

Dr. Elaine Phillips, Old Testament Literature

Lecture 1, Course Introduction

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Let's take some time to pray together and then we'll get started on the things that we need to do for this day.

But let's pray first.

Our gracious Heavenly Father, as we begin this term together in this class in this room, with each of us sharing the study of your word. We pray that your Holy Spirit would indeed Work deep in our hearts, Lord. We pray that you would draw us ever closer to you. We pray that we will have a more profound sense of who you are and how you have worked in the lives of your people literally for millennia. But also, in the lives of your people, this day work in our hearts. Our Father, teach us, encourage us when we need encouragement and challenge us and rebuke us when we need those things, And we'll offer you the thanks in the name of Christ our Savior. Amen.

Well, if you've got your 3x5 card all filled out as I say at the bottom of this, please hang on to it because I'm probably going to forget to collect them at the end. That's usually the way these things go. Let's kind of look at our Objective for the day if you've got that piece of paper in front of you, It says liturgy For the day, and I'm going to explain that in a moment. But we're going to start with this by reading Psalm 86 verses 10 and 11 So if you happen to have a Bible never hurts to bring a Bible to a Bible class That was kind of a clever idea to do that, and as you're going to find out the Bible is the major text for this particular class So I would encourage you to have it along at any rate.

You're going to find out that, Lord willing, we're going to start every class with a psalm, a section of a psalm, I'm a profound believer in Psalms, reading the Psalms and singing the Psalms. We will either read or sing a psalm in every class that we start God-willing so here we are in Psalm 86 and only a snatch of it. Let me start with verse 10, speaking of God. For you are great and do marvelous deeds, you alone are God. Verse 11 is really our punchline for this class. Teach me your way. Oh Lord, and I will walk in your truth. Give me an undivided heart, literally means a heart together. Give me an undivided heart that I may fear your name. Let's just do that verse 11 once more: teach me your way, O Lord, and I will walk in your truth. Give me an undivided heart that I may fear your name.

So, kind of put that in your heads, by the way, it wouldn't hurt to memorize some of these things that we work on, not that I'm ever going to test you. But they might come in handy for yourselves. Liturgy means the work of the people of God. Those of

you who come from liturgical churches know this, and therefore, as you talk about doing liturgy, It's not that stale, dead thing out there that you'd like to get away from and wave your hands and clap your hands. Liturgy means you're working, and your mind is working, and I'm hoping that not only today I'm calling this a liturgy for this day, but I'm hoping that in every class that we engage in We're going to think of what we're doing as worship now, I hope you've heard this already before because you've been at Gordon now for a semester and some of you even more than a semester but Study is worship. Study is worship. In fact, I would suggest, and I'm quoting Stan Gady. This is not my own thought quoting Stan Gady. The Holy Spirit is never so active as when we are using our minds Okay, the Holy Spirit is never so active as when we're using our minds. Keep that in mind as you're studying.

Here's my little tiny bit of advice, and I'm going to say it over and over again in this class: When you open your scriptures to do your assignment for the day, take it as an assignment from God, the Holy Spirit. All right, let him speak to you, pray that he will not have your devotional life way up here somewhere, and then, oh no, I've got a study of Genesis 5 through 15 right now. It all works together. Study and worship go together

There's a very interesting Hebrew word. It's avodah. You're going to encounter it when you read. Dr Wilson's book says it means work, and it also means worship. Okay, avodah means both work and worship. The Hebrew Bible has the right concept here as we're thinking through these things.

All right, so we have a little liturgy for this day. We have to get through some practical things and they're on the sheet there in front of you.

Then we're actually going to start talking about the nature of the Old Testament is first, but let's do our practical things Some issues have on class procedures and I'm going to introduce our TAs in a moment Matt. So don't worry. I haven't given up on you. I haven't forgotten you.

All right, you're going to find out that I'm a stickler for starting on time. In fact, I'm obsessively compulsively always early unless something horrible happens, but I will be starting on time if you need to talk to me and don't like to get up and walk over the third-floor of Frost come here early because I'll generally speaking be here at least 20 minutes ahead of class start time. If there are things that you want to discuss I'm here to do that, but we will start on time.

We'll start with announcements, and if you are not on time, you might miss some fairly important announcements, so try and be here on time. I Try to work rather hard at learning your names. Thank heavens, there are only 43 of you in this class.

This is going to be a whole lot better than my 120 in some classes, but I'll make an effort of it. Help me out because it's one thing to recognize you in class.

