

# From Creation to Exile

## Exploring the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament

### Religious Studies 2HB3 – Fall 2018

**Instructor:** Daniel Machiela  
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**Office Hours:** Tues. 8:30-11:30 (or by appointment; please e-mail to set up a time)

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#### Lectures

**Time:** Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:30-12:20  
**Place:** Kenneth Taylor Hall (KTH) 104

#### Tutorial (50 Minutes)

**Time:** 10:30-11:20  
**Place:** T-13 105

#### Teaching Assistant:

TBD (@mcmaster.ca)

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### COURSE INFORMATION

#### Purpose and Approach of This Course:

This course will be an in-depth exploration of the books gathered together into what is often called the Hebrew Bible, or the Christian Old Testament. Written and handed down over thousands of years, these books constitute a scriptural foundation for both Judaism and Christianity, and contain many traditions shared with Islam. The Hebrew Bible contains entertaining moral stories, harsh prophetic rebukes, law codes, and emotionally-charged poetry. We will work together to gain a good working knowledge of the contents of these books and some of their central themes, to understand the cultures and places in which they were written, to appreciate the many ways in which they have been interpreted over millennia of study, and to assess their ongoing significance in contemporary societies.

#### Course Conditions

The components to be completed by each student, and evaluated by the instructor and TA, are as follows:

❖ Attendance and Participation (15% of final evaluation)

Your presence during *both* lectures *and* tutorials is a required part of this class. This is especially important since we will cover material in class that is not part of the reading schedule. Beyond simply showing up, the quality of your engagement with the class is important and will influence your final evaluation. This does not necessarily mean you are expected to be talking or asking questions regularly – this, too, will be evaluated on quality and not quantity, and I recognize these things are simply more comfortable for some than others. I ask that you be alert, prepared, engaged and ready to enter discussion when it is warranted. In short, I will ask myself at the end of the semester, “Did this student demonstrate that she/he consistently completed the readings, was prepared to ask questions and discuss this material, and in general was engaged with the class?” It is your job to help me and the TA respond with an emphatic “Yes!”

❖ Quizzes (33%; [3@ 11% each])

There will be three quizzes during the semester aimed at testing your knowledge of the primary and secondary reading material from the course, as well as central topics of discussion in lectures and tutorials. Questions will have both objective (multiple choice, true-false, fill in the blank, etc.) and short-answer questions (a sentence to several-sentence responses expected). These will take place during the tutorial sessions of the week listed in the schedule, below.

❖ Weekly responses (35%)

Each week you will be required to hand in an approximately one-page response (12 pt. font, double-spaced) to one of the “For Further Reflection” questions at the end of the assigned chapter(s) in Tzvi Novick’s, *An Introduction to the Scriptures of Israel*, or an alternative question provided to you in advance. Your responses must be uploaded to the appropriate Avenue dropbox as a .doc, .docx, or .pdf file by every Monday evening at 10:00 PM, beginning on September 10, with the exception of October 8 (mid-term recess) and December 4 (last day of class). This amounts to 10 total responses, each worth 3.5% of your overall grade.

❖ Final (summative) essay questions (17%)

At the end of term, you will write three brief essays (approximately two pages each, six pages total) on topics that I will give you in advance, related to the course material. The assignment will be due during the finals period on a date to be determined toward the end of term (though you are free to finish them earlier, if you like), and can be handed in through Avenue as a .doc, .docx, or .pdf file. There is not a standard mid-term or final in this class.

**Required Texts:**

- ❖ Any **Bible** using either the New Revised Standard Version translation or the Jewish Publication Society translation. If you don’t have this translation, I would recommend ***The Harper Collins Study Bible. Fully Revised and Updated*** (NRSV trans.; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006). I have asked the bookstore to order a number of paperback copies of the Student Edition of this Bible, and so you should be able to purchase it there if you wish.
- ❖ Tzvi Novick, ***An Introduction to the Scriptures of Israel: History and Theology*** (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018). Available in the bookstore.
- ❖ All other readings will be available through our class Avenue site.

