HEBREW BIBLE QUALIFYING EXAMINATIONS
READING LISTS

The following lists represent the minimal expectations for preparation for the Ph.D. Qualifying Examinations in the area of Hebrew Bible. In the Examination Prospectus submitted by each student (see the area guidelines), addenda should be added for each list as appropriate. There are three separate exams (not counting the Minor Area exam and the Orals): History of Ancient Israel; Methods and History of Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible since ca. 1750 C.E.; and one exam selected by the student from the following three areas: Religion in Ancient Israel; Literature of the Ancient Near East; or Social World of the Ancient Near East. In addition to the lists below, each student will include in the Examination Prospectus a reading list for her or his major area; the exams on History of Ancient Israel and on Methods and History of Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible since ca. 1750 C.E. will include questions focusing on the major area. The following lists are subject to periodic revision as necessary.

History of Ancient Israel


**Methods and History of Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible since ca. 1750 C.E.**


**Religion in Ancient Israel**


**Literature of the Ancient Near East**

Beckman, Gary M. Hittite Diplomatic Texts. 2nd ed. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999. [Read the texts to get a feel for historiography.]

Black, Jeremy. Reading Sumerian Poetry. Ithaca: Cornell University, 1998. [Some chapters easier than others; but a useful introduction into an unusual literature.]


Foster, B., et al. The Epic of Gilgamesh. New York: W. W. Norton, 2001 [Includes essays taken from elsewhere.] OR:


Hallo, William W., ed. The Context of Scripture. 2 vols. New York: E. J. Brill, 1997. [Introductions worth reading; but also good stuff to sample.]

Hoffner, Harry A., Jr. Hittite Myths. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998. [Many of them fragmentary and difficult to access without background. But you need to read them.]


Parker, Simon, ed. Ugaritic Narrative Poetry. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997. [Texts that must be read; try to locate decent commentary to them.]


Sasson, Jack M., ed. Studies in the Literature of the Ancient Near East. New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1984. [Get someone to gift it to you and then get used to sampling its pages, as back/foreground to what you are reading. Easy read, not bad biblio.]


**Social World of the Ancient Near East**


Chavalas, Mark W., ed. EMAR: The History, Religion, and Culture of a Syrian Town in the Late Bronze Age. Bethesda: CDL, 1996. [Good collection about a recently found culture, odd in many ways.]


Harris, Rivkah. Gender and Aging in Mesopotamia: The Gilgamesh Epic and Other Ancient Literature. Norman: Oklahoma University, 2000. [Nice articles, with interesting ideas.]


Kramer, S. N. *History Begins at Sumer*. Garden City: Doubleday, 1957. [Fun and informative; take it with lots of salt.]

Leick, Gwendolyn. *Sex and Eroticism in Mesopotamian Literature*. London: Routledge, 1994. [Every list should have one of those.]


Redford, Donald B., ed. *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*. Oxford: Oxford University, 2001. [Don’t read it in one sitting. Here only to be noticed.]


Miscellaneous

At least one scholarly introduction to the Hebrew Bible.


Schniedewind, William M. How the Bible Became a Book: The Textualization of Ancient Israel. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University, 2004