

OT 201-3 Exegesis of Genesis
Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary
Fall 2022
Wed 9 – 11:50 AM
Schlegel 122

Prerequisites

OT 131-3 Torah and Former Prophets OR
OT 132-3 Latter Prophets and Writings OR
OT 102-3 Introduction to OT Exegesis AND
OT 100-4 Scripture 1

Instructor Contact

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Schlegel 304
Office Hours: email for appointment

Course Description

This course provides students with a close examination of the book of Genesis including its historical background, literary contours, and history of interpretation. Some students will also have the option to hone their skills in Hebrew through translation and attention to the Hebrew text. By studying the book of Genesis against the backdrop of modern scholarship and reception history, students will uncover new and exciting arenas of meaning for this inspiring book of the Bible.

Learning Goals

By completing this course, students will:

1. Gain a stronger familiarity with the content and distinctive features of Genesis.
2. Be able to analyze and exposit passages in Genesis through critical focus on the world behind the text, the world within the text, and the world in front of the text.
3. Develop critical awareness of the impact (positive or negative, but always inescapable) of contextualized beings (including themselves) on biblical interpretation.
4. Reflect critically on the past, present, and future consequences of competing paradigms for the authority of the Bible and its relationship to other sources of authority.
5. Engage in critical reflection on the history and current contexts regarding race, racism, and antiracism as it relates to the interpretation of Genesis and related biblical texts.

Required Book

An English study Bible. Choose **ONE** of the options listed below:

- Attridge, Harold W., ed. *The Harper Collins Study Bible*. New York: HarperOne, 2006.
- Berlin, Adele, Marc Zvi Brettler, and Michael Fishbane, eds. *Jewish Study Bible*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Coogan, Michael D., ed. *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*. 4th ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Harrelson, Walter, ed. *New Interpreter's Study Bible*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2003.

Recommended Resources

The following commentaries and general resources will be valuable resources for topics discussed in class and for research toward exegesis papers and final projects. You are highly encouraged to explore these resources in our library as you develop your idea and do research for your final paper:

- Evans, Craig A., Joel N. Lohr, and David L. Petersen, eds. *The Book of Genesis: Composition, Reception, and Interpretation*. Leiden: Brill, 2012.
- Gunkel, Hermann. *Genesis*. Translated by Mark E. Biddle. Mercer Library of Biblical Studies. Edited by John Blekinsopp and Walter Brueggemann. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1997.
- Hendel, Ron, ed. *Reading Genesis: Ten Methods*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Moberly, R. W. L. *The Theology of the Book of Genesis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- Rad, Gerhard von. *Genesis: A Commentary*. Revised Edition. Old Testament Library. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1972.
- Westermann, Claus. *Genesis 1-11*. Translated by John J. Scullion. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1984.
- . *Genesis 12-36*. Translated by John J. Scullion. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1985.
- . *Genesis 37-50*. Translated by John J. Scullion. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1986.

Students aiming to practice Hebrew in this course may want to own a Hebrew Bible (*Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. 5th corrected edition. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1997) and one of the three lexicons listed below.

- Brown, Francis, S. R. Driver, and Charles Augustus Briggs. *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907.
- Holladay, William L. *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Leiden: Brill, 2000.
- Koehler, Ludwig, and Walter Baumgartner. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Translated by M. E. J. Richardson. Study Edition. 2 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2001.

Contract Grading

The contract grading system below has been implemented in order to facilitate an environment that aligns with a democratic, emancipatory model of education. This system should foster more collaborative (rather than competitive) interactions and ease tensions about “making-the-grade.” Based upon your individual learning goals, each student can choose how much work to do for this course and expect a grade within the range displayed below.

Individual assignments will be graded on a basis of R (Re-do or Rewrite), S (Satisfactory), and E (Excellent). In the case of participation, students will only be graded on a basis of S and E. For the Final Paper or Project there is no chance for an R. Unsatisfactory work will result in no credit. Every student must complete ALL assignments to the standard of S in order for that assignment to count.

If a student receives an R, that student must re-do the assignment based on feedback and re-submit the assignment at the standard of an S. Re-do assignments are due within two weeks of the student receiving an R. Every student who receives an R must meet with the writing center and the professor before re-submitting their assignment. If the student fails to earn an S on a re-done assignment, the student will receive one mark against their ability to remain within the contract grading system. A student with two marks will negate their contract grade and will need to meet with the professor regarding the potential for them to pass this class.

