



**Course Syllabus:**  
**OT 101: Introduction to the Old Testament**  
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Overview

The Old Testament is an amazing body of literature. As an expression of the religious life and thought of ancient Israel, it is a foundational document of Western civilization. More than a collection of stories and sayings, the Old Testament is a spiritual compass. The events of those years, when interpreted correctly, give us an accurate understanding of the hour in which we currently live and the reality of the need for prophetic voices in our day.

For Christians, studying the Old Testament is a journey into the heart of God, to the “roots” of faith, giving inspiration and direction. Israel’s story, feelings, and learning, become our own. In the end, one comes to realize that the text truly is revelation from God and of God himself.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to acquire a good knowledge of, and/or skills as described below:

1. To understand the chronology, structures, and themes of the Old Testament. This includes seeing how Old Testament narratives reveal God’s hand in Israel’s history.
2. To recognize various literary genres of the Old Testament. This includes an awareness of the vast differences between ancient cultural forms and the modern world.
3. To appreciate the relationship of the Old Testament with the New Testament.
4. To grasp the missional value of the Old Testament and be able to preach effectively from it.
5. To inspire in others a passion for reading and studying the Scriptures.

General Course Requirements

OT101 requires timely completion of the following course requirements:

1. Required Reading
2. Final Exam
3. During the semester, prepare and deliver a lesson/sermon from the Old Testament.

Grade computation:

Letter grades for OT101 are based on the following scale:

A 94-100  
A- 90-93  
B+ 87-89  
B 86-86  
B- 80-83  
C+ 77-79  
C 74-76  
C- 70-73  
D+ 67-69  
D 64-66  
D- 60-63  
F Failure

Reading Requirements:

1. Scripture:

Read/skim through the entire Old Testament.

Each student must have access to at least two modern translations of the Bible, preferably employing different translation techniques. For example, students may choose one of the following “dynamic” translations: NIV, ESV, NET, NEB; and one of the following “formal” translations: NRSV, RSV, NASB, and NKJV.

Note: Students are expected to have completed the reading in preparation for each lecture and for the final exam.

Another Note: As you read, come up with your own list of 100 Useful Passages. This is a list of themes and passages that you find helpful. One way of doing this is by highlighting passages and themes in your Bible. You are not required to memorize this list.

2. Primary reading.

Students must pick one of the following texts and complete it during the semester.

Beginner level:

Archer, Gleason. *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*. Rev. Paperback Ed. Chicago, Moody Press, 1985. Beginner level.

Drane, John. *Introduction to the Old Testament*. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1987.

Geisler, Norman. *A Popular Survey of the Old Testament*. 2007 edition. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1977. Beginner level.

Kaminski, Carol M. *Old Testament Study Guide: Casket Empty, God's Plan of Redemption through History*. Casket Empty Media, 2012.

Advanced level:

- LaSor, William S., David A. Hubbard, and Frederic W. Bush. *Old Testament Survey: The Message, Form, and Background of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996.
- Hill, Andrew and John Walton. *A Survey of the Old Testament*, 3rd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009.
- Longman, Tremper, III and Raymond B. Dillard. *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006. Advanced level.

Secondary reading (or extra credit). Does not count as a primary reading text, but can be read for extra credit.

#### Introductions:

- Barth, Christoph. *A Theological Introduction to the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991.
- Childs, Brevard S. *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979.
- Harrison, R.K. *Introduction to the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969.
- Hoerth, Alfred J. *Archaeology and the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998.
- House, Paul R. *Old Testament Survey*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994

#### Other books:

- Arnold, Bill T. and Beyer, Bryan E., ed., *Readings from the Ancient Near East: Primary Sources for Old Testament Study* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002).
- Terrien, Samuel. *The Elusive Presence*. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1978.
- Thiele, Edwin R. *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*. New Revised Edition. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1983.
- Walton, John H. *Chronological Charts of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978).
- Wright, C. J. H. *Knowing Jesus through the Old Testament*. IVP, 1995.
- Youngblood, Ronald. *The Heart of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998.

### Course Outline

#### 1. Creation and Covenant. Genesis. **SK**.

Genesis 1-11. Creation. Adam and Eve. Sin enters the world.

Genesis 12-50. The Patriarchs. Abraham and the Covenant. Isaac. Jacob. Joseph.

#### Study questions:

- Discuss the purposes for which Genesis was written.
- Discuss the areas in which science supports the Bible.
- What are the ways by which God prepared Israel as a nation?
- How is the person of Abraham important for the message of the OT?

Memory: Genesis 3:15, 12:1-3

#### 2. The Exodus. The Book of Exodus. Moses. Sinai. God's Presence. **SK**.

#### Study questions:

- What is the main doctrinal emphasis of Exodus through Deuteronomy? How does it compare with that of Genesis?

- What is the significance of God revealing his name to Moses?