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE**

Date	Description/Assignment
4 September Tuesday	Syllabus and Introductions <b>Assigned Reading for <u>Next</u> Class:</b> Genesis 1-2, 11:31-12:9; Exodus 1-2, 14, 19-20, 23:1-25:9; 40:16-38; Joshua 1 James Kugel, <i>The Great Shift: Encountering God in Biblical Times</i> (New York: Houghton Mifflin Hartcourt, 2017), xiii-xvi. (on Avenue) <b>NOTE: No tutorial this week</b>
6 Sept. Thursday	What is the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament? Getting started <b>Assigned Reading for <u>Next</u> Class:</b> Judges 1:1-7; 2:1-3:6; 19-20; 1 Samuel 8-9, 16:1-13; 2 Samuel 7; 1 Kings 2:10-3:28; 4:20-21; 11-12 Novick, <i>Scriptures of Israel</i> , 1-14
11 Sept. Tuesday	The Story of Israel <b>Assigned Reading for <u>Next</u> Class:</b> 2 Kings 17:1-21:17; 23:36-25:21; Isaiah 1-2; Jeremiah 1:1-2:13; Malachi 3-4 Jon Levenson, “Historical Criticism and the Fate of the Enlightenment Project” (on Avenue)

13 Sept. Thursday	Ways of approaching the Bible <b>Assigned Reading for Next Class:</b> Proverbs 1-9 R. Van Leeuwen, "Liminality and Worldview in Proverbs 1-9" (on Avenue)
18 Sept. Tuesday	Wisdom literature I: Introducing Proverbs <b>Assigned Reading for Next Class:</b> Proverbs 15-17; 22:17-24:22; 30-31 Novick, <i>Scriptures of Israel</i> , 15-24
20 Sept. Thursday	Wisdom literature II: Proverbs and the universal view <b>Assigned Reading for Next Class:</b> Job 1-14, 29-31, 38-42 Novick, <i>Scriptures of Israel</i> , 24-28
25 Sept. Tuesday	Wisdom literature III: Job and Its Meaning for Proverbs <b>Assigned Reading for Next Class:</b> Genesis 11:10-28:9; Deuteronomy 21:15-17 Novick, <i>Scriptures of Israel</i> , 29-36
27 Sept. Thursday	Divine election and the covenant <b>Assigned Reading for Next Class:</b> Song of Songs 1, 2, 5, and 8 Novick, <i>Scriptures of Israel</i> , 36-42 A. J. Heschel, "Duties of the Heart," <i>Heavenly Torah</i> , 189-207 (on Avenue) Selection from St. Ambrose, "Isaac, or the Soul" (on Avenue)
2 October Tuesday	<b>**QUIZ 1**</b> Song of Songs: A love story, but of whom? <b>Assigned Reading for Next Class:</b> Genesis 28:10-33:20; 35; 37-46; 48-50 Novick, <i>Scriptures of Israel</i> , 43-55 Selection from James Kugel, <i>The Bible as It Was</i> (on Avenue)
4 Oct. Thursday	The Jacob and Joseph stories <b>Assigned Reading for Next Class:</b> Exodus 1-17 Novick, <i>Scriptures of Israel</i> , 56-65
9 Oct. Tuesday	<b>Mid-term recess: NO CLASS!</b>
11 Oct. Thursday	<b>Mid-term recess: NO CLASS!</b>
16 Oct. Tuesday	The Exodus from Egypt <b>Assigned Reading for Next Class:</b> Exodus 19-24; The Laws of Hammurabi (on Avenue); Deuteronomy 1:1-3; 4; 6 Novick, <i>Scriptures of Israel</i> , 66-76
18 Oct. Thursday	Moses and the Law at Mount Sinai <b>Assigned Reading for Next Class:</b> 1 Samuel 8-10, 16-17; 2 Samuel 5-7, 11-12; 1 Kings 16:29-21:29 Novick, <i>Scriptures of Israel</i> , 77-87
23 Oct. Tuesday	Choosing a King <b>Assigned Reading for Next Class:</b>

