

COS 221 Bible II: Torah & Israel's History

Effective Summer 2020 term

Course Goals: 221 – Bible II: Torah and Israel's History

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.

Students will be able to:

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.

Text-Book List

Unless otherwise noted, please use most recent edition.

Required Texts for 221 – Bible II: Torah and Israel's History

1. Michael Coogan, *The Old Testament: A Historical & Literary Introduction to the Hebrew Scriptures*. (Oxford University Press; 4 edition (July 3, 2017); ISBN 978-0190608651).
2. Terrence Fretheim, *The Pentateuch: Interpreting Biblical Texts Series*. (Abingdon Press; Edition Unstated edition (November 1, 1996); ISBN 978-0687008421).

Recommended / Supplementary Texts

1. Adrian Curtis, *Oxford Bible Atlas* (Oxford University Press; 4 edition (June 15, 2009) ISBN: 978-0199560462)

Reference Books

1. Bruce Birch, Walter Brueggemann, Terence Fretheim, David Petersen, *A Theological Introduction to the Old Testament, 2nd Edition*. (Abingdon Press; 2 edition (September 1, 2005); ISBN 978-0687066766).
2. Michael W. Goheen, *A Light to the Nations: The Missional Church and the Biblical Story* (Baker Academic; 3.2.2011 edition (April 1, 2011); ISBN 978-0801031410).

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Advance Assignments or Pre-Class Assignments:

(DUE- 2 weeks before class meets OR Summer due 6/22 OR per Professor's Syllabus)

Assignment 1:

1. Write a summary of ancient Israel's history: 2,000 – 2,400 words in length. (This will be about seven or eight full pages, double-spaced, using one of the standard 12-point font sizes.) Begin with Israel's Exodus from Egypt under Moses; conclude with the reign of Ahaz (Judah) and the fall of Samaria (Israel) about 721 B.C.

For the purposes of this assignment, you may assume the essential "big-picture" reliability of the biblical narratives which, of necessity, will be the ultimate sources of your summary. Whether we would proceed to adopt, or decline to adopt, that stance in the end, we cannot have useful discussions in our class time together unless we have a relatively clear picture of the narrative we are discussing. Again for the purposes of this assignment, this "clear picture" will include mention of many or most of the major characters, major places and major movements from place to place, other major events, and other features as you find them helpful. This is not a series of biographical sketches, nor a geography lesson, nor a theology of ancient Israel's "success" and "failures." It is a big-picture outline/summary of the main movement of ancient Israel's history as presented in the pertinent biblical narratives. A major goal of this assignment is to begin fulfillment of our first course goal, given to us from Nashville: "the student will be able to articulate a historical overview of the experience and faith of ancient Israel"

The value of the pertinent Old Testament readings, and of the *Oxford Bible Atlas*, to your preparation of this assignment will be self-evident. In Birch, et al., *A Theological Introduction to the Old Testament*, you should use chapters four through eight (4-8). The corresponding material in Coogan's text also will be helpful. In preparation for our class time together, you should read all of Fretheim's text; some of it also should be helpful in preparing this assignment.

This paper is a summarizing essay. Your purpose is only to give your own short narrative account of the major features of Israel's historical record. You do not need to analyze, criticize, agree or disagree, with any of our textbook authors. (This discussion will come in our class time together, and in some of your shorter writing assignments at that time.) Also, if you restrict your reading for this paper to our course texts (they *will* be sufficient for this assignment), and if you avoid direct quotations, you do not need to provide citations of any kind: no notes, and no bibliography. We also will deal with those issues in some of our class sessions. With respect to the writing process itself, focus on doing your own best writing throughout this essay, in matters of content, composition, grammar, syntax, spelling, punctuation, and all else that goes into good writing.

Saint Paul Course of Study School Expectations and Preparation:

The mission of the Course of Study School is to educate and share in the formation of Local Pastors as effective and faithful spiritual leaders of the ministry of the Church, the body of Jesus Christ in the world.

Our agreement with the Division of Ordained Ministry, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry in Nashville is that we will provide a year-round experiential and classroom learning process. This process assumes cooperation between the instructors, the students and clergy mentors in the annual conferences.

