

Introduction to Israel's Scriptures (Old Testament)

Topic One - Approaches to Israel's Scriptures

This week we will discuss the value of studying Israel's Scriptures, and look at some different approaches that have been taken in order that we might examine our own perspectives on Israel's scriptures. We will also take a 'whistlestop tour' through some of the history and geography of ancient Israel and their neighbours, and see how these relate to the biblical story.

Topic Two - The Pentateuch

This week will introduce you to the character of biblical narrative and to the Pentateuch (which is primarily narrative). We will learn about the importance of narrative patterning for understanding Israel's Scriptures. We undertake a brief overview of each book of the Pentateuch, with a 'touchdown' on some topics of interest (e.g. blessing, promise, grace).

Topic Three - Creation and Covenant

This week we will look at the character of God as portrayed in the Pentateuch. We will also begin to explore the first of our major themes of Israel's Scriptures: creation and covenant.

Topic Four - Law and Worship

This week we will look at the major themes of Israel's Scriptures as they emerge and develop in the Pentateuch and beyond: torah, and worship.

Topic Five - Former Prophets

This week consists of an overview of the books of the Former Prophets: Joshua to Kings, sometimes called the 'Deuteronomistic History'.

Topic Six - The Kingdom of God and the Promised Land

This week we continue with the theme of covenant, and explore further themes: God as king, warrior, and judge, as well as the difficult issue of *herem* (holy war).

Topic Seven - Prophets and Prophecies

This week we look at biblical prophets and prophecies, and we take a closer look at Isaiah as an example of a prophetic book.

Topic Eight - Latter Prophets

This week will consist of an overview of the books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and an introduction to the Book of the Twelve, including some consideration of how the Minor Prophets may have been edited as a whole book.

Topic Nine - The Books of the Twelve

This week we will look at each book of the Twelve minor prophets, discuss their structure, contents, and individual characteristics.

Topic Ten - Living In Exile

This week we will try and summarise what we have learned about Israel's prophets, and begin on the post-exilic literature: the Writings section of the Tanak.

Topic Eleven - Songs of Exile

This week we explore further into the Writings section of Israel's Scriptures, including overviews of the Psalter, Lamentations, and Song of Songs.

Topic Twelve - Exile and Yahweh

This week is our final lecture in the Introduction to Israel's Scripture series. We conclude our overview of the Writings with the very different books of the Wisdom Literature (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Job). We end with the book of Daniel, looking to God's future.