

Wesley Theological Seminary  
Weekend Course of Study: October 13-14 and November 3-4, 2017

CS-221 Bible II: Torah and Israel's History  
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Objectives:

This course interprets the critical events, developing institutions, and traditions of Israel. Attention is given to the earliest Covenants, to the Exodus, to the rise of the monarchy, and to other events up to the eighth century prophets.

Goals:

1. Articulate a historical overview of the experience and faith of ancient Israel.
2. Exegete selected passages that illustrate crucial turning points in the history of Israel.
3. Apply exegesis to preaching, other pastoral responsibilities, and issues of the present day.

Texts:

- ◆ Birch, Bruce, Walter Brueggemann, Terence Fretheim, David Peterson. *A Theological Introduction to the Old Testament, 2nd edition*. Abingdon Press (2005)
- ◆ Coogan, Michael. *The Old Testament: A Historical & Literary Introduction, 3rd edition*. Oxford University Press (2013). NOTE: The third edition is the text "officially" recommended but use of a prior edition is an acceptable alternative. If you use another edition, you must indicate in your written work that you have done so. Please see notes, below, regarding required citation for assignments.
- ◆ Fretheim, Terrence. *The Pentateuch*. Abingdon Press (1996).
- ◆ Documents posted on Blackboard by the professor.

Assignments:

Due dates: Students are to turn in their first assignment by 1 p.m., Friday October 14. Students are to turn in their second assignment by 1 p.m., Friday November 4, 2016. Assignments are to be submitted via Blackboard. Grades will be reduced a step (i.e. from B to B-) for assignments handed in after due date and time (1 p.m.). Grades will be reduced a full letter (i.e. from B to C) for assignments handed in more than 24 hours late.

Format: Papers should be double-spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font, with one-inch margins on all sides.

Grading: Papers will be graded based on

- ◆ whether the question(s) are fully answered,
- ◆ whether the student engaged with the assigned readings, demonstrating understanding and critical thinking, and
- ◆ whether the written work has few, if any, errors of spelling, grammar or punctuation.

Please note that work which fulfills these expectations will be given a "B" range grade. The "A" grade is awarded only for work that is excellent.

The two written assignments will constitute 80% of the final course grade (40% each); class participation will constitute the remaining 20% of the final course grade.

#### Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is regarded as a serious offense and will result in substantial penalties, including the possibility of academic dismissal. The faculty regard the following as forms of plagiarism or dishonesty:

- ◆ copying from another student's paper
- ◆ giving or receiving unauthorized assistance to or from another person
- ◆ using unauthorized material during an examination
- ◆ borrowing and presenting as one's own (i.e. without proper attribution) the composition or ideas of another; this includes direct quotation and/or paraphrasing of others' words/ideas

Assignments in this class do not require you to do additional research but to engage with the readings assigned. You may choose but are not required to consult other resources (commentaries, dictionaries) such as those you may be familiar with from prior COS courses. Whether you are drawing on the assigned readings or on other resources, you must properly cite your sources. I do not require any particular format - parenthetical citations or footnotes are equally acceptable. For readings which have been assigned for this class, you should include author/page number(s) (i.e. Birch/Brueggemann, 91 or Fretheim, 91) and, for the Coogan, the edition (Coogan, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed, 91). For Bible citations, provide book/chapter:verse (i.e. Exodus 3:6). For any additional resources you choose to use (including footnotes or other scholarly information from your study Bible), you must include author/title/publisher/publication date/page number(s).

Please refer to your Wesley COS Student Handbook (on-line) for more information about Wesley's academic policies or contact the Course of Study office (202-885-8688).

#### Course Outline:

- ◆ October 13-14: Exodus and Moses; Guidance in the Wilderness; Sinai and Covenant; The Ten Commandments; Israel in Canaan
- ◆ November 3-4: Rise of the Monarchy: Samuel and Saul; David and 2 Sam 7; The Succession Narrative; Solomon and the Divided Monarchy

**Assignment #1:** To be posted on Blackboard by 1 p.m. Friday October 13, 2016. The assignment should be submitted as a single document with each question separately numbered, as below. The document name should include your name, CS221, and Assignment No 1 (i.e. Brown\_CS221\_No1); your name should also appear in the document itself.

1.1 Read Exodus 1-15; Birch/Brueggemann Ch. 4 (“Bondage, Exodus, Wilderness”); Coogan Ch. 7 (“Escape from Egypt”) and 8 (“From Egypt to Sinai”); Fretheim Ch. 4 (“The Book of Exodus”).

Discuss the account of Moses’ call in Exodus 3, noting both its form (structure) and content. Comment on the significance of each part of the call narrative in terms of what it says about God and about Moses. How does this call narrative express Israel’s view of God and of the relationship between God and prophet? How is your call like or unlike the call of Moses? (2 pages, 20 points)

1.2 Read Exodus 16-40 (particularly 16-24, 31:12-34:35); Leviticus (particularly 19); Deuteronomy 5-6; Birch/Brueggemann Ch. 5 (“The Structures of Covenant Life”); Coogan Ch. 8 (“From Egypt to Sinai”), 9 (“Law and Ritual”), 10 (“Ritual and Holiness”); Fretheim Ch. 5 (“The Book of Leviticus”).

