

HISTORY 413  
ANCIENT ISRAEL  
TuTh 9:30—10:45  
MJ 101

Art Marmorstein  
TC 363  
Phone: 626-2608  
Hours: M 3-4, W 1:00-4:00  
TuTh 11-12

## **INTRODUCTION:**

The people of ancient Israel left no great works of art or architecture. They made virtually no contributions to astronomy, medicine, physics, or biology. They created no mighty empire. And yet the Israelites are probably the most important of all ancient civilizations in terms of their impact on subsequent civilization. As more than one modern scholar has noted, no member of Western civilization can consider himself fully educated if he is not familiar with the Israelites and their one contribution to subsequent civilization, the Bible.

This course will provide the familiarity with ancient Israel necessary to a good understanding of Western civilization. It will include a survey of Israelite history from the time of the Patriarchs to the time of the Great Diaspora (1900 BC--AD 70). It will also include extensive readings from the Old Testament and the Deuterocanonicals.

## **ON-LINE:**

My e-mail address is [art.marmorstein@northern.edu](mailto:art.marmorstein@northern.edu). You will be able to find on-line help for this class via D2L, but you might find it quicker to go to my regular website, [www.marmorstein.website](http://www.marmorstein.website). There is also an official blog for this course: *Torah, Torah, Torah 2022* (<http://torahtoratorah2022.blogspot.com>).

## **REQUIRED TEXTS:**

ESV Study Bible/Documents from Old Testament Times (online)

*Ancient Israel for the time of Abraham to the Destruction of the Temple by the Romans* (Herschel Shanks) ISBN-13: 978-0205096435

I will also be having you read selections from Thomas Winton's *Documents from Old Testament Times*. You can probably find inexpensive used copies online, but this "flipbook" edition online will probably be sufficient: <https://archive.org/details/documentsfromold00insoci>.

Please be sure to do all the assigned readings \*before\* class on the day assigned, and add a comment on the reading to that day's blog post. We will be discussing the readings in class.

## **SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND READINGS:**

1/11 Introduction: Survey of Hebrew History  
1/13 A Very Good Place to Start (Genesis 1-11)

- 1/18 To Begin the Beginning (Genesis 12-50)  
 1/20 A Strange Interlude: Approaches to the Torah
- 1/25 Yes, Jean-Paul, There is an Exit (Exodus 1-20)  
 1/27 Torah, Torah, Torah (Exodus 21-40)
- 2/1 As Moses Said in His Last Exciting Lecture (Deuteronomy 1-15)  
 2/3 Choose Life (Deuteronomy 16-33)
- 2/8 \*\*\* **Midterm I** \*\*\*  
 2/10 Warts with Heroes (Joshua/Judges 1-21)
- 2/15 The Tragical History of Eli (I Samuel 1-14)  
 2/17 The Tragical History of Saul (I Samuel 15—31)
- 2/22 The Tragical History of David (II Samuel 1-24)  
 2/24 The Tragical History of Israel and Judah, Part I (I Kings 1-22)
- 3/1 TTHOIAJ, Part II (II Kings 1-17)  
 3/3 TTHOIAJ, Part III (II Kings 18-25)
- 3/8 Review/Catch-up  
 3/10 \*\*\* **Midterm II Exam**\*\*\*
- 3/12-20 \*\*\* **Spring Break: No Class** \*\*\*
- 3/22 The Prophet's Lot is Not a Happy One (Amos 1-9)  
 3/24 A Burden Worth Bearing (Isaiah 1-66)
- 3/29 \*\*\* Assessment Day: No Class \*\*\*  
 3/31 Cry me a River... (Jeremiah 1-30)
- 4/5 ...I Cried a River Over You (Jeremiah 31-52)  
 4/7 Dem Bones Gonna Rise Again (Ezekiel 1-48)
- 4/12 To Everything, There is a Season (Ecclesiastes 1-11)  
 4/14 The Words of the Wise (Proverbs 1-3 carefully, skim the rest)
- 4/19 The Problem of Evil I (Job 1-5, 19, 37-42)  
 4/21 The Problem of Evil II (Habakkuk, Daniel)
- 4/26 Temple to Temple (Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Malachi)  
 4/28 The Exciting Conclusion to this Course!

**FINAL EXAM: Friday, May 6, 12:00—2:00**

## **GRADING:**

There will be three major exams for this course (two “midterms” and a final), each of which will count approximately 25% when I determine your final grade. The remaining 25% of your grade will be based on your blog entries, attendance and participation.

## **BLOG:**

For each day scheduled for a discussion of primary sources (almost every day the class meets!), I would like you to add an entry to the class blog (<http://torahtorahtorah2022.blogspot.com>). In general, what I want you to do is pick out a key verse/passage from the assigned reading and either:

1. Explain why you think this verse/passage is the key to understanding what the selection is about.
2. Explain why you think this verse is the best/most memorable in the assigned reading.
3. Explain why you think this verse is the most difficult/hard to understand in the passage.

If earlier posters have argued for different verses as either key, best, or hardest, explain why you think your line is a better choice.

Since part of the goal here is to make sure you are prepared for class discussion, late blog entries will not be counted.

