

Student Study Guide to accompany Drane, *Introducing the Old Testament*, 3e (Fortress, 2011)

**STUDENT STUDY GUIDE TO ACCOMPANY:**  
John Drane, *Introducing the Old Testament*, 3rd ed. (Fortress, 2011)

Success in any College level course requires excellent study and time management skills. Resources for the student who is seeking to improve his/her general skills are included at the end of this document.

**General Resources for Biblical Studies**

***Key Reference Works:***

Freedman, David Noel, ed. *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 6 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1992.

Keck, Leander E., ed. *The New Interpreter's Bible*, vols 1-7. Nashville: Abingdon, 1994-2001.

*Dictionary of the Bible and Western Culture* (forthcoming, Sheffield Phoenix).

Keil, C.F. & F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, 10 volumes, Hendrickson, 1996.

Newsom, Carol A. & Sharon H. Ringe, eds., *Women's Bible Commentary – expanded edition*, Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1998.

Wiersbe, Warren W. *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, Six volumes, David C. Cook—vendor.

The articles included in:

Bruce Metzger and Roland Murphy, eds., *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocryphal / Deuterocanonical Books*, NRSV, New York: Oxford University Press.

***An excellent reference work for Extra-Biblical writings from the Ancient Near East is:***

Arnold, Bill T. & Bryan E. Beyer, *Readings from the Ancient Near East: Primary Sources for Old Testament Study*, Grand Rapids. MI: Baker Academic, 2002.

***Useful Websites:***

Maps and other useful material:

<http://www.palestineremembered.com/Acre/Maps/Story584.html>

<http://www.ebibleteacher.com/imagehtml/batlas.html>

<http://bible.org/maps>

<http://www.bible.ca/maps/>

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Handouts:

[http://www.biblical-studies.ca/ot/ot\\_handouts.html](http://www.biblical-studies.ca/ot/ot_handouts.html)

Images of artifacts at the British Museum:

<http://www.google.com/images?hl=en&q=Old+Testament+British+Museum&wrapid=tlif12888780281561&um=1&ie=UTF-8&source=og&sa=N&tab=wi&biw=1003&bih=551>

Biblical Art:

<http://www.biblical-art.com/text1.asp>

<http://www.artbible.info>

***Other Introductory Texts that you may find useful for their differing approaches to the Old Testament and the Ancient Near East:***

Boadt, Lawrence, *Reading the Old Testament: An Introduction*, New York: Paulist Press, 1984 (Scheele Library – BS1140.2.B63)

Collins, John J., *Introduction to the Hebrew Bible*, Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004.

Dick, Michael B., *Reading the Old Testament: An Inductive Introduction*, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2008.

Dillard, Raymond B. & Tremper Longman III, *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, Zondervan, 1994.

Stanley, Christopher D., *The Hebrew Bible: A Comparative Approach*, Minneapolis: Fortress, 2009.

## **Chapter 1**

### ***Summary:***

This chapter provides an overview of Old Testament books and the complexity involved in the study of this material. Taken as a whole, the Old Testament tells the story of the people of Israel and of Israel's relationship with God. Yet at the same time, it puts forth a broader storyline that depicts the God of whom it speaks as having universal jurisdiction over the whole world. Far from a single unified book, the Old Testament is comprised of books that span an enormous time period and are representative of a wide variety of literary genres: epic stories, history, reflective philosophy, poetry and political commentary. While attention to the literary nature of the texts is important, modern scholarship has also revealed the crucial necessity of delving into the reality of the world in which the books were written. In order to do so, a full range of tools from a variety of scholarly disciplines must be employed, including archaeology, sociological analysis, literary theory, historical investigation as well as religious and spiritual methodologies. Study of this material is further complicated by the fact that it is not simply ancient

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literature from an ancient context but also living, vibrant and sacred literature for contemporary communities. As such, attention must also be paid to the ways in which it is utilized and interpreted in the modern world. Jews, Christians, Muslims, New Age practitioners and even secular atheists will all discern its messages differently. For that reason, it is always important to recognize the starting point of any interpreter -- the student should therefore recognize that while this book sometimes offers insights from a variety of perspectives, it is self-consciously written from a Christian position. Notice, for instance, that the author has chosen to entitle this text *Introducing the Old Testament* rather than *Introducing the Hebrew Bible*, although technically either title could legitimately have been chosen.

***Key Terms and People:***

Yahweh  
Abram/Abraham  
Sarai/Sarah  
Moses  
Exodus  
Canaan  
Baal  
Canon  
Apocrypha  
Deuterocanon  
Archaeology  
Former Prophets  
Latter Prophets  
Torah  
Pentateuch  
Septuagint  
Tell  
Stratigraphy

***Review Questions:***

1. How do the terms "Hebrew Bible" and "Old Testament" relate to one another? How are the terms used in this book? Why do Christians but not others use the term "Old Testament"?
2. What are the various types of literature found in the Hebrew Bible?
3. Why is it not possible to positively identify a single author or particular date for the Old Testament?
4. How many books are in the Old Testament and why is this a more complicated question than it seems?

***Further Reading:***

Student Study Guide to accompany Drane, *Introducing the Old Testament*, 3e (Fortress, 2011)

"Introduction to the Old Testament," "The Pentateuch" and "Modern Approaches to Biblical Study" in Bruce Metzger and Roland Murphy, eds., *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocryphal / Deuterocanonical Books*, NRSV, New York: Oxford University Press.

Beasley, James R., *An Introduction to the Bible*, ch. 1-5, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991.

Carrvalho, Corrine L., *Primer on Biblical Methods*, Anselm Academic, 2009.

McEntire, Mark, *Struggling With God*, Macon, GA: Mercer, 2009.

Tate, W. Randolph, *Interpreting the Bible: An Essential Guide to Key Terms Used By Biblical Interpreters*, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2006.

