Course V55.0514 World Cultures: Ancient Israel
Professor Lawrence H. Schiffman
Spring 2005
Course Information
Map World Cultures: Ancient Israel
V55.0514

Instructor: Professor Lawrence H. Schiffman
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Time of Lectures: Tuesday and Thursday, 9:30-10:45 AM

Required materials to be purchased by each student (all paperback, available at New York University Bookstore):


Course Description:

This course is designed to introduce students to the history and culture of "Israel," that is, to say, the people of Israel in ancient times, primarily as experienced in its land. This history begins in the early Iron Age (after 1200 B.C.E.) and concludes, for the purposes of this course, with the Christianization of the Roman Empire (in 324 C.E.). Although the Hebrew Bible, Second Temple and Rabbinic literature will be utilized as important sources, this is not a course in the Bible and ancient Jewish literature as such. The object of the course is to delineate context; namely, to place Israelite/Jewish history and culture in time and space, and to outline the development of its essential characteristics and historical experience.
Structure of the Course:

The course consists of two main components:

1. Lectures: The course will be divided into four units each, with one introductory and one concluding session.

2. Recitation Sections: In a smaller, more intimate setting than lectures, these will serve the function of reinforcing material covered in class through direct discussion of primary sources. Recitations will be conducted by the preceptors. Any student who does not register for the recitation section will not get credit for the course. Students must bring Bibles to recitation sections through about February 26. Thereafter they must bring Schiffman, Source Reader.

Attendance:

Students are permitted two unexcused absences from lectures and one excused absence from recitations. In the case of any additional absence from lecture or recitation sessions, the student must notify his/her preceptor in advance or furnish a medical explanation signed by a physician. Attendance will be taken at each session, including recitations, and excessive absence will be considered in the determination of final grades.

Course Requirements:

Students are expected to keep up with the readings on a unit by unit basis. Weekly lectures and recitation sections will be conducted on the assumption that students are keeping up with their reading.

The final grade will be calculated on the following basis:

1. Three quizzes (10% each). Quizzes will be based on the lecture and readings covered in each of the first three units on the syllabus. They will be administered in recitations sections on the following schedule:
   
   Quiz No. 1: February 14-18
   Quiz No. 2: March 7-11
   Quiz No. 3: April 11-15

2. A 10 page paper (30%). Papers may be written on any topic of the student's choice. Topics must be drawn from material covered in lectures, readings, or recitation sections, and must be approved by the student's preceptor in advance of the due date. Papers must be fully footnoted and should result from research using a variety of sources. Students must learn the difference between the documented use of the work of others, and copying or plagiarism. Plagiarism will not be tolerated under any circumstances.
In order to help students in writing their papers, preceptors will be available to discuss topics. We will require the submission of topics for approval, outlines, and bibliographies, before the due date of the paper. These will be carefully checked by the preceptors and papers may not be submitted until all preliminaries have been approved.

Due dates:

Approval of topic: February 10
Outline and Bibliography: March 8
Completed paper: April 12

3. Final Examination (30%). A traditional final examination will be given at the regularly scheduled examination time. Students will be expected to demonstrate both a wide mastery of the contents of the lectures, recitation sections, and course materials and the ability to think critically about issues raised by the course.

4. Weekly Writing Assignments (10%). Students will be required to hand in a one-page response to an issue of particular interest raised in the reading or lecture at each recitation session. Questions will be distributed each week by the preceptors. These weekly assignments will focus on specific questions of importance. While these exercises will not be returned with letter grades, they will be assessed collectively at the end of the semester and given a grade.

Please note that part of the purpose of this course is to assist students in developing their writing skills. While content is a primary concern, papers in particular, and weekly writing assignments to a lesser degree, will be graded in part on the basis of the quality of the student's writing. Students are encouraged to meet with their preceptors on an individual basis at least twice during the semester to discuss their papers. Students who encounter serious difficulties in the area of writing will be referred to the expository writing department to receive the assistance they need.

