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Duke University Divinity School
June 30-July 25, 2008

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COS 411: Hebrew Bible II

Textbooks:

- _____ Achtemeier, Paul J., Ed. *The HarperCollins Bible Dictionary. Revised Edition.*, \$47.50
- _____ Bright, John. *A History of Israel. Fourth Edition.*, \$39.95
- _____ Brueggemann, Walter. *An Introduction to the Old Testament: The Canon and Christian Imagination.*, \$34.95
- _____ Gorman, Michael J. *Elements of Biblical Exegesis: A Basic Guide for Students and Ministers.*, \$16.95

Students w/last names beginning with A through M:

- _____ Weems, Renita. *Battered Love.*, \$17.00

Students w/last names beginning with N through Z:

- _____ Hauerwas, Stanley. *Unleashing the Scripture.*, \$18.00 (no discount)

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Instructor

Dr. James P. Ashmore, Assistant Professor of Old Testament
Shaw University Divinity School
email: jashmore@shawu.edu or jashmore1@nc.rr.com

Course Description

A continuation of the examination of the Word of God as it was expressed through some of Israel's prophets, selected Psalms, and selected passages from the Book of Job.

Objectives

1. A focus on the biblical message as a whole by integrating this year's study with previous study of the Bible.
2. Gain greater familiarity with a number of the great passages in the designated books.
3. Continuation of exegetical practice.
4. Exploration of the assigned passages as relevant for preaching, mission, and ministry by today's pastor and congregation.

Texts

Achtemeier, Paul J., Ed. The HarperCollins Bible Dictionary. Revised Edition. San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1996.

Bright, John. A History of Israel. Fourth Edition. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000.

Brueggemann, Walter. An Introduction to the Old Testament: The Canon and Christian Imagination. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003.

Gorman, Michael J. Elements of Biblical Exegesis: A Basic Guide for Students and Ministers. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers.

Students with last names beginning with A through M will read:
Weems, Renita. *Battered Love*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1995.

Students with last names beginning with N through Z will read:
Hauerwas, Stanley. *Unleashing the Scripture*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993.

Assignments

Book Review

Each student will read either *Battered Love* (students with last names beginning with A through M) or *Unleashing the Scripture* (students with last names beginning with N through Z) and write a review. The format is given at the end of this syllabus. It will count 30% of the grade.

Exegesis Paper

Students will write an exegesis paper on a passage we have covered in class. The paper will follow the format given in Gorman, *Elements of Biblical Exegesis*. The paper should be approximately 12-15 pages in length. It will count 35% of the grade.

Sermon

Each student will write a sermon on the same passage he or she wrote the exegesis paper on. The sermon will be approximately 5 pages in length and will be evaluated on how well it connects the passage in its original context with the contemporary world. It will count 35% of the grade.

Class Schedule

June 30

Understanding Your Context

Read:

Gorman

July 1

Understanding Your Context

July 2

Understanding the Historical Context

July 3

Understanding the Literary Context

July 4

Understanding the Theological Context

July 7

Book Review Due

Prophecy

Read:

Isaiah

Brueggemann, 159-176

July 8

Prophecy

July 9

Prophecy

July 10

Prophecy

July 11

Prophecy

Read:

Jeremiah

Brueggemann, 177-190

Bright, 310-372

July 14 Exegesis Paper Due

Prophecy

July 15

Prophecy

July 16

Prophecy

July 17

Psalms

Read:

Psalms

Brueggemann, 277-292

Bright, 373-427

July 18

Psalms

July 21 Sermon Due

Psalms

July 22

Psalms

July 23

Job

Read:

Job

Brueggemann, 293-304

Bright, 428-457

July 24

Job

July 25

Job

Pre-Assignment

It is expected that students will have **read** the following prior to arriving at Course of Study:

Isaiah

Jeremiah

Job

Psalms

Gorman, *Elements of Biblical Exegesis*.

Students with last names A through M: *Battered Love*

Students with last names N through Z: *Unleashing the Scripture*

Prior to arriving at Course of Study, students will find it very helpful to have **written a rough draft** of the Book Review assignment (instructions attached). The final draft of the assignment will be due at the end of the first week. The instructor will gladly read rough drafts and make suggestions prior to the beginning of Course of Study and during the first week of class.

Students who have completed these pre-assignments will find the course much more useful and fulfilling. Those who have not completed these assignments will find it much more difficult to complete the work during the month.