***Biblical Archaeology Review:***

<http://www.bib-arch.org/>

## **Chapter 2**

### ***Summary:***

This chapter traces the stories of Israel's earliest ancestors and shows how their experiences lay the foundation for the later nation's understanding of itself and its relationship to God and the world. The period covered is from Abraham's calling to Moses' reception of the Ten Commandments on Mt. Sinai. The stories are discussed in relation to their original context as well as in relation to their usefulness for later generations. Because several major figures are covered, the student would do well not to rely on the textbook alone but to also read the narratives in the primary text.

### ***Key Terms and People:***

Archbishop James Usher

El Shaddai, El Elyon

Abraham

Sarah

Isaac (in the primary text, note also the story of Rebecca)

Jacob (in the primary text, note also the stories of Leah and Rachel)

Joseph

Moses

Wandering Aramean

Mesopotamia

Ark of the covenant

Red Sea

Suez canal region

anachronism

cultural parallel

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**Review Questions:**

1. Think about what it means to portray historical "truths." What is the difference between a "historical novel" and a "historical narrative;" or what is the difference between historical "truth" and a historical "fact?" How might a composite character be useful in relating the former? What is the evidence for figures such as Abraham and Sarah being "real" people? What is the evidence for them being composite figures?
2. Who was Joseph? What trauma did he experience as a youth and how did this become so important for the history of the nation?
3. Who led the Israelites out of Egypt and what is the traditional belief about the route that they took?
4. What are potential dates for the Exodus from Egypt and what evidence has been brought forth to support each?
5. Why is the common belief that the Israelites crossed the Red Sea problematic? What body of water did they probably cross instead?

**Further Reading:**

*Genesis* 12-50

*Exodus*

*Deuteronomy* 4-6

Arnold, Bill T., *Genesis*, in The New Cambridge Bible Commentary Series, Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Feiler, Bruce, *Walking the Bible: A Journey By Land Through the Five Books of Moses*, Harper Collins, 2005.

Finkelstein, Israel & Neil Asher Silberman, *The Bible Unearthed: Archaeology's New Vision of Ancient Israel and the Origin of Its Sacred Texts*, Simon & Schuster, 2002.

Schneider, Tammi J., *Mothers of Promise: Women in the Book of Genesis*, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2008.

Thompson, Thomas L., *The Historicity of the Patriarchal Narratives: The Quest for the Historical Abraham*, Continuum, 2002.

Trible, Phyllis, ch. 1 & 2 in *Texts of Terror*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1984.

Valley of the Kings:

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/ancient/enlarge/valley-of-kings.html>

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Egyptian tombs – includes photo of the mummy of Ramses II:

[http://www.thebanmappingproject.com/sites/browse\\_tombimages\\_821.html](http://www.thebanmappingproject.com/sites/browse_tombimages_821.html)

### **Chapter 3**

#### ***Summary:***

This chapter examines Israel's movement into the land of Canaan following the exodus from Egypt. Canaan's long history prior to Israel's entry and the variety of people groups already occupying the land are discussed and major theories as to how Israel eventually arose as a ruling power in the land are presented. The nature of the tribal system during the time of the Judges is considered as is the long lasting cultural and religious significance of the various Canaanite peoples on the Israelites.

#### ***Key Terms and People:***

Merneptah

Philistines

Canaanites

apiru

shasu

city-states

Joshua

Rahab

Deborah

Barak

Sisera

amphictyony

Bethel

Shechem

Shiloh

syncretism

Baal, Astarte, Anat

Albrecht Alt

Martin Noth

Deuteronomistic history

#### ***Review Questions:***

1. What major power controlled the land of Canaan in the second millennium BCE?
2. Why did the location of the land of Canaan make it so desirable for major powers throughout the ages (and even now)?
3. Who is Merneptah and why is the inscription he created important in the study of Israelite history?
4. What are the three major theories regarding Israel's emergence as a ruling power in Canaan? What are the strengths and weaknesses of each?

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5. What is the general pattern and lesson of the book of *Judges*? In what incidents can you see the pattern being played out?
6. What does the term "amphictyony" mean and how does Martin Noth's study based on it help in understanding the tribal nature of Israel during the time of the Judges?
7. What is meant by the term "Deuteronomistic History" and which books are included in it?

***Further Reading:***

*Joshua*

*Judges*

Bal, Mieke, *Death and Dissymmetry: The Politics of Coherence in the Book of Judges*, (Chicago Studies in the History of Judaism), Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988).

Klein, Lillian, *From Deborah to Esther: Sexual Politics in the Hebrew Bible*, Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003.

Matthews, Victor H., *Judges and Ruth: New Cambridge Bible Commentary*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Noth, Martin, *Deuteronomistic History*, Continuum, 1981.

Trible, Phyllis, ch. 3 & 4 in *Texts of Terror*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1984.

Yee, Gale A. (ed.), *Judges & Method: New Approaches in Biblical Studies* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2nd ed., 2007).

**Chapter 4**

***Summary:***

This chapter covers the transition of Israel from a tribal league to a Monarchy and traces the kingship from Saul to David who unites the northern and southern tribes and to Solomon who expands Israel's territory. The tension inherent in the text regarding whether or not Israel should have a king is addressed along with the clear indication, also in the text, that the people need a king. "Wisdom" as an intellectual movement is discussed as are canonical and deuterocanonical books designated as "Wisdom" texts.

***Key Terms and People:***

Eli

Samuel

Samson

Saul

David

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Bathsheba  
Jonathan  
Ishbaal  
Solomon  
Rehoboam  
Hebron  
Jerusalem  
Wisdom Movement  
acrostic  
synonymous parallelism  
antithetic parallelism

***Review Questions:***

1. In what ways did Samuel act in all three roles of judge, prophet and priest?
2. What factors contributed to King Saul's loss of popularity among the people?
3. Who was King David before he killed Goliath? Although Saul was king at that time, how did David eventually rise to power?
4. David was not always a perfect king. What great sin did he commit that caused him to be upbraided by the prophet Nathan and punished severely by God?
5. What are the things for which King Solomon is most remembered?
6. What was the "Wisdom Movement?" What types of people were involved in it? What kinds of subjects were studied by them?
7. Which canonical books are considered "Wisdom Books?" Which deuterocanonical books are considered "Wisdom Books?" What kinds of topics/questions do these books seek to address or answer for people?
8. What does the book of *Psalms* consist of and how was it used in ancient Israel?
9. What are some of the prominent literary devices used in the *Psalms* and in the "Books of Wisdom?"

