

Canadian Nazarene College
BL 240a (UoC, RELS 301) Introduction to the Bible
SYLLABUS, Fall Term 1997
Professor: Dr. David Neale - 571-2550, ext 32

I. Course Objectives

This course is an introduction to the literature of the Bible, beginning with the Old Testament this autumn and the New Testament in the winter. This is an issues course, not a content course, i.e. our goal is to become conscious of the major issues that are encountered in studying and interpreting the biblical text itself. In the course of the year we will discuss a wide variety of matters as they relate to the biblical story: theology, hermeneutics, history, language, literary art, faith; all in the context of the biblical literature. The overall objective is to improve your ability to read and understand the Bible in a way that does justice to the literature.

II. Course Outline

The class sessions will be a combination of lecture and discussion. The schedule of discussion topics is as follows. Reading assignments are in bold and are to be done **prior to the class session where they are listed**. Questions from Hauer and Young are also listed in bold.

Sept

- 9 Introductory session; Why Study the Bible?
- 11 The Geography, Power and Politics of Eretz Israel
View video: Israel 5000 years Plus 40 (on reserve)
- 16 The Story **Efird 1-22 (on reserve)**
- 18 Scrolls, Scribes and Scripture
H&Y 1-31, Questions from page 31 due
- 23 OT Canon - Hebrew Lesson
- 25 Genesis 1-3
Genesis 1-3; H&Y 32-53, Questions from page 53 due.
Notebooks due.
- 30 Genesis 4-11
Genesis 4-11

Oct

- 2 Genesis 12-18
Genesis 12-18; H&Y 54-74, Questions from page 74 due
- 7 Genesis 25-50
Gen 25-50
- 9 Exodus
Ex 1-12; H&Y 75-89, Questions from page 89 and Notebooks due.
- 14 Leviticus
Leviticus
- 16 Jerusalem Video - From David to the Babylonian Destruction
- 21 TBA
H&Y 90-116, Questions from page 116 due
- 23 Prophets and Seers
- 28 Prophets and Seers, contd.
H&Y 117-143, Questions from page 143 due
- 30 Prophets and Seers, contd.

Nov

- 4 Psalms and Songs in the OT

H&Y 144-160, Questions from 160 due; Pss 90-106

Notebooks due.

6 Psalms and Songs, contd.

11 No class

13 Jerusalem Video - Babylonian Destruction to Jesus - **Study Paper due**

18 Postcards from the edge: Job

Job 1-10, 38-42; H&Y 161-179, Questions from page 179 due

20 The Apocalypse

25 Daniel

Daniel; H&Y 180-197, Questions from page 196-97 due

27 Between the Testaments: Cyrus to Caesar (Bring your Teddy)

Dec 2 Between the Testaments, contd.

H&Y 198-223, Questions from page 223 due

4 Dead Sea Scrolls Video, Literature of the DDS

Notebooks due.

III. Course Requirements

Final	30%
Study Paper	30%
Typed notebooks and questions	40%

See attached sheet for Study Paper Assignment.

Typed class notes as follows:

Notes are to be fully typed with a table of contents. Days for which class is missed should be so noted in the table of contents. The notes must follow the lecture outlines. Minimum length is 20 pages. It is essential to type your notes up after each class session. Plagiarism of any sort will result in a loss of the entire 50%. The questions from Hauer and Young should be inserted in your class notes at the appropriate point, and so noted in the Table of Contents. The questions for each chapter (from 5-7) should be no less than three pages typed and double spaced for each chapter. There is an example of class notes on reserve in the library for your examination.

N.B. Absence Policy: After three (3) unexcused absences per term, the professor reserves the right to require a student to withdraw from the class. A late arrival equals .5 absence.

IV. Required Texts

C.E. Hauer and W.A. Young, *An Introduction to the Bible: A Journey into Three Worlds*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1994.

New Revised Standard Bible, Canadian Bible Society.

Collegeville Bible Time-Line

V. On Reserve

James Eford, *The Old Testament Writings: History, Literature and Interpretation*, Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982.

Video: *Israel 5000 Years Plus 40*. Doko Video Limited, Jerusalem.

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Study Paper Assignment
Fall Term, 1997

The purpose of this paper is to get you to read a biblical narrative carefully and observantly (NRSV is the required text). Choose an individual from the list provided and conduct a character study of that individual in the OT. Your sole source of information will be the biblical narratives about that person. Make a photocopy of the relevant text(s) and then read and reread them until you know the story intimately. Your writing assignment is to analyze the story for plot, character development, conflict and theology. Thus, your paper should have four headings:

Plot: Describe the plot briefly, i.e. distill the story line down to its most basic elements. Then ask: How does it work? What are the main turning points? What are the features that make it dramatically appealing? Why was this story good enough to be preserved for thousands of years?

Characters: Do a character sketch of each of the individuals in the story. Describe what you know about this individual and how you know it, from the text. Include a character sketch of God and treat him as any other character you do not know.

Overriding emotions: Analyze the text specifically for its emotional impact on the reader. Look for tension, conflict, anger, pain, victory, joy etc. and describe how these are developed and presented by the author.

Theology: What is this story designed to teach about God and what moral, ethical or spiritual lesson is the reader intended to take from it?

The paper must be typed and double-spaced and should be 6-10 pages in length. If you read your text carefully and get into the story you will probably feel that this is not enough space. Pay careful attention to spelling, grammar and the visual appeal of your paper. Your choices for topic are:

- Abraham Gen 12-25.11
- Joseph Gen 37-50
- Moses Ex 2-20 (from his birth to the giving of the 10 Commandments)
- Saul 1 Sam 9-31
- Ruth
- Job
- Other with permission

Due Date: November 16, at beginning of class. Late papers will be docked one full letter grade for each class session late. I.e., if not in at beginning of Nov. 5 class, one full letter grade will be penalized, up until the start of the next class session.

Sample grade sheet on Notebook grading:

Notebook Grading (10 Possible)

Completeness of notes (3)

classes missed: 1	(2)
2	(1)
3	(0)

Presentation (2) _____

Hauer and Young Questions (5) _____

Total _____