It's another thing to see you over in Lane. Sometimes people all look alike, you notice that, so just keep helping me out and introduce yourself over and over and over and over again, and we'll get there.

If you have questions as we're talking along as I'm talking along, please feel free to ask them. I'm going to be asking you questions from time to time. Please feel free to ask questions because that's the way this stuff is really going to be coming alive for you as we're talking about it. So, questions are perfectly in order. I may take the opportunity to redirect our conversation because we do have some things we have to cover, but see if your questions aren't answered. There's always email, and there are some open forums, and your syllabus is going to tell you all about open forums. Those are times that are optional, in which we'll just carry the conversation on further. I don't want that. It's probably going to come up at least six times.

Hey Ted. How do I get rid of this thing permanently? I don't know either, all right at any rate, just a little bit on classroom etiquette, which I probably don't have to say, but I'm going to say it anyway just in case. It's not nearly so bad when there are only 40 people in class 120, which is a slightly different story. I encourage you to bring your laptops to class as you're going to find out all the lecture outlines are on the Blackboard. Download them ahead of time. Bring them on your laptop to class. It'll make your absorption of the material a whole lot easier. You'll be able to listen to a little bit as opposed to furiously writing down every last thing I'm saying. Every last thing that's on the PowerPoint, what's on the PowerPoint is generally speaking is on Blackboard. In the lecture outline, bring it along bring your laptop.

But having said that, I'll just tell you my experiences. It's kind of funny, you know, when I'm talking about something really serious, and all of a sudden, in the back row behind a laptop, two people burst out in gales of laughter. I'm thinking what I said is not really all that funny. There must be something else on that laptop. So, laptop etiquette simply runs like this. Please keep it focused on the class. I wander around when I teach just to check from time to time in terms of what happens to be on your laptop or what your thumbs are doing. If you happen to be texting somebody somewhere along the line, if you're having conversations with the person next to you I sure hope they have to do with what we're talking about in class. I may ask you, and then you'll have to divulge what that happened to have been.

All right, something's clicking here. Is it the microphone in this are you getting a real bad? That feed all right 910 isn't nearly as bad as 8 o'clock.

But let me give you two pieces of advice to make sure that you're here faithfully for the rest of the semester. The first one is your mother speaking: go to bed early. It's

as simple as that: go to bed early as opposed to all the rest of the dorm, okay? Make a point of it. Secondly, and this is a piece of advice from one of my former students from at least 15 Years ago who said, I learned she said I learned it only two-thirds of the way through the semester. She said I learned to make breakfast dates with somebody in the class, and that way, we both got to class on time. So, if that works for you, it's courtesy of Kirsten.

All right, well, let's carry on a little bit. The office hours are posted or they should be listed in that sheet that I gave you they're also going to be listed in the syllabus, but let me emphasize a couple of things in this regard. Please note that I'm not on campus on Thursdays by and large there may be some exceptions to this. I try and schedule a day off campus just to get some work done. So, if you're looking for me on Thursday make it an email contact. I will be reading email. Then secondly, lunch in Lane means that I'm available whenever you want to have a further conversation over a meal just email me, call me. We can set something up. I've got the hours there usually. It's after chapel convocation on a Monday, Wednesday, Friday that I arranged to do this. So that's always an option as well. I don't just go over there and sit and wait for people. You know this has to be something that we've arranged ahead of time.

Okay, Matt, I know you need to leave. So Matt, sitting right back there. Good, thanks, Matt and Carrie. Good thank you both.

I would urge you to take advantage of review sessions, not just the one before the exam. If you do this on a regular basis, it's just another way of studying. It's a devoted hour. It's going to help you immensely. So certainly do take advantage of both Matt and Carrie's time. Okay? Any questions so far on this pragmatic stuff we've been talking about?

All right, let's carry on with Old Testament History, Literature, and Theology. By the way this text that I have in front of you is a very interesting kind of thing. It's a commentary on the book of Habakkuk of all things from the Dead Sea Scrolls. Now you know we can spend a lot of time talking about this. But what I want to emphasize is notice that folks back then, and this is probably you know middle of the 2nd century BC or 1st century BC. Folks back then were interested in studying Scripture, at least that particular community was, and they're not talking about Psalms or Deuteronomy or Isaiah they probably were, in fact, we have commentaries on Psalms and Isaiah. But they're even taking care to discuss Habakkuk of all things. So just that that's just to get us going you'll also find out that I often like to engage our interest with some questions.