***Further Reading:***

*1 & 2 Samuel*  
*1 Kings 1-11*  
*Ecclesiastes*  
*Job*  
*Proverbs*  
*Psalms*

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Bergant, Diane, *Israel's Wisdom Literature, Vol. 1*, Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997.

Camp, Claudia V., *Wise, Strange, and Holy: The Strange Woman and the Making of the Bible* (JSOT Sup 320), Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000.

Crenshaw, James L., *Old Testament Wisdom: An Introduction*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2010.

DeClasse-Walford, Nancy L., *Introduction to the Psalms: A Song From Ancient Israel*, St. Louis: Chalice, 2004.

Gunkel, Hermann, *An Introduction to the Psalms: The Genres of the Religious Lyric of Israel*, Macon, GA: Mercer, 1998.

Murphy, Roland E., *The Tree of Life: An Exploration of Biblical Wisdom Literature*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996.

Perdue, Leo G., *Wisdom Literature: A Theological History*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2007.

Solomon's temple

<http://mysite.verizon.net/vzeu2swg/index.html>

## **Chapter 5**

### ***Summary:***

This chapter covers the time period following Solomon's death and the division of the kingdom up to the northern kingdom's defeat and take-over by Assyria in 722 BCE. The tension over whether or not the people should have king at all lives on but in a somewhat different form: both the north and the south accept the fact of kingship by this time but disagree about what qualifies one for kingship. Tribal loyalties resurfaced in the north, and although there had been loyalty to David, this loyalty did not extend to his line following Solomon. The South, however, continued to give allegiance to the Davidic dynasty. The bulk of this chapter focuses on the northern kingdom and its successive rulers. The student would be well-advised to refer frequently to the timeline provided at the beginning of the chapter and to take extensive notes since there are many important persons to recall, including Israelite Kings, Assyrian rulers and prophets.

### ***Key Terms and People:***

Rehoboam

Jeroboam

Bethel

Dan

Omri

Ahab

Jezebel

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Samaria  
Elijah  
Prophets of Baal  
Naboth  
Jehu  
obelisk  
Shalmaneser III  
Jeroboam II  
Uzziah  
Amos  
Tiglath-Pileser III  
Ahaz  
Isaiah  
tribute  
Shalmaneser V  
Sargon II  
Hosea  
Gomer

***Review Questions:***

1. Even though the writers of the text seem to suggest that Judah is the more important of the two kingdoms, what factors hint that the northern kingdom was a greater force internationally and politically?
2. What role did internal fighting between the north and the south play in the weakening of both groups and the loss of territory?
3. Why did not Jeroboam not want his subjects to make their usual pilgrimages to the temple in Jerusalem? How did he make it so that his people would have no need to go to Jerusalem?
4. How did Jeroboam seek to unite those in his kingdom who were loyal to Yahweh and those who practiced Canaanite religions? While it was politically expedient, what reputation did this earn him in the records of the Deuteronomic history?
5. How did Omri and Ahab somewhat restore the greatness of the northern kingdom? Where did Omri build his capital city?
6. Why was Jezebel so important? How did her background, religion and political abilities threaten covenant principles? How would the political nature of the kingdom have been altered if her views would have won out?
7. What happened between Elijah and the prophets of Baal? Whose god was victorious?
8. What does the story of Ahab and Naboth's vineyard have to say about how Yahweh expects his rulers to act in relation to the people?

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9. What factors led to the collapse of the House of Omri and the success of Jehu's revolution and seizure of power?
10. What is the obelisk of the Assyrian King Shalmaneser III and what important information does it relate about Jehu and Israel?
11. Based on archaeological evidence, what types of occupations, apart from farming, must people have practiced in Israel during this time period?
12. How were villages arranged during this time and what different types of housing existed?
13. What is the nature of city life? What conveniences were or were not available in cities of the time?
14. Prosperity marked the reign of Jeroboam II. How did this occur and what criticism did it draw especially from the prophet Amos?
15. What were the steps of Tiglath-Pileser III's comprehensive plan for annexing other states and thus gaining territory for Assyria?
16. How does Hosea's marriage to Gomer serve as a personal portrait of the relationship between God and Israel?

***Further Reading:***

*1 Kings* 12-22

*2 Kings* 1-17

*Amos*

*Hosea*

Blenkinsopp, Joseph, *A History of Prophecy in Israel*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1996.

Boadt, Lawrence, ed., *The Hebrew Prophets: Visionaries of the Ancient World*, NY: St. Martin's, 1997.

Borowski, Oded, *Daily Life in Biblical Times*, Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003.

King, Philip J., *Life in Biblical Israel* (Library of Ancient Israel Series), Westminster John Knox, 2002.

<http://www.bible-history.com/black-obelisk/the-jehu-relief.html>

Israelite Housing (pics and info):

<http://www.bible-archaeology.info/housing.htm>

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Ziggurats (especially from Ur)

<http://www.bible-archaeology.info/ziggurats.htm>

Pottery etc

[http://www.google.com/images?hl=en&source=imghp&biw=1020&bih=547&q=ancient+Israel+pottery&gbv=2&aq=f&aqi=&aql=&oq=&gs\\_rfai=](http://www.google.com/images?hl=en&source=imghp&biw=1020&bih=547&q=ancient+Israel+pottery&gbv=2&aq=f&aqi=&aql=&oq=&gs_rfai=)

Images of artifacts at the British Museum:

<http://www.google.com/images?hl=en&q=Old+Testament+British+Museum&wrapid=tlif12888780281561&um=1&ie=UTF-8&source=og&sa=N&tab=wi&biw=1003&bih=551>

## **Chapter 6**

### ***Summary:***

This chapter traces the downfall of the southern kingdom as it moves from being dominated by Assyria, then Egypt, and finally is conquered by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. The Babylonian take-over is gradual as Nebuchadnezzar deports King Jehoiachin in 597 and replaces him with his own choice of a local ruler, Zedekiah. However, when Zedekiah joins an alliance with Egypt against Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar moves in and takes over entirely. Jerusalem, including the temple, is destroyed in 586 BCE and most of the remaining people are deported to Babylon. The chapter also covers the role of the prophet, Jeremiah, during these years as well as the writings of three lesser known prophets, Nahum, Zephaniah and Habakkuk. The role of the arts in ancient Israel is also discussed in this chapter.

