

OT/TH 3XE3/5XE5/6XE6

Old Testament Theology: The Heartbeat of the Old Testament



Mark J. Boda, Ph.D.
Professor of Old Testament
McMaster Divinity College
(905) 525-9140^{x24095}
mjboda@mcmaster.ca

Fall Semester 2018
Class Sessions: Saturdays
Sept 22, Oct 20, Nov 3, Dec 8

Course Description

This course provides orientation to 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 OT text in light of the broader witness of Biblical Theology.

Concentrations: Biblical Studies, Christian Worldview, Pastoral Studies

Doctor of Practical Theology students who wish to apply for this course as an Advanced Elective for their degree program must consult with the Program Director of the DPT and the course instructor in order to develop an Advanced Elective approach to the course that fulfills the specific elements required by the DPT program. Once the elements of the Advanced Elective have been agreed upon by the student, the Program Director, and the instructor, a formal application can be made for an Advanced Elective in connection with this course. Once the application is accepted, DPT students can proceed with the course as part of their degree program.

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: IVPress, 2015.

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 Bookstores, 5 International Blvd, Etobicoke, ON M9W 6H3: phone 416-620-2934; fax 416-622-2308; e-mail books@readon.ca. Other book services may also carry the texts.

Online Classroom

We will be using an Online Classroom (Avenue to Learn) throughout the semester to facilitate discussion, review of material and also provide secondary literature. Instructions on how to enter and participate in the online classroom will be provided at the beginning of the semester.

Course Schedule

September 19	Submit to Avenue 2 Learn a reflective reading report on Introductory Articles (Part One) in the <i>New Dictionary of Biblical Theology</i> (11:59pm)
September 22	9am-4pm class on campus (Introduction to OT Theology, Exegetical Biblical Theology)
October 17	Submit to Avenue 2 Learn a reflective reading report on <i>Heartbeat of OT Theology</i> (11:59pm)
October 20	9am-4pm class on campus (Heartbeat of OT Theology, Exegetical Biblical Theology)
October 27	Submit to Avenue 2 Learn the Exegetical Biblical Theological Project (11:59pm)
November 3	9am-4pm class on campus (OT Theological Themes)
December 1	Submit to Avenue 2 Learn the Biblical Theological Theme Project (11:59pm)
December 8	9am-4pm class on campus (OT Theological Themes)

Learning Opportunities

A. Reflective Reading for all specializations (10%)

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*: September 22 (submit reflective reading report by September 19, 11:59pm)
2. Read *Heartbeat of Old Testament Theology*: October 20 (submit reflective reading report by October 17, 11:59pm)

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

1. Biblical Studies Specialization

a. Exegetical Biblical Theological Paper (45%)

Goal: The goal of this learning experience is to show the biblical theological significance of a short OT pericope.

In this 20 page paper students will provide a basic 7 page exegesis of a short OT pericope (see list below) which will identify the core theme(s) of the passage within its original context in history and canon before showing in 11 pages the connection of this(these) core theme(s) to the rest of the canonical witness of the Old and New Testament. The student must highlight the ways in which the theme(s) of the passage is(are) transformed within its(there) larger canonical context and how this affects how the passage is applied into the lives of Christians today (2 pages).

Passages to choose from:

Deut 30:1-6 (read articles on Genesis to Kings and on Deuteronomy)

Judges 3:7-11 (read articles on Genesis to Kings and on Judges)

Zech 1:1-6 (read articles on Prophetic Books and on Zechariah)

Psalms 1 (read articles on Wisdom Books and on Psalms)

Process:

*Read the relevant introductory articles on Old Testament Books in Part Two of the NDBT on Old Testament books (see specific articles in brackets above, you can read more of these articles to gain more knowledge) to see the way in which scholars have provided insight into the meaning of various OT books and how their message relates to the broader witness of Scripture.

*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.

*Trace the main theme(s) of this individual passage throughout the Old and New Testaments (some help may be gained from NDBT Part Three), first on your own by identifying basic vocabulary, images, and topics related to the theme(s), 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 showcasing your exegesis of the individual passage and then the connection of its theme to the OT and NT in conversation with the best in scholarship.

Use this guide below for your outline:

I. Introduction

II. Exegesis of Passage (5 pages)

III. Connection of theme of passage to the rest of the OT/NT (7 pages)

IV. Relevance for theology today (2 pages)

V. Conclusion

b. Biblical Theological Theme paper (45%)

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 20-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 the 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.

*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 guide below for your outline:

- I. Introduction
- II. Old Testament Theology (12 pages)
- III. New Testament Theology (5 pages)
- IV. Relevance for theology today (2 pages)
- V. Conclusion

2. Pastoral Studies Specialization

a. Exegetical Biblical Theological Sermon (45%)

Goal: The goal of this learning experience is to show the biblical theological significance of a short OT pericope through preaching

This 20 page written submission will include a 10 page sermon written in full sentences followed by a 10 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 OT, provides a depth of engagement with that text rooted in its ancient context, and connects the theme(s) of this text to the rest of Scripture. The research appendix should show deep engagement with the passage and its theme throughout Scripture in conversation with the best of scholarship. Secondary and Primary sources should be used, cited and footnoted appropriately.

The 10 page research appendix will provide a basic 5 page exegesis of a short OT pericope (see list below) which will identify the core theme(s) of the passage within its original context in history and canon before showing in 5 pages the connection of this(these) core theme(s) to the rest of the canonical witness of the Old and New Testament.

