



McMaster Divinity  
College



OT/TH 3XE3

# OLD TESTAMENT THEOLOGY

**\*This course is approved for the Biblical Studies and Pastoral Studies specializations\***

**Class Schedule.** Jan 17 & 31, Mar 7 & 28 9:00am-4:00pm

**Professor.** Dr. Paul S. Evans

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**Office.** 236

## **Course Description:**

A study of the theology of the Old Testament which integrates the contents and theological themes of the books that comprise the Old Testament, viewing them as Christian scripture and as the foundation for Christian theology and ministry. Attention will be given to questions of canon, authority, the relationship of the Old to the New Testament, the unity and diversity of the biblical canon and the use of the Old Testament in apologetics and Christian ministry.

## **Course Objectives**

### **Knowing:**

- To have an introductory knowledge of the discipline of OT theology
- To be aware of the diversity within the OT but also the different ways of viewing the unity within this diversity
- To have a grasp of the structure of OT theology as it is revealed throughout redemptive history
- To have an appreciation to how the various biblical genres and books contribute to our understanding of God's redemptive plan.

### **Being:**

- To embrace the contemporary relevance of the whole Old Testament for the Church and society today
- To grow closer to God through study of the Old Testament

### **Doing:**

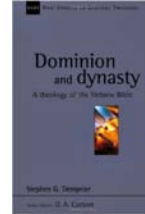
- To be able to trace out themes that run throughout the OT, (Creation, Temple, Covenant, Command, Holiness, Priest, Atonement, Worship, Grace, Idolatry, Kingdom, Exile, Messiah, The Day of the Lord, Justice, and The People of God
- To be able to articulate the implications of OT theology for a systematic theology and a Christian worldview.
- To complete an in-depth study on a biblical-theological theme

### **Required Textbooks**

Alexander, T. Desmond, and Brian S. Rosner. *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology. Reference Collection*. Leicester: Intervarsity Press, 2000.



Stephen G. Dempster. *Dominion and Dynasty: A Theology of the Hebrew Bible*. Intervarsity Press, 2003.



- Readings emailed to students, or handed out in class

All required textbooks for this class are available from the College's book service, READ On Bookstore, Room 145, McMaster Divinity College. Texts may be purchased on the first day of class. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstore, 304 The East Mall, Suite 100, Etobicoke, ON M9C 5K1: phone 416.620.2934; fax 416.622.2308; email [books@readon.ca](mailto:books@readon.ca). Other book services may also carry the texts.

### **Course Evaluation: The assignments and their weights are as follows:**

**1. 10%. Reading:** Students must read the textbooks in their entirety as well as other assigned readings. Each student will account for their reading by sending an email by the last day of classes (**April 2**) stating their reading accomplishments.

**2. 40%. (20% per review) Article Reviews and Reflections:** Students will write two brief reviews/reflections on assigned articles/essays on Old Testament Theology. The papers must be **no more** than **5 pages** double-spaced each. The papers should clearly summarize the contents of the article(s) in your own words and include your own critical interaction, evaluation and reflections on the chapter.

- First review due Jan 31; second review due Feb 14—No Extensions.

**3. 10%. Statement and Annotated Bibliography. Due March 7.** In preparation for the major assignment students will write a one-paragraph statement of their project along with an annotated bibliography of at least 12 bibliographic items of secondary sources. These secondary sources do not include primary sources (the Bible, Josephus, Qumran). By way of **supplement** to these 12 sources, a student may use a **maximum of 2** Internet resources. Students are responsible for the quality of these Internet resources. Each source listed must be drawn on in the paper and evidenced in the footnotes etc.

#### 4. 40%. Major Assignment. Due April 2.

##### A. Major Assignment for Biblical Studies Specializations:

There are two (2) options for Biblical Studies: Choose only one (1) of the following:

**i: Research paper:** 12-15 pages double-spaced. This is especially recommended if you are planning to go on to a research degree or write a thesis in OT (or if you have a particular topic in mind that you wish to write on). The topic of this research must be related to OT Theology and approved by the professor.

