

## **WESLEY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY COURSE OF STUDY**

### **CS 121 Bible 1: Introduction**

**October 1 – November 8, 2025**

Course of Study Fall Orientation September 24 10:00 am  
October: Asynchronous Black Board Learning  
November: Synchronous Online Learning (Zoom Class)  
Friday, November 7, 9:00 am–12:00 pm and 1:00–3:00 pm  
Saturday, November 8, 9:00 am–12:00 pm and 1:00–3:00 pm

Instructor: Rev. Dr. Yo Rhie

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### **COUSE DESCRIPTION**

This course offers a general introduction to the Bible exploring the languages, canonization, organization, and translation of the biblical texts. The genres of narrative, poetry, wisdom, law, prophecy, gospels, parables, letters, and apocalypse are analyzed in order to comprehensively exegete the Bible.

### **COURSE GOALS**

The purpose of this course is to enable the student to do the following:

- Learn the origin, purpose, literary genre, and theology of various types of sacred writings in the Bible.
- Articulate the inspiration and formation of the canon and its authority within the community of faith.
- Articulate and critique various traditional and contemporary methods of exegeting the biblical texts.
- Develop a method of exegesis and the means for applying such to preaching and teaching in the local church.

### **REQUIRED TEXTS**

- John H. Hayes & Carl R. Holladay, *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook* (latest ed.; Westminster John Knox).
- William Barclay, *Introducing the Bible* (25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary ed.; Abingdon).
- Bernhard W. Anderson, *The Unfolding Drama of the Bible* (Fortress).
- Joel S. Kaminsky, Joel N. Lohr, & Mark Reasoner, *The Abingdon Introduction to the Bible: Understanding Jewish and Christian Scriptures* (Abingdon).

## **GRADED ACTIVITIES/ASSIGNMENTS**

<b>Assignments</b>	<b>Weight</b>
Book review of <i>Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook</i>	10%
Midterm exegesis paper with ministry application	20%
Final exegesis paper and sermon manuscript	30%
Discussion Board	25%
Participation & attendance	15%
Total maximum	100 points

### Grading Scale:

93 – 100 = A (Excellent/Outstanding)

90 – 92 = A- (Outstanding)

87 – 89 = B+ (Very Good)

83 – 86 = B (Good)

80 – 82 = B- (Adequate)

77 – 79 = C+ (Adequate)

73 – 76 = C (Adequate)

70 – 72 = C- (Substandard) Below 70 = F (Failing)

### **Graded Assignment**

#### **Paper #1 [Pre-Course Assignment] Book review of *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook* (10%)**

Write a 1,000-word book review of *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook* by Hayes & Holladay and answer:

- How does the book define “exegesis”?
- List the major categories of specialized exegesis and, for each category, state its primary focus and the principal sources/evidence it employs.

The book review should include quotations and references to pages in the book that support your claims. Upload in the Assignment portal in Blackboard by Wednesday, October 1 at 11:59 am.

## **Paper #2 Midterm exegesis paper with ministry application (20%)**

Choose ONE topic and write a 1,500-word exegesis paper with a concrete ministry application:

- 1) **Lament that Leads to Worship:** exegete a lament psalm (e.g., Ps 13, 42–43, or 88) and reflect on how lament moves the community from raw honesty before God to renewed trust and propose a pastoral use for this psalm in contemporary ministry.
- 2) **Prophet vs. Power:** analyze Nathan's confrontation of David (2 Sam 12) alongside Amos 7:10–17. Discuss the rhetorical strategies used by prophets when speaking truth to power and draw out ethical implications for church leadership today, particularly in contexts of abuse, injustice, or moral failure.
- 3) **Law, Prophecy, and Social Justice:** The prophets consistently emphasized that authentic worship must be joined with justice and care for the vulnerable—the poor, the widow, the orphan, and the stranger (e.g., Deut 10:18–19; Micah 6:6–8; Isa 1:11–17; Jer 7:1–11; Zech 7:8–10). Draw connections between the prophetic insistence on justice and contemporary challenges: religious communities that emphasize ritual, tradition, or image while neglecting systemic inequities and compassion. Reflect on how today's church can faithfully embody covenantal integrity by uniting worship with social action.

Paper should cite *The Unfolding Drama of the Bible*, and *The Abingdon Introduction to the Bible*, the Bible, and at least two commentaries.

Upload in the Assignment portal in Blackboard by Sunday, October 26, 11:59 PM EST.

## **Paper #3 Final Exegetical Paper and sermon manuscript (30%)**

Write a 2500-word paper following the instruction. You may expand on your midterm essay or select a new scripture passage for this assignment.

### **Part I Exegesis**

1. Text & Delimitation
  - Identify book, chapter, verses.
  - Name the translation you use; note significant textual variants where relevant.
2. Contextual Studies (Genre, History, Author, Canon)
  - Genre/Form: Define the literary type (e.g., lament psalm, prophetic woe oracle, royal annals, parable, miracle story, epistle thanksgiving, apocalyptic vision) and its

typical conventions.

- History/Author/Audience: Summarize what is reasonably claimed about authorship, date, community setting, and indicate contested areas briefly.
- Literature Family/Canonical Location: Situate the book in its wider corpus (e.g., Pentateuch; Deuteronomistic History; Chronicler's History; Wisdom; Major/Minor Prophets; Synoptic; Pauline; Catholic Epistles; Apocalypse). Note how this family shapes interpretation (motifs, theology, narrative arc).
- Historical-Cultural Backdrop: Identify 1–2 concrete social, political, or cultic factors that illuminate the text (e.g., exile; imperial power; temple practice; patronage; purity; honor/shame).

