

## Hebrew Bible/Systematic Theology

# Christian Doctrine and the Old Testament

<b>Professor</b>	Daniel R. Driver, PhD	<b>Course</b>	Version 2.0
<b>Phone</b>	902-425-7051	<b>Meets</b>	Tuesdays
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<b>Office</b>	Microsoft Teams	<b>Where</b>	Teams/Classroom 3
<b>Hours</b>	Tuesdays, 1:00–3:00 PM	<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://danieldriver.com">danieldriver.com</a>

## 1 Course Description

What is the relationship of scripture and theology? Some answers to this question start with the Bible, while others begin with Christian doctrine, while still others call for a dialectical movement between canon and creed. However it is approached, the question presents a number of challenges.

To illustrate the problem in general, and to outline some possible solutions, this course highlights a variety of current approaches to the Old Testament as the scripture of the Church. Students will encounter work by an array of biblical and theological specialists who transgress the conventional limits of their disciplines. They will study the views of Catholics, Protestants, Jews, and those who disavow religious affiliation. Because the Hebrew Bible is Jewish scripture in the first instance, students will consider why some Jews are not interested in biblical theology, and what it means for the Church to adhere to the Scriptures of Israel. Specific doctrines under consideration include: creation, sin, election, incarnation (the body of God), divine impassibility, Christology, Mariology, law and gospel, death and resurrection, and the afterlife.

*Prerequisites: BF 1001 and RM 1000 or GTRS 6000.*

## 2 Learning Objectives

By the end of this course students should develop knowledge of some ways different churches – including Roman Catholic, Anglican, and United – approach the Bible in general, and the Old Testament in particular, as scripture. They should become familiar with some leading narratives about the relationship of Bible and Theology, and with different theories about how to frame knowledge of God (in terms apophatic and kataphatic, for example). They should be able to analyze and evaluate doctrinal claims by biblical scholars and theologians who use the OT as a core theological resource. Students should also develop curiosity about the role of Hebrew scripture in communities beyond the church, including in the academy and the synagogue. Their creativity and confidence in expressing their own ideas about the Scriptures of Israel should grow, even as they learn to do so with appropriate humility and charity. Finally, students should experience a process of discovery in dialogue with biblical traditions ancient and strange as they pursue fresh ways of thinking and speaking about the God of Israel.

## 3 Required Texts & Materials

The following texts are required. Library copies may be placed on reserve, but students are strongly encouraged to purchase their own copies. Visit the professor's website for links to [order the assigned editions](#).

- [Anderson] Gary A. Anderson. *Christian Doctrine and the Old Testament: Theology in the Service of Biblical Exegesis*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017. ISBN 978-0801098253.
- [Davis] Ellen F. Davis. *Opening Israel's Scriptures*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019. ISBN 978-0190948948.
- [NRSV] M. D. Coogan, ed. *New Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha: NRSV*. 5th ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018. ISBN 978-0190276072.

An good alternative study Bible is the NJPS: Adele Berlin and Marc Zvi Brettler, eds., *The Jewish Study Bible: Second Edition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014). Reference copies of both the NRSV and NJPS are available in the AST library. Electronic versions are also available through [Oxford Biblical Studies Online](#) (accessible with your AST student card barcode number and password).

## 4 Supplementary Texts

Supplementary readings will be recommended throughout the semester and either placed on reserve or made available through the course website. Give this material good effort and attention. As a foundation for this course, students are asked to explore relevant church statements about Christian scripture, particularly the Old Testament. Resources from the founding churches of AST include the following.