## **ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:**

As much as possible, I want this course to be a seminar and not a lecture class. Because of this, it is extremely important to have done the assigned reading before each class and be prepared to discuss those readings. Each student should have in mind at least three good questions based on that day's reading. These questions will be an important part of many class sessions.

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY:**

Please make sure all electronic devices are turned off and put away before class begins. Cell phones, laptop computers, MP3 players, and similar devices are all distracting to other students. I do *\*not\** allow the use of electronic dictionaries during exams.

## **EXAM FORMAT:**

Midterms and Final exam--8 ID's, 1 essay

ID's will be selected from the terms put on the board at the beginning of each lecture. You will be asked not only to identify the terms, but also to explain their historical significance. I am impressed when students can include plenty of detailed information, but I am even more impressed when students can show how the ID terms relate to important themes discussed in this class.

Essay questions will deal with major themes discussed in the lectures. Most often, the exam question will be a generalization I have made in class with the additional word, "Comment."

A student who studies hard and does the required reading should have plenty to say in response to each of these questions. You will be given 75 minutes for each midterm and two hours for the final exam. Most students will need the full time to do a good job.

What is a good job? I tell students over and over again that a good essay consists of a series of good generalizations based on the exam question and backed up with specific support from the lectures and the readings. I am particularly impressed when students include in their essays references to primary source material.

## **PREPARING FOR MARMORSTEIN EXAMS:**

1. Think! Do not just memorize facts.
2. Prepare the essay questions first.
3. Come up with a fairly detailed outline for each essay.
4. Think of good topic sentences for each paragraph of your essay.
5. Use the key words of the exam question in your topic sentences.
6. Choose good supporting evidence for your topic sentences.
7. Use the appropriate ID terms in your essays.
8. Learn the ID's in context. Do not use a "flash card" approach.
9. Do not wait until the last minute to study.
10. Do spend extra time studying the week of the exam.
11. Do not just memorize facts. Think!

## **EXAM DAY INSTRUCTIONS:**

Taking the exam:

- Bring a blue book. Make sure there are no pages torn out.
- Use pen—blue or black ink preferred.
- Don't sit by anyone with whom you studied.
- Plan on spending the full time writing your exam.
- Always do the ID terms first.
- If you run out of time on the essay, include an outline of the material you would have covered.

- If you have extra time (very unlikely), go back and add extra info to your ID and essay responses.
- Be sure to discuss the significance of each ID term. Why is the figure/term important? How does that figure tie in to major themes discussed in class?
- Do not put all your essay information into one long paragraph. Shorter paragraphs with good topic sentences work best.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Any student caught cheating in this class at any time (even on a one point "sign your name" quiz) will receive a failing grade for the course. Cheating includes the use of any notes during midterm or final exams. Please place no marks of any kind on or in your blue book before I give the signal to begin taking the exams.

It is not cheating to study with another student, to share notes, or to prepare essays or ID's together. However, if you do study with another student, be sure you do not sit next to each other during the exam.

### **NSU DISABILITY POLICY:**

Northern State University recognizes its responsibility for creating an institutional climate in which students with disabilities can thrive. If you have any type of disability for which you require accommodations, please contact Karen Gerety at the NSU Office of Disability Services (626-2371, Student Center 217) as soon as possible to discuss your particular needs.

### **BOARD OF REGENTS ACADEMIC FREEDOM POLICY:**

Under Board of Regents and University policy student academic performance may be evaluated solely on an academic basis, not on opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards. Students should be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled. Students who believe that an academic evaluation reflects prejudiced or capricious consideration of student opinions or conduct unrelated to academic standards should contact the academic dean administratively in charge of the class to initiate a review of the evaluation.

### **NORTHERN STATE UNIVERSITY DIVERSITY STATEMENT:**

Northern State University strives to build an academic community of people from diverse backgrounds and experiences who are committed to sharing diverse ideas in a mutually respectful environment. We value open discourse and consideration of multiple perspectives on issues of regional, national, and international importance, in which individuals are free to express their points of view. Our goal is a diverse learning community with equal opportunity for all.

## TENTATIVE MIDTERM I STUDY GUIDE

### POTENTIAL ID'S:

TORAH, TANAKH, COVENANT, ADAM, EVE, NOAH, ABRAHAM, SARAH, (LOT), (TABLE OF NATIONS), (BABEL). FGS I, FGS II, FGS III

DOCUMENTARY HYPOTHESIS, JEPD, FORM CRITICISM, CREATION MYTH, ELOHIM, NEO-ORTHODOXY

MOSES, JETHRO, PASSOVER, RAAMSES, AARON, MIRIAM, "I AM," 10 COMMANDMENTS, 10 PLAGUES, LXX, SEPTUAGINT, PER-O

CODE OF HAMMURABI, SHEMA, 10 COMMANDMENTS, APODICTIC LAW, LEVITE, JUBILEE, DEUTERONOMIC COVENANT, SONG OF MOSES, IDL I, IDL II, IDL III

FGS=Favorite Genesis Story, IDL=Interesting Deuteronomy Law

### POTENTIAL ESSAY QUESTIONS:

- A. The Torah contains perhaps the finest law code the ancient world produced, probably because it is a lot more than just a law code. The book of **Genesis** is a good illustration of this.  
Comment.
- B. The literalist, rationalist, and neo-orthodox approaches to scripture all have their strengths, but none of them are complete satisfactory in their attempts to understand and explain the Old Testament.
- C. The Torah contains perhaps the finest law code the ancient world produced, probably because it is a lot more than just a law code. The book of **Exodus** is a good illustration of this.  
Comment.
- D. The Torah contains perhaps the finest law code the ancient world produced, probably because it is a lot more than just a law code. The book of **Deuteronomy** is a good illustration of this.  
Comment.