Students can expect a grade within the range below based upon the proportion of assignments earning an S or E.

C Level Work (C- or C or C+)

1. Active participation in class and group discussions
2. [Genesis Outline](#)
3. [Topic and Preliminary Bibliography](#)
4. [HLT/Three Worlds Questions](#)
5. [Thesis](#)
6. Response to Exegetical Questions First Draft
7. Response to Exegetical Questions Final Draft

B Level Work (B- or B or B+)

1. Requirements 1 – 5 above
2. [Outline of Paper or Project and Updated Bibliography](#)
3. First Draft of Final Assignment
 - 3,000 – 4,000 word-length (without including footnotes) paper
 - [Four-video series](#)
 - [Four-class Bible study curriculum](#)
4. Final Draft of Final Assignment

A Level Work (A- or A)

1. All of the requirements of the previous level
2. First Draft of Final Assignment
 - 4,000+ word-length (without including footnotes) paper
 - [Eight-video series](#)
 - [Eight-class Bible study curriculum](#)
3. Final Draft of Final Assignment

Please note: All work that you submit for this course must meet substantive (quality of your ideas) and formal (adherence to standards of proofreading and citation) requirements for a graduate level course in order for you to be eligible for the contract grade. If your work does not meet these requirements you may negate your contract grade. If I correct an earlier draft of your work and you re-submit the same errors, you will negate your contract grade.

A Note about Citation

For all of your assignments you are asked to properly cite secondary sources and biblical texts according to the guidelines [here](#). These guidelines show you how to cite the Bible and how to use Zotero to automatically generate footnote citations and a bibliography according to the Society of Biblical Literature's Style Guide (which is very similar to Chicago Manual of Style).

Assignments and Evaluation

Participation is expected in all class sessions. Students should come to class prepared to discuss the assigned biblical text(s) and/or secondary reading(s). Aside from simply answering questions, active participation can be shown through activities like listening attentively to others, responding to others, asking relevant questions, and taking notes.

Each assignment in this class helps students gain skills that are valuable in exegesis. Specific guidelines can be found by clicking on the hyperlinks or visiting Canvas.

[Students can see their grade by clicking on this link.](#)

All Assignments with Due Dates

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Due Date</u> (bring to class and submit online)
Genesis Outline	Sep 21
Topic and Preliminary Bibliography	Sep 28
HLT/Three Worlds Questions	Oct 5
Thesis Statement	Oct 12
Outline and Updated Bibliography	Nov 2
First Draft of Paper or Project	Nov 16
Response to Exegetical Questions First Draft	Nov 16
Final Draft of Paper or Project	Dec 16
Response to Exegetical Questions Final Draft	Dec 16

Course Schedule

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Biblical Texts</u>	<u>Secondary Readings</u>	<u>Assignments Due</u>	<u>Topic</u>
1	9/14				Introduction Review Syllabus
2	9/21	ALL of Genesis		Book of Genesis Outline	Theology of Genesis Source Criticism and Historical Contexts
3	9/28	Gen 1–4	Meyers, “Eve in Eden” 59–80, 218–220 [Canvas] Yee, “Eve in Genesis,” 59–79 [Canvas]	Topic and Preliminary Bibliography	Creation Stories Historical Context for Primeval Stories
4	10/5	Gen 5, 10, 36, 46 Gen 6–9	Chapman, “Introduction,” 1–19, 229–234 [https://lpts.on.worldcat.org/oclc/959713175] Mbuvi, “The Theology of Genealogy,” 43–67 [Canvas] Haynes, “Setting the Stage,” 1–19, 224–230 [Canvas]	HLT/Three Worlds Questions	Genealogies History of Consequences
5	10/12	Gen 11–14, 20, 26	Sharp, “[Excerpt from] Foreign Rulers and the Fear of God,” 43–54, 81–83, 264–275 [Canvas] Moberly, “The Religion of the Patriarchs,” 79–104 [Canvas]	Thesis Statement	Wife-Sister Stories Religion of the Patriarchs and Matriarchs
NO CLASS – READING WEEK					
6	10/26	Gen 15, 17	Schwartz, [Excerpts from <i>The Curse of Cain</i>], ix–		Theology of Election

