

COS 221 HEBREW BIBLE II

TORAH AND ISRAEL'S HISTORY

Hybrid/Spring Heights, Spencer, WV
Fall 2023

First portion of the course: online learning and via zoom
In person weekend: November 17-19, 2023

Instructor: The Reverend Deborah Coble
681-587-0820

900 Glendale Avenue
South Charleston, WV 25303
deborahcoble@gmail.com

COURSE DESCRIPTION (Goals & Objectives)

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, the Exile and to other events up to the eighth century prophets.

After completing the course, 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.

COURSE TEXTS:

1. *The Pentateuch: Interpreting Biblical Texts*, Terence E. Fretheim, Abingdon Press; (November 1, 1996), ISBN-10: 0687008425, ISBN-13: 978-0687008421
2. *The Old Testament: A Historical and Literary Introduction to the Hebrew Scriptures*, Michael D. Coogan, Oxford University Press; 4th edition (2018), ISBN 978019060865.

REFERENCE TEXTS:

3. **The New Revised Standard Version of the Bible*
4. **The New Interpreter's Bible One-Volume Commentary (IOVC)*
5. *Oxford Bible Atlas*, Adrian Curtis, Oxford University Press; 4th edition (June 15, 2009), ISBN-10: 0199560463, ISBN-13: 978-0199560462.

*Students will have the book from a previous class or Licensing School

READING ASSIGNMENTS:

First Zoom: September 16, 2023 - 9 to 11 AM and 1 to 3 PM

Bible reading assignment:

Read Genesis. Pay special attention to:

the story of creation: 1-4,

the story of Abram and Sarai: 12-24

the story of Jacob and Joseph 25-50

Second Zoom: October 14, 2023 - 9 to 11 AM and 1 to 3 PM

Bible reading assignment:

Read Exodus 1-20,

Deuteronomy 5-6, 26, 31

Be sure to read the **IOVC** commentary on each passage.

Read the **IOVC** “Overview” introduction to each of these books.

The Old Testament: A Historical and Literary Introduction to the Hebrew Scripture: chapters 1-12

The Pentateuch: Interpreting Biblical Texts. Pay special attention to the first two chapters.

Oxford Bible Atlas: pages 37-82

In person Weekend: November 17-19

Bible reading assignment:

Joshua 1-3, 6, 24;

1 Samuel 1-3; 16-17;

2 Samuel 5-7;

2 Kings 17-25

Nehemiah 1, 2 and 7-8;

Be sure to read the **IOVC** commentary on each passage.

Read the **IOVC** “Overview” introduction to each of these books.

Pay special attention to the supplementary lessons on the teachable platform.

The Old Testament: A Historical and Literary Introduction to the Hebrew Scripture:
chapters 13-18, and 26-27

Oxford Bible Atlas: pages 83-121.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

- **Papers are due at the beginning of the second zoom – please submit papers, via email to deborahcoble@gmail.com. Be sure to keep a copy.**
- **If you want your papers returned, provide a self-addressed, stamped envelope.**
- **The Course of Study program’s expectation is that there be a total of at least 20 pages of writing for every class.**

Preparation for the First Zoom: September 30

Ponder the power of story and the importance of oral traditions. (read lesson in Teachable)

Come to our zoom sessions prepared to share a story from your family of origin. This should be a story that has been passed on through oral tradition. You do not have to have it written down, but you will be expected to share with the class.

Second Zooms: October 28, 2023

(please email these assignments to the instructor prior to October 28.

You get to pick two of these three options for your Writing Assignment)

1. Read the Abraham/Sarah stories in Genesis 12 - 24 and in partnership with the resource books for the class, write a 3-page paper on the significance of the covenant God makes with Abraham and Sarah.
2. Read Exodus 1- 24 and in partnership with the resource books for the class, write a 3-page paper on the importance of the Exodus, the Passover, and the wilderness experience for the nation of Israel.
3. Read Deuteronomy 4-6, and 26 and in partnership with the resource books for the class, write a 3-page paper on Moses’ final sermon to the Hebrew nation. What are the important takeaways from these passages?

In Person Weekend: November 17-19: (you are assigned two papers total, both of which are due at the start of the first class session Friday, November 17)

1. Read 1 Samuel 3 and write a 3-page paper on the meaning of call, in ancient Israel. Briefly share your call story and what it means to be called today.
(Note: this passage is a lectionary reading for January 14, 2024)
- 2 . Choose one of these two assignments:

Read Nehemiah with special attention to Chapter 8 and exegete Chapter 8:

- What is the literary context?
- What is the Historical – Cultural context?
- What did this passage mean to the people when it was written?
- What does this passage mean for us today?
- How does this passage reveal the nature of God?

OR

Read Ecclesiastes 3 and exegete the passage:

- What is the literary context?
- What is the Historical – Cultural context?
- What did this passage mean to the people when it was written?
- What does this passage mean for us today?
- How does this passage reveal the nature of God?

(Note: this passage is a lectionary reading for January 1, 2024)

Write a sermon based on the passage you choose. Use the “Four Pages of a Sermon” method discussed during the September zoom meeting (refer to Teachable for more information as well).

Please turn in both your exegesis work and sermon. Combined this work should be 10-12 pages.

Submission

1. Assignments submitted more than one week after the due date will result in an automatic “F” with no written feedback from the instructor. Assignments submitted late will be reduced 1/2 letter grade for each day that it is late. The instructor will not contact students to remind them of deadlines.
2. You are always welcome to contact the instructor via email with questions about the course assignments. Assignments received in a timely manner will be graded and returned to students prior to our in- person gatherings.
3. All papers should be typed with margins no more than 1”, 12-point font, no more than double spaced, with your name in the header and page numbers. Please do not exceed the page limit. Follow the MLA format. Use the font of your choice as long as it is readable.
4. All assignments must be typed and sent as an attachment using Microsoft word only. not Microsoft Works or Word perfect. (“Save as” .doc or .docx.)

Grades

The three-page papers are worth 30%;

Exegesis and sermon, 40%

Class attendance for zoom sessions and participation in person 30%

Criteria for grading:

1. How well the material is understood?
2. How well are the ideas in the paper expressed? Clarity counts.
3. How well sources are used and how well the paper is documented.

Papers may be emailed, in advance of class, to: deborahcoble@gmail.com