

Study Sheet for Exam #1

Friday, 1 November 2019

Please bring a large green book to the exam.

Review Session • Wednesday, October 30 • 7:00-8:15 p.m. • Kenna 102



Description of the exam

There will be five types of questions on the exam, corresponding to each of the five sections on this Study Sheet. Each type of question in the first four sections corresponds to the critical skills we've worked on in class or the terms and questions on class prep or in the readings. The final essay is a global question that asks you to synthesize and evaluate information and insights you've learned so far. The exam covers all of the readings, lectures and discussions through October 30.

Map and/or Timeline

Be able to place the following sites on a map: Jerusalem, Samaria, Nineveh, Babylon, Persepolis, Antioch, Dead Sea, Egypt.

Be able to place the following events on a timeline, along with their associated dates or span of years: United Monarchy, Divided Monarchy (identify the two nations the country divided into), Assyrian conquest of north, reunified monarchy under King Josiah, Babylonian conquest of Judah, Persian Empire, Hellenistic Empire, Maccabean Revolt/Book of Daniel, Roman Empire

Definitions

Be able to provide a 3-4-sentence definition of each of the following terms (only a few will appear on the exam). In your definition, the first sentence should state clearly what the term refers to; it should be able to "stand alone" as a complete definition. Use the subsequent sentence(s) to amplify the definition with appropriate references to supplementary information from the readings and/or ties to biblical texts.

- bricoleur • Documentary Hypothesis • Tanak • affordance
- Torah • Deuteronomistic History • apocalyptic • mode

Short Identifications

The following questions drawn from the readings, class prep and lectures may appear on the exam. Be prepared to answer them in 1/2 to 3/4 - page paragraphs.

1. Many people today read the story of Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 19 as proof that homosexuality is condemned by God. Identify and evaluate at least two significant problems with this interpretation introduced by Holly Joan Toensing.

2. From an historian's point of view, what are some of the problems with the biblical account of settlement of the land of Canaan after the Exodus and the 40 years of wilderness wandering?
3. Identify four modes of communication, and compare the affordances and limitations of the two that Plato discussed (class notes).
4. Describe the types of things that prophets characteristically did, and offer three specific examples from the primary texts (Amos, Jeremiah, Ezekiel).
5. What roles did temples perform in ancient societies?
6. What are the differences between the four versions of the ten commandments? Choose one of the four sources, and tie that group's emphasis to the historical circumstances of their writing. Why did they emphasize the theme(s) they did?
7. Outline, compare and contrast the two creation stories in Genesis 1-2. What author is responsible for each? Defend your identification by connecting the structure and themes with the time frame and concerns of the authors you've chosen.
8. Choose either the folktale chapter of Daniel 2 or the more explicitly apocalyptic vision of Daniel 7, and identify the apocalyptic features you find in the NRSV (using our list of apocalyptic features from class).

Critical Reading of Texts

We've practiced certain critical reading skills for breaking down texts (scriptural texts or texts that interpret scripture). In this section of the exam, you will be presented with one or more text excerpts, and you will be asked to analyze them using these skills. Be able to identify (and defend your identifications of):

- the Yahwist, Elohist, Deuteronomist and/or Priestly verses in a passage from Torah of Nevi'im based on themes typical of each (be able to tie the themes to their circumstances and interests)

Flip the sheet over for the Essay and Grading Rubric

3-4 Page Essay: (Re)Producing Cultural Memory in Judaism

Tanak is a repository and living anthology of the cultural memory of Judaism. In this essay, you will examine a central religious concept in Tanak—the liberation from slavery to form a covenant with God—and analyze how that core belief was reconstructed in new historical circumstances. You will cover the “initial” account in J, and then address how E, D, P, the prophets, and apocalyptic authors reinterpret that tradition. The successful essay will include the following steps in the argument:

- Introduce the notion of the liberation/covenant tradition in its earliest biblical form (J). Identify the historical context of the author of that passage and tie the themes of their version of the covenant to the circumstances in which they were writing. That is, how did their social context shape their telling of the story?
- Plan a short paragraph on each of your later “reconstructors,” describing briefly their historical circumstances, defining *how* and *why* they reinterpret the central belief (that is, identify *how* they change the tradition and *link* their themes/changes to their circumstances—why did they say what they did *then?*).
- Conclude with a brief discussion of the characteristics of the modern period, and why it produced this historical-critical approach to the production of the Bible (that is, viewing the Bible as a product of various authors with different points of view).

Grading Rubric

This exam is worth 10 points, or 10% of your quarter grade. Each question will have a point value assigned to it, so you can judge how important it is relative to the entire exam and spend your time accordingly. Each answer will get a letter grade and a fractional number (that letter grade applied to the point value of the question).

Each of your answers will be assessed against the following rubric. The columns correspond to letter grades (from D/F to A, left to right), and the rows correspond to the outcomes the professor is looking for.

	Unacceptable	Marginal	Acceptable	Exemplary
Accuracy	The content is inaccurate or doesn't address the question.	Most of the information is inaccurate.	Some information is accurate/apropos.	Information is accurate and answers the question.
Comprehensiveness of answers	Answers don't even cover the basic information from class.	Answers do not go beyond basic information discussed in class.	Answers go a little beyond basics from class discussion.	Answers move well beyond basic definitions, flesh out ideas appropriately.
Critical thinking	Core concepts are inaccurate and synthesis and evaluation weak or missing.	More rote memorization than independent critical thought.	Your synthesis and evaluation are modest but present.	You offer your own independent synthesis and evaluation of the material in compelling fashion.
Integration of readings	Answers don't demonstrate any evidence of course readings.	Very few of the course readings are integrated, or primary texts are ignored.	Some of the course readings are integrated.	Answers demonstrate comprehension and integration of readings, especially primary texts (not direct quotes/citations, but content).
Clarity of writing (not handwriting, but expression)	Poor writing style (grammar, syntax) obscure your points completely.	Poor writing style makes it hard to identify your ideas.	Ideas are clear, but writing style could improve.	Excellent sentence construction and clear thoughts.