As we start so, here's a multiple-choice question; in fact, guess what? It's one you might actually see on the first test. Why is Israel called the testing ground of faith? This is multiple choice. Let's go through them and see what you think is the right

answer if I can find my pointer here when you're really helpful. Option one: It was the place where God gave the Torah, which demanded obedience. You have to copy this down. This is just a little test. It'll be up in front of you for the next three minutes. The second option: the Israelites were called to this land because of its rich abundance of resources just to see if they would continue to remember the Lord in spite of their plenty. Like that one, how about three: it's precariously situated on the land bridge between large power circles and its agricultural productivity, and thus, economic security is dependent on sometimes marginal amounts of rainfall and dew. It's kind of a long-winded option. Four, well, it's really not a testing ground of faith because the main places the Israelites' faith was tested were in Egypt and Babylon.

Okay, got the options. Who's going for the first one? Be brave and bold. Okay, we got about four people going for the first one. Who's going for the second one. Okay a little bit more. It looks like eight or nine, or something like that. Is anybody going for the third one? Here's a three, four, there five. Okay. How about the fourth one? Okay, this is fairly evenly distributed.

How many of you are not voting? Yeah, there's always some people who don't vote. I understand that. Well, guess what our threes have it. Our threes have it. So, give yourself a couple of points here. Our threes have it. In about a week, we're going to figure out why this works the way it works.

All right, it is indeed precariously positioned. God chose to plant his people in a situation that was both geopolitically vulnerable and also agriculturally precarious. Therefore, that will be a way in which their faith is tested. The covenant blessings and curses are tied right into the land. It's fascinating. Okay. Well, that gets us kind of started here.

Now, what I want you to do is take two minutes, turn to the person next to you, and say why are you here? It can be, you know, as bland as, oh, I have to take this class but talk. Why are you here? Talk to the person next to you. Now, you know you could have cheated and look down at the objectives down here. We're going to look through them in a moment, but before we do that, let me just draw your attention to this liturgy for the day. If you will to not only the course description but also the paragraph that follows that, and I don't mean to insult your intelligence, but I'm going to read this to you.

First Testament and I'm going to talk about the First Testament in just a moment. First Testament history and teaching are presented in the context of cultural geographical and literary backgrounds of the ancient Near East archaeology comparative history, and literature are studied. Do you get the impression this is sort of an interdisciplinary endeavor here? Literature, archaeology, history, geography etc, etc.

All that's going to feed into how we think about what we're going to be doing for the next three months. What this means is your core curriculum courses are indispensable as you think through the wider context. Don't ever think about, oh, I can't wait to get the core out of the way. Have you heard that around you now and then? Getting the core out of the way. That's a horrible expression excise it from your vocabulary. The core curriculum is designed for us all to be thinking more Interdisciplinarily. All right.

This course includes a study of key theological themes foundational to New Testament and Western culture. I hope you like the word "theology" because it has everything to do with living.

All right, and then finally, that second paragraph: Instruction in this course is founded upon the conviction that the biblical text is revelation from our sovereign God who has chosen in his mercy to reveal himself.

This is a profound theological statement. I hope you're getting that. Please don't walk out of here saying oh, I didn't study theology you will have if you're studying, at any rate, who has chosen in his mercy to reveal himself to humankind. Through his activity in history through the scriptures, and supremely in the person of Jesus the Messiah. In each of these means of revelation we perceive the supernatural intervention of God into the natural order of which he is both creator and sustainer.

Okay, think through that. I hope this is not the last time you look at that particular statement because it does indeed indicate what it is we're supposed to be doing. Whenever you see that up there just tell me that I have to move it. Have you had a chance to look at Calvin and Hobbes? Can you see it from back there? Can you not see it from back there? Can't.

All right, lying in bed, I wonder what man was put on earth for what's our purpose? Why are we here? And the answer is Tiger food. All right, now why are we here? Well, here are the objectives that I've tried to kind of work out. They're the ones that are on the sheet in front of you. You know, it's kind of pulling them into some particular categories here. I hope that together, I pray that together, in fact, that was my prayer at the beginning. It will foster an increasing love for God. If that's not happening, please come and talk to me.

All right, this is not just an academic course in which you want to get a 4.0. Let's foster an increasing love for God and appreciation for God's revelation in Scripture. It's terribly important as you approach the rest of your lives perhaps you know that already. In addition to that, I'm hoping that we will integrate biblical studies with other disciplines. I've already talked about that and you hope you're going to see it happen to a degree.

I hope we put together some ideas in terms of how to live.

