

OT 3XE3/5XE5/6XE6

## Old Testament Theology: The Heartbeat of the Old Testament



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Fall Semester 2021, On campus class sessions: Mondays, 4:00-5:50pm

### Course Description

This course provides an orientation to the core theological expressions as well as the multiplex themes that emerge from the Old Testament. These expressions and themes will be traced into the New Testament with reflection on their relevance for Christian theology, ethics and spirituality today. The discipline of Old Testament theology will be engaged and students will have an opportunity to develop their own hermeneutic for reading the Old Testament as Christian Scripture with relevance for Christian community, witness, and ministry.

### Course Purposes

**Knowing:** That the students have a firm intellectual grasp of the discipline of Old Testament and Biblical Theology. That the students know the core themes that dominate the Old Testament and their relevance to Christian Theology.

**Being:** That the students gain an appreciation for the Old Testament as a source for Christian Theology. That the students experience a deeper relationship with God through their encounter of God and his ways with humanity in the Old Testament.

**Doing:** That the students acquire competency in tracing themes throughout the Old Testament and how they relate to the New Testament and Christian Theology. That students acquire competency in interpreting an Old Testament text in light of the broader witness of Biblical Theology.

## Concentrations

Biblical Studies, Pastoral Studies

## Textbooks

Alexander, T. Desmond, & Rosner, Brian S., ed. *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*. Leicester/Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity, 2000.

Boda, Mark J. *The Heartbeat of Old Testament Theology: Three Creedal Expressions* (Acadia Studies in Bible and Theology). Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017.

Boda, Mark J. *“Return to Me”: A Biblical Theology of Repentance* (New Studies in Biblical Theology 35). Leicester: Apollos; Downers Grove: IVP Press, 2015.

All required textbooks for this class are available from the College’s book service, The Hurlburt Family Bookstore, McMaster Divinity College (Across from Cullen Hall). Texts may be purchased on the first day of class. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstore, 5 International Blvd, Etobicoke, Ontario M9W 6H3: phone 416.620.2934, Text: 416 668 3434. fax 416.622.2308; email [books@readon.ca](mailto:books@readon.ca).

## Course Internet Resources: Avenue 2 Learn and Zoom

We will be using **Avenue 2 Learn** this semester for sharing resources for reading as well as distributing papers for evaluation.

At times we will gather together for synchronous sessions through **Zoom**. Successful classroom experiences depend on student commitment commensurate as how it would be in a face-to-face experience. Just as in a normal physical classroom experience, students are encouraged to take notes, participate in discussion through asking and answering questions, and wear appropriate attire. As much as is possible students should join the Zoom class in a quiet place where you will not be interrupted. Please have your video turned on whenever possible. It is best practice to mute your microphone except for when you are intending to speak to the class. Students are encouraged to use digital virtual backgrounds if desired. Tasteful backgrounds can help with the issues of privacy and prevent distractions for others in the class (e.g., in the case of a family member walking in the background of your video).

## Course Schedule

### September

- 13 In Person Class: Orientation, Syllabus
- 20 In Person Class: Introduction to OT Theology
  - Reflective Reading Report on NDBT Part 1 due: Sept 25, 11:59pm
- 27 Online: Orientation to Exegetical Biblical Theology Paper/Sermon

### October

- 4 In Person Class: Introduction to OT Theology
- 11 No Class: Thanksgiving, Online: Introduction to OT Theology
  - Reflective Reading Report on Heartbeat of OT Theology due: Oct 16, 11:59pm
- 18 In Person Class: Heartbeat of OT Theology
- 25 No Class: Reading Week
  - Exegetical Biblical Theology Papers/Sermons due: October 30, 11:59pm

### November

- 1 In Person Class: Heartbeat of OT Theology
- 8 Online: Orientation to Biblical Theology Theme Papers
- 15 In Person Class: OT Theological Themes: Israel's Name
- 22 Online: Imagery as OT Theology
- 29 In Person Class: OT Theological Themes: Repentance, Spirit/Word
  - Biblical Theological Theme Papers due: Dec 3, 11:59pm

### December

- 6 Online: Discuss OT Theological Themes from Papers (share a 3 minute video of your theme)

## Learning Opportunities: OT3XE3

### A. Reflective Reading with Report for all specializations (20% of final grade)

*Goal: The goal of this learning experience is to become familiar with major trends in OT theological research.*

*A reflective reading report should be at least 3 pages long, with one page devoted to a description of the reading, the second page devoted to areas of strengths and weakness and the third page devoted to implications for one's own hermeneutics and theology.*

