Isa 40:1-7; 42:1-9; 44:1-45:7 (compare 41:22-24); 47:1-15; 49:1-6; 56:1-8; 58:1-14; 65:17-25; 66:18-23
 - Zechariah 13:2; 14:9

While reading these passages, take note of one or two of the main themes of each passage, with a view to answering the questions just below.

- In READINGS: (1) Greenberg, "Prophecy in Hebrew Scripture." (2) A.J. Heschel, *The Prophets*, pp. 3-5 bottom; 13-16 top, 24 middle (from "The prophet does not judge...")-25 top; 221-235 middle (note: the Latin phrase *sub specie dei* on p. 15 means "from God's viewpoint.") (3) Y. Muffs, "His Majesty's Loyal Opposition. A Study in Prophetic Intercession." (4) Review M. Greenberg, "Biblical Attitudes Toward Power," pp. 110-12. (5) Joseph Klausner, "The Jewish and the Christian Messiah."

Questions:

- What is the basic role of the prophet?
- What is the difference between the classical and the pre-classical prophets?
- What are the original ideas of the classical prophets (mention at least four), and how do these ideas differ from those on the same subjects elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible? Specifically, in the view of the classical prophets:
 - What are the relationship and relative importance of justice and righteousness as compared to sacrifice and other forms of worship, and how do their views compare to the ideas of the Torah about the same question?
 - What is the effect of repentance, and how does their view compare to that of the Torah about the same question?

- Who is punished for the sins of the guilty, and who is rewarded for the virtuous acts of the righteous? How does their view compare to that of the Torah about the same question?
 - What will be the religious orientation of the world when history reaches its culminating stage? How does their view compare to that of the Torah about the same question?
 - What are the prophets' arguments against (a) polytheism and (b) the worship of idols?
 - Who will enjoy security and peace when history reaches its culminating stage? How does their view compare to that of the Torah about the same question?
 - What will be the ultimate relationship between Israel and the other nations when history reaches its culminating stage? How does their view compare to that of the Torah about the same question?
 - Who will be affected when God judges sinners in the future? How does their view compare to that of the Torah about the same question?
 - Whose action will usher in the final stage of history? How does their view compare to that of the Torah about the same question?
- What does the term "messiah" mean and what are the nature and roll of the messiah? Where does this idea (if not the term) first appear in the Bible?

Nov. 11, 13 THE PSALMS: LITURGY AND INSTRUCTION

- Psalms 1; 6; 7; 8; 15; 19; 30; 42-43; 50; 51; 94; 104
- In READINGS: Adele Berlin, "Characteristics of Hebrew Poetry." (Interested readers will enjoy Berlin's fuller essay in JSB, pp. 2097-2104.)
- WEBSITE: N.M. Sarna, "Psalms."
- Sarna, *On the Book of Psalms*, pp. 3-150, 190-207

Questions:

- What is "poetic parallelism?"
- What professional group does Sarna think was responsible for the psalms? What is the basis of the tradition that the entire book of Psalms was composed by David? Does the available evidence support this tradition?
- What are the various purposes and situations for which psalms were composed, as indicated by their form and contents? Which genres were composed for which purposes? To which genre does each of the assigned psalms belong?
- What is the main theme of Psalm 1? How does it relate to the contents of the book as a whole? Why would a psalm about this theme have been placed at the beginning of the book?
- What are the main themes of the other assigned psalms?
- How do Psalms 8 and 104 relate to Genesis 1?
- Comment on specific psalms discussed in class.

Nov. 18 WISDOM LITERATURE (1): DIDACTIC WISDOM LITERATURE

- Proverbs 1-3; 22:17-24:12
- Ecclesiastes 1:1-4:3; 9:7-12; chap. 12.
- In READINGS: (1) "The Instruction of Amen-em-ope"; and (2) "Some Aspects of the Popular Religion" (the latter is from Y. Kaufmann, *The Religion of Israel*, 316-341).
- WEBSITE: "Egyptian parallel to Proverbs 22-24"

Questions:

- What is the stated purpose of the book of Proverbs?
- What does "fear of the Lord" mean and what does the book mean by stating that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge"?
- What is the difference between didactic and critical wisdom literature in the Bible? Which books (and parts of books) belong to each type?
- Describe the themes, typical teachings and arguments of these two types and the source of the knowledge that their teaching and arguments are based on, and compare them in these respects to the Torah and the Prophets.
- For what purpose were the wisdom books included in the Bible?
- Who were the main audience of wisdom literature?
- According to Ecclesiastes, can humans change the world at large, or determine the course of own lives?
- What pursuits did the author test out, and what did he get out of them?
- Why is it no better to be wise than to be a fool?
- What about his other pursuits – why does he conclude that they were worthless?
- What does he conclude that a person should do?
- How does 12: 13-14 relate to the rest of the book?
- Does this book belong with didactic wisdom literature or should it be classed with critical wisdom literature?

Nov. 20 WISDOM LITERATURE (2): CRITICAL WISDOM LITERATURE

- Job, chaps 1-2 and 42:7-17, and the following speeches by individual characters in the book:
- Job: 3; 7; 9; 16:9-17; 19:1-20; 21:7-15 and v. 34; 31
- Eliphaz: 4-5; 15:7-22, 32-35; 22:1-11
- Zophar: 20:4-11 and v. 29
- Bildad: chap 25
- Elihu: 32:1-4; 33:8-30
- God: 38:1-18; 39; 40:9-14
- In READINGS: (1) Review "Some Aspects of the Popular Religion," pp. 334-338; (2) N.M. Sarna, "The Book of Job: General Introduction;" and (3) M. Greenberg, "Reflections on Job's Theology." (Note: Sarna and Greenberg refer several times to the question of whether Job's piety/devotion to God was "disinterested." By "disinterested" they mean "without expectation of reward.")

