

OT 2095 METHODS: PENTATEUCH/HISTORIES

Gina Hens-Piazza (JSTB)
M & Thurs 11:10-12:30
JSTB 216

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

A socio-historical and literary survey of the Pentateuch and Histories with attention to the effects of culture upon both the composition and reception of these writings in faith communities. The course provides a foundation in critical methodologies and in the theory and practice of exegesis. In addition, we will wrestle with pastoral dimensions of our study – i.e. what is the relationship of these biblical criticisms to the kinds of interpretations made of the Bible in pastoral places outside the academy; what kinds of ethical, social, and ideological impact does the Bible and its interpretation have in our world?

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Students gain a knowledgeable grasp of the current terrain of biblical interpretation especially in regards to methodological venues and the strengths and shortcomings of each.
- Students achieve an in-depth acquaintance with the traditions that make up the Pentateuch and Historical books.
- Students demonstrate competency in the preparation of a defensible exegesis of a biblical text.
- Students engage in critical thinking about the Bible's role in culture, i.e. its ethical, social and ideological influence as well as how culture impacts the study of this text.
- Students become familiar with several different Introductions to the O.T. as well as resources for critical study of the Bible (atlases, commentaries, concordances, journals).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Careful critical reading of assigned material. (To be completed *before* class sessions.)
2. Participation in exegetical group meetings during class time and two required meetings outside of class time.
3. Preparation and submission of THREE preliminary exegetical exercises – due one week after presentation on the particular critical tool. (See Exegesis Instructions.)
4. Preparation and submission of exegetical outline. (DUE Nov. 6)
5. Preparation and submission of exegesis. (DUE Nov. 20-23)
6. Successful completion of two course exams. (Oct. 19 & Dec. 14)

R	READER - available at Copy Central
M/H	McKenzie and Haynes
EE	Eerdman's Dictionary of the Bible
B/W	Brueggemann and Wolff
McD	McDermott

CLASS SCHEDULE

Sept. 7 Introduction to the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament
Canonical Makeup vs. Chronological Development vs. Compositional Formation
 Course Syllabus and Requirements

EE Deuterocanonical Books Apocrypha Apocalyptic
 Pseudopigrapha Canon, O.T.

Sept. 11 The Lay of the Land – Geography and Historiography

R “Geography of Ancient Near East” pp50-67
EE Mesopotamia Palestine, Land of Canaan
 Sinai Arabah Negeb

Sept. 14 The Growth of the Pentateuch – Group Exercise
Introduction to Exegesis

EE Samaritan Pentateuch Pentateuch Patriarchs
M/H Source Criticism pg. 35-57.

Sept. 18 Pentateuch as Mosaic of Traditions

EE Yahwist Elohist Deuteronomistic History
 Priestly Document Abraham Sarah
 Hagar Isaac Rebbekah
 Esau Ishmael Jacob
 Leah
 GENESIS 12-25

B/W Chapter 1

Sept. 21 The Ancestral Narrative in Genesis

EE Molech Sacrifice Teraphim
 Abimalech

M/H Form Criticism pg. 58-89.
R N. Gottwald, *The Hebrew Bible – A Socio-Literary Introduction* pg. 163-178.
 GENESIS 26-36

B/W DEUTERONOMY 1-11, 27-34
Chapter 5

Oct. 16 **Reading the Pentateuch Contextually**

M/H Ideological/Cultural/Reader Response Criticism pg. 268-282, 283-305.
R N. Gottwald, "Framing Biblical Interpretation at the New York Theological Seminary." pg.

Oct. 19 **MIDTERM**

Oct. 23-27 **READING WEEK**

Oct. 30 **"Of Methods, Outlines, and Exegesis"**

R "Forms of Violence and the Violence of Forms," JFSR (1998),
pg. 91-104 (as sample exegesis).

Nov. 2 **Introduction to the Deuteronomistic History**

EE Deuteronomistic History
McD J. McDermott, *What Are They Saying About the Formation of Israel?* New Jersey:
Paulist Press, 1999. (Read the entire book Nov. 2- Nov 13.)

Nov. 6 **Models for Reconstructing the Settlement of Israel**
EXEGETICAL OUTLINES DUE!!!!

JOSUHA 1-12, JUDGES 1-2.5

Nov. 9 **The Books of Joshua and Judges**
Violence in the Bible – A Response

EE Judge
R "Religion and Politics in Israel" 275-284
JOSHUA 22-24, JUDGES 2-8, 11-16, 17-21

Nov. 13 **Ruth – Critic of Culture, Custom and Common Sense**
The Books of Samuel and Kings

EE Ruth Boaz Naomi
Obed Levirate Marriage

RUTH 1-4, I SAMUEL 1-15

Nov. 16 **The Rise of Kingship in Israel**
Saul – Transitional Figure and Tragic Hero

EE King Saul
R J. Pixley, *Biblical Israel: A People's History*. 27-46
I SAMUEL 16-31

**Nov. 20-24 Exegesis Week!!! Exegesis DUE by 5:00PM Nov. 24 (or postmarked by that time)
HAPPY THANKSGIVING!!!**

Nov. 27 David – From Shepherd to Political Renegade to King

EE David Zion
(Read only one by Dec. 4) “The Improvidence of Royal Authority,” pg 39-76. “Wisdom Prompts a Hesitant King,” pg 77-121, or “The Underside of Monarchic Rule,” pg 123-163.
II SAMUEL 1-16

Nov. 30 Solomon – Wise King or Oppressive Tyrant?

EE Solomon
I KINGS 1-11 (overview)

Dec. 4 A Divided Nation – Israel and Judah : Seminar on Saul, David and Solomon

I KINGS 11-12

Dec. 7 The Elijah/Elisha Traditions

EE Elijah Elisha Prophet
R T. Hoover Renteria “The Elijah and Elisha Stories: A Socio-cultural Analysis of Prophets and People in the Ninth Century B.C.E. Israel,” pg 75-126.
I KINGS 17-19, II KINGS 4-5

**Dec. 11 The End of Israel and Judah
The Bible...The Making of Israel's History or the Silencing of Palestinian History?**

K. Whitlam, “The Invention of Ancient Israel: Denying Space and Time to Palestinian History,” pg 37-58.

II KINGS 17, II KINGS 24-25

Dec. 14 FINAL EXAM