Number one there's lots and lots and lots of very practical stuff in the Old Testament or the First Testament. There are things that have to do with justice and things that have to do with the way we interact with each other. We'll be talking about those things. And so, this ought to have ways of shaping who we are, how we live in community, and especially how we live in community at Gordon College.

We'll talk about some of those things when we talk about social Torah among other things. In addition to that, you may have got the sense. Oh, by the way, I've got to ask the question that I forgot to ask at the beginning. How many of you have read the entire Old Testament all the way through? This is remarkable This is remarkable. There are seven people that I counted right here. Usually, in my class of 120, whatever it is, there are two or three. So, thank you, and keep reading because the First Testament has everything to say about how we understand our lives, our responsibilities, and the choices we make as we're living in this particular culture. As you know, whatever, like, yeah, culture, and that's deemed to be a substantive statement. Especially if you attach yeah at the end of it with a certain amount of emphasis. There's more to say there's much more to say and then of course.

This is obviously foundational to New Testament. I've got a quote in a moment From a really excellent book, which you're going to see the title of in a second, which I think will kind of put together for us just the beginning of how we want to think about the foundations for the New Testament. Here we go: *New Testament Development, Old Testament Themes*, excellent scholar F.F. Bruce was, and Let me read through this. It's posted on Blackboard by the way, so you don't need to copy all this slavishly either. It's posted on Blackboard, but notice what he's saying in terms of how vital First Testament is in Jesus.

In Jesus, the promise is confirmed. What's the promise? Promise to whom that's not a rhetorical question. What's your name? You're Trevor, okay? I mean, if it's a promise to us, that's the one that's confirmed. How about an original promise way back somewhere? Earlier on, good, and I know, start biting your fingernails now, don't worry, you know, I love to put people on the spot. But you can do the same to me and ask me questions. I may say I don't know.

Tell me your name, Jesse Chelsea; I got it, right? Okay, Chelsea. Yeah, good, that's the starting point. I mean, there are some promises made to Adam and Eve, too, but I'm thinking particularly about the covenant with Abraham, which is then reiterated to the rest of the patriarchs and then certainly to Israel, as well. So, a good covenant is renewed. Well, that's also an Abraham kind of thing, isn't it? We'll have a lot to say about covenant prophecies, oh Goodness, there's going to be a whole lot of these in Jesus. There are manifold prophecies that are fulfilled, and the law is vindicated.

In other words, the law is not going to have this kind of a bad name. In fact, what does it say in the gospel narratives about Jesus being baptized? He came to fulfill all righteousness. Jesus will indeed be one who keeps the Torah. Salvation is brought near lots. We could say about salvation as well you know, we're often when we use the term Jesus saves. Jesus is the source of my salvation. We think of it pretty lightly but think of all the things that were saved from guilt, sin, and the consequences of sin, and you could write down the line. But also think of the things that we're saved to a new relationship with God, no longer alienation, new relationships with each other, and we could go on. Salvation is a rich concept sacred history has reached its climax. Perfect sacrifice has been offered and accepted. You're going to wonder why we spend so much time studying Leviticus so that we can understand what it is that Jesus has done. Then in relationship to that the great high priest over the household of God has taken his seat at God's right hand.

This is not the end of it. The prophet like Moses has been raised up, the son of David reigns, and the kingdom of God has been inaugurated. What wonderful and profound themes are here, all these focusing on Jesus, but Jesus who was fulfilling them as they're articulated in the First Testament. Son of man has received dominion from the ancient of days. Where's that figure coming from? Does anybody know? Tell me your name. Yeah, your name, say. Okay, the book of Daniel. Good, Daniel chapter 7 where you have this remarkable vision that Daniel has dream vision and he sees the ancient of days sitting on the throne.

That's God, the Son of man comes into his presence, and the Son of Man has given glory, power, dominion, etc. All those things that are saying he's deity. And, of course, when Jesus chooses that name for himself that then has some very interesting implications. The servant of the Lord this is straight out of Isaiah chapter 53, having been smitten to death for his people's transgression, born the sin of many, accomplished the divine purpose, has seen the light after the travail of his soul, and is now exalted and extolled and made very high. The Gospel is right there in Isaiah 53 along with many other places.

So, again, just in terms of one of our objectives kind of unpacking what we say when we say Jesus has saved me from my sins. There's a whole wonderful theological heritage underlying that.

Well, just a couple of things to push this forward a little bit further. Now, I'm picking up right from the lecture outline as it starts on the multiple sheets of paper that I handed out there. At least, I think that should be where we are on the second page.