1. Read Part One of *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*: **Submit reflective reading report by September 25, 11:59pm**
2. Read *Heartbeat of Old Testament Theology*: **Submit reflective reading report by October 16, 11:59pm**

### B. Specialization Requirements: Choose the requirements for only one specialization.

#### 1. Biblical Studies Specialization

##### a. Exegetical Biblical Theological Paper (40% of final grade)

*Goal: The goal of this learning experience is to show how the theology of the Old Testament informs the meaning and significance of a New Testament passage.*

In this 15 page paper students will provide an exegesis of a short NT passage that prioritizes the theology of the OT as a primary context of interpretation. The paper will include a basic 3 page overview of the passage, which will identify the core theme(s) of the passage within its original context in history and canon before showing in 1 to 2 pages how the passage connects to a core area of the OT's theological witness, followed by 6 to 7 pages discussing how the OT develops that area of theology, ending with 4 pages that discuss how the OT theological witness informs the meaning and significance of the NT passage for exegesis and application, including how it may transform the relationship of that passage to the broader witness of the NT. The student must highlight the ways in which the theme(s) of the passage is (are) uniquely configured within its (their) OT theological context and the effect this has on how the NT passage is understood and applied into the lives of Christians today.

### Process:

\*Select a short passage from the NT to work on. This passage can include, but does not need to include, direct reference(s) to OT pericopae.

\*Research your individual passage using key recent commentaries on that passage, providing a basic interpretation of the passage, its structure and its theme set within its original context and book.

\*Read the relevant introductory article on the NT book in which your passage is found as well as at least four other NT books in Part Two of the NDBT to see the way in which scholars have provided insight into the meaning of a NT book and how its message relates to the broader witness of Scripture. (Provide a reading report on the cover page of the paper that you have read the Introductory articles in Part Two in *NDBT*).

\*Identify one key area of OT theology that could have a bearing on the theme(s) discussed in the NT passage (e.g. human/Israelite identity, covenant relationship, sin and atonement, exile and restoration, redemption/salvation, Yahweh's character, etc.) NDBT articles on major OT theological themes and other components will give a good sense of the kinds of areas that can be explored. *Important: do not merely identify passages in the OT to which your NT passage directly refers.*

\*Trace the identified area of OT theology and its development throughout the OT, (some help may be gained from NDBT Part Three), first on your own by identifying basic vocabulary, images, and topics related to the topic, and how they are developed in individual passages throughout the OT, and then secondly researching key scholars who have worked on this theme in books and articles.

\*Write your paper showcasing your exegesis of the individual passage and then the connection of its theme(s) to the OT in conversation with the best in scholarship.

\*Use this outline:

- I. Introduction
- II. Overview of Passage (3 pages)
- III. Area of OT Theology Relevant for Interpreting the Passage (1 to 2 pages)
- IV. Development of OT theological witness (6 to 7 pages)
- V. Impact on Exegesis and Relevance for Today (4 pages)
- VI. Conclusion

### Submission:

- Due date: October 30, 11:59pm
- Format: PDF
- Location: Avenue 2 Learn

## **b. Biblical Theological Theme paper (40% of final grade)**

***Goal: The goal of this learning experience is to trace a major biblical theological theme throughout the Scriptures and show its relevance for the church today.***

This 15-page paper will trace a key theological theme throughout the various corpora of the Old Testament, into the New Testament and identify the impact of this theme on the church today. Your treatment of the theological theme must show interaction with the various corpora of the Old Testament (Torah, Former Prophets, Latter Prophets, Writings: Psalms/Wisdom, Writings: Persian Period), showing sensitivity to the diversity of expression of theology in the Old Testament while also points of continuity and unity in this theology. In a smaller second section of the paper you should identify links between this Old Testament theology and the theology of the New Testament. Finally, you will write a section on the impact of this theological theme on the church today.

### **Process:**

\*Read *Return to Me* and at least five introductory articles in the *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology* on “Biblical Themes” (Part 3) to identify examples of tracing a theme throughout Scripture. This will give you an idea of how to trace a theme but also help you identify a particular theme. (Provide a reading report on the cover page of the paper that you have read *Return to Me* and the Introductory articles in *NDBT*.)

\*Research that particular theme throughout the Old and New Testaments, first on your own by identifying basic vocabulary, images, and topics related to the theme, and how they are developed in individual passages throughout the OT and NT, and then secondly researching key scholars who have worked on this theme in books and articles.

