

Alliance Theological Seminary
OT504.NA Hebrew Bible in the Eastern Mediterranean World
Spring 2023
Monday 5:30pm - 8:30pm
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Final Examination

Part One: Short Answer

Directions: Identify each of the following

1. Threshing floor

A *threshing floor* is a smooth, flat, and open surface that was used during the harvest processing. A threshing facility was centrally located between adjoining fields or even between villages, and all Israelite farmers would have transported stalks of grain to a flat and open space where the prevailing west winds would help to separate the wheat from the chaff(Ruth 3:2). It also functioned as a public space of villages, gathering together to consult prophets (1 Kings 22:10) or sacrifices(2 Samuel 24:16), etc.

2. Bethulah

It means “female virgin” or “young woman,” used twelve times in the Bible. In the Bible, a virgin was a marriageable woman and was the most politically significant woman in Israel as a state. Her virginity was political power and the honor of a household.

3. Mesopotamia

Mesopotamia means ‘between two rivers.’ It is a biblical and historical region situated within the Tigris–Euphrates river system.

4. Meribaal

It is the name of the son of Jonathan, the grandson of King Saul, meaning Meri(messiah) of Baal(Lord Yahweh), also called Mephibosheth(Sentence of Death). He was five years old when Saul and Jonathan died in the battle on Mount Gilboa. His nurse picked him up and fled, but as she hurried to leave, he fell and became crippled(2 Sam. 4:4). King David, showing his kindness for

Jonathan's sake, he adopted Meribaal and let him eat at the king's table (2 Sam. 9).

5. patrilocal

Patrilocal means that a woman lives in the household of her husband.

6. Tanak

TaNak is an acronym for the names of the three large subcollections of the Hebrew Bible: Torah (Law), Nevi'im (Prophets), and Ketuvim (Writings).

7. Concubinage

Concubine refers to a female slave, either foreign or Hebrew, who was owned by a household and bore for its children. In Hebrew, the terms are not always degrading, but often simply distinguish secondary wives from the primary who is mother of the household. (1 King 11-8)

8. Midwife

Midwife [*meyalledet*] is the one who causes, helps birth. Midwives had the clinical and legal authority both to negotiate the pre-coital covenant, and to provide the mother with prenatal, labor, delivery, and postpartum care.

9. Herem

'Herem' means literally "Destined to be destroyed". It means the execution of prisoners of war and the destruction of all their property. In Joshua 6:15-21, in the battle of Jericho, God gave a command of the 'herem' with a clear purpose of punishing the evil Canaanites and eliminating the threat of false idol worship from the holy land.

10. Monarchy

It is a political system with a monarch (king), with undivided sovereignty or rule. The Hebrew monarchy began in Samuel's time when Saul was anointed as the first king of Israel. Moreover, Israel transformed from a village to a complete state during the reign of the monarch David.

11. Patriarchy

A system of society or government in which the father or eldest male is head of the family and descent is traced through the male line.

12. Levirate marriage

“*Levirate*” from Latin *levir*, which means “brother-in-law” or “husband’s brother.” *Levirate marriage* is a type of marriage arrangement responding to the case of the husband who died before producing offspring. A surviving brother has a duty to marry the widow of his brother. And “The first son she bears shall carry on the name of the dead brother so that his name will not be blotted out from Israel (Deuteronomy 25:5-6).

13. Bronze Age

Bronze Age is the second phase of the Stone–Bronze–Iron Age sequence in the development of material culture in the ancient world. The Age is about 3000 BC to 1200 BC, including Early Bronze (3000-2100 BC), Middle Bronze I (Patriarchs, 2100-1900 BC), Middle Bronze II (sojourn, 1900-1600), Late Bronze I (Exodus and Conquest, 1500-1400 BC), and Late Bronze II (Judges to Deborah, 1400-1200 BC).

