

**Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament)**  
REL 2210.0217 / JST 2930.1H62 / REL 3938.1397, Fall 2018  
MWF 7 (1:55-2:45), MAT 0018

Professor: Robert Kawashima  
office hours: M 3:00-4:00; W 12:45-1:45; or by appointment  
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office: 120 Anderson  
Department of Religion: 107 Anderson

Course Description:

This course will introduce students to the modern scholarly study of the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) and its world. While we will touch upon various literary genres in the Bible, we will focus on biblical narrative, as we trace the history of ancient Israel — inasmuch as this can be reconstructed from our primary sources — from its origins up to the Babylonian Exile (586 B.C.E.). We will also analyze various aspects of the “culture” of ancient Israel, including its political (judges, kings) and religious (priests, prophets) institutions. In particular, we will study Israelite religion, not just as a set of beliefs and practices, but as a mode of knowledge, a means of understanding god(s), humans, the world, and the relations between them. Topics will include: myth, ritual, sacrifice, law, and the sacred. Here, we will address the conceptual divide between so-called “pagan” religions and, for lack of a better term, the “monotheistic” religion of ancient Israel. The point isn’t to judge the relative merits of these two different religious systems, but to recognize and understand their differences. Our approach will be broadly literary and comparative. Thus, we will draw upon the mythic and epic traditions of Mesopotamia and Ugarit, in order to bring the peculiar nature of the Bible and biblical religion into better focus. And throughout the semester, various methodological questions regarding textual interpretation and the analysis of religion and culture will be raised.

Required Texts:

*HarperCollins Study Bible* — or other approved translation

Stephanie Dalley, trans., *Myths from Mesopotamia*

Additional secondary readings, course materials, and information will be made available through e-Learning Support Services: <http://elearning.ufl.edu>

Recommended Text:

John J. Collins, *A Short Introduction to the Hebrew Bible*, 3d edition (2018)

Accommodations for students with disabilities: students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

Course Requirements:

**Attendance is mandatory**

**REL 2210 & JST 2930**

Participation — 10%

3 Exams — 90%

**REL 3938**

Participation — 10%

3 Exams — 67.5%

1 Written Exercises (4 pages) – (22.5%)

Make-up exams must be approved by instructor beforehand, or justified afterward by providing appropriate documentation (medical, etc.).

Grade scale:

	87–89 = B+	77–79 = C+	67–69 = D+	below 60 = E
93–100 = A	83–86 = B	73–76 = C	63–66 = D	
90–92 = A-	80–82 = B-	70–72 = C-	60–62 = D-	

Schedule:

**PRIMEVAL HISTORY**

Week 1

8/22 **Introduction:** syllabus; general background

8/24 **Creation:** Genesis 1-3

Week 2

8/27 **Cosmogony:** *Epic of Creation* (Dalley)

8/29 **Creation:** Genesis 1-3

8/31 **Philology (on the text and the language of the Bible):** Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible?*, “Introduction” (online)

Week 3

9/3 **Labor Day (no class)**

9/5 **Myth versus History:** *Gilgamesh* (Dalley, pp 95-120); Eliade, “Sacred Time and Myths” (online)

9/7 **The Human Condition:** *Atrahasis* (Dalley)

Week 4

9/10 **Rosh Hashanah (no class)**

9/12 **The Human Condition:** Genesis 6-9

9/14 **Discussion:** Genesis 4:1-17; 11:1-9

**THE PATRIARCHS**

Week 5

9/17 **Heroes:** *Gilgamesh* (Dalley)

9/19 **Yom Kippur (no class)**

9/21 **Patriarchs:** Genesis 12-36; *Aqhat* (online)

## FROM EGYPT TO CANAAN

### Week 6

9/24 **Patriarchs:** Genesis 12-36; *Aqhat* (online)

9/26 **Joseph in Egypt:** Genesis 37-50

9/28 **EXAM 1** (from 8/24 to 9/26)

### Week 7

10/1 **The Exodus:** Exodus 1-15

10/3 **The Covenant:** Genesis 12, 15, 17, 28, 35; Exodus 19-24; *Atrahasis*, pp 14-18; *Epic of Creation*, pp 259-64 (Dalley)

10/5 **Sacred Space:**

Exodus 35-40; Numbers 1-3, 9:15-23;

Exodus 33:6-11; Numbers 11:16-17, 12:4-10; Deuteronomy 31:14-15;

Genesis 28, 35; 2 Samuel 24; 1 Kings 8

### Week 8

10/8 **Sacred Time:** Exodus 12, 23:10-17, 31:12-17, 34:18-24; Leviticus 23; Numbers 28-29; Deuteronomy 16

10/10 **Sacrifice and Purity:** Leviticus; Deuteronomy 14:1-21

10/12 **Discussion:** TBA

### Week 9

10/15 **In the Wilderness:** Exodus 1-24, 32-34; Numbers 1-3, 11-17, 22-26; Joshua 1-5

10/17 **The Border:** Deuteronomy 12-26

10/19 **The Judge:** Judges

## THE EMERGENCE OF ISRAEL

### Week 10

10/22 **Biblical Poetry:** Exodus 14-15; Judges 4-5; 2 Samuel 22; Psalm 18

10/24 **And there was no king in Israel...:** Judges

10/26 **EXAM 2** (from 10/1 to 10/24)

## THE UNITED MONARCHY

### Week 11

10/29 **Samuel:** 1 Samuel; *Hammurabi Law Code & The Sumerian King List* (online)

10/31 **Saul:** 1 Samuel

11/2 **Homecoming (no class)**

### Week 12

11/5 **David:** 2 Samuel, 1 Kings 1-2

11/7 **Solomon:** 1 Kings 3-11

11/9 **The Prophet:** 1 Kings 12 - 2 Kings 2; Amos; Hosea; Isaiah 1-6

## THE DIVIDED KINGDOM

### Week 13

11/12 **Veteran's Day (no class)**

11/14 **The Messiah:** 2 Samuel 6-7; 2 Kings 17, 24-25; Psalms 2, 89, 110; Isaiah 9:1-6, 11

11/16 **The Deuteronomistic Reform:** Deuteronomy 6-7, 29-30; 2 Kings 14-23

### Week 14

11/19 **Class canceled (due to conference)**

11/21 **Thanksgiving (no class)**

11/23 **Thanksgiving (no class)**

## THE EXILE

### Week 15

11/26 **The Exile:** Leviticus 26; Jeremiah 1-25, 34-45; Ezekiel 4-24; Psalm 137

11/28 **The Rebuilding of Jerusalem:** Ezra 7-10; Nehemiah 7-12

11/30 **The Dawn of Apocalypticism:** Isaiah 26-27, 40-42, 51; Ezekiel 40, 47; Daniel 7-12

### Week 16

12/3 **EXAM 3** (from 10/29 to 11/30)

12/5 **Conclusion; Q&A**

12/10 **Written exercise due (for REL 3938 ONLY); email to [rsk@ufl.edu](mailto:rsk@ufl.edu)**