

**HTS 653 Readings in Western Spirituality**  
**Two Novels and a Musical: The History of Israel in Fiction, Drama and Music**  
**(3 hrs/4 units)**

<b>Instructor</b>	Thomas Shepherd
<b>Office Hours</b> (TW Shepherd )	Tuesdays 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. and Wednesdays, 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm, and other times by appointment; Room 224.
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<b>Term</b>	Monday–Friday, 8:00–11:00 am; May 5–23, 2008
<b>Prerequisites</b>	None. (See Pre-Assignments )
<b>Required Texts (3):</b>	<p>Required Reading:</p> <p>James Michener, <i>The Source</i>. (Any edition.)</p> <p>Leon Uris, <i>Exodus</i>. (Any edition.)</p> <p>Howard Stone &amp; Duke, James O. <i>How to Think Theologically</i>, Second Edition, (2006).          Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press</p>
<b>Recommended Materials</b>	<i>Fiddler on the Roof</i> , DVD or VHS.

**Course Description:**

This course will be offered as a series of studies selected from non-canonical writings of the great mystics and metaphysicians from the Western spiritual tradition. An in-depth concentration of writings and authors who represent a school of thought or an era will be studied on a rotating basis.

**Content:**

- Introduction to the Holy Land, pre-history through modern times through fictional works about Israel.
- Biblical archaeology and historical fiction.
- History of Israel from United Kingdom to the Diaspora to the establishment of the modern State of Israel in 1948.
- Historical and theological analysis of themes raised in the fictional works studied.

## Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Compare and contrast the teachings of selected non-canonical writers.
- Correlate the studied materials with biblical texts and basic New Thought books such as *Lessons in Truth*.
- Analyze and critique the contribution to Unity made by selected authors.
- Contribute to the ongoing theological discussion by suggesting new applications for ideas gleaned from the study of the spiritual literature of western civilization.

## Course Requirements & Schedule:

**Pre-Course Assignments:** The following must be completed prior to May 5, 2008.

1. **Read:** *The Source* (at least the first 700 pages of Michener's 928-pp novel).
2. **Read:** *How to Think Theologically* by Stone & Duke, paying special attention to chapters 1-4 (pp. 1-69).

### **In-Course Assignments:**

1. **Read:** *The Source* to its conclusion (during first week); *Exodus* (by Monday of week three).
2. **Take notes in class.** These will not be collected but will serve as the basis for your reflection papers.
3. **Attend all classes.** Some flexibility is allowable for a three-week course, but the expectation is that students will attend and participate in every session.
4. **Lead a discussion seminar.** All students are expected to share class leadership. You will have an opportunity to sign up for the session, scheduling conditions permitting.

### **Post-Course Assignments**

**Critical Reviews:** Using methods of critical analysis found in Stone & Duke, write a theological reflection for each fictional selection--*The Source*, *Exodus*, and *Fiddler on the Roof*. Each review must be four pages, double-spaced; approximately 1,000 words. Write the papers as if you were reviewing the works for a scholarly journal, not a popular magazine. Approach this assignment the way Stone & Duke would write a book review. Think theologically, critically, and deeply.

**All Three Reviews Due: Monday, June 16, 2008**

### Final Grading Determination:

<i>The Source</i> Critical Review (25%)	Due: 6-16
<i>Fiddle on the Roof</i> Critical Review (25%)	Due: 6-16
<i>Exodus</i> Critical Review (25%)	Due: 6-16
Discussion Seminar Leadership (25%)	In-Class / TBA

### Grading Scale:

Percentage	Points	Grade
90 – 100%	4.0	A
80 – 90%	3.0	B
70 – 80%	2.0	C
65 – 70%	1.0	D
Below 65%	0	F

I = Incomplete (see section below on incomplete grades)

W = Withdrawal (see section below on withdrawal)

AU = Successful audit (see section below on auditing a class)

WA = Withdrawn or unsuccessful audit (see section below on auditing a class)

Graduation requires a 3.0 cumulative grade point average or above on a 4.0 scale. Grades below C may not be used to satisfy degree requirements, and a maximum of six hours of a grade of C may be counted toward a degree. Courses may be repeated in regularly scheduled terms (not as independent study). In such cases, both grades are posted and only the repeated grade is calculated in the term and cumulative grade point averages. Credit will be given only once toward graduation requirements.

### Late Assignment Policy:

Written work is due on the day scheduled. No extensions of due dates will be given except for bona fide emergencies, on a case-by-case basis. Late papers which have not received an emergency extension will be assessed *10% penalty per day* (weekends/holidays included).

### Academic Integrity:

All work submitted in this course must be the student's own original work generated specifically for this class. This policy includes all assignments, exams, papers, and other projects required by the instructor. The submission of another person's work represented as that of the student without properly citing the source of the work will be considered plagiarism and will result in a failing grade (zero) for that assignment or exam. A second

incident will result in a failing grade (zero) for the course. Repeated offenses may result in dismissal from the program. *Previously written papers or other materials from student files—even though written by the student who is submitting the assignment—are also not acceptable.* The rule is, *new work for new assignments.* For a full description of academic honesty, see the *Unity Institute Student Handbook*.

### **Attendance Policy:**

While attendance has no direct impact on the final grade, there is a very strong correlation between attendance and success in the class. If students miss a class, they are responsible for obtaining the lecture notes, information and/or directions from another student. Students who decide to quit attending this class must officially “drop” the course through the Registrar’s Office. Failure to do this will result in an F for the class, regardless of how many days the student has attended.

### **Day-by-Day Syllabus:**

To be distributed the first day of class. Generally, the sequence will go like this:

Week One - *The Source*

Week Two - *Fiddler on the Roof*

Week Three - *Exodus*