Memory: Exodus 19:4-6

**3. The Law.** Leviticus - Deuteronomy. Hebrews 7-9. The Law as God's gift. Gospel verses Grace. Lessons from the Wilderness. **SK.**

Study questions:

- What predictions in Deuteronomy point to the future path of Israel?
- How is Christ prefigured in the Law?
- How does the Law impact Christians today?

Memory: Numbers 6:24-26, Deuteronomy 6:4, 29:29

**4. The Conquest.** Joshua, Judges, Ruth. Preparation, invasion, conquest, tribal inheritances, the Judges Cycle, the nations nearby. **SK.**

Study questions:

- Define *theocracy*.
- What is the doctrinal purpose of Joshua?
- How important is the conquest of land to Israel's identity?
- How did the judges shape Israel's history? In what ways do they prefigure Christ?
- What is "the Judges Cycle"?
- How does Ruth pave the way for Jesus' coming?

Memory: Joshua 1:8-9, 11:23; Judges 21:25

**5. United Kingdom.** 1 & 2 Samuel; 1 Kings 1-11; 1 Chronicles 10 - 2 Chronicles 9. Samuel. Saul. David. David makes Jerusalem his capital. **SK.**

Study questions:

- Compare Israel's theocracy and monarchy.
- What spiritual lessons are to be learned from 1-2 Samuel?
- Compare the character of David and Saul.
- What things brought about the corruption of Solomon's kingdom?
- Compare Kings and Chronicles as spiritual commentaries on Israel's kingdom period.

Memory: 1 Samuel 15:22; 2 Samuel 7:12-13; 2 Chronicles 7:14

**6. Divided Kingdom.** 1 Kings 12 - 2 Kings 17; 2 Chronicles 10-28. Solomon. Rehoboam. Rehoboam leads a succession. The Divided Kingdom to the Fall of Samaria (931-722 B.C.). Focus on the kings of Samaria. **SK.**

Study questions:

- Describe the events that led to the division.
- What were the results of the moral decline of the Jewish nation?
- Explain the role of the prophets in this period.
- How did the morality of Israel's early kings compare with that of Judah's early kings?

Memory: 1 Kings 9:4-5; Jonah 4:2

**7. Poetry/Praise/Love.** Psalms. Song of Songs. **RM.**

Study questions:

- Give the main characteristics of Hebrew poetry.
- List the various types of Psalms.
- What is the primary theme/lesson of Song of Songs?

Memory: Memorize a Psalm of your choice.

**8. Wisdom.** Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Job. **RM.**

Study questions:

- How do each of these books show man's aspiration for Christ?
- What Bible-wide themes are seen in the poetical books?
- Compare Ecclesiastes and Job on the aspect of man's purpose for living.

Memory: Prov. 1:7; Ecc. 12:113-14

**9. The Assyrian Captivity.** Amos, Hosea, Jonah. Focus on the kings of Samaria. Samaria Falls. Judah and Jerusalem. Hezekiah. **SK.**

Study Question:

- What are the theological themes of Amos, Hosea, and Jonah?
- Describe the fall of Samaria.
- What was going on in Judah in 722 when Samaria fell?

Memory: Amos 3:7-8; Hosea 14:9; Jonah 4:10-11

**10. The Babylonian Captivity.** 2 Kings 18-25, 2 Chronicles 29-36, Isaiah 1-33, Micah, Nahum, Jeremiah, Joel, Obadiah, Habakkuk, Zephaniah. **SK.**

A Brief Respite (722-640, B.C.), the Last Days of Judah and the Fall of Jerusalem, focus on the kings of Judah.

Study questions:

- Describe the events that led to the fall of Jerusalem.
- Why is the destruction of the Temple significant?
- Explain the role of the prophets in this period.
- How do the prophets of this period challenge Israel's faith?

Memory: Micah 6:8, 7:18; Habakkuk 2:4; Zephaniah 2:3

**11. Exile/Captivity.** Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Esther, Isaiah 34-35, 40-66; selected Psalms. **RM.**

God's presence in Exile. Development of Judaism during exile.

Study questions:

- Explain the role of the prophets in this period.
- In what two senses was Jeremiah's prediction of a seventy-year captivity fulfilled?
- How did the exile affect the Israelites understanding of themselves?
- How does Isaiah articulate God's plans to comfort his people?

Memory: Ezekiel 36:24-26; Daniel 2:44; Isaiah 53:6

**12. Restoration.** 1 Chronicles 9, Jeremiah 29, Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi. Construction of the Second Temple. Return and Rebuilding: Judaism under Foreign Domination, Awaiting the Deliverer from Zion. **RM.**

Study questions:

- What events led to the return of the Jewish exiles?

- In what ways is the rebuilding of the Temple important for Israel?
- What common concern gripped the post-exilic prophets?
- How do these books refer to God's faithfulness to his covenant?
- What is the role of the Word of God in Israel's restoration?

Memory: Ezra 1:3, 7:10; Nehemiah 6:15-16; Malachi 4:5-6