\*Write your paper providing coverage of all the major parts of the OT listed above.

\*Use this outline:

- I. Introduction
- II. Old Testament Theology (9 pages)
- III. New Testament Theology (4 pages)
- IV. Relevance for theology today (2 pages)
- V. Conclusion

### **Submission:**

- Due date: December 3, 11:59pm
- Format: PDF
- Location: Avenue 2 Learn
- Produce a 3 minute video sharing your work to the class by December 6, 11:59pm

## 2. Pastoral Studies Specialization

### a. Exegetical Biblical Theological Sermon (40% of final grade)

***Goal: The goal of this learning experience is to show how the theology of the Old Testament informs the meaning and significance of a New Testament passage through preaching.***

This 15 page written submission will include a 7.5 page sermon written in full sentences followed by a 7.5 page research appendix which is the basis for the sermon presented. The sermon must be preached in a way that draws a contemporary audience into a particular text of the NT, provides a depth of engagement with that text rooted in its ancient context, and expounds the meaning and significance of that text in light of a key area of OT theology. The research appendix should show deep engagement with the passage and how OT theology informs its exegesis in conversation with the best of scholarship. Secondary and Primary sources should be used, cited and footnoted appropriately.

- The 7.5 page research appendix will provide a basic 2 to 3 page overview of a short NT passage, which will identify the core theme(s) of the passage within its original context in history and canon before showing in 4 to 6 pages how a key area of OT theology contributes to the meaning and significance of the NT passage.
- The 7.5 page sermon will be based on the work done in the research appendix, but will re-express this work in oral English, which invites the audience into the passage, explains the passage, connects the theme(s) of the passage to an OT theological context, and applies it to the life of the audience today.

Process:

\*Select a short passage from the NT to work on. This passage can include, but does not need to include, direct reference(s) to OT pericopae.

\*Research your individual passage using key recent commentaries on that passage, providing a basic interpretation of the passage, its structure and its theme set within its original context and book.

\*Read the relevant introductory article on the NT book in which your passage is found as well as at least four other NT books in Part Two of the NDBT to see the way in which scholars have provided insight into the meaning of a NT book and how its message relates to the broader witness of Scripture. (Provide a reading report on the cover page of the paper that you have read the Introductory articles in Part Two in *NDBT*).

\*Identify one key area of OT theology that could have a bearing on the theme(s) discussed in the NT passage (e.g. human/Israelite identity, covenant relationship, sin and atonement, exile and restoration, redemption/salvation, Yahweh's character, etc.) NDBT articles on major OT theological themes and other components will give a good sense of the kinds of areas that can be explored.

Important: do not merely identify passages in the OT to which your NT passage directly refers.

\*Trace the identified area of OT theology and its development throughout the OT, (some help may be gained from NDBT Part Three), first on your own by identifying basic vocabulary, images, and topics related to the topic, and how they are developed in individual passages throughout the OT, and then secondly researching key scholars who have worked on this theme in books and articles.

\*Write your research appendix showcasing your exegesis of the individual passage and then the connection of its theme(s) to the OT in conversation with the best in scholarship.

\*Write your sermon based on this research appendix.

\*Use this outline:

I. Sermon (7.5 pages)

II. Research Appendix

A. Exegesis of Passage (2 to 3 pages)

B. Connection of theme(s) of passage to its (their) OT theological context (4 to 6 pages)

**Submission:**

- Due date: October 30, 11:59pm
- Format: PDF
- Location: Avenue 2 Learn

**b. Biblical Theological Theme paper on a pastoral studies theme (40% of final grade)**

***Goal: The goal of this learning experience is to trace a major biblical theological theme on a pastoral studies theme throughout the Scriptures and show its relevance for ministry today.***

This 15-page paper will trace a key theological pastoral studies theme throughout the various corpora of the Old Testament, into the New Testament and identify the impact of this theme on the church today. Your treatment of the theological theme must show interaction with the various corpora of the Old Testament (Torah, Former Prophets, Latter Prophets, Writings: Psalms/Wisdom, Writings: Persian Period), showing sensitivity to the diversity of expression of theology in the Old Testament while also points of continuity and unity in this theology. In a smaller second section of the paper you should identify links between this Old Testament theology and the theology of the New Testament. Finally, you will write a section on the impact of this theological theme on ministry today.



**Process:**

\*Read *Return to Me* and at least five introductory articles in the *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology* on “Biblical Themes” (Part 3) to identify examples of tracing a theme throughout Scripture. This will give you an idea of how to trace a theme but also help you identify a particular theme that is relevant for ministry. (Provide a reading report on the cover page of the paper that you have read *Return to Me* and the Introductory articles in *NDBT*.)