Instructor

Dr. James P. Ashmore, Assistant Professor of Old Testament, Shaw University Divinity School
email: jashmore@shawu.edu or jashmore1@nc.rr.com

Book Review

Purpose

This assignment requires students to become engaged with the issues currently being addressed by the scholarly community. It is also an exercise in critical reading, a skill that all students should develop. The assignment has four parts, and must not exceed eight pages.

The following parts must be in the paper in the following order.

1. Identification (5 pts.)

Identify the book through standard bibliographic format.

2. Contents (20 pts.)

Briefly give a factual summary of the main points the author makes.

3. Thesis (10 pts.)

State the author's thesis, that is, the main point the author wishes to convey. Note whether or not a thesis is explicitly stated or only implied.

4. Evaluation (65 pts. total)

This is the most important part of the assignment and should constitute the bulk of the paper.

Does the author successfully demonstrate his/her point? (30 pts.)

How effective is the author in proving the thesis of the book? **Why** is the author's argument effective or ineffective?

What about the author's argument is persuasive or not persuasive and why? You should make specific references to the evidence the author employs. You should also note other ways of interpreting this evidence, in so far as you are able to determine this.

What is the author's attitude toward the subject? (15 pts.)

By specific reference to the author's work, describe the author's attitude to the subject matter. Does the author generally appear objective? Does she/he reveal a particular attitude towards the subject matter? How does this effect the way he/she evaluates the evidence?

Are there others who agree or disagree? (10 pts.)

Does the author mention other positions on the issue(s) he/she discusses? How does he/she evaluate these positions? Does he/she appear to be fair in these evaluations?

Does the book contribute to your understanding of the subject? (10 pts.)

You should include consideration of whether or not this book is worth reading. Does it contribute significantly to scholarly debate? Did it help you to understand the issue better or only confuse you? Would you recommend this book to others interested in the topic?

Grading Rubric for Book Review

Section	Excellent (5)	Good (4)	Acceptable (3)	Marginal (2)	Poor (1)
Identification in Standard Bibliographic Format 5 Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> all required parts are present parts are in correct order reference appears first in paper all elements are correct 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> no more than one required part missing <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> no more than one required part out of order reference appears first in paper all elements are correct 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> no more than two required parts missing <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> no more than two required parts out of order <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reference does not appear first in paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> material given in bib. format with multiple parts missing <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> in wrong order <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> multiple errors and not in correct position 	Author and title given, but no bibliographic reference is present.
Summary of Contents 20 Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> notes all main points of book gives accurate description of main parts of book clearly and accurately accounts for the method of argument is no more than two pages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> notes all main points of book gives a mostly accurate description of main parts of book has some content on method of argument is no more than two pages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> notes majority of main points contains general description of main parts of book notes author's method of argument is too short to adequately cover contents OR it exceeds two pages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> omits several key points omits description of multiple main parts of book fails to account for author's method of argument is more than three pages in length OR is less than one page 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> omits multiple key points gives only very cursory description of the parts of the book gives no more than passing view of method is more than four pages in length OR is less than ½ page
Thesis Statement 10 Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> gives accurate, one sentence summary of thesis notes whether thesis is stated or implied, and, if stated, notes where 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> accurately stated notes whether thesis is stated or implied 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> generally accurate statement of thesis implies whether thesis is stated or implied 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not completely account for author's thesis makes no statement whether it is stated or implied 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> inaccurate statement or excessively wordy makes no statement whether it is stated or implied
Evaluation successfully demonstrates points 30 Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consistently uses evaluative comments ("The author's argument fails to convince because . . .") rather than descriptive comments ("The author makes three points about 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> contains no more than 2-3 descriptive comments consistently gives clear, sound reasons why the author's argument succeeds or fails accounts for each of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> contains more evaluative comments than descriptive comments more than half the points give clear, sound reasons why the author's argument 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> contains some evaluative comments at least 1/3 of the points give clear, sound reasons why the author's argument succeeds or fails accounts for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> contains few evaluative comments fewer than 1/3 of the points give clear, sound reasons why the author's argument succeeds or fails accounts for fewer than