Do you see something that looks like this? What shall we call this text and why? Great, and again, from here on in, if you like to do things this way, download these. It'll work best for you. You've grown up with Old Testament as the title for this, and I'm not going to fuss if you keep on calling it the Old Testament. I will as well, but

when you call something old, what does that mean to you? Maybe tell me your name Nick, okay. Good, so you're actually drawing on my first idea here, aren't you? Well, let's take it away from the Testament and our whole theological thing and just say Old. What does that imply? I've got to tell you a funny story yesterday in the mail, by the way, I'm not 60 yet. I'm getting there, but I'm not 60 yet. Yesterday in the mail, I got this ugly piece of paper that said ballot for senior citizens. Can you imagine that I was slightly incensed at that point? I mean I threw it away. I thought give me a little while. I don't feel like a senior citizen yet. Now, most people think you're getting over the hill a little bit.

I saw a hand back there. Where was it? Yes. Tell me your name Kate, thanks. Yeah, and that often seems to be the subtext isn't it, when we use the term "old" especially when old is used in contrast with new. Therefore the tendency is to say old means that we just don't have to pay attention to it anymore. It's obsolete. It's out of date. I don't use Facebook, so I obsoletely guarantee you that but at any rate, you know, there are some places where old is not entirely bad. I think one of the things you may want to be thinking out is what Nick was saying earlier that really old here means original first. The foundation on which new is based and that might help us a little bit. Names are important.

We live in an area here where there's a fairly extensive Jewish community, and perhaps you come from contexts where there are fairly extensive Jewish communities, for their sakes, if for nothing else, maybe referring to this as Hebrew Bible or First Testament or something might be a little less derogatory. But again, make your own choices. You'll hear me saying First Testament quite often that does bring us to another way of referring to this, and it comes right out of the Jewish community.

Have we got our yes? We have our Thank You, Nick? I'll figure that out next time around in Judaism. When they think of the Hebrew Bible or what we're calling the Older or First Testament, they have a name for it. That is an acronym. That's what Tanakh is an acronym T and KH Tanakh. Sometimes spelled Tanak depending on how you're going to do it. But the whole point is the T stands for Torah. The N stands for Nevi'im, which means prophets and the K or KH stands for Ketuvim.

Now, next time, Lord willing, we're going to talk about the different genres of this text. We're going to talk about four breakdowns in terms of our English understanding of Bible. But as you're thinking of the Jewish three parts of the scriptures of their scriptures, Think of these, and then let me just give you a little bit of a clue within Nevi'im. The section is called Nevi'im, which is prophets. We actually have historical writings and the writing prophets. Am I making sense with that? Is that a yes or no? All right, we normally think of Torah first five books of Moses, history, prophets, Psalms and writings, and so forth poetry. But they put together the history and the writing prophets. The reason they do it is because in the historical

books, the ministry of the prophets is very evident: Elijah, Elisha, Samuel, Gad, Nathan, etc. etc.

All right, this is all kind of by way of introduction. What did some of you say when you were asking each other? Why are you here? Anybody want to venture a synopsis of what you heard in that little discussion ten minutes ago? Why are you here? Why are we here? Why are we studying this text? Did anybody get to that? Tell me your name, Susanna, thank you.

So now you're going to do the foundation. Okay, good. Good, anybody else? Well, I have some reasons for you.

Whoops. Let's back up on that one. I'm well aware that as we have a class this size there are different reasons for being in this class, and some of them may well be as exalted as that one.

Others may simply be I got to take it because it's part of a core requirement. I understand that. But let me suggest to you that even if that's the point you're at right now even if that's the point you're at right now, God works with different people at different times. Nobody here is going to impose on you what you have to feel and believe but let me suggest that even if you're not interested in the life application, life transforming issues, right now simply functioning as a member of Western society knowing your cultural heritage is a pretty good reason for taking Old Testament. Goethe, and this is in quote, in a paraphrase and translation. Goethe said if you don't know three thousand years of your heritage, you're living hand-to-mouth. He's a German poet, right? If you don't know three thousand years of your heritage, you're living hand-to-mouth. So, simply in terms of developing your cultural literacy it's fairly important in terms of knowing the First Testament.

I'm going to come back to that in a moment. Here's the second basic reason: when we study First Testament and what's in it as I've already tried to intimate it really does indeed shape our worldview. Now you've been in CCC for an entire semester so, you know all about worldview. We all have them the issue is whether or not they're coherent, whether they hang together, whether they really do indeed shape in a cohesive way how we function. So our perception of ourselves, our society, our world, our history, our conduct, and perceived responsibility and our decisions. All these things can be shaped by what we do, what we study, what we take in in terms of the manifold amount of excellent stuff in the First Testament.