### ***Key Terms and People:***

Ahaz  
Hezekiah  
Isaiah  
Micah  
Sennacherib  
Ashurbanipal  
cuneiform  
Josiah  
Jehoiakim  
Jehoiachin  
Zedekiah  
Babylon  
Nebuchadnezzar  
Zephaniah,  
Nahum  
Habakkuk  
Jeremiah  
Ezekiel

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Baruch  
*Book of Baruch*  
*Letter of Jeremiah*  
*Lachich Letters*  
ostraca  
shofar

***Review Questions:***

1. What practical problems did the collapse of the northern kingdom cause for the southern kingdom?
2. Why did the prophet Isaiah walk around Jerusalem naked? What message was he trying to convey?
3. What were the major religious reforms that King Hezekiah made during his time? How did making these reforms also serve his political agenda?
4. What other preparations did King Hezekiah make in case the Assyrians should invade his territory?
5. How does Sennacherib of Assyria describe King Hezekiah at the time of the siege of Jerusalem?
6. What does the Biblical text say regarding why Jerusalem did not fall to Assyria at this time?
7. Which Assyrian king was responsible for the building of the royal library at Ninevah from which much knowledge about the ancient world has been gleaned?
8. How were cuneiform tablets produced?
9. What major powers weakened the Assyrian empire and how did this help the kingdom of Judah?
10. What kind of reforms did King Josiah undertake?
11. What important object did Josiah's workers find while they were renovating the temple? What main points did they take from it? In what specific way did Josiah have the people recommit themselves to Yahweh and the covenant after finding this book?
12. Under what empire's domination did Judah fall for a brief time after the death of King Josiah and before its own fall to Babylon? What was happening to Assyria during this time?

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13. Jehoiakim tried to outsmart king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon but it didn't work -- what happened? Who replaced him as king and what happened to him and many of his subjects?
14. Who were Zephaniah, Nahum and Habakkuk? How did they interpret the troubles being faced by Judah? What was their view of God and the way he works against injustice?
15. What were the visions that Jeremiah saw and what did they mean?
16. Why was Jeremiah not satisfied with the religious reforms that had been undertaken under King Josiah? Why did Jeremiah get distressed as he continued to deliver his message about the coming doom?
17. What message did Jeremiah deliver by using the basket of figs in the market as an object lesson? What was his advice to King Zedekiah?
18. Why did Jeremiah wander around the city wearing first a wooden yoke and then an iron yoke? What did each of the yokes signify?
19. When did Jerusalem finally fall to Babylon? What happened to Zedekiah and many of the people still there (who were not killed)? What happened to the temple and other major structures in the city?
20. Who was Baruch in relation to the prophet Jeremiah? What is the *Book of Baruch* and what features indicate that it was probably written at a later time and not by the Baruch associated with Jeremiah?
21. What is the *Letter of Jeremiah*? During what period was it probably written?
22. What are the *Lachish Letters*? What horrifying site must the military leader who sent the message have been seeing?
23. What are the five models the book relates for attempting to understand Biblical prophecy? What is the main focus of each and what positive value as well as limitations can you see in each model?
24. How prevalent were music, dance and drama, especially in Israelite worship? Be able to give examples. What sorts of visual objects associated with worship have been found? How prevalent was writing at this time and among whom?

***Further Reading:***

*Isaiah* 1-39

*Jeremiah*

*Zephaniah*

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*Nahum*  
*Habakkuk*

Braun, Joachim, *Music in Ancient Israel/Palestine: Archaeological, Written and Comparative Sources*, Eerdmans, 2002.

Gottwald, Norman K., *The Politics of Ancient Israel* (Library of Ancient Israel Series), Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2000. (Useful for other periods in Israel's history as well).

Heschel, Abraham, *The Prophets*, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2001.

Kelle, Brad, *Ancient Israel at War, 853-586 BC*, Osprey, 2007.

Hezekiah – Siloam tunnel  
<http://biblicalstudies.info/hezekiah/hezekiah.htm>

## **Chapter 7**

### **Summary:**

This chapter covers the period of the Babylonian captivity up to the return of the exiles to Jerusalem (under the edict of King Cyrus) as well as the rebuilding of the temple and the city of Jerusalem. Attention is given to the interpretation of the disaster as leaders reflected on the nation's history and relationship with God -- recognizing that God is a God of justice and that the future hope of the people laid only in recommitting themselves to the covenant. The return to Jerusalem reveals ethnic tensions that disrupt and delay the rebuilding of the temple as leaders seek to maintain ethnic identity by creating and enforcing purity laws and by eventually building a wall around the city itself. The chapter also discusses theories regarding authorship of the Pentateuch as well as providing further information on several prophets, particularly Isaiah, Ezekiel, Haggai and Zechariah.

### **Key terms and People:**

Gedaliah

Ishmael

Jeremiah

Lamentations

Ezekiel

As regards the Biblical text: Anachronism, Duplicate stories, Apparent Inconsistencies,  
Legal Differences and different Names for God.