1. RCC: Roman Catholic Church
  - (a) *Divino Afflante Spiritu*, the encyclical from Pope Pius XII [[overview](#)] (1943)
  - (b) *Dei Verbum*, Vatican II's Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation (1965)

- (c) PBC = Pontifical Biblical Commission: *L'interprétation de la Bible dans l'Église*, **The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church** (April 15, 1993)
  - (d) PBC: *Le peuple juif et ses Saintes Écritures dans la Bible chrétienne*, **The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible** (May 24, 2001)
2. ACC: Anglican Church of Canada (a **member of the Anglican Communion**)
    - (a) Articles VI–VII of **The Thirty-nine Articles of Religion** (1562)
    - (b) **The Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral** (1886, 1888)
    - (c) Paragraphs 52–62 of **The Windsor Report** [PDF] (18 October 2004)
    - (d) **Bible in the Life of the Church (BILC) Project Report** (2012)
  3. UCC: United Church of Canada
    - (a) The UCC requires its ministers to be in “**essential agreement**” with four doctrinal statements that are “**subordinate to the primacy of scripture**” (**GC 41 2012 - 005**):
      - i. **Twenty Articles of Doctrine** (1925)
      - ii. **A Statement of Faith** (1940)
      - iii. **A New Creed** (1968)
      - iv. **A Song of Faith** (2006)
    - (b) *The Authority and Interpretation of Scripture: A Statement of the United Church of Canada* (Toronto: UC Publishing House, 1992) [BS 480 U65 1992 – **on reserve**]
    - (c) See Robert C. Fennell’s series “How Does the United Church Interpret the Bible?” in *Touchstone*, a Canadian journal of theology and heritage:
      - i. **Part I, 1904–1940s: Tradition and Resistance** (26.2 [2008]: 13–24)
      - ii. **Part II, 1950s–1990s: Tradition and Liberation** (26.3 [2008]: 31–42)
      - iii. **Part III: A Song of Faith** (29.2 [2011]: 21–29)
    - (d) From an OT scholar, see also: Gerald T. Sheppard, *The Future of the Bible: Beyond Liberalism and Literalism* (Toronto: United Church Publishing House, 1990).

Also, the following reference works are worth owning and consulting. [[Making Sense](#)] in particular contains sound advice on core skills like reading religious texts, writing essays and reviews, revising essays, making oral presentations, and learning languages.

[[Making Sense](#)] Northey, Margot, Bradford A. Anderson, and Joel N. Lohr. *Making Sense in Religious Studies: A Student’s Guide to Research and Writing*. 3rd ed. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2019. ISBN 978-0199026838.

[SBL2] Collins, Billie Jean, et al. *The SBL Handbook of Style*. 2nd ed. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014. ISBN 978-1589839649. Designed to augment *Chicago Style* (the standard at AST), there is also a free **Student Supplement for SBL2**.

## 5 Course Outline

We will adhere to the schedule in [Table 1](#) as closely as possible, though the professor reserves the right to adjust it to suit the needs of the class.

See the AST website for a list of other **important dates**.

§. Topic	Anderson	Davis	OT Scripture	Date
I. THEOLOGY & HERMENEUTICS				
1. Introductions	Intro	Intro		13 Jan.
2. Apophaticism	1	3	Lev 8–10	20 Jan.
3. Impassibility	2	10	Jonah 1–4	27 Jan.
II. ORIGINS				
4. Creation	3	1	Gen 1–3	3 Feb.
5. Sin	4	2	Exod 32–34	10 Feb.
6. Election	5	4–5	Gen 50	17 Feb.
~. No Class: Reading Week				24 Feb.
III. CHRISTOLOGY				
7. Christology 1	6	9	Exod 40	3 Mar.
8. Mariology	7	8	1 Sam 1–2	10 Mar.
9. Christology 2	8	11	Tobit 1–4	17 Mar.
IV. SANCTIFICATION				
10. Merits	9	15	Prov 19	24 Mar.
11. Purgation	10	17	Dan 4	31 Mar.
12. Conclusions		14	Ps 19	7 Apr.
☞ End of Term: Final marks due for all courses				13 Apr.

Table 1: Schedule of Readings

## 6 Evaluation

Given the small class size this term, I have adopted a tutorial format for HB/ST 3001.