Section	Excellent (5)	Good (4)	Acceptable (3)	Marginal (2)	Poor (1)
<p>Evaluation successfully demonstrates points 30 Points (continued)</p>	<p>the text . . .”)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consistently gives clear, sound reasons why the author’s argument succeeds or fails • accounts for each of the main points of the book • does not repeat material from the Summary section • is accurate in representing the author’s points and evidence 	<p>main points of the book</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • does not repeat material from the Summary section • is accurate in representing the author’s points and evidence 	<p>succeeds or fails</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accounts for most of the main points of the book • rarely repeats material from the Summary section • is generally accurate in representing the author’s points and evidence 	<p>at least half of the main points of the book</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • repeats several of the points from the Summary section • contains some accurate statements about the author’s points and evidence 	<p>half of the main points of the book</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • repeats many or most of the main points from the Summary section • contains numerous inaccuracies in statements about the author’s points and evidence
<p>Evaluation attitude towards subject 15 Points</p> <p>Evaluation attitude towards subject 15 Points (continued)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gives an accurate description of the author’s attitude toward the subject • consistently connects statements about the author’s attitude with illustrative quotes from or references to the book • clearly indicates how the author’s attitude affects how she/he evaluates the evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gives an accurate description of the author’s attitude toward the subject • with no more than one exception, connects statements about the author’s attitude with quotes from or references to the book • clearly indicates how the author’s attitude affects how she/he evaluates the evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is mostly accurate in describing the author’s attitude toward the subject • majority of statements about the author’s attitude are connected to quotes from or references to the book • makes some statements about how the author’s attitude affects how she/he evaluates the evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contains several inaccuracies in describing the author’s attitude <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student allows student’s own attitude toward subject matter to skew her/his view of the book • some statements about the author’s attitude are connected to quotes from or references to the book • makes at least one statement about how the author’s attitude affects the way she/he evaluates the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contains numerous inaccurate descriptions of the author’s attitude • fewer than 1/3 of the statements are connected to quotes from or references to the book • makes little or no statement about how the author’s attitude affects her/his evaluation of the evidence

Section	Excellent (5)	Good (4)	Acceptable (3)	Marginal (2)	Poor (1)
				evidence	
Evaluation others who agree or disagree 10 Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> accurately states which scholars are cited as supporting or opposing points accurately states how the author evaluates these points notes whether this strengthens or weakens the overall argument 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> accurately states which scholars are cited as supporting or opposing points accurately states how the author evaluates these points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> mostly accurate statements about scholars who are cited as supporting or opposing points mostly accurate statements about how the author evaluates these points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> some accurate statements about which scholars are cited as supporting or opposing points some accurate statements about how the author evaluates these points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> one part mostly or completely absent
Evaluation contribute to understanding of subject 10 Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> makes a clear statement and provides supporting reasons states clearly whether or not he/she would recommend the book, to whom, and states clearly why 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> makes a clear statement and provides at least one supporting reason states clearly whether or not he/she would recommend the book and why 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> makes a clear statement states whether or not he/she would recommend the book, some explanation of why 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> statement is not clear states whether or not he/she would recommend the book 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> one of the two parts is missing entirely
Evaluation contribute to understanding of subject 10 Points (continued)					
Overall Quality and Writing (points deducted)	0 Points	2 Points	5 Points	10 Points	15 Points
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> paper conforms to length requirement paper is typed in standard type paper is double spaced parts of paper are clearly labeled all parts of paper are in correct order no errors in spelling no errors in word choice no errors in grammar all references are properly cited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> paper conforms to length requirement paper is typed in standard type paper is double spaced parts of paper are clearly labeled all parts of paper are in correct order no more than one error in spelling no more than one error in word choice no more than one error in grammar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> paper does not exceed length requirement by more than one page paper is typed in standard type parts of paper are clearly labeled all parts of paper are in correct order no more than two errors in spelling no more than two errors in word choice no more than two errors in grammar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> paper does not exceed length requirement by more than one page paper is typed in standard type parts of paper are clearly labeled all parts of paper are in correct order no more than 3-4 errors in spelling no more than 3-4 errors in word choice no more than 3-4 errors in grammar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> paper does not exceed length requirement by more than one page paper is typed parts of paper are labeled most of paper is in correct order multiple errors in spelling, word choice, or grammar all references are properly cited

Section	Excellent (5)	Good (4)	Acceptable (3)	Marginal (2)	Poor (1)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• all references are properly cited	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• all references are properly cited	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• all references are properly cited	

Items that will result in having a paper returned as unacceptable:

- indications that material has been paraphrased, quoted, or copied from a source without proper attribution
- grammar, word choice, and spelling errors that are so pervasive that the paper is difficult to read

Book Review

Purpose

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Does the book contribute to your understanding of the subject? (10 pts.)

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