Questions:

- What are the differences between the prose framework of Job and its poetic chapters? How do scholars account for those differences?
- What are the various explanations of evil expressed by the writer(s) and characters in the book of Job, the purpose of the book and the reason for its inclusion in the canon of the Bible?
- ESSAY 2: Write an essay of ca. 700 words on all of the following questions based on the articles by Sarna and Greenberg about Job. It is to be handed in writing at the beginning of class on Nov. 20.

(1) Sarna writes about the two distinct parts of the book – prose and poetry. Which chapters, or parts of chapters, comprise the prose and which the poetry? What is the discrepancy between the two? Cite a verse from each part that illustrates the discrepancy. What does Sarna think is the origin, or background,

of the prose narrative and what is the evidence on which he bases that conclusion. Cite at least two passages that form part of that evidence and explain how he believes they support his conclusion.

(2) What, according to Greenberg, are the usual ways of explaining misfortunes such as those that struck Job, and why – despite the friends’ statements – can’t those explanations be applied in Job’s case?

(3) Greenberg says that the book is not merely an exposition of ideas but is a portrayal of a spiritual journey. Describe the journey – whose journey is it, where does he begin spiritually and where does he end up?

(4) What is the concept of God that Greenberg says contradicts the teachings of Proverbs, the Torah and the Prophets? How does it contradict them? According to Greenberg, why, given those contradictions, was the book of Job retained in the Bible?

In citing verses, you need only give the chapter and verse numbers – don’t quote the verses themselves. (if you wish to quote them, put them in footnotes so that they will not count in the 700 word limit).

Nov. 25, Dec. 2 THE CANONIZATION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE BIBLE

Canonization and early interpretation:

- Exodus 24:1-8 (skim chapters 20-23 for review); 2 Kings 22-23:1-25; Nehemiah chapters 8; 10; 13:1-3, 23-27 (compare Deut. 23:4-9); Daniel chap. 9 (compare Jer. 25:1-14).

Questions:

- What does "canonization" mean, and what were the initial stages by which the books of the Bible became canonized? In this connection, what is the historical significance of Exodus 24:1-8; 2 Kings 23:1-3; Neh. 9:1-10:30; what is that of Neh. 8?
- How does Neh. 13:1-3, 23-27 interpret Deut. 23:4-9? How else might the Deuteronomy verses be interpreted?
- What does "the books" in Dan. 9:2 refer to? How does Daniel chap. 9 interpret the phrase "seventy years" in Jer. 25:1-14? How else might it be interpreted?

Later Jewish interpretation:

- Learn the following terms from the glossary in READINGS: Derash; Eisegesis; Exegesis; Hermeneutics; Midrash; Mishnah; Oral Law/Oral Torah/Oral Tradition; Peshat; Rashi; Talmud
- In READINGS: (1) M. Greenberg, "Exegesis"; (2) "Talmudic Exposition of the Scriptures"; (3) "Loose Construction in Rabbinic Interpretation of the Bible"; (4) "Biblical Interpretation in the Halakhic Process: Determining the Permissibility of Medical Experiments on Animals;" (5) selections from Rashi (only those underlined or marked with a vertical line in the margin); (6) selections from Judah Goldin, *The Jewish Expression*.

Questions:

- How does Talmudic interpretation of the Bible continue the methods of interpretation used earlier in Nehemiah and Daniel?
- What is the interpretive strategy of Talmudic loose construction? What motivates this strategy? What does it have in common with American Constitutional and statutory interpretation? What is its historical significance?

Later Christian interpretation:

- Learn the following terms from the glossary in READINGS: Barnabas, Letter of; Henry, Matthew; Justin Martyr; Type
- In READINGS: (1) "The Bible and its Interpreters: Christian Biblical Interpretation," pp. 57-64; (2) "Christian Interpretation of the Bible"; and (3) selections from Matthew Henry's commentary on the book of Isaiah (read Isaiah 2:1-9 and 11:1-9 before reading these selections).

Questions:

- What are the four main types of traditional Christian interpretation? What is its main interpretive strategy? What motivates this strategy? What is its main difference from Jewish interpretation?
- See (a) Isaiah 7:14 and (b) its interpretation in the New Testament, in the Gospel according to Matthew 1:18-25; (c) Jeremiah 31:30-33 and (d) its interpretation in the New Testament, in Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews 8:6-13. The New Testament is found in any Christian translation of the Bible, such as NOAB (see the assignment for SURVEY OF THE CONTENTS OF THE BIBLE for the call numbers). What do the two verses mean in their original contexts, and how are they construed in the New Testament?

Dec. 4 THE BIBLE AND WESTERN CIVILIZATION; CONCLUSION

- WEBSITE: The historical effects of monotheism.
- WEBSITE: "Bible. In the Arts."
- WEBSITE: "The Great Seal of the United States (design)."
- In READINGS: "How the Bible Made America" (from *Newsweek*).

Question:

- Cite some examples of the influence of the Hebrew Bible on Western literature, art, and music and American history and culture.

Dec. 6-9 READING DAYS. A review session will be arranged during this period.

Dec. 16 (Tuesday) 12:00-2:00 FINAL EXAM.

NOTE: This is the date listed in the Fall 2007 Course and Room Roster as of August 28, 2007. Please verify the date with the Registrar before you make any travel plans. NOTE also that the date is set by the Registrar and cannot be changed. Keep it in mind when making any travel reservations, so that you do not inadvertently make reservations that you will have to change. It is not possible to offer alternate dates to accommodate vacation plans or extracurricular activities.