\*Research that particular theme throughout the Old and New Testaments, first on your own by identifying basic vocabulary, images, and topics related to the theme, and how they are developed in individual passages throughout the OT and NT, and then secondly researching key scholars who have worked on this theme in books and articles.

\*Write your paper providing coverage of all the major parts of the OT listed above, as well as the NT, identifying at the end the connection to ministry today.

\*Use this outline:

- I. Introduction
- II. Old Testament Theology (9 pages)
- III. New Testament Theology (4 pages)
- IV. Relevance for ministry today (2 pages)
- V. Conclusion

**Submission:**

- Due date: December 3, 11:59pm
- Format: PDF
- Location: Avenue 2 Learn
- Create a 3 minute video sharing your work to the class by December 6, 11:59pm

## **Learning Opportunities: OT5XE**

### **1. Mentoring/Teaching/Participation (15% of final grade)**

- Attend all sessions (online and in person) and participate in discussions online
- Provide feedback to MDiv/MTS students on biblical theological draft work
- Do a minimum half hour presentation in class

### **2. History of Scholarship (25% of final grade)**

- Read key works on the intersection between Biblical Theology and Practical Theology over the past century (4 key works minimum) and write a paper reviewing this history critically including your own perspective. (4000 words)
- Due date: October 30 @ 11:59pm

### **3. Research Paper (45% of final grade)**

- Write a paper on an approved research topic related to the study of OT Theology for the purpose of Practical Theology (8000 words)
- Due date: December 6 @11:59pm

### **4. Research Paper reviews (15% of final grade)**

- Provide peer review of papers written by other students in OT5XE5.
- Due Date: December 10 @ 11:59pm

## Learning Opportunities: OT6XE6

### 1. Mentoring/Teaching/Participation (10% of final grade)

- Attend all sessions (online and in person) and participate in discussions online
- Provide feedback to MDiv/MTS students on biblical theological draft work
- Do a minimum half hour presentation in class

### 2. History of Scholarship (20% of final grade)

- Read key works in the History of OT Theology Research over the past century and write a paper reviewing this history critically including your own perspective (5 key works, 4000 words)
- Due date: October 30 @ 11:59pm

### 3. Translation (20% of final grade)

- Translate 5 verses of key OT Theological pericopae per week with syntactical notes. Send to professor by Wednesday 11:59 p.m.

### 4. Research Paper (40% of final grade)

- Write a paper on an approved research topic related to the study of OT Theology (8000 words)
- Due Date: December 6 @ 11:59pm

### 5. Research Paper reviews (10% of final grade)

- Provide peer review of papers written by other students in OT6XE6
- Due Date: December 10 @11:59pm

## Guidelines for all projects in this course

You must ensure that you have used a minimum of 10 secondary sources beyond the textbooks for the class (for OT5XE5 and OT6XE6 the number should be at least double this). These secondary sources must include *both books and articles* (for articles use the ATLA database through Mills Library), must reflect recent research (after 1990, best after 2000), and must be elongated treatments of your biblical text, period, theme or book. This requirement does not include ancient sources used (Josephus, Qumran) or Bibles, Versions, Bible Dictionaries (or other reference works). Internet resources are usually **not** acceptable (unless they are from ATLA and DTL) and must be approved by the professor. Avoid study Bibles and old commentaries available on the web or in Bible Word Programs like Matthew Henry (1708-10), Lange's (1865-80), Calvin (1500s), Jamieson Fausset Brown commentary (1871), Gill's exposition of entire Bible (1746-1763), Geneva Study Bible (1560), Cambridge Bible for schools (1882), Pulpit commentary (1800s), Keil and Delitzsch commentary (1800s), etc. **All papers will be run through turnitin.com to ensure there is no use of internet resources or plagiarism.**

After all your good research on your passage you will need to present it in a way that is accessible and gets to the heart of the passage. All material which is submitted should be double spaced with 1" margins utilizing a readable font (12 point). It must have a title page and bibliography which is not included in the length required. It should be written in excellent modern literary English with proper grammar, spelling, punctuation and rhetoric (including an introduction, conclusion and logical flow of argument). If it helps an outline may accompany the paper but this is not included in the length of the paper. Secondary and Primary sources must be used, cited and footnoted appropriately.

## Format and Evaluation



So I can properly evaluate your work, the following style guide is to be used for papers in this class.