That, of course, leads us to this one that has been mentioned earlier foundational for understanding the relationship between God and humankind which, of course, culminates in Jesus as he's revealed to us the Word in flesh. All these other things are important, too. And just to pique your interest for those of you who may not be terribly interested in two and three, yet let's do some things with our basic cultural

literacy issues. When you know First Testament narratives, we can understand a good deal of our Western cultural heritage. Did you know that? Not me.

That's not so true now because in the last 20 to 30 years, we've lost any connection. I shouldn't say it. That's really overstating it, but we've lost some connection with our long cultural heritage.

We're going to have a tiny cultural literacy quiz. This is tiny What's Rembrandt's subject here? Sarah, how do you know? Okay, that's good, that's good. But, yeah, if you know the basic details of the narrative, you can kind of pull that one together, can't you? Genesis 22 is all about that dramatic scene where the angel stops Abraham at the last minute before his knife slashes Isaac's throat as the sacrifice burnt offering. Well, let's try another one we think What's the one on the left? Does anybody want to guess? Well, let's pick it apart a little bit. What are these? You can say it. Don't be ashamed.

These are wings, right? Okay. So, who's this? An angel of some sort, now what? It gets a little more tricky, doesn't it? Because okay, Sarah, go ahead. Yes, it's Jacob wrestling, isn't it? But of course, part of the challenge is, and that's why this one's a little trickier. In Genesis 32, Jacob initially wrestles with a man; in fact, the text says man over and over again, but then, once it's over, what does Jacob say? My goodness, I've seen God face to face. But then what does Hosea say about it is wrestling with the angel? So, there's all of that that's built into that So you're right. It's a little bit challenging.

What's this one here? Tell me your name, Cassia, and by the way, I'm not going to remember these on Friday. So, we'll start all over again on Friday. Okay, Who's who, and how do you know? Now, switch that around a little bit because who's known for being a harp player? Yeah, David is. The one here, right, is interesting. What do we see? All we see are his hands in the harp. If David is playing the harp, who's this? Saul how do you know that in addition to the fact that we got David playing harp? What's in his hand, a spear? Do we know this narrative by any chance? It's probably not one of the ones you grew up in Sunday school. You did David and Goliath; I bet, in Sunday school. What's going on here? Yes.

Tell me your name, Kaelin. Yeah, Saul's been plagued by an evil spirit from the Lord, hasn't he? We know that this is causing him a horrifying dementia, basically, and David is brought into his presence to play the harp. Of course. Saul really is jealous. He's paranoically jealous of David, and he's occasionally out to get him. The spear is Saul's weapon of choice. Initially, so fascinating.

Well, let's do it one more. We have time. I like this one. Do you have any music majors in here? Oh, rats, no music majors. Yes, you are super. What's your name?

Melanie, so do you want to be stuck on the whatever this is that you're on right now? Anybody can name one Mary I know two people in this class.

Go ahead, Handel's Messiah. Excellent, that's the one we'd all come up with, right? Does anybody want to take a guess at anybody else that might be the subject of one of Handel's oratorios, an Old Testament character? Well, here's the Messiah. See the fine print, guess what? There are more than four. Let's look at him. Samson, Jethro, who's Jethro? He's one of the judges isn't he. So is Samson.

Well, let's get the next one Israel in Egypt. Saul, Solomon, Esther, Belshazzar, Joshua, Deborah, Joseph, and his brothers, Nabal, Gideon, and Judas Maccabeus. I realize it's not straight out of the First Testament, but it's that intertestamental time period Handel's written oratorios on all these things. Isn't that fascinating! And his audience would have appreciated the one he was writing, by the way.

All right, lots to do in terms of culture here, but of course, that's only basic foundations. Are you ready to carry on if you had enough culture quiz for now? All right, not just visual art forms, musical masterpieces, major works of drama and literature. Read John Milton, read Shakespeare. The whole language of those people are as actually infused with biblical language.

Obviously, our principles of jurisprudence are being blocked out by updating our computer yet again. Is anybody counting to see how many times we're actually going to do this time? It's five by now, right? And the very fabric of our language, maybe not so much now again. There's been kind of a seismic shift in culture in the last generation or so. But if you have grandparents who have grown up in the church, listen to them sometimes. The way they talk reflects the Bible, if they've been infused with this. My grandmother who died at the tender age of 99 and was a believer for 80 of those years spoke Bible. I mean she could be talking about cooking in the kitchen, and it came out with just this biblical cadence and biblical language. The very fabric of our language is infused with this kind of stuff. Look for it.

