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# Old Testament Stories in Czech Art

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## Annotation

- Old Testament figures as Adam, Noah, Abraham, etc. are presented in biblical and apocryphal texts with visual illustrations from both western and eastern art. Jewish, Christian, and Muslim traditions are compared to show the different interpretive outlines. Teacher's presentations are complemented with students' entries on chosen topics.

## Aim of the course

- To recognize Biblical motives in art and to narrate their stories. To discern the artist's differences from the canonical Biblical text and to explain his particular idea.

Study Informational System



## Literature

- **Sources**
  - The Holy Bible – New International Version. Biblica, 2011, **or**
  - New American Bible. Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, **or**
  - New Jerusalem Bible. Darton. Longman, Todd, 1999.
  - **All are available online.**
- **Reference**
  - FRIEDMAN, David N. (ed.). Anchor Bible Dictionary. New York: Doubleday, 1992.
  - KIRSCHBAUM, Engelbert. Lexikon der Christlichen Ikonographie. 8 vols. Rom: Herder, 1968-76.
  - RÉAU, Louis. Iconographie de l'Art Chrétien. 3 vols. Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1955–59.
  - SCHILLER, Gertrud. Ikonographie der Christlichen Kunst. 5 vols. Gütersloh: Gutersloher Verlagshaus G. Mohn, 1966–80.
- **Other Literature**
  - Art and the Bible: <http://www.artbible.info/>

- Overview of Biblical Figures: <http://www.bibleodyssey.org/people.aspx>
- ROYT, Jan. Slovník biblické ikonografie. Praha: Karolinum, 2007.
- MANSER, Martin – REID, Debra. The Compact Guide to the Bible. Oxford: Lion Hudson, 2010 (Malé biblické kompendium. Euromedia, 2014).
- DE CAPOA, Chiara. Old Testament Figures in Art. Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2003.
- ZUFFI, Stefano. *Gospel Figures in Art*. Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2003.
- Iconography: <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/introduction-to-medieval-iconography-32889>
- SPEAKE, Jennifer. The Dent Dictionary of Symbols in Christian Art. London: Dent, 1994.

## Teaching methods

Lectures in form of visual presentations (ppt) supplemented by students' papers and presentations on chosen topics to illustrate the main themes of the course.

## Requirements to the exam

- Presentation of a chosen topic, active part in final review.

## Syllabus

### 1. The Stories of the Book of Genesis

- Introduction: The Old Testament, Five Books of Moses, Torah of the Jews, the Apocrypha. Early stories of Mesopotamia, the patriarchal history, Abraham.
- For papers: The Creation of the Universe, Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, the Flood, the Tower of Babel, Destruction of Sodom, Abraham and Isaac, Jacob's story (Esau, the dream of the ladder, Rachel)

### 2. Israel in Egypt

- Introduction: Slavery and liberation – red line of the Jewish history, the Lord God of the fathers, the story of Joseph and the sons of Israel, the saviour archetype.
- For papers: Joseph sold to Egypt, Joseph and the Potiphar's wife, the Pharaoh's dreams, Joseph's brothers, Moses saved from the river, Moses and the burning bush, the plagues of Egypt.

### 3. The story of the Exodus

- Introduction: the book of Exodus, Israelites – the travelling people (the Passover), the Torah and the Decalogue, commandments and the sin (idolatry), Sinai pilgrimage route, the holy mountain, the Tent of meeting.
- For papers: Passage of the Red Sea, the manna and the spring, the tablets of the Law, the golden calf.

### 4. Heroes of the Jews

- Introduction: the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel; Palestine – the Promised Land, holy war, the map of Israel, the city of Jerusalem, the anointed one, the king.
- For papers: Joshua and the battle of Jericho, Gedeon, Samson and Delilah, Ruth, Samuel the Prophet, King David (the stories of Goliath, Batsheba, Absalom).

### 5. The Temple

- Introduction: the books of the Kings, the desert sanctuary and the temple of Jerusalem, typology of a holy place, the holy city, pilgrim rituals, the icon of the throne, Solomon – the model king.
- For papers: iconography of the temple, Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, Solomon's wisdom.

### 6. The Prophets

- Introduction: the prophetic books, Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel.
- For papers: Elijah's contest, Elijah's ascension to heaven, the heavenly vision of Isaiah, the valley of the dead

### 7. The Stories of Miracles

- Introduction: ketuvim – pious fiction, stories from Jewish exile, prize for virtue.
- For papers: Daniel's vision, Jonah and the fish, Tobias's travels with the angel, Judith and Esther.