

**SCRIPTURE I
Fall Semester 2015**

Instructor: Johanna Bos

Office hours: Professor Bos by appointment – Gardencourt 303

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Scripture I, along with Scripture II, will introduce the student to the Bible and the world of the Bible. Scripture I is a four-credit course taught in one semester; it will concentrate on matters that are of interest to the study of the entire Bible and to the study of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament in particular. Subjects for attention will be: The development of Christian study of the Old Testament from its earliest beginnings to the present day; steps in the formation of the biblical canon and the transmission of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament; the creation, composition and context of the texts of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament; the historical and geographical setting of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament; the nature of biblical authority, especially with a view to the relationship between the Testaments of the Christian Bible; some major theological concepts rooted in the Bible. ¹

OBJECTIVES: In part the course aims to further the knowledge of the historical context and literature of the Bible, essential to introductory Bible study. In addition, students should arrive at an understanding of the nature of biblical revelation and authority that are existentially meaningful and relevant to a larger faith context.

Overall Objective: To engage the text of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament with imagination and love and become open to the richness of its expression and depth of meaning as revealing of God and a crucial part of Christian heritage.

Specific Objectives and Learning Goals

- (1) To be acquainted with a rough outline of the history and context of South-West Asia in biblical times.
- (2) To outline the history of ancient Israel from 1200 B.C.E. - 100 B.C.E. in relation to developments in other cultures of South-West Asia of that period and to geographical features of the area.
- (3) To be or become thoroughly familiar with the content of the different books of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament and to be able to place texts within their appropriate biblical context and the history of Ancient Israel.
- (4) To be informed about the process and the formation of the Canon and to place this process in a historical and religious context.

¹ Because one semester is too brief a period to review all the books of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, students are strongly advised to take the one-credit Bible Content course taught in the Fall Semester to go through the entire collection.

SCRIPTURE I – FALL SEMESTER 2015

- (5) To articulate understandings of the significance and authority of the Bible as a whole and of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament in particular, especially in relation to the New Testament, providing historical settings for different perspectives.
- (6) To identify and discuss major biblical theological concepts, especially as they relate to present-day issues in the church and the world.

METHOD: The class will meet as one group twice a week for a two-hour period. Because of the size of the class, the course will consist for the greatest part in class presentations with some time set aside for questions and discussion.

MEANS OF EVALUATION: In general, students are expected to be or become thoroughly familiar with the content of the Bible, its different types of literature by using the Study Bibles, reading also texts beyond those that can be directly addressed during the class period. Students will receive a grade based on: (a) class presence and participation, reflecting familiarity with the biblical text; (b) a mid-term and final examination with stress on factual information (both will be take-home); (c) An in-class oral at mid-term and Finale during final exam days. Detailed instructions for exams and in-class exercises will be posted at an appropriate time.

Grading scale:

Class attendance and participation:	200
Mid-term exam:	100
Mid-term oral:	200
Final exam:	200
Finale:	300
Total:	1000

1000-950=A 949-900=A- 899-850=B+ 849-800= B 799-750=B- 749-700=C+ 699-650=C 649-600=C- 599-550=D Less than 550 = F

Attendance at all class meetings is a basic requirement. Three absences reduce the class attendance grade by 100 points, with each additional absence reducing that grade by 50 points. Habitual tardiness in class attendance will be noted and will cause a deduction of 10 points for each occasion (beginning on the second meeting of the class). In case of unavoidable conflict, notify the instructor as soon as possible. Participation in class includes pertinent and productive questions, and insights and observations relevant to the subject and readings as well as completing in-class assignments.

Use of Inclusive Language

In accordance with seminary policy, students are to use inclusive language in class discussions and in written and oral communication by using language representative of the whole human community in respect to gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, and physical and intellectual capacities. Direct quotations from theological texts and translations of the Bible do not have to be altered to conform to this policy. In your own writing, however, when referring to God, you are encouraged to use a

variety of images and metaphors, reflecting the richness of the Bible's images for God. See for more information, see:

<http://www.lpts.edu/academics/academic-resources/academic-support-center/online-writing-lab/avoiding-gender-bias>

Academic Honesty

All work turned in to the instructors is expected to be the work of the student whose name appears on the assignment. Any borrowing of the ideas or the words of others must be acknowledged by quotation marks (where appropriate) and by citation of author and source. Use of another's language or ideas from online resources is included in this policy, and must be attributed to author and source of the work being cited. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism, and may result in failure of the course. Two occurrences of plagiarism may result in dismissal from the Seminary. Students unfamiliar with issues related to academic honesty can find help from the staff in the Academic Support Center. For more information, see the Policy for Academic Honesty in the Student Handbook.

Special Accommodations

Students requiring accommodations for a documented physical or learning disability should be in contact with the Director of the Academic Support Center (kmapes@lpts.edu) during the first two weeks of a semester (or before the semester begins) and should speak with the instructor as soon as possible to arrange appropriate adjustments. Students with environmental or other sensitivities that may affect their learning are also encouraged to speak with the instructor.

Citation Policy

Citations in your papers should follow Seminary standards, which are based on these guides:

American Psychological Association. *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. 6th ed. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2010.

Turabian, Kate L., Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*. 8th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013.

The Chicago Manual of Style. 16th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010.

Copies of these guides are available at the library and in the Academic Support Center.

Electronic Devices

All electronic devices, laptop computers, i-pads, i-Phones, cell-phones, etc, are to be turned off during class time. Exceptions may be requested from the instructors. Taping of a class may take place only with permission by the instructor.

RESOURCES: The Hebrew Bible/Old Testament is a main resource for this course and we will spend a considerable amount of time working directly with the text.

SCRIPTURE I – FALL SEMESTER 2015

Required reading material

The New Interpreter's Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version (Nashville: Abingdon, 2003)

The Jewish Study Bible. Adele Berlin and Marc Zvi Brettler eds. (Oxford University Press, 2004.)

Assignments posted on CAMS Check CAMS regularly for posted material.

Johanna W.H.van Wijk-Bos. *Making Wise the Simple – the Torah in Christian Faith and Practice* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, October 2005)

The Contemporary Torah – A Gender-Sensitive Adaptation of the JPS Translation.

Editors: David E.S. Stein, Adele Berlin, Ellen Frankel and Carol L. Meyers. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2006.

**Kugel, James L. *The God of Old – Inside the Lost World of the Bible.* (New York: The Free Press, 2003)
ISBN 0-4732-3584-3**

Recommended

Everett Fox. *The Five Books of Moses – A New Translation with Introductions, Commentary and Notes.* (New York: Schocken, 1995)

Robert Alter. *The Five Books of Moses – A Translation with Commentary.* (New York: W.W.Norton & Co, 2004)

Peter C. Craigie. *The Old Testament – Its Background, Growth, and Content.* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1986)

Rainer Albertz. *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period.* (Louisville: Westminster, 2004).

Johanna W.H.van Wijk-Bos. *Reformed and Feminist – A Challenge to the Church* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1991)

Jonathan Sacks. *The Dignity of Difference* (New York: Continuum, 2002) ISBN: 0826468500

Daniel C. Snell. *Life in the Ancient Near East.* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997.)