Julius Wellhausen

Documentary Hypothesis -- the JEDP Theory

Marduk

Nabonidus

Cyrus of Persia

Cyrus Cylinder

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Deutero-Isaiah (or Isaiah of Babylon)

Zerubbabel

Joshua

Cambyses

Darius

Haggai

Zechariah

Malachi

Nehemiah

Ezra

Sanballat

Tobiah

Targum

The Chronicler

Elephantine Documents

***Review Questions:***

1. Who was placed in charge in Judah after it was conquered by the Babylonians? What happened to him? Where was Jeremiah at this time and where did he eventually end up being taken?
2. In what differing ways did people interpret the disaster that had befallen them? What message did Jeremiah continue to give and what is the central theme of the book of *Lamentations*?
3. How did Jehoiachin's presence in Babylon help those who had been taken there keep their national pride? How was he treated by King Nebuchadnezzar's successor?
4. What was life like for the exiles in Babylon? How did the Jeremiah instruct them to live?
5. At what point was the prophet Ezekiel taken to Babylon?
6. Although not so neatly structured, what are the four basic sections of the book of *Ezekiel*?
7. Although Ezekiel's basic message was similar to that of Jeremiah, what does it have to say about hope for the future of the people and the restoration of Jerusalem (especially the temple)?  
What element in Ezekiel's thought about the restoration of the people lays the seeds for the later development of apocalyptic literature?
8. What is the Pentateuch?

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9. What is the meaning of "Tetrateuch?" Why do some scholars suggest that the book of Deuteronomy should not necessarily be grouped with the first four books of the Hebrew Bible?

10. According to tradition, authorship of the Pentateuch was attributed to whom? What are five reasons that most scholars now believe that the Pentateuch had many authors, was compiled over several generations and was not completed until after the exile to Babylon? Be able to give examples of each.

11. What is the JEDP Theory and with what scholar did it originate? What are the modern criticisms against this theory? Although it is important to consider possible strands within the text, why are scholars also beginning to see that it is also necessary to examine the text in a more holistic fashion? Why does criticism of the basic JEDP Theory not necessarily justify a return to the traditional view of Mosaic authorship?

12. In what year did Cyrus of Persia enter Babylon and take-over? How did the take-over happen?

13. What new policy did Cyrus put forward regarding conquered peoples and how did it affect the exiles from Judah? What is the Cyrus Cylinder?

14. What are three major factors that suggest that Isaiah 40-55 was written by a later prophet (a Deutero-Isaiah) even though they are attached to the works of Isaiah who had prophesied in Judah?

15. Deutero-Isaiah teaches that God still has a concern for his people Israel but the message of this prophet is also that God's love and his concern for justice is for all people -- it is universal. What are the "servant" poems in these chapters and why has the last one become especially meaningful for Christians?

16. How would allowing the return of captives to their homelands ultimately benefit Persia?

17. When did Haggai and Zechariah prophesy and what was their main message?

18. When does the prophet Malachi speak and what are his major concerns? Why was he especially worried that Jewish men were leaving their wives and marrying foreign women?

19. What was the basis of the disagreement between Nehemiah and people such as Sanballat and Tobiah who were already working in Jerusalem when Nehemiah arrived? Why did Nehemiah decide to build a wall around the city to hinder interaction between those he believed had a valid claim to Jerusalem and those who did not?

20. Why did Ezra institute the policy of no intermarriage between Jews and people of other ethnicities (including Samaritans)?

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21. How might the books of *Ruth* and *Jonah* have functioned as a corrective to the purity laws instituted by Nehemiah and Ezra?

22. What is the main focus of the Chronicler as seen in the history written down in *1 & 2 Chronicles*?

23. What do the Elephantine documents tell us about the Jewish settlement in Egypt during the 4th century BCE?

**Further reading:**

*Lamentations*

*Isaiah 40-66*

*Ezekiel*

*Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*

*Ruth*

*Jonah*

*Ezra*

*Nehemiah*

Bautch, Richard J., *Glory and Power, Ritual and Relationship: The Sinai Covenant in the Postexilic Period*, Continuum, 2009.

Lipschitz, Oded, Rainer Albertz & Gary Knoppers, *Judah and Judeans in the Fourth Century BCE*, Eisenbrauns, 2007.

Nicholson, Ernest, *The Pentateuch in the Twentieth Century: The legacy of Julius Wellhausen*, Oxford: Oxford University press, 2003.

Rosenberg, Stephen G.. *Source: Near Eastern Archaeology*, 67: 1 Mr 2004, 4-13.

## **Chapter 8**

### **Summary:**

This chapter covers the turbulent period in Judea's history between Alexander the Great's defeat of the Persian ruler Darius III Codomannus and the beginning of Roman rule. During the years between, Judah undergoes a strong process of Hellenization first under the Ptolemaic rulers and then under the Seleucid dynasty. During this time, the Hebrew language falls completely out of daily use and the need for a Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures results in the completion of the *Septuagint*. Under the Seleucid leader, Antiochus IV Epiphanes, the Jewish people undergo severe persecution as a plan for complete Hellenization is enforced. This leads to the resistance movement led by the Hasmonean family, the most well-known of whom is Judas Maccabeus (the Hammer). The Hasmoneans wrestle power from Antiochus and rule the area with relative independence until 63 BCE when Pompey arrives and it falls into Roman hands. The chapter also provides information about the canonical books of Esther and Daniel and the deuterocanonical books of Tobit, Judith and I, II, III, IV Maccabees. Using different

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genres, these books reveal challenges and problems faced by the people during this period in Israel's history.

***Key Terms and People:***

Samaritans  
Alexander the Great  
Mt. Gerazim  
The Ptolemies  
The Seleucids  
Hellenism  
Antiochus IV Epiphanes  
Jason  
Hasmoneans  
Menelaus  
Maccabean revolt  
Matathias  
Judas (the Hammer)  
Hasideans  
Hanukkah  
Pompey  
Esther  
Haman  
Mordecai  
Judith  
Holofernes  
Tobit  
Tobias  
Raphael  
Sarah (of the Book of *Tobit*)  
Asmodeus  
Daniel (character and Book of)  
Sharach, Meshach, Abednigo  
Nebuchadnezzar (of the Book of *Daniel*)  
I, II, III & IV Maccabees

***Review Questions:***

1. What is the root of the tension between the Jews who returned to Jerusalem after the exile and the people already in Jerusalem who come to be known as Samaritans? How does this tension lead to another temple being built and where?
2. What was the extent of Alexander the Great's domain by the time of his death?
3. After Alexander's death, what groups rule over Judea and in what order? In what time frame does each group rule?  
Who are the Ptolemies, the Seleucids, the Hasmoneans (Maccabees) and the Romans?