		Gen 16, 21 Gen 18–19	xi, 1–38, 177–83 [Library Reserve] Levenson, “The Universal Horizon of Biblical Particularism,” 143–169 [Library Reserve] Use this link to choose one of the following three readings: Trible and Russell, “Unto the Thousandth Generation,” 1–29 [Canvas] Sakenfeld, “Sarah and Hagar,” 7–25 [Canvas] Junior, “Egyptian Hagar,” 46–68 [Canvas]		Hagar Sodom and Gamora
7	11/2	Gen 22–25	Levenson, “The Test,” 66–112, 219–223 [Canvas]	Outline of Paper or Project and Updated Bibliography	The Aqedah Rebecca
8	11/9	Gen 27–33, 35	Lapsley, “Hearing Whispers,” 21–34, 113–117 [Canvas] Gafney, [Excerpts from <i>Womanist Midrash</i>], 45–85 [Canvas]		The Jacob Cycle The Body of God
9	11/16	Gen 34, 37–38	Finish your first draft...	First Draft of Paper or Project Response to Exegetical Questions First Draft	Rape in the Hebrew Bible Joseph
	11/23	NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING			
10	11/30	Gen 39–45	Ackerman, “Joseph, Judah, and Jacob,” 85–113, 305–306 [Canvas]		Literary Artistry in Joseph Saga

11	12/7	Gen 47–50	Fox, “Joseph and Wisdom,” 231–262 [Canvas]		Joseph and Wisdom
	12/16			Final Draft of Paper or Project Response to Exegetical Questions Final Draft	

Course Policies

Inclusive and Expansive Language

Whether you are aware of this fact or not, Louisville Seminary emphasizes the use of inclusive and expansive language with regards to people in our written and oral communications. This intentionality of language should be representative of the span of humanity with respect to gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, age, as well as physical and intellectual capacities. With gender, for example, “humankind” is an inclusive alternative to the androcentric term “mankind.” For many of us, this type of writing, speaking, and thinking may be new or different and we encourage you to continue to work with it as one aspect of proclaiming the truth of the gospel for all people.

In this course, we will also discuss God with this intentionality of language in mind. While it is clear that the Bible often uses masculine forms to refer to God, the Christian faith has always taught that God is beyond male and female. In keeping with the Christian conviction that God is neither male nor female and the attempt to remain intentional with our language, you are encouraged to either avoid gendered pronouns when referring to God or use pronouns that intentionally reflect the metaphors, theology, or claims you are making. Part of this expectation is that members of this community will be intentional with what we say rather than complicit in perpetuating biases (especially those we do not agree with) based upon our ignorance or lack of effort. To help us remain intentional with our language, the instructor may encourage students, on occasion, to remain cognizant of the language that we use.

Direct quotations and translations from the biblical text need not be altered to conform with this policy; but, you may alter these as well if you so choose.

Attendance

Prompt attendance is mandatory. Excessive tardiness (in time or frequency) constitutes an absence. If absences become a problem, students must meet with the instructor regarding the possibility of passing this class.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to submit their own work—or their own group’s work in the cases where we have group assignments. The use of any ideas or words from an outside source must be acknowledged by an appropriate citation of the author and source. Failure to follow these guidelines constitutes plagiarism and may result in failure of this course. Two occurrences of plagiarism may result in dismissal from the seminary. Students unfamiliar with issues related to academic honesty can find help from the staff at the Academic Support Center. For more information, see the Policy for Academic Honesty in the Student Handbook.

Special Accommodations

Students requiring accommodations for a documented physical or learning disability should be in contact with the Director of the Academic Support Center and should speak with the instructor as soon as possible to arrange appropriate adjustments. Students with environmental or other sensitivities that may affect their learning are also encouraged to speak with the instructor.

Policy on Late Work

All assignments must be turned in on time. Students may be offered grace with regards to one late assignment during the course of the term. This grace does not apply to the final draft of final assignment.

