

WESLEY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY COURSE OF STUDY

CS 121 Bible 1: Introduction October 1 – November 2, 2024

October: Asynchronous Black Board Learning
November: Synchronous Online Learning (Zoom Class)
Friday, November 1, 9:00 am–12:00 pm and 1:00–3:00 pm
Saturday, November 2, 9:00 am–12:00 pm and 1:00–3:00 pm

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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

- Hayes, John, et. al. *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook*, Westminster John Knox Press, 2007.
- Johnston, Philip. *The IVP Introduction to the Bible*. Intersity Press, 2006.

- Kaminsky, Joel, et. al. *The Abingdon Introduction to the Bible: Understanding Jewish and Christian Scriptures*, Abingdon Press, 2014.

RECOMMEND TEXT

- Anderson, Bernhard. *The Unfolding Drama of the Bible*, Fortress Press, 2006.

ASSIGNMENTS

The first month, (10/1~31) is asynchronous Black Board Learning, which means you'll be required to watch the lecture videos and read textbooks and other selected materials and submit your essays to Blackboard. All grades will be posted on Blackboard. No corrections will be made once final grades have been submitted.

1. Attendance and Participation

- Contribute to the Blackboard Discussion Board.

2. Attendance will be recorded at the end of each week's assignments during the asynchronous learning period (October 1-31). It is particularly important to attend all two Zoom classes from November 1 to 2.

3. Writing Assignment

- Journal reflection: Every week (except for when midterm and final exegesis papers are due), students will submit an essay discussing topic from class readings of the week.
- Final research paper is due on November 10th, 11:59 pm. The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate your biblical literacy (identify structural features of the Bible, the context and audience of the original text, authorship and interpreting traditions, etc.); and to produce your own biblical exegesis integrating your research of primary and secondary sources into a preaching manuscript.

Grades

- Late papers will not be accepted.
- All written assignments must demonstrate academic integrity which means both truthful representation of all academic work, and opposition to cheating, lying, and plagiarism of any kind. You must cite any sources used in essays in footnotes or a bibliography and are expected to produce your own original work.
- All papers must be submitted electronically to Blackboard in word document formats (*.docx, *.doc), twelve-point font, double-space, with a one-inch margin by due dates.
- Passing grades are A,B and C.

Grading Scale	A (93-100)	A- (90-92)	
	B+ (87-89)	B (83-86)	B- (80-82)
	C+ (77-79)	C (73-6)	C- (70-72)

D+ (67-69) D (63-66) D- (60-62)
Less than 60 = fail

COURSE OUTLINE

10/1 **What is exegesis?** Understanding various exegetical traditions and views.

Readings:

1. J. Hayes et. al. *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook*, Ch 1.
2. Johnston, *IVP Introduction to the Bible*, Ch.1, 2
3. Kaminsky, *The Abingdon Introduction to the Bible*, pp. 1-29, 45-49

Assignment (ONE-PAGE):

1. What is “exegesis” and what are the ten categories of specialized exegesis?
2. Write a brief interpretive strategy of one or two “criticisms” which you have used/might use in your studying and preaching the biblical text.

Due Date:

Monday, October 7, 11:59 PM.

10/8 **Hebrew Poetry & Wisdom Literature**

The literary composition, themes, and theological significance of biblical poetry and Wisdom Literature.

Readings:

1. Kaminsky, *The Abingdon Introduction to the Bible*, pp.171-203.
2. Johnston, *IVP Introduction to the Bible*, Ch 5.

Assignment (TWO-PAGE):

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?

Due Date:

Monday, October 14, 11:59 PM.

10/15 **Historical Writings**

Readings:

1. Johnson, *IVP Introduction to the Bible*, Ch. 10. (pp. 69-94)
2. Kaminsky, *The Abingdon Introduction to the Bible*, pp. 99-130, 183-197, 220-241.

Assignment (THREE-PAGE):

1. Leadership in Human Kingship: What patterns can be observed in the interactions between the early kings and prophets? How do these patterns reveal the broader relationship between political power and spiritual authority in Israel?
2. Sin Cycle and Divine Justice: Repeated pattern of sin and redemption in Judges underscores the need for God's justice and redemption. How do these stories point forward to the coming of Christ and the ultimate fulfillment of God's redemptive plan?
3. Word of God as Foundation of Reformation: Josiah's Reforms was influenced by the discovery of the Book of the Law (2 Kings 22-23), and the Post-Exilic Jewish Community had the spiritual renewal after the public reading and explanation of the Book of the Law (Ezra-Nehemiah). In what ways can the Scripture serve as a catalyst for spiritual and moral reformation in our community and society?

Due Date:

Monday, October 21, 11:59 PM.

10/22

Law & Prophecy

Readings:

1. Johnson, *IVP Introduction to the Bible*, Ch. 3. (pp. 49-67), Ch. 6. (pp. 115-139).
2. Kaminsky, *The Abingdon Introduction to the Bible*, pp. 52-93, 131-168.

Assignment (TWO-PAGE)

1. The Law as Covenant: What were the primary purposes of the covenant law given to Israel? How did these laws help to establish and maintain the identity of Israel as God's chosen people? what are the consequences the prophets outlined for breaking the covenant?
2. Law, Prophecy, and Compassion: The prophets often emphasized social justice issues, such as caring for the poor, the widow, and the orphan. In what ways did the prophets call the leaders and people of Israel to align their social practices with the law? How did they address the disconnect between religious rituals and social ethics?

Due Date:

Monday, October 28, 11:59 PM.

Final Assignment (10 PAGES)
Due by November 10th, 2024, 11:59PM

You'll be required to submit your research paper and preaching manuscript implementing one traditional and one contemporary exegesis strategies on scripture readings of your choice.

The first five pages will explain your exegetical process on the biblical text.

- Identify cultural and historical context of the original author, audience and/or language.
- The position of your chosen text in the wider manuscript families and traditions (Pentateuch, Law, Poetry, Wisdom, History, Gospel, Letters, and so on)
- Implement at least one contemporary perspective:
- Reading the biblical text in the context of Christian faith and theology, or from specific cultural, racial, gender, social, and political contexts.
- Engagement with ancient biblical writings through diverse cultural perspectives and contemporary experiences - why and how is the Bible relevant to the issues and challenges of your audience?

The remaining five pages will be your preaching manuscript.

11/1~2 **The New Testament**

Synchronous Zoom Meeting

- Friday, November 1, 9:00 am–12:00 pm and 1:00–3:00 pm
- Saturday, November 2, 9:00 am–12:00 pm and 1:00–3:00 pm