

BIBLE AS LITERATURE

Dr. David Wilson-Okamura English 3630 Spring 2012 East Carolina Univ.

“Every judge who judges a judgement of truth, true to the truth of the matter, causes the glory of God to dwell in Israel.” —Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 7a

Jan. 9	M	Introduction
11	W	Genesis chs. 1–3 (Creation and Fall)
13	F	Gen. 4–11 (After the Fall)
16	M	Martin Luther King Day
18	W	Gen. 12–24 (Abraham)
20	F	Gen. 25–36 (Isaac, Jacob, Esau)
23	M	Library research session
25	W	Gen. 37–50 (Joseph)
27	F	Exodus 1–15 (Egypt)
30	M	Ex. 16–23 (Law)
Feb. 1	W	Psalms 1–13; also “Reading Biblical Poetry” (<i>Jewish Study Bible</i> , pp. 2097ff.)
3	F	Ps. 14–27
6	M	Ps. 28–41 [Note: Ps. 1–41 = Book I]
8	W	Ecclesiastes 1–2 (the Gatherer)
10	F	Ecc. 3–6 (Observations)
13	M	Ecc. 7–12 (Counsel)
15	W	Job 1–3 (God, Satan, Job)
17	F	Job 4–14 (Job’s friends: first dialogue; there are two more, 15–21 and 22–31)
20	M	Job 29–42 (Job and God)
22	W	Isaiah 1–12 (Judah and Israel) [Note: We will be studying the section known as “First Isaiah”; for background, see <i>Jewish Study Bible</i> , pp. 780–84, 2052–54]
24	F	Is. 24–27 (Apocalypse)
27	M	Is. 28–35 (conclusion of First Isaiah)
29	W	Mark 1–2 (coming of Jesus)
Mar. 2	F	Mk. 3–5 (teaching and healing I)
4–10		Spring Break
12	M	Mk. 6–8 (teaching and healing II)
14	W	Mk. 9–10 (disciples)
16	F	Mk. 11–13 (Jesus in Jerusalem)
19	M	Mk. 14–16 (passion)
21	W	John 1 (coming of the Word)
23	F	Jn. 2–6 (ministry, disciples)
26	M	Jn. 7–12 (Jesus in Jerusalem)
28	W	Jn. 13–17 (farewell discourse, prayer)
30	F	Jn. 18–21 (passion, post-resurrection appearances)
Apr. 2	M	Gospel of Thomas and Gospel of Mary Magdalene
4	W	Ephesians 1–2 (doctrine)
6	F	Good Friday
9	M	Eph. 3 (autobiography)
11	W	Eph. 4–6 (practice)
13	F	Revelation 1–4 (prologue, letters to the seven churches)
16	M	Rev. 5–11 (seven seals, seven trumpets)
18	W	Rev. 12–16 (seven signs, seven plagues)
20	F	Rev. 17–20 (Babylon, the Lamb)
23	M	Rev. 21–22 (new heavens and a new earth)
24	T	Last Things

REQUIRED TEXTS

- *The Jewish Study Bible*. Ed. Adele Berlin and Marc Zvi Brettler. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2004.
- For the New Testament and Gnostic gospels, I will distribute texts online, which you will print, staple, and bring to class.

REQUIREMENTS

Reading quizzes (25%). Each quiz is worth 1 point and there will be 26 quizzes. There will be no make-ups for missed quizzes. However, because there is an extra (26th) quiz, you can miss one quiz without harming your grade. Think of it as a free pass: you can use it to go to the beach, or you can use it when you're sick. Because this system is based on numbers, you don't need to explain why you missed class. Just do it: the math will take care of it, automatically. Of course, you'll still be responsible for the material discussed in class. But once you've used that free pass, it's gone! Forever! My advice is to save it for when you're sick or need to attend court, or a wedding. But I leave that to you.

Tutorial essays (75%). There are two essays in this class: one on the Old Testament or Hebrew Bible, the other on the New Testament. Each essay will be 1,500–1,800 words long and delivered to me during office hours, where I will read your finished paper and we will discuss it for about twenty minutes. So that I can spend time with everyone in the class, you will need to make an appointment; a schedule will be posted on my office door where you can write in your name. If you miss your appointment, you will need to sign up for another one, assuming there are free slots. If there are no openings left (and that may happen with a class of this size), you will not be able to complete the assignment. The last appointment for the first paper will be March 2. All work for this course must be completed on or before the last day of class, Apr. 24.

For the first essay, choose a short book from the Hebrew Bible, identify a repeated word, phrase, or image, and formulate an argument about what it means in the book as a whole. For the second essay, do the same thing for a short book of the New Testament.

- All papers should be typed.
- The word *Bible* is capitalized, but not the word *biblical*.
- Pages should be (a) stapled and (b) numbered by computer. If you don't know how to use your word processor's page numbering function, ask the help staff at the computer lab.
- First impressions count; so do spelling, punctuation, and grammar. If you have trouble with these, I recommend *Grammar in Plain English* by Harriet Diamond and Phyllis Dutwin.
- Double-space. Use 12 point Times Roman.
- When you're done, do a word count and write the result on the first page of your paper. Word count should not include such things as long quotations.

Midterm and Final Exams. There will be no midterm or final exams in this course.

Please don't read, send, or monitor **text messages** in class. Please do turn off your **cell phone ringer** before class begins. **Laptops and tablets** might be helpful in some courses, but not this one; please keep them shut during class.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is using someone else's words or ideas in such a way that they seem like your own. Give credit where credit is due; if you don't, it's cheating. If you have questions about plagiarism, please ask them before a paper is due; after a paper is handed in it's too late to claim ignorance. If you do it in this class, expect an F for the course. I will also report the offense and, if you've done it before, ECU may impose additional penalties, such as suspension or expulsion.

ACCOMMODATIONS

East Carolina University seeks to comply fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students requesting accommodations based on a disability must be registered with the Department for Disability Support Services located in Slay 138 (Voice/TTY 252-737-1016).

OFFICE HOURS, EMAIL

Office: Bate 2137

Office hours: MWF 10:50–12:00 and 2:00–2:30. This spans two class periods: if you have class during both, grab me after class or call me on the telephone and we'll set up an appointment. My home number is in the book but, please, no phone calls after 9:00 pm.

Email: Instead of exchanging emails, let's have a conversation. That's what office hours are for.