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4. What is the meaning of the term "Hellenism?"
5. What is the *Septuagint*? What is the legend regarding how it was produced?
6. In what way does tension between the Jewish priestly families serve for awhile to strengthen the Seleucids?
7. What factors allowed rulers to raid the coffers of the Jerusalem temple?
8. Why is Judas of the Hasmonean family called Judas "Maccabeus" and what does this mean?
9. Why do the Hasideans, although initially reluctant to support the Hasmoneans (in their rebellion against the Seleucids) eventually do so? And then, why do they withdraw their support in later years after the Hasmoneans are in power?
10. Which books discussed in this chapter fall into the genre of "historical novel? What prominent challenge faced repeatedly by Jewish people is each of the main characters trying to navigate?
11. To what genre does the Book of *Daniel* belong? When do most scholars believe it was written and why?
12. What types of books are the Books of *Maccabees* and why are they grouped together even though they are so dissimilar? What is the main feature of each?
13. What ancient event does the feast of Hanukkah commemorate?
14. What year did the Romans destroy the temple in Jerusalem?

**Further Reading:**

*Esther*

*Daniel*

*Judith*

*Tobit*

*I, II, III & IV Maccabees*

Albertz, R. & B. Becking. eds., *Yahwism after the Exile: Perspectives on Israelite Religion in the Persian Era* (Studies in Theology and Religion), Royal Van Gorcum, Assen, 2000.

Carruthers, Jo, *Esther: Through the Centuries*, (Blackwell Bible Commentaries), Malden, MA/Oxford: Blackwell, 2008

Collins, John J., *Daniel, First Maccabees, Second Maccabees, with an Excursus on the Apocalyptic Genre* (Old Testament Message 15), Wilmington: Glazier, 1981.

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Collins, John J., *A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994.

Craghan, John, *Esther, Judith, Tobit, Jonah, Ruth*, (Old Testament Message, 16), Wilmington: Glazier, 1982.

## **Chapter 9**

### **Summary:**

This chapter addresses the manner in which the deuteronomic writers and the prophets interpret Israel's experience of God through their own national history. Israel's God is understood in ways very different from the gods of other nations. Yahweh is not a nature god but rather a god that transcends nature. He is sometimes described in human imagery but he transcends human sexuality. He is no impersonal force but rather a god who enters into human history and who actively works through the affairs of the nation. In addition, he is no capricious god but rather a god who is powerful, loving and generous but who also demands justice of his covenant people. The trials of the nation come to be interpreted as punishment for the failure to live up to the terms of the covenant and yet, punishment does not lead to hopelessness but rather to the assurance of God's everlasting presence in the life of the nation.

### **Key Terms and People:**

Asherah

Yahweh (meaning of)

Adonai

Jehovah

Baal

Plato

Job

Ecclesiastes

Analytical approach (to the text)

Functional approach (to the text)

### **Review Questions:**

1. What very basic assumption about God did the people of the Old Testament make that is not necessarily made by people today, especially those who see themselves as secularists?
2. In the view of Old Testament writers, what is the proper relationship between God and the things of nature? Can God ever be described using nature images? How does describing God with images of nature differ from specifically identifying God with natural phenomena?
3. What is the difference between an analytical approach and a functional approach to the question "Who is God?" Which type of approach is used by the writers of the Hebrew Bible?

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4. How is the Old Testament God viewed and understood and what are the various characteristics he displays (i.e. active in history, chooses people, is powerful, just and generous)? Be able to give examples of how each of these characteristics is displayed in the text.
5. What are the various names for God used in the Biblical text? Which common name for God is actually an English word and how was it derived?
6. What are the two theories given regarding the way the various names were understood by Biblical writers?
7. What problem is addressed in the Books of *Job* and *Ecclesiastes*? To what conclusion does each writer come? How do their views differ?

***Further Reading:***

*Job*

*Ecclesiastes*

Bartholomew, Craig, *Ecclesiastes*, Baker, 2009.

Collins, John J., *Encounters with Biblical Theology*, Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005.

Day, John, *Yahweh and the Gods and Goddesses of Canaan*, Continuum, 2002.

Pope, Marvin H., *Job: The Anchor Bible*, Yale University press, 1965.

Seow, C.L., *Ecclesiastes: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Yale University Press, 1997.

**Chapter 10**

***Summary:***

This chapter sets the primordial stories of Genesis within the cultural context of the ancient near east. Although the Biblical writers often draw from a common cultural pool of images and symbols, they utilize these in such a way as to articulate the distinctive characteristics of Yahweh and of humanity's relationship to him. Thus, the theological meaning that is passed on differs from that passed down by stories from other cultures (such as *Enuma Elish* and *Gilgamesh*) that seem to explain the same events. Recognition of genre is critical to a meaningful understanding of these texts, as has been demonstrated in the past, and continues to be today, when attempts are made to force the texts into a scientific frame of interpretation.