14. *lmlk* seal

The ancient Hebrew *lmlk* seal impressions found in and around Jerusalem on fragmented jar handles interpreted as royal stamps. The Hebrew phrase *lmlk* means “belongs to the king” or “for the king.”

15. Goel

The Hebrew word literally means “redeemer.” In the family system of ancient Israel, *Goel* implied the nearest relative was supposed to redeem, or by back, a family estate (land) that had been taken into the hand of an outsider because of poverty (Lev. 25:25).

16. Matrilocal

A custom in marriage whereby the husband goes to live with the wife's community.

17. Clan

Clan (*mispahah*) is a residential kinship group of several families. The *mispahah* often pointed to a village consisting of several farm households related by kinship and marriage.

18. Tribe

The *tribe* refers to a larger social unit than clan that provided the major geographical and kinship organization (real and fictional) for ancient Israel.

19. Anat

Anat was a goddess of fertility, sexual love, hunting and war. She was considered to be the mother of the gods; and was also known as “the Virgin” in Ugaritic myth.

20. Tehom

The Hebrew word “Tehom” literally means the deep or abyss, refers to the great deep of the primordial waters of creation in the Bible (Gen. 1:2).

Part Two: Answer the following: 100 words minimum

1. List the major themes of Chapter 13 in Matthews and Benjamin in *Social World of Ancient Israel 1250 - 587 BCE*. What are the major points of the chapter? How do these points impact on how you read the Bible? Pick one passage to illustrate this idea? Do you agree or disagree with Matthews? Why or why not?

Major themes of chapter 13

- Virgin as a married or marriageable woman
- Virginity as the honor of a household
- Rape as a political maneuver

What are the major points of the chapter?

First, in the biblical world, a virgin was a woman who could be married. The virginity of an unmarried woman indicates the political integrity of her father's household.

Second, protecting the virgins was a matter of honor for each family. This measure of honor was proof of virginity on the part of the bride when the marriage was consummated.

Third, the bride's virginity indicates that the father's household is stable, so the covenant between that household and the husband's household will be productive. Likewise, the virginity of the wife of a nation represents the possibility of a provision to enrich the land and children of both nations as stipulated in the covenant between her nation and her husband's nation.

In the biblical world, virginity was not only a woman's physical condition but also her political strength. A virgin protected and provided for her father's family by shunning promiscuity, resisting rape, and ratifying covenants for her father's family by her marriage.

How do these points impact on how you read the Bible? Pick one passage to illustrate this idea? Do you agree or disagree with Matthews? Why or why not?

Matthew's point of view gave me a vivid backdrop of the ancient biblical world. I could relate it instantly with 16th century Korean literature that I read that shows similar virginity ethnic values. When I read 1 Samuel 11 again while reading Ahithophel's hidden heart, I felt a sense of realism that the Bible contains true historical stories. Absalom's rebellion was an opportunity for Ahithophel to take revenge on David and restore the family's honor. He even schemed Absalom to have open relations with David's wives, just as David had done to his own family.(2 Sam. 16:20-23).

However, I disagree with some of his explanations of the Amnon and Tamar relationship. Amnon was so tormented that he made himself ill because of his sister Tamar (2Sam 13:2). I don't think Amnon raped Tamar for political motivation as the author described. It seems to be one of the subjects of Psychiatry of love stories we often witness even though it developed into political issues. I think Amnon was a kind of narcissistic person who focused on satisfying his own needs without regard for the needs of others.

2. Summarize the major points in Chapter 4 of Family in the Bible. How do these points impact on your reading of the Wisdom Literature? Pick one theme that interests you and explain how it is treated in Chapter 4.

The major points

This chapter includes the book of Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs. The book of Proverbs provides profound theological wisdom about our relationship with Yahweh. It shows the importance of a strong and cohesive family. The family is a good place for parents to give instructions to their children. Children should respect their parents' teachings. Parents should discipline their children for the good. Proverbs also teaches marriage relationships: avoiding an immoral woman, building a strong relationship with her wife, and recognizing the consequences of poor choices.

