

Rel A 302

1 Kings–Malachi

Course Description, Objectives, and Requirements. Reading Strategies. What is the “Old” Testament? Introduction to the *Tanakh*: the books and periods of the Hebrew Bible.

Course Description

- Rel A 302 is an introductory survey to the second half of the Hebrew Bible or *Tanakh*, commonly known as the “Old Testament”
 - Most of 1 Kings–Malachi (Psalms generally is covered in Rel A 301)
- In addition to reading much of 1 Kings thru Malachi, this course will introduce students to the basic historical context and the literary and theological issues that surround this important work of scripture

Choosing a Religion Section

- Taking a religion class at BYU is an important part of a student's university experience
 - Fortunately, numerous sections of each course are offered in any given semester or term, allowing students to be selective in the classes that they take
- Although each section of the same course covers the same scriptural material, sections differ in their approach and in the teaching philosophies and styles of their instructors
 - Consider carefully the objectives of a given section, the personality and teaching style of the professor, and the way the course is organized
- **Read the syllabus completely and thoroughly!**
- *You are most welcome in this section and hopefully it will add to your understanding and appreciation of the scriptures.*
 - On the other hand, *you are also free to change sections if this does not seem like the experience that you want*

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- Academic Background
 - BYU alumnus: BA (1990) in Classical Greek and Latin
 - MA and Ph.D. (University of Pennsylvania: 1992, 1997) in Ancient History
 - More details at Bio link at <http://www.erichuntsman.com>
- Church Background
 - Thailand Bangkok Mission (1984–85)
 - Former bishop (1996–2002)
 - Current Provo Temple ordinance worker, member of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir
- Contact Information
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Elaine, Rachel, Samuel, and Eric



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Course Objectives

- First, to increase the student's knowledge of the Old Testament
 - familiarize him or her with the basic content, themes and theological concepts of its constituent books
- Second, to help the student read, discuss, and write about the Old Testament as both a source of scriptural knowledge and as a collection of sacred *texts*
 - Ask basic historical, literary, and theological questions (a process known as "exegesis," from the Greek "to lead out" or explain—more on this the next class period)
- Third, strengthen testimonies by learning doctrine and gaining an increased understanding God and his interactions with his people throughout history
 - What did the Old Testament prophets teach about God's plan, and how much did they know and prophesy of Christ?
 - How have latter-day apostles and prophets helped us understand their writings?

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Course Requirements

- Texts (LDS Standard Works, course packet)
- Online resources
 - Blackboard (two modules, one for course materials, another for grades)
 - <http://erichuntsman.com> then take the Rel 212 link
- Attendance and class lectures
- Assessment
 - Quizzes, exams, paper, final exam
- Class discussions, quizzes, and exams will be formatted with the course's three overarching objectives in mind.
 - Identifications (scriptural knowledge)
 - Scriptural commentary, exegetical paper (understanding and analyzing scripture as text)
 - Essay questions (understanding doctrine to strengthen testimony)

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Class Preparation

- Read background material before beginning each text
- ***Read the assigned scriptural text***
 - Use the outlines in the packet as a “road map”
 - Follow suggested reading strategies and approaches (see slide below)
- Review class presentations
 - Posted on Blackboard and on class website
 - Consider reading through them before class, ***at least look at them after class***
 - The instructor may chose to focus on some slides more than others in class, understanding, needs and discussion dictate
 - Nevertheless students are responsible for all of them
- Periodically review Notable Passages lists
 - List important passages studied in each units
 - Not necessary to memorize chapter and verse, but students should be able to recognize them and be able to answer basic historical, literary, and theological questions about each
- Review sheets will be posted (or updated) before each quiz and exam

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Introduction to the Old Testament

- ***The Old Testament is a spiritual record, a religious document not a systematic history!***
 - It was meant to be a spiritual record of the Israelites and later the Jews, so only focuses largely on the Jews and their immediate ancestors.
 - Over the centuries, various scholars have tried to “prove” the Old Testament using archaeology, to pin down events, locations, dates, etc.
 - The results are ambiguous, however. Sometimes archeology provides strong support for biblical places, events, and even people, but sometimes it raises more questions
 - This leads some modern scholars to dismiss the OT as little more than legend, and discount everything in it as untrue.
 - Like the Book of Mormon, the OT, and all scripture, is meant to be taken on faith!
- ***The text is better understood by putting it in its historical and cultural context***

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What is the “Old” Testament?