So, you want to be educated? Let's enjoy this class together, but that's not all. Some basic theological foundations will expand a little bit on what I said earlier. Sometimes we have this notion that we know God best by knowing Jesus, and I'm not in any way discounting that, not a bit because, of course, the word made flesh is what all the First Testament is really looking forward to. But having said that, you get an incredibly profound sense of who God is by studying First Testament. All you need to do, for example, is read the Psalms because the Psalms tell us all about God's compassion, his love, his forgiveness, his justice, and his wrath. The attributes of God are just there full force when you read the Psalms, and we see them throughout the First Testament. God and his holiness. God and his majesty.

And so, as you're reading your assignments for this class, pray that God will indeed

reveal more of himself to you through the text that you're reading. We also learn a little more about who we are. As a matter of fact, on Friday, we're going to spend some time with this. No, I'm sorry. That's next week.

We're going to do this. Hopefully, we'll have a little bit extra time to think about these things that are so much part of our lingo if you've grown up in the church. Yes, we know we're creating the image of God. Sometimes that just flows off a little too easily without our giving full thought to what that really means. What it says in terms of our capacities and our potential for choosing, for knowing, for feeling, for appreciating beauty and all those things.

If you ever want an interesting thing to read, and especially Melanie as a musician splendid book by George Steiner called *Real Presences* in which she talks about how the aesthetic experiences and especially music. She talks about the other artistic forms as well, but especially music. The way we experience music and the capacity that we have to experience music really does speak about, as Steiner says, a Real Presence capital R capital P because music is something that transcends just the mundane and the here-and-now. There's something profound about music, and that testifies to a creator of these wonderful aesthetic forms that we have.

So, the image of God, fellowship, and community communication and communion I should say with him. But then, of course, it's in scripture of the First Testament that we learn the tragedy of the fallen nature of humankind. In fact, as you study the narratives of the Israelites, my suspicion is you'll be like every other class of First Testament students I've had who read through Numbers, and they read through Judges, and we sort of sit back on our heels and say wow that sounds just like me.

Okay, we really get an appreciation for how desperately we need salvation when we read some of these narratives in the First Testament state of corruption and alienation from God.

Then, of course, that Leads us to the whole idea of the covenant. The covenant, as we'll say later on, being God's instrument for restoring the relationship between fallen humankind and himself. So, those are going to be our theological concerns Let's just do Two more things.

We're stopping a little bit early today for which you'll probably be thankful. That will only happen one more time this semester unless something untoward takes place.

But two more reasons that we're going to go to the New Testament for these. So if you've got your Bibles turn to 1 Corinthians 10. Paul is doing something typically Paul here. Those of you who have had New Testament are well aware that Paul was trained as a rabbi which meant that he knew First Testament scriptures inside and out, backward and forward, and knew how to make all kinds of connections and

interconnections among those scriptures. Okay, Paul isn't just coming at it from somewhere else Paul is infused with the Word of God as someone who's trained in a rabbinical background.

So, notice what he says in chapter 10, and I'm going to actually read verses 1 through 13. If you've grown up in the church in a church that emphasized memory, I bet you memorized verse 13. Well, let's see what precedes it. I don't want you to be ignorant of the fact brothers and sisters there our forefathers, in other words, the Israelites, were all under the cloud, and they all passed through the sea. Of course, that's bringing back images of what great experience? Under the cloud past through the sea. Chelsea, yeah, it's the Exodus experience, isn't it? This is the defining experience for all of Israel's history as we're going to see. That is the defining experience, and, of course, it provides the paradigm for what we experience in our Passover lamb who was Jesus at any rate.

Let's keep going Verse 2 "they were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea" kind of reiterating this and using that fascinating term baptism in terms of going through the waters of the sea. "They all ate the same spiritual food," which was you can just yell it out "manna." They drank the same spiritual drink. They drank from that spiritual rock that accompanied them and that rock was Christ.

There's a rabbinic study, I shouldn't say study but midrash, you know treatment of Scripture which actually talks about the rock that we will encounter when we read Exodus, the rock following the people Okay, now that's going to be the basis maybe for what Paul says when he says that rock was Christ.

Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them. Their bodies were scattered over the desert. If you know your narratives, you know that.

But notice verse 6, These things occurred as examples, this is an expression he's going to use twice. Types typos is the Greek word here. These things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did.