	Amos and Jonah Novick, <i>Scriptures of Israel</i> , 88-99
25 Oct. Thursday	Introducing the Prophets <b>Assigned Reading for Next Class:</b> Genesis 2:4-4:26; 11:1-9; The Epic of Gilgamesh (on Avenue) Novick, <i>Scriptures of Israel</i> , 100-113
30 Oct. Tuesday	<b>**QUIZ 2**</b> Eden and Babel <b>Assigned Reading for Next Class:</b> Genesis 1:1-2:3; 5:1-10:32; Epic of Gilgamesh, Tablet XI; Atrahasis; Psalm 74; Exodus 25:1-9; 39:32-43; 40:17-38; Leviticus 25 Novick, <i>Scriptures of Israel</i> , 114-125
1 November Thursday	The Created Order and the Tabernacle <b>Assigned Reading for Next Class:</b> Isaiah 40-53; Ezekiel 1, 8-11, 36-39, 44:1-16 Novick, <i>Scriptures of Israel</i> , 126-138
6 Nov. Tuesday	The Prophets on Exile and Restoration <b>Assigned Reading for Next Class:</b> Deuteronomy 12; Ezra 7; Nehemiah 8; Sirach 19; 24; 36:1-22; 44-50 Novick, <i>Scriptures of Israel</i> , 139-149
8 Nov. Thursday	The Growing Importance of Torah and Temple <b>Assigned Reading for Next Class:</b> Joshua 1-19; Judges Novick, <i>Scriptures of Israel</i> , 150-58
13 Nov. Tuesday	Troubling Texts and the Scriptural View <b>Assigned Reading for Next Class:</b> 1 Chronicles 1-9 (skim), 21:1-23:6, 28-29, 2 Chronicles 33:18-36:23; 2 Samuel 24, 1 Kings 2:1-12 Introduction to 1 Chronicles in the <i>Harper Collins Study Bible, Fully Revised and Updated</i>
15 Nov. Thursday	Chronicles and the Recasting of History <b>Assigned Reading for Next Class:</b> Ezra 4, 9-10; Nehemiah 1-4, 6, 13; Daniel 3; Ruth; Esther Novick, <i>Scriptures of Israel</i> , 159-168
20 Nov. Tuesday	Israel and/among the Nations <b>Assigned Reading for Next Class:</b> 2 Maccabees 2:19-12:45; Daniel 1-2, 7, 10-12; The Community Rule, columns 1-4 (on Avenue) Novick, <i>Scriptures of Israel</i> , 169-179
22 Nov. Thursday	The Apocalyptic Imagination of the Bible and Dead Sea Scrolls <b>Assigned Reading for Next Class:</b> Psalms 1, 3, 18, 30, 36-37, 51, 70, 90, 94, 102-103, 110, 124, 130-131 Novick, <i>Scriptures of Israel</i> , 180-191
27 Nov. Tuesday	Israel at Prayer: Psalms <b>Assigned Reading for Next Class:</b> Habakkuk 1:1-2:5, Peshet Habakkuk (1QpHab) 7:3-8:15 (on Avenue), Romans 1:1-17, Galatians 3:1-14 Josephus <i>Jewish War</i> 2:162-166, <i>Antiquities</i> 18:11-17 (both on Avenue), Matthew 22:23-33 Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Leviticus 19:1-18, Matthew 22:34-40, Babylonian Talmud <i>Berakhot</i> 63a and <i>Shabbat</i> 31a (on Avenue)

29 Nov. Thursday	The Story Continues: Episodes in the Reception of the Hebrew Bible <b>Assigned Reading for Next Class:</b> Study time for the final quiz
4 December Tuesday	<b>**QUIZ 3**</b>

**COURSE POLICIES:**

*Nota bene:* Staff in the office of the Department of Religious Studies will not date-stamp or receive papers and other assignments.

**Use of Technology**

The classroom is a professional environment. Computers/laptops are allowed so long as they are used for educational purposes (e.g., note taking, group work, etc.). Using your laptop for Facebook/social media or surfing the internet is not acceptable. The use of “smart” devices for things such as texting, social media, and web-browsing is also not permitted during class. Use of devices in this way will significantly affect your grade.

**Academic integrity (Senate-approved language)**

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. The academic credentials that you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. Academic dishonesty is knowingly to act or fail to act in a way that results, or could result, in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated, and can be easily avoided by simply citing the source of your information whenever there is any doubt. Please be sure to do this – better safe than sorry!

**Avenue to Learn**

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course instructor.

### **Turnitin.com**

In this course we will be using a web-based service (turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically through Avenue, where it will be run through turnitin.com to check for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work to turnitin.com must still submit a copy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to turnitin.com; however, the instructor will still assure (by other means) that standards of academic integrity have been upheld. To see the turnitin.com policy, please go to [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

### **Academic accommodation of students with disabilities**

Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail at [sas@mcmaster.ca](mailto:sas@mcmaster.ca). For further information, consult McMaster University's Policy for Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities (<http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicAccommodation-StudentsWithDisabilities.pdf>).

### **Modifications to this course**

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check her/his McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

### **E-mail communication**

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all email communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account.

This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

### **McMaster Student Absence Form**

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar "Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work". Please note these regulations have changed beginning Spring/Summer 2015. The timeframe within which the MSAF is valid has been reduced from 5 days to 3 days. The upper limit for which an MSAF can be submitted has been reduced from 'less than 30%' to 'less than 25%' of the course weight. As per the policy, students must immediately follow up with their instructors to request accommodation for any missed academic work. Failure to do so may negate their relief. If you have any questions about the MSAF, please contact your Associate Dean's office. MSAF is now available in MOSAIC Student Center (in the drop down menu under Academics).

- Privacy Disclaimer: By using this tool you understand that some personal information will be submitted to your Faculty Office.
- If you find it necessary to submit the MSAF during this course you must arrange for an extension for any work missed. There will be no redistribution of grades for missed assignments.

**Special Notices**

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.