- **Testament:** here means “covenant,” but the meaning of “witness” works as well
- **Old?**
 - **Jewish View**
 - the God’s covenant with ethnic Israel and the Law of Moses are still in effect
 - Preferred: “Hebrew Bible” or better, *Tanakh* (more below)
 - **Typical Christian view**
 - the old covenant has been replaced by the new covenant in Christ (see Jeremiah 31:31–34; Mark 14:24)
 - **LDS view?**
 - Adam and the patriarchs to Moses had the fulness of the gospel and “the new and everlasting covenant!”

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Tanakh

- ***Torah*** also called the Pentateuch, the five books of Moses
 - **Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy**
 - Deuteronomy: The “2nd law” established principles which are later demonstrated in the Hebrew Bible’s historical books
- ***Nevi'im*** – Technically “the prophets”
 - **Former Prophets:** mostly historical books, although prophets are major characters—the “Deuteronomistic History,” which includes Joshua, Judges, 1–2 Samuel, 1–2 Kings
 - **Latter Prophets:** most of the “literary” prophetic books
- ***Ketuvim*** – meaning “writings,” this sections includes everything else
 - Poetic books such as Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Job
 - The “Chronicler’s History,” which includes 1–2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah
 - Ruth, Esther, Daniel

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Jewish Division of the Hebrew Bible

The Law	The Prophets	The Writings
Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy	<p>Former Prophets</p> Joshua 1-2 Samuel 1-2 Kings Judges	Psalms Proverbs Job Song of Songs (Solomon) Ruth Lamentations Ecclesiastes Esther Daniel Ezra Nehemiah 1-2 Chronicles
	<p>Latter Prophets</p> Isaiah Jeremiah Ezekiel Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah Jonah	Micah Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi

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English Division of the Old Testament

See Jackson, "God's Testament to Ancient Israel"

The Prologue	Historical Core	The Writings	The Prophets
Genesis	Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy Joshua Judges Ruth 1-2 Samuel 1-2 Kings 1-2 Chronicles Ezra Nehemiah	Esther Job Psalms Proverbs Ecclesiastes Song of Solomon Lamentations	<p>Major Prophets</p> Isaiah Jeremiah Ezekiel Daniel
			<p>Minor Prophets</p> Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah Jonah Micah Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi

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Periods Covered in the Old Testament

- **Antediluvian** (c. 4000–2268 B.C.)
 - From the creation through the flood
- **Primordial History** (c. 2000–1476 B.C.)
 - Formative period, especially Abraham through Moses
- **Early National** (c. 1476–1095 B.C.)
 - Moses, Joshua, Judges
- **United Kingdom** (c. 1095–975 B.C.)
 - Saul, David, Solomon
- **Early Divided Kingdom** (c. 975–850)
 - **northern Israel** and **southern Judah**
 - Israelite immediate neighbors and “cousins” (e.g. Edom, Moab, Ammon) rebel
 - Egypt and Syria repeatedly threaten
- **Assyrian** (c. 850–625, 607 Nineveh falls)
 - Israel reduced, then destroyed
 - Judah weakened
- **Babylonian** (c. 625–538 B.C.)
 - Judah subdued then destroyed
- **Persian** (538–330 B.C.)
 - Some exiles return, Jerusalem and temple rebuilt

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For Next Class: Historical and Literary Background

- **Jackson, “A Chronology of the Old Testament,”** (packet, 153–158)
- **Bandstra, 11–16, 22–29 (online)**
- Pike notes—“Literary Background of the Old Testament” (packet, 161–69)
- read intro to “Chronology” and skim the following chart, BD, 635–639; also “Dispensations,” BD, 657–58
- Hammond maps, 18–25 (online)
- **Huntsman, “Teaching through Exegesis: Helping Students Ask Questions of the Text”** (packet, 263–273)

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