1. Each week you will write a 1000–1200 word essay responding to a prompt.
2. Essays should interact thoughtfully with both primary and secondary sources, and should be **thesis-driven**. Your essay must argue a thesis, and not simply describe what you have learned or what others have argued. At the tutorial, you should know what you think about the question, and should be able to summarize the argument of your essay in one sentence.
3. Reading preparation should always give priority of attention to the assigned primary texts. Secondary literature will be important in lending guidance to the essay, but scholarly opinions should always be assessed on the basis of how helpful they are in explaining the primary text.
4. By email or Teams, please send me your essay as a Microsoft Word document by 4pm the day before class. Essays received on time will receive written feedback. Late essays are not guaranteed written feedback. If you do not provide an essay at all, class may be cancelled. Essays will not be accepted after class (with rare exceptions).
5. Written feedback will be returned by email or on Teams following discussion in the tutorial. Marks will not be assigned to the essays submitted on a weekly basis. Instead, affirmation and redirection will be provided as needed.
6. Select two of your best essays to revise and resubmit for a formal mark. Both essays must be submitted before the last day of class. You can opt to submit them early.

Completion of All Essays	70%
Assessment of Selected Essays	30%

Table 2: Distribution of Grades

The breakdown for the semester’s total work is shown in [Table 2](#).

AST’s [Academic Calendar](#) provides guidelines and detailed criteria for academic assessment. Marks are assigned by letter grade using these benchmarks (summarized in [Table 3](#)). Note that, at AST, a grade of “C” is deemed “Unsatisfactory.”

A+	94–100	Exceptional
A	87–93	Outstanding
A–	80–86	Excellent
B+	77–79	Good
B	73–76	Acceptable
B–	70–72	Marginally Acceptable
C	60–69	Unsatisfactory
F	0–59	Failure
FP	0	Failure due to Plagiarism

Table 3: Outline of Grades at AST

## 7 Other Course Policy

Late work will not be accepted, except in genuinely extenuating circumstances. Students must submit something before the deadline if they wish to receive credit. Unless I state otherwise, assignments are to be uploaded by 11:59 PM (Atlantic) on the date indicated.

Essay submissions must be typewritten and double-spaced. They should be free from error. In this course they should follow SBL Style (see [\[SBL2\]](#) in [section 4](#), above). As a reminder, AST upholds an Inclusive Language Policy. Please use gender-inclusive language when referring to human beings. Our traditions have different norms for speech about God; therefore, you are free to use non-gender-inclusive pronouns when referring to God.

Plagiarism is the [failure to attribute](#) (by means of footnotes when writing or aloud when speaking) any ideas, phrases, sentences, materials, syntheses, et cetera, that another author has composed and that you have borrowed for your own work. Plagiarism is unethical. Academic penalties for plagiarism at AST are serious, and may include failure of the course or even suspension of further studies. Unintentional plagiarism is considered plagiarism. AST’s Plagiarism Policy is found under that heading in the Academic Calendar.

Students should request permission to record a class or lecture. If permission is granted, or if recordings are provided (as in the case of an online or hybrid course), I stipulate that all recordings be for personal use only. They may not be shared or distributed.

If you have needs that require modifications to any aspect of this course, please consult with the instructor as soon as possible. Any documentation regarding disabilities that you wish to divulge to AST should be provided to the Registrar’s Office, where it will be kept in a confidential file.

Finally, I encourage the conscientious use of laptops, tablets, and other technology in my classes. In classroom settings, realize that, as [cognitive psychologists have demonstrated](#), “laptop multitasking hinders classroom learning for both users and nearby peers.” Do your

part to foster an environment for dialogue by honouring the presence of your classmates. In online and hybrid settings, consider both the physical environment in which you choose to work and the virtual environment that you help create through your participation in various forums. Let your engagement in this course be marked by rigour and charity alike.