

Wesley Theological Seminary

Course of Study

July 5-9, 2021

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 July 5 submitted via email. The remainder of our work will be done during the synchronous and asynchronous portions of the class.**

Please schedule time each week to work on your pre-course work. 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.****

1. Asynchronous Learning

During the weeks between May 24, 2021-June 18, 2021 your instructor will provide online asynchronous learning activities. Each day (M-F) there will be new assignments, requiring approximately 30-45 minutes of engagement from you. Where there are discussion forums, you are expected to both post your own responses and respond *meaningfully* in dialogue with your classmates.

2. Written and reading assignments:

Prior to our synchronous learning on July 5, 2021, you are expected to have completed the assignments, below:

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.

Prior to July 5, 2021:

On the first day of synchronous instruction (July 5, 2021), 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)

3. Face-to-Face Class Time (July 5-9, 2021)

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 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!

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” means the individual needs to see me immediately.
- Grades will be reduced a step (e.g. from B to a B-) for assignments handed in after the start of class, and a full letter grade for any assignments 24 hours past due. Assignments over 48 hours past due will be lowered two letter grades. We need to talk if an assignment is over 72 hours past due. Please note only two unexcused absences are allowed before grade is lowered one step. Final course grades are mailed to the student, GBHEM in Nashville and the student’s conference representative by September 30. Grades are not posted on-line.

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.

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.