**Medium for Submission:** All material in this class is to be submitted in digital format to the professor via Avenue 2 Learn. Please use .pdf format and ensure that what you send is what you want me to read.

**Style:** All stylistic considerations (including but not limited to questions of formatting, footnotes, and bibliographic references) must conform to the McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/resources-forms/>. Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions. Title page, footnoting where appropriate and bibliography are not included in the length required. Material should be written in excellent modern literary English with proper grammar, spelling, punctuation and rhetoric (including an introduction, conclusion and logical flow of argument). If it helps an outline may accompany the “paper” but this is not included in the length of the “paper.” Secondary and Primary sources should be used, cited and footnoted appropriately.

**Gender Inclusive Language:** McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all its publications. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected, but you will need to use gender-inclusive language for humans, and you will need to quote from a gender-inclusive version such as the following: NRSV (1989), NCV (1991), TEV/GNB/GNT (1992), CEV (1995), NLT (1996), TNIV (2005), and the Common English Bible (CEB 2011).

**Citations:** You must cite the source of your material very carefully using a consistent system, not only when quoting from a section, but also when drawing from it as resource. Quotations should be kept to a minimum as I favour integration of secondary literature (footnoted).

**Statement on Academic Honesty:** Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one’s academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College. Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty ~ <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/rules-regulations/>

So I can properly evaluate your work and help you grow in your biblical and writing skills the following evaluation guide should be kept in mind as you write:

- **Presentation:** Is the spelling correct? Does the grammar/syntax reflect proper English? Is the paper laid out properly?
- **Argumentation:** Is there a good introduction and conclusion? Does the argument flow with ample support? Is the question answered?
- **Content:** Are all the points considered? Is there proper documentation of sources used?

## Accountability

### הלכה התמבטים: The Rule of the Timbits

To ensure a timely start to class we will be observing the Timbit Redemption Rule for this course. Because “tardies” raise the ire of the covenant community (bound by this covenantal syllabus document delivered here at the foot of the “Mountain”), those who are late for class must have a means by which to atone for such “accidental sins” (בִּשְׁגָגָה, *bishgāgāh*; if they are defiant sins, בִּידָד רָמָה, *bēyad rāmāh*, then the offender will be “cut off” from the community, see Num 15:27–31).<sup>1</sup> which means anyone late for class will need to bring Timbits for the entire class (מִנְחָה, *minḥāh*) no later than the next class meeting plus a Tim Hortons coffee (נֶסֶךְ) for the professor (cream, no sugar). This מִנְחָה (*minḥah*) and נֶסֶךְ (*nēsēk*) will function simultaneously as both a sin offering (חֲטָאֵת, *ḥaṭṭāṭ*, Leviticus 4) atoning for the accidental sin of the offender and a peace offering (שְׁלָמִים, *shēlāmīm*, Leviticus 3) enhancing the fellowship of the covenant community. See the high professor for further details and any torah-rulings (see Hag 2:10–14) regarding specific situations. The full Rule of the Timbits will be available at our course website.

Especially important is to take seriously the cry of Joel of old in 1:13:

חָגְרוּ וְסָפְדוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים	Gird yourselves <i>with sackcloth</i>
הִלְלִילוּ מִשְׁרְתֵי מִזְבֵּחַ	And lament, O priests;
	Wail, O ministers of the altar!
	Come, spend the night in sackcloth
	O ministers of my God,
בָּאוּ לִינוּ בִשְׁלָמִים מִשְׁרְתֵי אֱלֹהֵי	For <u>the grain offering and the drink offering</u>
כִּי נִמְגַעַע מִבֵּית אֱלֹהֵיכֶם מִנְחָה וְנֶסֶךְ:	Are withheld from the house of your God.

And note his promise of a reward to those repent in 2:14:

מִי יוֹדַע יִשׁוּב וְנַחֵם	Who knows whether He will turn and relent
וְהִשְׁאִיר אַחֲרָיו בְּרָכָה	And leave a blessing behind Him,
מִנְחָה וְנֶסֶךְ לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם	<u>Even a grain offering and a drink offering</u>
	For the LORD your God?

Please Note: This syllabus is the property of the instructor and is prepared with currently available information. The instructor reserves the right to make changes and revisions up to and including the first day of class.

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<sup>1</sup> Of course, see the “definitive” work on this: Mark J. Boda, *A Severe Mercy: Sin and Its Remedy in the Old Testament* (Siphrut: Literature and Theology of the Hebrew Scriptures I. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 53–54.