

Study Guide/Syllabus
Wesley Theological Seminary Course of Study
for the
General Board of Higher Education and Ministry
Weekend Session Spring 2022

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

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Meeting Times:

Friday, March 11th, 1:30 p.m.-3:45 p.m.

Saturday, March 12th : 8:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

Friday, April 8th : 1:30 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.

Saturday, April 9th : 8:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

****Zoom link to join online meeting will be sent out prior to the first day of class.**

Course Description

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.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

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 (you may view the list on the Course of Study webpage, as well):

1. Michael Coogan and Cynthia Chapman, A Historical and Literary Introduction to the Hebrew Scriptures, 4th ed. (Oxford U. Press, 2017).
2. Birch, B., Brueggemann, W., Fretheim, T., and Petersen, D. A Theological Introduction to the Old Testament, 2nd ed., (Abingdon, 2005).

****Any other required readings/articles will be assigned/linked below and posted on Blackboard.** All textbooks are available for purchase online through sites such as Amazon, or you may check available libraries or borrow from friends.

Students are encouraged to build a library of commentaries on the various books of the New Testament. There are many one volume and series commentaries in existence differing greatly in content, style, and level of difficulty. Suggested commentaries include the following:

Harper's Bible Commentary. San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1988.

Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1982--.

New International Biblical Commentary. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1992--.

The New Interpreter's Bible. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994--.

The Oxford Bible Commentary. New York: Oxford U.P., 2001.

Course Schedule (This is an overall roadmap. It may change based on need.):

Fri. 3/11	The Matriarchs & Patriarchs; The Exodus
Sat. 3/12	Sinai & Covenant
Fri. 4/8	Israel in the Land 1: Canaan and the Time of the Judges
Sat. 4/9	Israel in the Land 2: The United and Divided Monarchies

General Assignment Submission and Format Instructions

In addition to being provided below, assignments are located and to be submitted on Blackboard.

Instructions on posting to Blackboard are on the COS webpage. If you run into trouble, please contact blackboardsupport@wesleyseminary.edu and they will help you.

If you are new to Course of Study at Wesley, please be sure to check Blackboard **once you receive your logon information from our IT department**. Please check with the COS office regarding when Blackboard access will be available.

**Be sure to include your name, course number and annual conference on each page of your paper. **

Papers should have one-inch margins on all sides, be double-spaced, and use a 12-point Times New Roman font. Please proofread papers carefully, avoiding as much as possible spelling, typographical, and grammatical errors, which can easily diminish the effectiveness of your writing. **Submissions must be in either docx, doc, or pdf format.**

Assignments*

Due by class time (1:30 p.m.), Friday, March 11. Please post on Blackboard under Assignments.

1. **Assigned Readings:** Genesis 12-50; Coogan & Chapman pp. 67-89; Brueggemann, et. al., chapter 3.

Answer the following: How do God's promises to Abraham of land and descendants play out in the lives of the matriarchs and patriarchs in Genesis 12-50? That is, what are the threats to these promises and how are these threats overcome? Look at the Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph stories to answer the question. Be sure to include reflection upon all assigned readings in your answer (3 pages).

2. **Assigned Readings:** Exodus 1-4; Coogan & Chapman pp. 90-107; Brueggemann, et. al, Chapter 4

Answer the following: What do Moses' objections to his call in Exodus 3 and 4 say about the way Israel sees the relationship between the prophet and God? How is your call like or unlike the call of Moses? (2 pages)

3. **Assigned Readings:** Exodus 19-24; Brueggemann, et. al, Chapter 5 (skim this chapter); Read online "Covenant in the Hebrew Bible" by Marvin A. Sweeney: [Click here to read Covenant in the Hebrew Bible](#); Read/listen to online: Lectio Divina - "The Ten Words: Exodus 20" by Sara Koenig: [Click here to read or listen to The Ten Words](#)

Answer the following:

- a. The Decalogue (Ten Commandments) expresses the essence of the Sinai covenant. Define the word "covenant," showing that you have consulted all of the readings. Choose one commandment and tell why it is important today. (2 pages)
- b. From the reflection questions on the Lectio (The Ten Words): Do you tend to think about commands in terms of "you shall not" or "you shall"? In your estimation, what difference does it make that most of the Ten Commandments are prohibitions? What do you think of the Koenig's assertion that the Commandments create freedom through boundary setting? How might this interpretation differ from a popular understanding of the Ten Commandments? (2 pages)

Due by class time (1:30 p.m.), April 8th. Please post on Blackboard under Assignments.

1. **Assigned Readings:** Joshua; Coogan & Chapman, pp. 188-190; "Canaanites, Cowboys, and Indians" by Robert Warrior (on Blackboard).

Answer the following: How do you explain the violence of conquest in the book of Joshua, that is the genocide of the Canaanites? What are the potential dangers of claiming "God is on our side"? Be sure to reflect upon Robert Warrior's article here: "Canaanites, Cowboys, and Indians" (It is posted on Blackboard as an attachment to this assignment). (2 pages)

2. **Assigned Readings:** Judges, 1 Samuel; Coogan & Chapman, pp. 227-258

Answer the following: Describe the rise of kingship in Israel, starting from the time of the period of the judges leading up 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 Scripture texts (don't quote; just cite chapter and verse) from the books of Judges through Samuel to support your answer. (4 pages)

3. **Assigned Readings:** 2 Samuel, 1 Kings 1-11; Coogan & Chapman, pp. 259-277; "Royal Consciousness: Countering the Counterculture" from Walter Brueggemann's Prophetic Imagination (posted on Blackboard as an attachment to this assignment).

Answer the following:

- a. What are the good and bad aspects of David's kingship in the Succession Narrative in 2 Sam 9-20 and 1 Kings 1-2? What weaknesses does David show in these stories? (2 pages)
- b. According to Walter Brueggemann (please see the chapter from Brueggemann's Prophetic Imagination), what are the 3 aspects or dimensions of the Solomonic achievement (or

enlightenment) that summarize the dominant culture of Solomon's kingship? How are these 3 dimensions challenged by the culture of Moses and the Sinai Covenant? (2 pages)

*Some assignments revised/adapted from Dr. Denise Hopkins

Criteria for Evaluating Course Work

Regardless of whether you write a paper, answer an essay question, voice an oral presentation, or create any original project, the academic context requires that certain minimal requirements characterize your work. While there are subjective components in the grading process, most professors are concerned that you become well educated in four basic qualities of excellent academic work.

- ◆ 1. Demonstration of an empathetic understanding of the content of texts and resources. Your topic should not only be well researched in the library, through interviews and observations, and/or from assigned readings and class discussions, but you should be able to provide a fair description and a clear understanding of texts and resources. This is apparent in the ability to describe and discuss precisely and accurately what an author has written or a speaker has said. Evaluation, response, and critique follow accurate representation of another's ideas—earn the privilege of criticizing a viewpoint by showing that you really understand it.
- ◆ 2. Clear critical thinking that provides appropriate specific evidence for conclusions. Use the most precise historical, empirical, or contemporary data or information to support the claims of your thesis and paragraphs. Conclusions follow from and are supported by evidence. Be sure that your evidence is relevant, accurate, and detailed. Adherence to clear critical thinking, relevant and accurate evidence, and logical organization constitute sound arguments. Even creative writing requires logical relationships among ideas to assist your readers in following the plot or main point.
- ◆ 3. Creativity that moves beyond reporting someone else's ideas. Your creative addition to academic discourse might include questioning, evaluating, applying, criticizing (positively or negatively), developing, or responding. You might see a connection between two or more ideas. You might see information from a unique perspective. The minimal requirement of academic work is correctly repeating what is read or discussed. Excellent work moves beyond repetition to unique insights, organization, correlations, and theses. Work to find your own scholarly and professional voice.
- ◆ 4. Grammar, spelling, and form. Excellent written work is conscious of proofreading and good communication. Oral presentations are equally accountable for careful expression. A brilliant thesis can be lost in a paper or project that obscures its ideas with careless communication. Your readers and listeners should not have to guess what you mean—help them by speaking and writing well.

