

Wesley Theological Seminary

Course of Study

August 2020; September 11-12

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

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Please read this study guide *carefully*. There is a lot of information here. It may feel overwhelming at first. Take your time reading this guide, give yourself time to digest it and understand it, and if you have any questions, feel free to email your instructor. Your instructor is here to help!

We have split the previous pre-course work up into two parts. **Everyone will have one assignment due by August 3 submitted via email. The remainder of our work will be done during the online and face-to-face portions of the class.**

Please schedule time each week to work on your pre-course work. If you are able to do this you will have the opportunity to come to DC next summer and enjoy some Sabbath time with us. Please let Sara Sheppard or Doug Powe know if we can help you with this in any way.

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.

Textbooks: To obtain textbooks or view the list go to **My Wesley** on the website (<https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/MyWesley>) and click on the button that says “Textbooks” From there select your program (Course of Study Summer Intensive), then select your course number. You may order books on-line directly from our e-store.

You may also order your books from Cokesbury or any other bookseller or borrow from friends.

REQUIRED:

Birch, Bruce, Walter Brugemann, Terence Fretheim, David Peterson. A Theological Introduction to the Old Testament, 2nd edition.

Collins, John J, A Short Introduction to the Hebrew Bible
Fretheim, Terrence. The Pentatuch

Also see documents posted on blackboard by the professor.

Assigned Reading:

It is expected that you will have completed all of the assigned reading before the first day of class in order to complete your pre-class assignments.

Written Assignment Instructions:

1. Please type your papers, double-spaced, 12 font.
2. Be sure to refer to all textbooks and reference books in your answers
3. Do not use footnotes when you quote but simply give the author and page number in parentheses after the quote, e.g. (Coogan, 49).
4. Pay attention to page limits; I will stop reading once I've reached the posted limit
5. Essay will be marked down 5 points for each day that it is late (unless you have permission from me for an extension).
6. Please submit your essay via email.
7. Put your name on your submission, either on the top of the first page or in the header.
8. Put your name in the file name of your document. Points off for not following directions.
9. Answer all questions in a single document instead of separate files for each question.
10. I will only accept .doc or .docx file formats.

August 2020 Online Instruction:

On the first day of online instruction (August 3, 2020), email your responses to the following questions to your instructor:

1. Describe the call narrative of Moses in Exodus 3. List the parts of the call narrative but also comment on the significance of each part in terms of what it says about God and about Moses. What does this call narrative say about the relationship between God and Moses? How is your call like or unlike the call of Moses? (2 pages, 30 points)
2. What does Israel remember about God and itself in the wilderness, that is, what are the basic themes of the story about Israel in the wilderness? Illustrate each theme you list with texts from Exodus and Numbers. Reflect on 'wilderness' as a metaphor for your life before God. (2 pages, 30 points)

3. The Decalogue expresses the essence of the Sinai covenant. Define the word “covenant,” showing that you have consulted all of the textbooks and the reference books. Discuss the form and content of the Decalogue (the Ten Commandments). Choose one commandment and tell why it is important today. (1 page, 20 points)
4. How do Exodus and Leviticus understand the nature of ‘holiness’? (1 page, 20 points)
5. Discuss the rise of David as king (1 Sam 16:1 – 2 Sam 7) and the development of a royal theology, being sure to discuss 2 Sam 7 and the tension between conditional and unconditional covenant. Discuss also the concerns of the Succession Narrative in 2 Sam 9-20 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, 35 points)

A major part of our work together for the online portion of the class will be to create several “wiki” documents together (your instructor included!) so that at the conclusion of the class you will have well-crafted documents that summarize several of the books we discussed and list the resources you may need for future sermon and Bible study preparation in the future.

- **What is a wiki?** A wiki is a website that allows for the collaborative editing of its content and structure by users. Our “wikis” will simply be shared Word or Google documents that we can all edit in real time.
- **Books:** Together, we will assemble “wiki” pages for Genesis, Exodus, Deuteronomy, Judges, 1 & 2 Samuel, and 1 & 2 Kings
- **Sections:** Each wiki will have these sections:
 - Timeline or map resources
 - Synopsis: a prose summary of the contents of the book
 - General outline: How would you divide this material? What are the most important moments? What are the subplots or minor events? This is not a prose narrative, but a bulleted-type outline
 - List of major plot themes
 - List of major characters, with descriptions of each character (and scripture references for each)
 - Interpretive Issues: What are some interpretive issues? Where are the stumbling blocks? On what do scholars disagree?
 - Online resources, links, additional books or articles that are useful.
- **Expectations:** Part of working on a wiki is being courageous enough to edit someone else’s work. This means that you can (and should) edit incorrect information, copy edit grammar, spelling, or punctuation, rearrange structure so things make more sense. This also means that you might work for a long time on something that someone else comes in and edits to look completely different. That’s part of the process! The product will almost always be better if we can all be open-minded about the process. Also, track-changes allow us to return to things that were edited out (nothing is gone forever online). Finally, it is my expectation that everyone will contribute. Your grade will reflect how seriously you take your commitment to creating this tool with your classmates. I will contribute as well, to ensure that the final product is not only accurate, but

includes high-quality resources. I will do my best to explain my choices and comments, and I expect you to do the same, when asked. The best part is, we will get to meet in person to talk about the process, and even make any final edits.

Online Course Learning schedule:

Week of Aug 3

- Written work due Aug. 3
- Work on Genesis and Exodus Wikis
- Respond to online min-lecture and resources posted by your instructor

Week of Aug 10

- Work on Deuteronomy and Judges Wikis
- Mini-lecture on Israel's History
- Your instructor will post a short article for you to read and respond to. There will be a specific question for you to consider and respond to in a discussion thread on Blackboard.

Week of Aug 17

- Work on 1&2 Samuel wikis
- Mini-lecture on 3 settlement theories and rhetorical considerations for the biblical text

Week of Aug 24

- Work on 1 Kings wiki
- Your instructor will post a short article for you to read and respond to. There will be a specific question for you to consider and respond to in a discussion thread on Blackboard.

Face-to-Face Class Time

By the time we come together face-to-face you will have done all the written work you need to do for the course! Together, we will work on some interpretive methods and read some texts together. We will be using all of the information you've gathered and dive in to reading and interpreting texts together, together with the aid of art, music, and videos. If you can muster the energy to do really fine work for the month preceding the face-to-face class, we can do a lot of fun and interesting interpretive work together!