The Division of Ordained Ministry recommends a guideline of 15-20 pages of written work for each course. That translates into 30 to 40 pages of written work for each module. If a student takes four classes (two modules), that individual will write about 80 pages during the year. Those papers are based on the reading of approximately 4-5 textbooks per class.

In order to keep our promise of **year-round learning**, and to keep the assignments from accumulating and overwhelming a student, the book list is available for students so that they can **begin reading** as early as possible. We encourage students to put dates on their calendars and plan for reading days, as well as time for writing. You know the demands of certain religious seasons such as Advent, Lent, and Easter. Work around them.

The writing manual approved by the Saint Paul Course of Study School faculty is: **Turabian's A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, 7th edition**. It is recommended that each student have a good collegiate-size American English dictionary of the student's choice in paperback or hardcover and copyrighted since 1998.

Related to Paper Structure

- Use Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th edition. You may find further help at www.eturabian.com.
- Unless otherwise indicated, all papers must be typed, 1" margins on all sides, Arial 11 or Times New Roman 12, double-spaced, with indented paragraphs (no additional line spacing between paragraphs), and page numbers. Cover pages and bibliography are not included in assigned page count.
- Cite any quoted sources with appropriately formatted footnotes (not endnotes or parenthetical notes); list these and other sources within an appropriately formatted bibliography. If you use a scriptural reference, cite the translation you use in a footnote and the actual Bible in the bibliography. Each paper should have a bibliography.
- Do not begin sentences with "and" or "but." Do not use contractions. Do not include parenthetical commentary in your papers.
- Use inclusive language when referring to God and/or humankind.
- Use appropriate formatting for page numbering, book titles, etc.
- Double-check spelling, grammar, punctuation, sentence fragments, tense agreement, etc.

Related to Content

- Read the assigned books thoroughly.
- Resist the temptation to write a book report! Instead, focus your writing on what the author(s) have to say about the assigned topic(s), integrating your own thoughts about the topic(s).

Related to Critical Thinking

- Read the assigned books thoroughly, making notes of what resonates within you and what brings up resistance in you.
- Are there other books or resources that would be appropriate? Bring them into the conversation.
- Practice being in dialogue with all the authors and their material. Who would say what? How would you and the other writers respond? This practice dialogue will not be included in your papers, but it will help you to move into critical reflection.
- If you strongly agree or disagree with an author's point of view, offer your own affirmation or disagreement, supporting your view with additional resources.
- Watch for unsupported "leaps" made by a writer. What, in your opinion, is missing? Use additional resources to fill in the gaps.

Related to Timeliness

- Submit all your assignments on time.

In the event of an emergency situation, a student may request an **extension** from the Director (not assigned faculty) to the due date for advance assignments. This request may be made via email, and if granted, may extend to a *three-week maximum*. A student may only receive *two extensions during their tenure* as a Saint Paul Course of Study student – so use them wisely. If assignments are not completed, the policies of the COS are such that the student may be asked postpone participation in a particular session of COS until that individual can complete all of the work.

Learning can be fun! Consider your reading as a dialogue with authors – some will be more interesting than others. All will have something to teach us. Share the learning process with friends or colleagues or interested members of your congregations.

Book List:

Each course has **Assigned Required Texts**. Students are required to read them, use them in their assignments and are accountable in the classroom for any discussion or presentation of materials.

Recommended (Supplementary) Texts (when applicable) are also required; assignments assure the use of the recommended books; they are not classroom texts. Assigned texts and recommended books help the student build their own library.

Reference Texts (when applicable) are valuable, but optional texts if a student wants to pursue an area of ministry.

Students may acquire the books in a variety of ways: Order from Cokesbury.com; order from another vendor such as Amazon etc.; purchase a used book; or borrow from a colleague.

Instructions for sending assignments to COS office at Saint Paul School of Theology:

Course of Study Students are to upload their papers through Moodle. **You will need to set up a Moodle account in order to submit your assignments.** If you need assistance in setting up your Moodle account, please contact cos@spst.edu for informational handouts. Additional questions on Moodle can be directed to our IT help desk at helpdesk@spst.edu (hours: M – F 8:00am – 5:00pm).