**ii. Theological Theme Paper:** 12 pages double-spaced. In this option you will choose one biblical-theological theme (e.g., social justice, atonement etc.), and write a paper that succinctly traces this theme throughout the entire OT canon (Pentateuch, Prophets, and Writings). This paper will note the diversity represented in the different biblical books but also note continuity. Finally the paper will discuss how this theme is picked up in the New Testament and reflect on how the theology of the Old Testament functions for the New Testament writer. A rough outline of the paper should be:

- i. Introduction stating the theme and its significance in the OT.
- ii. Discerning the Theme: Analyze passages that evince your chosen theme and noting diversity and continuity with other passages and reflecting theologically on this theme
- iii. NT connections. Note NT texts that pick up on and develop this biblical theological theme. How does the OT function for the NT writer?
- iv. Application for today. How is this theme relevant for Christians today? How does the OT function for Christian theology today?

##### B. Major Assignment for Pastoral Studies Specializations:

There are three (3) options for Pastoral Studies Specializations. Choose only one (1) of the following:

**i: Theological Theme Paper:** 12 pages double-spaced. In this option you will choose one biblical-theological theme, and write a paper that succinctly traces this theme throughout the entire OT canon (Pentateuch, Prophets, and Writings). This paper will note the diversity represented in the different biblical books but also note continuity. Finally the paper will discuss how this theme is picked up in the New Testament and reflect on how the theology of the Old Testament functions for 21<sup>st</sup> century Christian.

A rough outline of the paper should be:

- i. **Introduction** stating the theme and its significance in the OT.
- ii. **Discerning the Theme:** Analyze passages that evince your chosen theme and noting diversity and continuity with other passages and reflecting theologically on this theme
- iii. **NT connections.** Note NT texts that pick up on and develop this biblical theological theme.
- iv. **Application for today.** How is this theme relevant for Christians today? How does the OT function for Christian theology today? How might you communicate this theme in a contemporary setting?

**ii: Old Testament Theology Sermon (oral presentation).** 20-25 minute video-taped sermon submitted on CD/DVD/USB drive. Beginning with the text of the Old Testament this sermon will expound a theological theme from the OT scriptures, tracing it throughout the OT canon and applying it to the contemporary context. This will be strictly an OT sermon, NT connections can be made only in the conclusion to reinforce the OT content and illustrate the importance of the theme as established in the OT. The sermon will be delivered orally but include a written manuscript with an outline. The manuscript may be a combination of sentence, bullets/point form, paragraphs (it need not be a complete essay of the words you preach). This manuscript should be grammatically correct and include appropriate citation of sources employed.

**iii: Old Testament Theology Sermon (written).** 10 pages double-spaced. Beginning with the text of the Old Testament this sermon will expound a theological theme from the OT scriptures, tracing it throughout the OT canon and applying it to the contemporary context. This will be strictly an OT sermon, NT connections can be made only in the conclusion to reinforce the OT content and illustrate the importance of the theme as established in the OT. The sermon will be an original written composition but written with an aim to oral delivery. The submitted text should include an outline. The sermon must be written as it would be spoken and must not be in point form etc. but be a full written manuscript. It is expected it will conform to MDC style guide and be grammatically correct and acknowledge its sources appropriately (using Endnotes—not footnotes).

## **5. Reading the Old Testament**

In order to get a sense of both its flow and content, each student is encouraged to read the entire Old Testament during this semester. This is especially important if a student has never read the Old Testament through carefully before. The Old Testament is an assumed foundation for this course, but the professor will not grade you on your Old Testament reading completion.

### **Style for Submission of Written Work**

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 <http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/sites/default/files/documents/MDCStyleGuide.pdf> Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

All papers to be submitted in electronic format only (a pdf file)—no hardcopies—and must be emailed to pevans@mcmaster.ca.

If you need a program for creating pdfs go to <http://primopdf.com> or <http://www.pdf995.com> for a free pdf maker. Include your last name in the file name of your attachment (e.g., evans.researchpaper.pdf). To avoid late marks papers must be received before the end of the calendar day on which they are due (i.e., before midnight Eastern Standard Time).

### **Policy Concerning Late Papers**

Extensions for papers will not be given except in very exceptional circumstances. (serious illness, family crises, etc.). Busy-ness, computer problems etc. are not legitimate reasons to grant extensions and in the interests of fairness any request for extensions will take into account the entire class. Late assignments will be docked at the rate of 2% per day for the first 7 calendar days (including weekends) and 4% per day after that. Late assignments receive no critical feedback. All assignments must be received by the last day of class in order to avoid a failing grade in the class.

### **Gender Inclusive language**

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all of its publications. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. The NRSV and TNIV are examples of the use of inclusive language for human beings. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.

### **Academic Dishonesty.**

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 ~

<http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/rules-regulations>

### **Disclaimer**

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.