The Decalogue (Exodus 20; Deuteronomy 5) expresses the essence of the covenant between Israel and the LORD. Define the word “covenant,” with references to the assigned readings. Discuss the form and content of the Decalogue (the Ten Commandments). How is the Decalogue significant today? How do Exodus and Leviticus understand the nature of “holiness”? (3 pages, 30 points)

1.3 Read Numbers; Deuteronomy 1-4, 7-11; Birch/Brueggemann Ch 5. (“The Structures of Covenant Life”), Coogan Ch. 11 (“In the Wilderness”), 12 (“The End of the Journey to the Promised Land”); Fretheim Ch. 6 (“The Book of Numbers”).

What are the basic themes of the story about Israel in the wilderness? How does the wilderness theme function in the faith life of ancient Israel? How does the wilderness theme function in the faith life of the current church or as a metaphor for your own life before God. (2 pages, 20 points)

1.4 Read Deuteronomy 29-31, 34; Joshua; Judges; Birch/Brueggemann Ch 6 (“The People of the Land”); Coogan Ch. 12 (“The End of the Journey to the Promised Land”), 13 (Joshua and the Conquest of the Land of Canaan”), 14 (“The Emergence of Israel in the Land of Canaan”); Fretheim Ch. 7 (“The Book of Deuteronomy”); Robert Warrior “Canaanites, Cowboys, and Indians”(posted on Bb under Course Documents).

Reflect upon the biblical accounts (in Deuteronomy, Joshua, and Judges) of Israel’s settlement in Canaan. How do these books understand Israel’s entry into the land of Canaan? How do you understand Israel’s settlement? How do you explain the violence of conquest? What message does Israel’s settlement in the land have for us today? (3 pages, 30 points)

**Assignment #2:** To be posted on Blackboard by 1 p.m. Friday November 3, 2016. The assignment should be submitted as a single document. The document name should include your name, CS221, and Assignment No 2 (i.e. Brown\_CS221\_No2). Each question should be separately numbered, as below, and answered in the number of pages listed.

2.1 Read Judges; 1 Samuel 1-12; Birch/Brueggemann Ch. 7 ("The Rise of the Monarchy"); Coogan Ch. 15 ("The Establishment of the Monarchy").

Describe the rise of the monarchy leading to the first king, Saul. What brought about the emergence of the monarchy and what theological and political tensions surfaced in the process? Draw upon at least 5 texts (don't quote; just cite chapter and verse) from the books of Judges through Samuel to support your answer. (4 pages, 40 points)

2.2 Read 1 Samuel 16 – 2 Samuel 13; 1 Kings 1-2; Birch/Brueggemann Ch. 7 ("The Rise of the Monarchy"); Coogan Ch. 16 ("The Reign of David")

Discuss the rise of David as king (1 Sam 16:1 – 2 Sam 7) and the development of a royal covenant theology, being sure to treat 2 Sam 7 and the tension between conditional and unconditional covenant. How is this tension apparent in the events of 2 Sam 11-13? Discuss also the concerns of the Succession Narrative in 2 Sam 9-12 and 1 Kings 1-2. What are the good and bad aspects of David's kingship? What human vulnerabilities of David do these chapters reveal? (3 pages, 30 points).

2.3 Read 1 Kings 1-12; Birch/Brueggemann Ch. 7 ("The Rise of the Monarchy"); Ch. 8 ("Kings and Prophets in the Divided Kingdom"); Coogan Ch. 17 ("The Reign of Solomon").

Solomon's prayer in 1 Kings 8 expresses a theological tension inherent in the very construction of the temple. What is this tension? (You might find a comparison of 2 Sam 7 and 1 Kings 8 to be helpful.) Where or how does this tension exist in contemporary religious expression? (1.5 pages, 10 points)

2.4 Read 1 Kings 1-12; Birch/Brueggemann Ch. 7 ("The Rise of the Monarchy"); Ch. 8 ("Kings and Prophets in the Divided Kingdom"); Coogan Ch. 17 ("The Reign of Solomon"), Ch. 18 ("The Divided Kingdoms of Israel and Judah from the Late Tenth to the Early Eighth Centuries BCE"); Brueggemann chapter from *The Prophetic Imagination* (posted on Bb).

According to Brueggemann (see chapter from *The Prophetic Imagination* posted on Bb), what are the 3 dimensions of the Solomonic achievement (or enlightenment) that summarize the dominant culture of Solomon? How are these 3 dimensions countered by the culture of Moses and the Sinai Covenant? What is the prophetic task in light of Solomon? Should pastors be prophets? (2 pages, 20 points).