Grading

The instructor assumes that everyone in the class is capable of the work required to receive a "B" grade for each assignment. The following interpretations of the meaning of each grade have been developed to help class members review their work to identify strengths and problems.

- ◆ A "B" means that the basic elements of the assignment have been faithfully included, the argument is internally coherent, and clearly articulated.
- ◆ A "B+" means the assignment is also well crafted.
- ◆ An "A-" means that the assignment is not only well crafted, but it also probes the issues with considerable insight.

- ◆ An "A" means the assignment is well crafted, reveals considerable insight, and moves beyond the range of the student's prior knowledge to begin to construct new perspectives and meanings for the subject. In other words, it shows the student's imagination at work; it has a creative edge.
 - ◆ A "C+" means that the assignment lacks clarity or focus, tends to reveal more the writer's opinions than the results of the writer's analysis, and lacks reflective insight into the issues being discussed.
 - ◆ A "C" means that the assignment does not move beyond the reporting of information from readings and/or class discussions to engaging them with issues being discussed; it may indicate inappropriate or misuse of data and readings.
 - ◆ A "C-" means that despite some moments of focused discussion and insight, major gaps exist in the development of the argument or discussion.
 - ◆ An "F" indicates evidence of plagiarism or work has not been submitted.
- ◆ Full grade will be received if work is submitted on time. Grades will be reduced by 1/3 (i.e., B+ to B) if submitted during the week of class. Grades will be reduced by 2/3 (B+ to B-) if received on the last day of class. No work will be accepted the last day of class and student will receive the grade of F.

The Grade Scale is as follows:

A =	93-100	C+ =	78-79
A- =	90-92	C =	73-77
B+ =	88-89	C- =	70-72
B =	83-87	F =	69 or below; for unsubmitted work, or submitted work where
B =	80-82		there is evidence of plagiarism

Inclusive Language

In both oral and written contributions to the course, students are expected to be conscious of the power of language in theology. Inclusive language respects both gender and racial diversity, and students should demonstrate awareness that language about persons and God expresses values and impacts theological ideas in the details of race and gender connotations. Both gender and race are socially-constructed categories, and changing language is part of bringing justice to theological discourse.

Academic Policies

- ◆ Attendance: Students are expected to attend all classes in their entirety. Faculty members have the authority to set attendance policies for particular courses and those policies will be included in the course syllabus. Deviation from the attendance policy may result in reduction of grade or loss of credit for the course.
- ◆ Plagiarism: Plagiarism is regarded as a serious offense and will result in substantial penalties, including the possibility of academic dismissal. The faculty regards the following as form of plagiarism or dishonesty:
 - Copying from another student's paper
 - Giving or receiving unauthorized assistance to or from another student during an examination
 - Using unauthorized material during an examination
 - Borrowing or presenting as one's own (i.e. without proper attribution) the composition or ideas of another.

When you do quote from the textbooks or include an idea you read from the textbooks, use MLA Style parenthetical citations. This information is included within the body of your paper and includes within

parenthesis: (1) Author's last name; and, (2) page number. Below is an example of how to properly quote and cite from a textbook. You do NOT need to include a Works Cited/Bibliography page. If you do not properly cite the sources of the information you include in your work, it is considered plagiarism! Again, the work should NOT be quote heavy! You are to ENGAGE the information and demonstrate you understand what is being said.

Example of MLA citation: "One of the major goals in the book is to explore the religious theological dimensions of the New Testament writings" (Holladay 2).

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

*****Please note that this syllabus is subject to change, if necessary, for the benefit of student learning and/or due to unforeseen circumstances.*****