So, in other words when we read these texts again, we're supposed to be reading them and absorbing them and saying, wow I think I'm supposed to learn something from what the Israelites are doing in this particular context. They're examples for us.

There's a word that I'm going to keep using over and over and over again in this class So you might as well get used to it. Now. It's called adumbration that's a D U M B R A T I O N an adumbration is a foreshadowing, and we're going to see multiple foreshadowings. Sometimes within the First Testament itself, but oftentimes First Testament looking forward to Jesus. At any rate, these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things Don't be verse seven Idolaters of

some of them were as it is written the people sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulgent pagan revelry. This is, of course, that tragic situation where they made the golden calf. We should not commit sexual immorality as some of them did and in one day 23,000 of them died. A horrifying incident.

Verse 9: we should not test the Lord. Now that one isn't quite as heinous. I mean most of us would like to say, oh, well, I'm not an idolater, and I'm not engaged in secular sexual immorality. Although chances are if you read the Sermon on the Mount we are. But, at any rate, testing is a little bit more close to home.

And then, look at verse 10: and don't grumble as some of them did and were killed by the destroying angel. All these things serve as examples for us, which is exactly what Paul says in verse 11. These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us because, of course, we're human beings, and we need warnings.

Excuse me, so if you think you're standing firm, verse 12, be careful that you don't fall. And then the verse that I suspect a number of you have memorized. No temptation has taken you but what is common to man but God is faithful. He will not let you or us be tempted beyond what we can bear when we're tempted God will provide a way out so that we can stand up under it.

But notice the preceding context for that promise of God's faithfulness to rescue us from the overpowering nature of temptations because we get tempted just as the Israelites do. Well, that's the first thing to think of in terms of another reason for studying coming straight out of Paul.

The next one is and that's a sobering one, right? I've just read that it's a sobering reason. There's another one as well. And for here, I'd like you to turn to 2 Peter chapter 1 another marvelous chapter to study, to memorize, I would suggest. But let me simply read this, and I'm going to go beyond verses 3 & 4, although they are a great starting point. Peter says God's divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness. Let's get rid of that one more time. I'm going to stop with that because it's really easy to just read past that. One of the things I'm going to encourage you to do this term is take your stained-glass glasses off when you read scripture and stop and really think about what you read God's divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness Those of you have had New Testament, I hope you chewed on this when you were studying it that's pretty remarkable and God is indeed trustworthy.

So, we have to presume that when he says this it's true everything we need, even in the context in which you and I live which is a trap in terms of our trying to be godly. It's given us everything we need for life and godliness But notice how it works It's not just handed there .Through our knowledge of him who called us our knowledge of

him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

And then verse 4: through these he's given us his very great and precious promises. Got it great looks as I knock it all off here great and precious promises, you know, it's focused. There's a source for these things for this life and godliness business. He's given us his great and precious promises. So, through them you may be able to participate in the divine nature.

In other words, Christ in us that's what we're promised Christ in us, Christ the indwelling, Word the Holy Spirit indwelling as well. We may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

Now, I'm going to keep reading because there's a very practical statement that Peter makes at this point this is kind of a Peter counterpart to Galatians 5 and the fruit of the Spirit. You know, love joy peace, etc, etc. Look at this one, this list: make every effort to add to your faith, goodness. That's an exercise. That's a matter of when you're faced with choices, choosing what's right as opposed to what's wrong. When all the people up on the hill decide Friday night to do something they often are doing you decide not to do it.

Okay, add to your faith, goodness, to goodness, knowledge, takes a ton of work to do that. Possibly, what we're engaged in in this next semester here to knowledge self-control. Ouch, all of us need a little exercise of that. Peter is saying add these things God just doesn't give you the little blank check and the great and precious promises. There are expectations that go along with it.

To self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. This is a challenging little list and I hope that together we'll engage in unpacking some things that will help us along these lines. The book of Proverbs, for example, and Dr. Hildebrand can tell you all about the book of Proverbs, has some very practical things to say about choices that we make character-building issues.

At any rate, let me finish this: if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they'll keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Sometimes, we feel ineffective and unproductive, and we will be unless we're really keen on exercising some of these things. If anyone does not have them, He's nearsighted and blind and has forgotten he's been cleansed from his past sins. Therefore, brothers and sisters be all the more eager, eager to make your calling an election sure. If you do these things you will never fall, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

What a tremendous promise. Let's take it seriously. Any questions? As I said with the

exception of the 26th of January which is a Monday, this is the last time we'll stop early. Questions, comments? Splendid, see you on Friday.