Although the books of Job and Ecclesiastes do not directly describe marriage or family, they show that the most intimate of all human relationships is the family. In the

Song of Songs we see romance and physical intimacy between two lovers. It is an anthology of love poems that make it clear that romance and physical intimacy are part of God's will for the marriage relationship.

The proverbs must be accepted as valid only if applied at the right time because much of it is not law; it contains principles that are generally true depending on the people involved, the time as well as more general circumstances. For example Prov. 26:27(Do not answer a fool according to his folly, or you will be like him yourself) and Prov.26:9(Answer a fool according to his folly, or you will be wise in his own eyes) are side by side, and we have to discern which to apply in a specific situation. Furthermore, while Proverbs lays the foundation for our understanding of wisdom and retributive justice, Job and Ecclesiastes show that they are not always the case. God's sovereignty over our lives is always in priority and is beyond our understanding.

3. List the major themes of Chapter 16 in Matthews and Benjamin in *Social World of Ancient Israel 1250 - 587 BCE*. What are the major points of the chapter? How do these points impact on how you read the Bible? Do you agree or disagree with Matthews' examination of Isaiah 7? Why or why not?

The major themes of Chapter 16 in *Social World of Ancient Israel 1250 - 587 BC*

Classical prophets in the bible analyze the short-term consequences for the state of the decisions of its monarch to impose taxes, negotiate covenants, and wage war. Moreover, they represent the state before the divine assembly at its annual meetings to evaluate the fulfillment of Israel and Judah's covenants with Yahweh. Prophets Promulgate the decisions of the divine assembly regarding the state with words and pantomimes while he is in ecstasy. Possession, inspiration, or ecstasy was common to the prophets and the craft of the prophet was learned from a teacher or father in a school or guild(2 Kgs 2:1-18).

Generally, they opposed the economic and diplomatic policies of monarchs who centralized Israel's economy and who negotiated covenants with other states against YHWH's power and authority. Prophets thought of themselves as sentries, monitoring the performance of their monarch(Amos 5:15). They delivered the verdicts of the divine assembly with pantomimes, symbolic action, and words.

Matthews' examination of Isaiah 7

The background of Isaiah 7 is the syro-ephraimite war of 734 BC. Judah was caught up in a war for supremacy among the great powers. King Ahaz and his advisers needed help deciding whether to ally with the Israel-Syrian coalition against Assyria or join Assyria in seeking freedom from Israel. Isaiah went to the king with his son Shear-Jashub, whose name means remnant shall return, delivered the word of God, and proposed the coalition's doctrine of non-alignment. However, Ahaz wanted Judah to fulfill its legal obligation to Assyria and ignored Isaiah's advice.

I agree with the author that the "virgin" who will conceive a son was a "young woman" whose marriage ratified a significant covenant for Judah. The prophecy of Isaiah 7:9 is for the not-too-distant future. Because the prophecy speaks of the subsequent results that current actions will bring about, it was dealt with in the context at that time.

I also agree with the author that Isaiah assumed that God would protect Zion, and Jerusalem forever because of His commitment to the covenant with Israel. God can set Judah free, not Israel and Aram. Assyria is a great state but no greater than Egypt, from which God delivered Israel.

However, I wonder about his word choice, "Pantomimes." Pantomime is a play or entertainment where performers express themselves without speech. I think the word pantomime is inappropriate, and the subject of pantomime was his son and a young woman, not Isaiah.

3. List the major points of Chapter 4 in Families Ancient Israel. What are the major points made by Perdue in the chapter? How do these points impact on how you read the Bible?

Households formed the social basis of Israel and the early Jewish religion. The ethics of solidarity in the household shaped a network of understanding and care that moved beyond the immediate compound family to include clans, tribes, and the totality of the "children of Israel". Family emphasized education and contributed to establishing a protective agency of defense against the military. The household is a provider of care for members and marginals.