Remember, your preceptors are there for your benefit. Do not hesitate to call on them for guidance in any matter pertaining to class.
Syllabus

1. January 18—Introduction: The Study of Ancient Israel and Early Judaism
   Hauer & Young, 1-11, 19-28, 47-54

Unit I: Israelite Origins and the Settlement in Canaan

2. January 20—The Problem of Israelite Origins
   Schiffman, *History*, 17-23
   Hauer & Young, 62-82
   Genesis 1-11

3. January 25—The Patriarchal Age
   McCarter in Shanks, 1-31
   Genesis 12-13, 15, 21-23, 27-28, 35, 37, 39-45, 47-48, 50

4. January 27 and February 1—History, Memory and the Exodus
   Sarna in Shanks, 33-54
   Hauer & Young, 86-92
   Exodus 1-12, 14-15

5. February 3—Revelation and Law
   Schiffman, *History*, 23-28
   Hauer & Young, 92-99
   Exodus 19-24
   Leviticus 11, 18-20
   Deuteronomy 13-15, 24-25

6. February 8—Settlement in Canaan
   Callaway in Shanks, 55-89
   Hauer & Young, 103-13
   Joshua 1-3, 6-9
   Judges 1-8, 13-16
   1 Samuel 4-12
Unit II: From Monarchy to Exile

7. February 10--The United Monarchy

Lemaire in Shanks, 91-120
Hauer & Young, 113-122
1 Samuel 13-14, 16-20, 23-24, 29-31
2 Samuel 2-3, 5-7, 15
1 Kings 1-4, 9-11

8. February 15--The Temple

Leviticus 1-4, 12, 14-16
Numbers 28-29
1 Kings 6-8

9. February 17--The Divided Monarchy

Horn in Shanks, 129-99
Hauer & Young, 122-130
1 Kings 12-14
2 Kings 1-11, 17-23

10. February 22--Prophecy

Schiffman, History, 28-32
Hauer & Young, 133-58
Isaiah 1-2, 11-12, 40, 45
Jeremiah 1-2:3, 7, 26, 28-29
Ezekiel 1, 16, 37-39

11. February 24--Destruction and Exile

Purvis in Shanks, 201-216
2 Kings 24-25
Jeremiah 37-41
Lamentations 1, 5
12. March 1 and 3--Wisdom and Poetry

Hauer & Young, 161-75, 178-95
Job 1-4, 6, 32:1-5, 34, 38-39, 42
Proverbs 1, 3, 8-9, 31
Ecclesiastes 1-3, 9, 11
Psalms 1, 19, 23, 29, 90, 114, 121-122, 130, 145

Unit III: Under Persian and Hellenistic Empires

13. March 8--Return and Restoration

Purvis in Shanks, 216-229
Hauer & Young, 198-212
Schiffman, History, 33-47
Schiffman, Source Reader, 70-76, 80-99

14. March 10--Canonization of Scripture

Schiffman, History, 47-59
Schiffman, Source Reader, 103-20
Daniel

(March 15 and 17—no class)

15. March 22--The Hellenistic Age

Schiffman, History, 60-72
Levine in Shanks, 231-237
Schiffman, Source Reader, 130-138-, 142-150

16. March 24--The Maccabean Revolt

Schiffman, History, 72-79
Levine in Shanks, 238-264
Schiffman, Source Reader, 151-169

17. March 29--Hasmonean Dynasty

Schiffman, History, 98-119
Schiffman, Source Reader, 235-47, 250-266
18. March 31--Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha
   Schiffman, History, 120-30
   Schiffman, Source Reader, 276-82, 323-6, 330-3, 336-48

19. April 5 and 7--Dead Sea Scrolls
   Schiffman, History, 130-38
   Schiffman, Source Reader, 285-99, 354-67

   Unit IV: Under Roman Rule

20. April 12--Roman Conquest and Domination
   Cohen in Shanks, 265-284
   Schiffman, History, 139-49
   Schiffman, Source Reader, 385-396

21. April 14--Rise of Christianity
   Cohen in Shanks, 284-298
   Hauer & Young, 244-63, 313-18, 340-44
   Schiffman, History, 149-56  Schiffman, Source Reader, 407-21

22. April 19--The Jewish Revolts against Rome and Their Aftermath
   Schiffman, History, 157-76, 201-19
   Schiffman, Source Reader, 434-439, 446-469, 487-95

23. April 21--Mishnah, Midrash and Talmud
   Schiffman, History, 177-200, 220-39
   Schiffman, Source Reader, 522-35, 537-45

24. April 26--The Life of Torah
   Schiffman, History, 240-65
   Schiffman, Source Reader, 682-689, 701-710

25. April 28--Conclusions
   Schiffman, History, 266-9