***Key Terms and People:***

universal experience and application

Charles Darwin

*Origin of Species*

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John Scopes  
Scopes Monkey Trial  
John Calvin  
myth  
*Enuma Elish*  
*Gilgamesh*  
Sheol

***Review Questions:***

1. What evidence suggests that long before the time of the Babylonian exile, the Israelite people had formed a coherent set of beliefs that Yahweh was the creator of the entire natural world?
2. What theory did Charles Darwin assert that caused some Christians difficulty because they felt it threatened their faith? What is the problem with insisting that the Genesis stories be understood as a scientific account of the origins of the world? Why is the recognition of genre particularly important to understanding the earlier texts of Genesis and how might failing to do so cause a reader to miss the very meaning of the text itself?
3. What is the problem with attempting to understand the stories of Gen 1-11 through a scientific lens? Why did John Calvin, among others, consider such an approach to be absurd and fruitless?
4. What are three ways that Literary scholars define the term "myth?"
5. What are some of the images common throughout religions of the ancient near east that the Hebrew Bible also uses? And how does it adapt their usage in order to reflect Israel's understanding of God?
6. How does the tale, *Enuma Elish*, present a very different understanding about the creation of the world and humanity's relationship with God than that presented in the Hebrew Bible?
7. The Hebrew Bible gives a very different reason for the flood than does the Babylonian story of *Gilgamesh*. How does the reason given in the Biblical text serve to provide a moral framework within which Israel can learn to comprehend Yahweh as a God of justice and love?

***Further Reading:***

Gen 1-11

*Enuma Elish* in Bill T. Arnold & Bryan E. Beyer, *Readings from the Ancient Near East: Primary Sources for Old Testament Study*, Grand Rapids. MI: Baker Academic, 2002.

*Gilgamesh* in Bill T. Arnold & Bryan E. Beyer, *Readings from the Ancient Near East: Primary Sources for Old Testament Study*, Grand Rapids. MI: Baker Academic, 2002.

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Darwin, Charles, *Origin of Species*, arnes & Noble, 2004.

Moran, Jeffrey P., *Scopes Trial: A Brief History with Documents*, Bedford: St. Martin's, 2002.

Van Kooten, George H., ed., *The Creation of Heaven and Earth: Re-interpretation of Genesis 1 in the Context of Judaism, Ancient Philosophy, Christianity, and Modern Physics* (Jewish and Christian Traditions 8; Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2005).

## **Chapter 11**

### ***Summary:***

Under Israel's covenant with God, it is never possible to separate religious belief from behavior. Because God is the very source of life and the very center of life, all thoughts and actions, both of the individual and of the nation, are tied to him. It is this connection to Yahweh that informs both the nature of wisdom and of law in this society. Wisdom has a wide range because its base is in God and flows outward to all walks of life. Likewise, the Torah speaks to, and regulates, not just those aspects that we today might think of as legal matters but rather, every aspect of life. Both Wisdom and Law reflect the reality that freedom itself can only be found in God. Thus, it is profoundly meaningful and can be no accident that the Ten Commandments begin with the statement, "I am Yahweh your God who brought you up out of Egypt, where you were slaves . . ."

### ***Key Terms and People:***

Evolutionary Philosophy

Josephus

Torah

case law

apodictic law

Holiness Code

equal retribution

### ***Review Questions:***

1. What is meant by "evolutionary philosophy?" In the twentieth century, what scientific theory was it thought to parallel? Why has it been completely discredited?
2. What are the two major sections of Old Testament literature that spell out the relationship between everyday and the ideals of Israel's covenant with God?
3. What qualities or skills constituted "wisdom" in the ancient world?
4. Which canonical "Wisdom" books have a greater emphasis on the deep philosophical questions of life and which emphasizes practical wisdom for everyday life? Which book

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includes many separate and suitable gems of wisdom for parents to pass on to their children?

5. One translation of the word "Torah" is "Law" but how does the term "Law" differ significantly from the way we might define Law today?

6. What is the difference between case law and apodictic law? Which type regulated everyday affairs and which type reveals core values that, in this case, reflect Israel's relationship with God? Be able to give examples of each type? Although they seem harsh, what might have been the purpose and value of laws of equal retribution?

7. Which Old Testament books are also called the Books of the Law? How many sets of material are included in the Law Codes? What are they and how are they distinct?

8. What is the "Holiness Code" and in which book is it found?

9. What were the five categories of law in ancient Israel? What types of issues are dealt with in each category?

10. What is the difference between criminal law and civil law? Why are the Ten Commandments sometimes described as Israel's criminal law? How can offences within this category be classified?

11. What does it mean to say that the Old Testament ethic is 1) theological, 2) dynamic, 3) social and 4) personal?

12. In regard to the judicial process, what was the role of elders, judges, kings and priests?

***Further Reading:***

*Exodus* 20-40

*Leviticus* 1-26

*Deuteronomy*

*Proverbs*

*Laws of Hammurapi* in Bill T. Arnold & Bryan E. Beyer, *Readings from the Ancient Near East: Primary Sources for Old Testament Study*, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002.

Hildenbrand, Michael Dean, *Structure and Theology in the Holiness Code* (Bibal Dissertation Series, 10), North Richland Hills, TX: Bibal Press, 2004.

Marty E. Stevens, Marty E., *Temples, Tithes, and Taxes: The Temple and the Economic Life Ancient Israel*, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2006.

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Meyers, Carol, *Households and Holiness: The Religious Culture of Israelite Women*, Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005.

Rajak, Tessa, *The Historian and His Society*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Duckworth, 2007.

## **Chapter 12**

### **Summary:**

Worship has always been central to the life of the people of Israel. While Yahweh is understood as transcendent and therefore beyond the reach of human beings by their own initiative, he is also understood as a personal God who, in infinite love and goodness, reaches out to bring his people to himself. Israel's worship, then, is best understood as grateful response to their God who chose to be in covenant with them. This centrality of God was reflected in the construction of worship space during the nomadic years as well as later in the construction of the temple as the center of religious and political life. It was also reflected in the sacrificial system which served to bring the intangible God into connection with his tangible people; and it was, and continues to be, reflected in worship practices that involve the giving over of one's whole person to the love of God through regular worship and fellowship that includes singing, dancing, drama and especially, the reading of the Torah.