When the Monarch incorporated the households, royal exploitation of farm families led to the steady decline of the traditional household. It undercut its economics, education, care, law, and protection, the religious rituals and traditions that strengthened and legitimized its identity and solidarity. Prophets often warned the Monarch concerning their abusive power toward Israelites. (1 Sam 8:10-18)

Monarchs maintained centralized power to maintain their political legitimacy and initiative by holding all religious events in one place instead of in households. Jerusalem was designed to centralize religious control of the royal sanctuary and to negate the significant cultic celebration that strengthened family identity and solidarity. Prophets often warned the Monarch concerning their abusive power toward Israelites. (1 Sam 8:10-18) When Jerusalem fell in 586 BC, all households and villages belonged to the realm through which the kingdom controlled the towns, cities, and districts designated by the king.

The history of early Israeli household transitions gave me a glimpse of the historical context and led me to a better understanding of the background of the Monarch. The household was the basic unit for Israel's covenant with God. With the advent of the monarchy, many problems surfaced, but in the midst of this, God bless David's dynasty. What difference did David's Kingdom have from others in the Bible?

How do they solve the conflicts between individuals, households, and monarchs? What does the Bible say regarding these issues? This chapter gave me these questions I must solve in the future through the Bible. Furthermore, this chapter's refreshing definition of house and covenant and Monarch gave me a better understanding of the context of God's salvation covenant history with the households of Israel.

Part Three

Directions: Choose or provide the correct answer.

1. One of the roles of the monarch is to promulgate a code of law administered by a full-time corps of judges.
2. A monarch is responsible for raising a stand army to control the local population and to protect and expand borders.
True (*); False ()
3. According to Matthews, the virgin was the most politically significant women in Israel as a state.
True (*); False ()
4. The following are some of the issues dealing with biblical interpretation.
 - a. () Maximalist approach'
 - b. () Minimalist approach
 - c. () Archaeological approach
 - d. (*) A, B and C
 - e. () A and B

f. () None of the above

5. Egypt is the most frequently mentioned foreign nation in the Old Testament.

True (*); False ()

6. In the prophetic literature, one notes the use of marriage as a metaphor to describe Yahweh and his relationship to Israel.

7. the tribe, the clan and the family household were three primary units of social organization in ancient Israel.

8. One of the major functions of the family in ancient Israel was reproduction.

True (*); False ()

9. One of the major functions of the family in ancient Israel was the education of children.

True (*); False ()

10. List 3 major prophets. Isaiah Jeremiah Ezekiel

11. Maintaining social stability was one of the major features of the family.

True (); False (*)

12. The economic character of the family was never an important feature in the Ancient Near East. True (); False (*)

13. Central to family values was the emphasis placed on solidarity grounded in the interdependence of the members that was necessary for survival and continuity.

True (*); False ()

14. Familial land ownership was the economic base of Israelite and early Jewish households.

True (*); False ()

15. Most education occurred within the household through the oral transmission of knowledge and skills relating to household tasks, social customs and religious tradition.

16. Prior to state formation, Israelite households within their larger clans established a protective agency of defense against military invaders who threatened them.

True (*); False ()

17. Within the household, the male head was responsible for maintaining order, adjudicating disputes, arranging marriages, assigning household, maintaining the economic and social support.

18. The three primary units of social organization shaped by kinship structures are the tribe, the clan, and the family household.

19. Throughout their lives, men were subordinate to women in the clans of the ancient near east.

True (); False (*)

20. In the ancient near east, education is the power to influence the future generation.

21. The name provided evidence of the social standing of a person's household.

True (*); False ()

22. In the world of the Bible, clothing was not simply an accessory reflecting individual style or personal preference, but could reflect one's status.

23. In the world of the Bible, an elaborate system of writing and storytelling was used to preserve and pass on traditions.

24. The storyteller, the scribe, and the sage performed stories which served two important functions.

True (*); False ()

25. Storytellers helped monarchs resolve crises which threatened the land and people

True (*); False ()