Passages to choose from:

- Deut 30:1-6 (read articles on Genesis to Kings and on Deuteronomy)
- Judges 3:7-11 (read articles on Genesis to Kings and on Judges)
- Zech 1:1-6 (read articles on Prophetic Books and on Zechariah)
- Psalms 1 (read articles on Wisdom Books and on Psalms)

The 10 page sermon will be based on the work done in the research appendix, but will reexpress this work in oral English, which invites the audience into the passage, explains the passage, connects the theme of the passage to the broader Old Testament and New Testament canon and applies it to the life of the audience today.

Process:

*Read the relevant introductory articles on Old Testament Books in Part Two of the NDBT on Old Testament books (see specific articles in brackets above, you can read more of these articles to gain more knowledge) to see the way in which scholars have provided insight into the meaning of various OT books and how their message relates to the broader witness of Scripture.

*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.

*Trace the main theme(s) of this individual passage throughout the Old and New Testaments (some help may be gained from NDBT Part Three), first on your own by identifying basic vocabulary, images, and topics related to the theme(s), 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 research appendix showcasing your exegesis of the individual passage and then the connection of its theme to the OT and NT in conversation with the best in scholarship.

*Write your sermon based on this research appendix.

Use this guide below for your outline:

Sermon (10 pages)

Research Appendix

A. Exegesis of Passage (5 pages)

B. Connection of theme of passage to the rest of the OT/NT (5 pages)

b. Biblical Theological Theme paper on a pastoral studies theme (45%)

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 20-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 the 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 to ministry.

*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 guide below for your outline:

- I. Introduction
- II. Old Testament Theology (12 pages)
- III. New Testament Theology (5 pages)
- IV. Relevance for ministry today (2 pages)
- V. Conclusion

3. Worldview Studies Specialization

a. Exegetical Biblical Theological Paper on Wisdom (45%)

Goal: The goal of this learning experience is to show the biblical theological significance of a short OT pericope and its impact on Christian worldview.

In this 20 page paper students will provide a basic 7 page exegesis of a short OT pericope (see list below) which will identify the core theme(s) of the passage within its original context in history and canon before showing in 11 pages the connection of this(these) core theme(s) to the rest of the canonical witness of the Old and New Testament. The student must highlight the ways in which the theme(s) of the passage is(are) transformed within its(there) larger canonical context and how this theme impacts the formation of a Christian worldview (2 pages).

Passages to choose from:

- Prov 2:1-11
- Prov 3:1-12
- Prov 8:12-21
- Prov 8:22-31

Process:

*Read the relevant introductory articles on Old Testament Books in Part Two of the NDBT on Old Testament books (Wisdom Books and Proverbs) to see the way in which scholars have provided insight into the meaning of various OT books and how their message relates to the broader witness of Scripture.

*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.

*Trace the main theme(s) of this individual passage throughout the Old and New Testaments (some help may be gained from NDBT Part Three), first on your own by identifying basic vocabulary, images, and topics related to the theme(s), 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 showcasing your exegesis of the individual passage and then the connection of its theme to the OT and NT and to Christian worldview today in

conversation with the best in scholarship.

Use this guide below for your outline:

- I. Introduction
- II. Exegesis of Passage (5 pages)
- III. Connection of theme of passage to the rest of the OT/NT (7 pages)
- IV. Relevance for Christian Worldview today (2 pages)
- V. Conclusion

b. Biblical Theological Theme Paper on Creation (45%)

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

This 20-page paper will trace a key theological theme related to Creation 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 the 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 define your own theme. You will want to remind yourself of the sections of Creation that you read in *Heartbeat of Old Testament Theology*.
- * 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 Christian Worldview formation today.

Use this guide below for your outline:

- I. Introduction
- II. Old Testament Theology (12 pages)
- III. New Testament Theology (5 pages)
- IV. Relevance for theology today (2 pages)
- V. Conclusion

C. 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. 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, 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 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 that I can properly evaluate your work the following format is to be used for the paper in this class.

- **Medium for Submission:** All material in this class is to be submitted in digital format to me via email. Please use .pdf format and ensure that what you send is what you want me to read. If you need a program for creating .pdfs go to <http://primopdf.com> for a free .pdf maker.
- **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://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/sites/default/files/documents/mdc_styleguide_june_2014.pdf. 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 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 (but many others are available). It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.
- **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 McMaster Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty ~ <http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/rules-regulations>
- **Late Material:** Late submissions for will be docked 2% per day including Monday-Saturday but not Sunday.

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 התמבחים: 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” (בשגגה, *bishgāgāh*; if they are defiant sins, בְּיַד רָמָה, *b’yad rāmāh*, then the offender will be “cut off” from the community, see Num 15:27-31).¹ 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 (חֲטָאת, *ḥaṭṭāt*, 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:

<p>חָגְרוּ וְסָפְדוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים הַלֵּילִלוּ מִשְׁרָתֵי מִזְבֵּחַ בְּאוֹ לִינוּ בְּשִׁלְמִים מִשְׁרָתֵי אֱלֹהֵי כִּי נִמְנָע מִבַּיִת אֱלֹהֵיכֶם מִנְחָה וְנֶסֶךְ:</p>	<p>Gird yourselves <i>with sackcloth</i> And lament, O priests; Wail, O ministers of the altar! Come, spend the night in sackcloth O ministers of my God, For <u>the grain offering and the drink offering</u> Are withheld from the house of your God.</p>
---	---

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

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

¹ 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 1. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 53-54.

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.

© M. J. Boda, 2015