Bibliography

- Ackerman, James S. "Joseph, Judah, and Jacob." Pages 85–113, 305–6 in *Literary Interpretations of Biblical Narratives*. Edited by Kenneth R. R. Gros Louis and James S. Ackerman. Abingdon Press, 1982.
- Chapman, Cynthia R. "Introduction: Disrupting the Begats (Tôledôt)." Pages 1–19, 229–34 in *The House of the Mother: Social Roles of Maternal Kin in Biblical Hebrew Narrative and Poetry*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016.
- Clines, David J. A. "Prefatory Theme." Pages 66–86 in *The Theme of the Pentateuch*. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 10. Edited by David J. A. Clines, Philip R. Davies, and David M. Gunn. Sheffield: University of Sheffield, 1978.
- Cross, Frank Moore. *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973.
- Fishbane, Michael. "The Jacob Cycle." Pages 40–62 in *Text and Texture: A Literary Reading of Selected Texts*. Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 1998.
- Fox, Michael V. "Joseph and Wisdom." Pages 231–62 in *The Book of Genesis: Composition, Reception, and Interpretation*. Edited by Craig A. Evans, Joel N. Lohr, and David L. Petersen. Leiden: Brill, 2012.
- . "The Sign of the Covenant." *Revue Biblique* (1974): 557–96.
- Gafney, Wilda C. "[Excerpt]." Pages 45–85 in *Womanist Midrash: A Reintroduction to the Women of the Torah and the Throne*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2017.
- Haynes, Stephen R. "Setting the Stage." Pages 1–19, 224–30 in *Noah's Curse: The Biblical Justification of American Slavery*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Hendel, Ron. "Genesis: Historical Context." Pages 51–82 in *The Book of Genesis: Composition, Reception, and Interpretation*. Edited by Craig A. Evans, Joel N. Lohr, and David L. Petersen. Leiden: Brill, 2012.
- Kaminsky, Joel S. "The Theology of Genesis." Pages 635–56 in *The Book of Genesis: Composition, Reception, and Interpretation*. Edited by Craig A. Evans, Joel N. Lohr, and David L. Petersen. Leiden: Brill, 2012.
- Lapsley, Jacqueline E. "Hearing Whispers: Attending to Women's Words in the Voice of Rachel." Pages 21–34, 113–17 in *Whispering the Word: Hearing Women's Stories in the Old Testament*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2005.
- Levenson, Jon D. "The Beloved Son as Ruler and Servant." Pages 143–69, 244–45 in *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993.
- . "The Test." Pages 66–112, 219–23 in *Inheriting Abraham: The Legacy of the Patriarch in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012.
- . "The Universal Horizon of Biblical Particularism." Pages 143–69 in *Ethnicity and the Bible*. Edited by Mark G. Brett. Boston: Brill, 2002.
- Mafico, Temba L. J. "The Divine Name [Yhwh] 'Elôhîm from an African Perspective." Pages 21–32 in *Reading from This Place: Social Location and Biblical Interpretation in Global Perspective*. Edited by Fernando F. Segovia and Mary Ann Tolbert. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995.
- Mbuvi, Amanda Beckenstein. "The Theology of Genealogy." Pages 43–67 in *Belonging in Genesis: Biblical Israel and the Politics of Identity Formation*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2016.
- Meyers, Carol. "Eve in Eden: Genesis 2-3." Pages 59–80, 218–20 in *Rediscovering Eve: Ancient Israelite Women in Context*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

- Moberly, R. W. L. "The Religion of the Patriarchs." Pages 79–104 in *The Old Testament of the Old Testament: Patriarchal Narratives and Mosaic Yahwism*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992.
- Sakenfeld, Katherine Doob. "Sarah and Hagar: Power and Privileges." Pages 7–25 in *Just Wives? Stories of Power and Survival in the Old Testament and Today*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003.
- Scholz, Suzanne. "[Excerpts from] Breaking the Silence." Pages 27–38, 50–51, 219–23 in *Sacred Witness: Rape in the Hebrew Bible*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010.
- Schwartz, Regina M. "[Excepts]." Pages ix–xi, 1–38, 177–83 in *The Curse of Cain: The Violent Legacy of Monotheism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997.
- Sharp, Carolyn. "[Excerpt from] Foreign Rulers and the Fear of God." Pages 43–54, 81–83, 264–75 in *Irony and Meaning in the Hebrew Bible*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2009.
- Trible, Phyllis, and Letty M. Russell. "Unto the Thousandth Generation." Pages 1–29 in *Hagar, Sarah, and Their Children: Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Perspectives*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006.
- Yee, Gale A. "Eve in Genesis: The Mother of All Living and We Her Children." Pages 59–79 in *Poor Banished Children of Eve*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003.