### **Key Terms and People:**

holy

profane

tabernacle

Holy of Holies

synagogue

Day of Atonement

Mercy seat

scapegoat

Passover

### **Review Questions:**

1. What is the meaning of the terms "holy" and "profane?" How does the Old Testament's use of the term "holy" differ from the way it is often used in modern times?
2. From the view of the Old Testament writers, what does it mean to say that God is infinite, that God is good and that God is love?
3. In Canaanite spirituality, humans could make themselves fit to be in the company of the gods by properly engaging in ritual. Why, in Israelite spirituality, is it not possible for humans to reach this level through humanly initiated ritual? What else is needed?
4. What was the general set-up for the place of worship each time Israel set up camp in its earliest days (before the building of the temple)? What was the "Holy of Holies" and what was contained in it?

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5. Which King was responsible for finally building the temple in Jerusalem?
6. Why did synagogues arise and in what ways did synagogue worship differ from earlier temple worship?
7. According to recent scholarship, what is the most likely context for many of the *Psalms* and what evidence is there to support this claim?
8. What are three basic types of sacrifice that were practiced in Israel and what was the purpose of each? What purpose, in particular, was served by the "scapegoat" on the Day of Atonement?
9. In the context of the Old Testament, what did it mean to be "unclean?"
10. What was the role of the king, of priests, and of prophets in the worship life of Israel? In what ways do their functions seem to overlap and why is it difficult to define absolute boundaries between the functions of each?
11. What were the Harvest Festivals and to what significant events in Israel's history were they linked?

***Further Reading:***

*Exodus* 25-31

1 Kings 6-10

Anderson, Gary A., *Sacrifices and Offerings in Ancient Israel: Studies in their Social and Political Importance* (HSM 41) Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987.

Mowinckel, Sigmund (Trans. D.R. Ap-Thomas) *The Psalms in Israel's Worship*, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004.

Shanks, Hershel, *Jerusalem's Temple Mount: From Solomon to the Golden Dome*, Continuum, 2007.

Soggin, J. Alberto, *Israel in the Biblical Period: Institutions, Festivals, Ceremonies, Rituals*, Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2002.

**Chapter 13**

***Summary:***

The Hebrew Bible is sacred scripture for both Jews and Christians. This chapter deals primarily with the processes by which Christians over the centuries have reconciled its overall message with that of the message of Jesus, as conveyed in the New Testament. The problem of texts that convey and even appear to promote abhorrent behaviors such as ethnic cleansing is wrestled with and addressed. Although many instances in history, wherein people and nations have used these texts as ideological underpinning for such

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actions of brutality can be found, a critical study of the Old Testament reveals that the message overall is not one that sanctions violence and genocide, but rather is one that critiques such behavior. Such critical study of these texts, then, is essential not just for Jews and Christians but for any who seek to understand the foundations of western civilization. For Christians, the very designation of the Hebrew Bible as the "Old Testament" underscores the basic Christian notion that another Testament, the New one, must accompany the Old in order for the set of scriptures to be complete.

***Key Terms and People:***

Gentile

Apostle Paul

Marcion

Philo of Alexandria

Hilary of Poitiers

Martin Luther

John Calvin

Desmond Tutu

progressive revelation

transcendence

immanence

allegorical method

historical critical method

*mashiach* or *christos*

***Review Questions:***

1. In what way did the Old Testament inform early Christian thinking about the goodness of the world? How was the material world viewed by the early Christian, Marcion, and in what way did this influence his thinking about the value of the Old Testament texts?
2. What is meant by the allegorical method of interpretation and why did many early Christian leaders use it?
3. In what way did the Protestant Reformers move away from allegorical readings of the Biblical texts, and why?
4. In what ways did the Reformers, Martin Luther and John Calvin, reconcile the use of both Testaments?
5. What are some of the common attitudes toward the Old Testament among Christians today? Consider the starting point of each and how the starting point might be useful for Christians. Then, consider the interpretive problems that sometimes result from each.
6. What are some of the limitations of the historical-critical method of interpretation?
7. How does a critical study of the Old Testament reveal that the message overall is not one that sanctions violence and genocide but rather is one that critiques such behavior?

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8. How does a Jewish reading of the "servant songs" of Isaiah differ from a Christian reading of the same texts?

**Further Reading:**

Feiler, Bruce, *Abraham, A Journey to the Heart of Three Faiths*, Harper Collins, 2005.

Harnack, Adolf (Trans. John E. Steely), *The Gospel of the Alien God*, Wipf & Stock, 2007.

Helmer, Christine, ed., *The Global Luther: A Theologian for Modern Times*, Minneapolis: Fortress, 2009.

Janowski, Bernd, ed. (Trans. Daniel P. Bailey), *The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources*, Eerdmans, 2004.

O’Keefe, John J. & R.R. Reno, *Sanctified Vision: An Introduction to Early Christian Interpretation of the Bible*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005.

Selected Works of Martin Luther:

<http://www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/text/wittenberg/wittenberg-luther.html>

Calvin’s Commentaries:

<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/commentaries.i.html>

**Resources for the student who is seeking to improve his/her general study skills:**

**Books:**

Badke, William B., *Research Strategies: Finding Your Way Through the Information Fog*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., NY: iUniverse, 2008.

Palmquist, Mike, *The Bedford researcher*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., NY: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2009.

**Websites:**

A very useful resource that includes a number of tutorials:

<http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/writersref6e/Player/Pages/Main.aspx>

A number of useful videos on study skills are available at

<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~acskills/videos/index.html>

The following are especially recommended:

“Strategic Learning” -- Strategies for Retaining Information (9 minutes):

[http://www.dartmouth.edu/~acskills/videos/video\\_sl.html](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~acskills/videos/video_sl.html)

“Reading Improvement” – (from Dartmouth – about 10 min)

[http://www.dartmouth.edu/~acskills/videos/video\\_ri.html](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~acskills/videos/video_ri.html)

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“Note taking” video – Cornell method (from Dartmouth – about 7 min)

[http://www.dartmouth.edu/~acskills/videos/video\\_nt.html](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~acskills/videos/video_nt.html)

Useful handouts and other study skills information can be found at Dartmouth Academic Skills Center general website:

<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~acskills/handouts.html>