## TENTATIVE MIDTERM II STUDY GUIDE

### *Potential ID's:*

JOSHUA, CALEB, EHUD, DEBORAH, GIDEON, JEPHTHAH, ABIMELECH, SAMSON

HANNAH, ELI, SAUL, JONATHAN, MICHAL, PHILISTINES, DAVID, SAMUEL

DAVID, MICHAL, ABIGAIL, SAMUEL, JOAB, ABNER, ABSALOM, AMNON

SOLOMON, REHOBOAM, JEROBOAM, AHAB, JEZEBEL, ADONIJAH, ELIJAH

ELISHA, HEZEKIAH, JOSIAH, ZEDEKIAH, ATHALIAH, HULDAH

### Potential Essays:

A. The books of Joshua and Judges gives us “heroes with warts”—and sometimes, “warts with heroes.”

Comment.

B. I Samuel might rightly be considered one of the first great historical works. It might also be viewed as a great prophetic work. But, in some ways, I Samuel is best understood as a series of tragedies--or perhaps as parts of one great tragedy, the tragedy of the nation of Israel. Comment.

C. II Samuel might rightly be considered one of the first great historical works. It might also be viewed as a great prophetic work. But, in some ways, I Samuel is best understood as a series of tragedies--or perhaps as parts of one great tragedy, the tragedy of the nation of Israel. Comment.

D. I Kings might rightly be considered one of the first great historical works. It might also be viewed as a great prophetic work. But, in some ways, I Samuel is best understood as a series of tragedies--or perhaps as parts of one great tragedy, the tragedy of the nation of Israel. Comment.

E. I Kings might rightly be considered one of the first great historical works. It might also be viewed as a great prophetic work. But, in some ways, I Samuel is best understood as a series of tragedies--or perhaps as parts of one great tragedy, the tragedy of the nation of Israel. Comment.

(Note: on the last four questions, you might begin your discussion by those elements you think are key to history, prophetic works, and/or tragedy and then discuss the ways in which II Kings meets or does not meet these criteria.)

## TENTATIVE FINAL EXAM STUDY GUIDE

### POTENTIAL ID'S:

NEVIIM, AMOS, JEROBOAM II, MINOR PROPHETS, ISAIAH, UZZIAH, NAZAR, SERAPHIM, SHEARJASHAB, IMMANUEL, MAHERSHALHASHBAZ, HEZEKIAH, SENNECHARIB, CYRUS, DEUTERO-ISAIAH

JEREMIAH, ZEDEKIAH, HULDAH, BARUCH, NECHO, GEDALIAH, LAMENTATIONS, PASHUR, NEBUCHADNEZZAR, MERKABAH, TAMMUZ, GOG

ECCLESIASTES, QOHELETH, VANITY, UNDER THE SUN, ZAKAN, PROVERB A, PROVERB B, PROVERB C, MASHAL (Note: Proverb A, Proverb B, and Proverb C are any three proverbs of your choice.)

JOB, SATAN, HABAKKUK, DANIEL, MESHACH, NEBUCHADNEZZAR, BELSHAZZAR

CYRUS, ZERUBBABEL, EZRA, NEHEMIAH, HAGGI, DANIEL, BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY, MALACHI, SYNAGOGUE, ANTIOCHUS EPHIPHANES, MACCABEES

### POTENTIAL ESSAYS:

A. There are many ways in which the messages of the Hebrew prophets are rightly referred to as "burdens." Clearly, however, these burdens were worth bearing. One can see both the prophetic burden and the reasons for bearing in Amos and Isaiah. Comment.

B. There are many ways in which the messages of the Hebrew prophets are rightly referred to as "burdens." Clearly, however, these burdens were worth bearing. One can see both the prophetic burden and the reasons for bearing it in Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Comment.

C. The Hebrews may not have added much to human knowledge, but their contributions to human wisdom are very impressive. Ecclesiastes, Proverbs, and the Song of Solomon are particular good examples of this. Comment.

D. One of the questions for those who believe in an all-powerful, all-knowing, and loving god is the problem of evil. Among the greatest contributions of the Hebrews to subsequent civilization are their attempts to explore and to answer this problem. Especially important are the explorations of evil in Habakkuk, Daniel, and Job. Comment.

E. For Jews during the exile and for the post-exilic Jewish community, nothing seemed so important as Jerusalem and the temple. Yet it was the long struggle to rebuild and maintain the city and the sanctuary that enabled the Jewish community to survive without either. Comment.