### 3. Methods: One Traditional + One Contemporary

Briefly define and justify your selected pair:

- Traditional (choose one): historical-critical (source/form/redaction/tradition), textual criticism, socio-historical, rhetorical, narrative criticism, canonical criticism, theological interpretation.
- Contemporary (choose one): feminist/womanist, Latinx, Asian/Asian-American, African or African-Diaspora, postcolonial, disability, queer, ecological, reader-response, minoritized-community hermeneutics.

Explain why this pairing is apt for your passage and what distinct questions each method asks.

## Part II Sermon

Write a sermon manuscript that demonstrates:

faithfulness to the text; clarity of the Big Idea; contextual sensitivity; credible movement from exegesis to proclamation; and the consistent use of inclusive language.

\* Big Idea: Ground your central claim in your exegetical research, answering two questions “what does this Scripture proclaim?” and “why does this message matter in our church today?”

Paper should cite textbooks, the Bible, and at least three different exegetical sources, such as commentaries, Bible dictionaries and encyclopedias, hymnals, academic journals.

Upload in the Assignment portal in Blackboard by Monday, November 10, 11:59 PM EST.

*Do not submit your assignment to the instructor by email. All written work must be uploaded to Blackboard in .docx or .doc format.*

*Late Work: Not accepted without prior arrangement; contact instructor in advance for extenuating circumstances.*

### **Discussion Board (25%)**

There will be two questions on the readings each week during the month of October. You will post your answers to the prompts by Thursday night at 11:59pm each week and then reply to at least one classmate by Sunday night each week with meaningful engagement. Of course, you may respond to more than one and this is encouraged. You are also invited to introduce yourself in Blackboard by answering the four questions prior to October 2.

### **Participation & Attendance (10%)**

Attendance will be recorded at the end of each week's assignments and the discussion board participation during the asynchronous learning period (October 1-31). It is particularly important to attend all two Zoom classes from November 7 to 8. You are expected to log-in on time, participate fully in the discussion with your camera on and stay for whole session.

### **WEEKLY SCHEDULE**

<b>Modules</b>	<b>Topics &amp; Assignment</b>
10/1	What is exegesis? Understanding various exegetical traditions and views. Readings: J. Hayes et. al. <i>Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook</i> . Kaminsky, <i>The Abingdon Introduction to the Bible</i> , pp. 1-49
Before 10/1	*Pre-assignment: Write 1,000-word book review of <i>Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook</i> (10%)
Before 10/5	Discussion Board: Introduce yourself and respond to at least one classmate.
10/6	Torah Readings: Anderson, pp.19-37 (Study I~II) ; Barclay, pp. 25-35 (The Making of
10/9, 12	the Pentateuch); Kaminsky, pp. 52-93 (Torah~ Deuteronomy)

Discussion Board (post by Thu 10/9; reply by Sun 10/12):

- 1) How do covenant law shape a community's identity and ethics?
- 2) What are the challenges facing the church today in the keeping of the covenant commitment in a world of increasing polarized, digital and laicized?

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10/13	Hebrew Poetry & Wisdom Literature Readings: Kaminsky, pp.169-203 (Ketuvim ~ Song of Songs); Anderson, pp. 53-60 (Study V)
10/16, 19	Discussion Board (posted by Thu 10/16; reply by Sun 10/19) Choose One: 1) Psalms often convey a wide range of emotions, such as joy, sorrow, gratitude, despair, and so on. Reflect on a time when you experienced feelings similar to those expressed in a psalm, and tell us which psalm(s) resonates most with you and why? 2) The test of any religion is how it deals with the problem of suffering and evil. How is this problem dealt with in the Book of Job?
10/20	Prophecy Readings: Kaminsky, pp. 94-170 (Prophets); Barclay, pp. 36-45 (Prophets); Anderson, pp. 45~52 (Study IV) <i>*By this week, you have covered most of the Scripture genres needed for your midterm paper, so I encourage you to begin working on it.</i>
10/23, 26	Discussion Board: How do you think Jesus fulfills eschatological hope expressed in the writings of Old Testament prophecy?
10/27	Historical Writings and Apocrypha Readings: Kaminski, pp.204-208 (Ruth), 220-251 (Esther ~ Apocrypha); Anderson, pp. 76~101 (Apocrypha)
10/31	Paper #2 Midterm exegesis paper with ministry application
11/7-8	Synchronous Zoom Class Friday, November 7, 9:00 am–12:00 pm and 1:00–3:00 pm Saturday, November 8, 9:00 am–12:00 pm and 1:00–3:00 pm

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## **ACADEMIC HONESTY & INTEGRITY**

Inclusive Language: Use language that reflects the equal dignity of all people. Avoid sexist, racist, or otherwise dehumanizing language in speech and writing.

All submitted work must be your own. Properly cite every source (books, articles, lectures, media, and any AI tool usage disclosed per the AI policy). Plagiarism or academic dishonesty (including unauthorized collaboration, using prohibited aids on assessments, or submitting AI-authored content) may result in failure for the assignment or course and be reported to the Dean.

### **Generative AI Policy**

- Purpose: Seminary work forms your own pastoral/theological voice; AI must not replace your learning.
- Permitted (with acknowledgment in the submission):
  - o Preliminary backgrounding and idea-mapping.
  - o Light writing support (grammar, single-sentence clarity, synonym suggestions).
  - o Brainstorming or outlining for non-graded preparation.
- Prohibited in graded work:
  - o Generating substantive content (paragraphs, sections, or drafts) for any graded assignment.
  - o Submitting AI-authored text as your own.
  - o Using AI to answer discussion items or to summarize readings in place of your own engagement.
  - o Unattributed paraphrase/summary originating from AI.
- If AI misuse is suspected: the assignment receives a failing grade and offences are reported to the Dean.