

**GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY  
BACHELOR OF ARTS IN LIBERAL STUDIES PROGRAM**

**BIBLICAL LITERATURE AND THE ANCIENT WORLD**

BLHS 103-01

Four Credits

Fall Semester, 2017

**Classes meet Wednesdays, September 6 – December 20**  
**640 Mass Ave Campus**

**6:30 – 10:05 pm**  
**Room C**

**Prof. Joseph E. Jensen**  
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**Office hours:** by appointment Wednesdays before class at the Mass Ave / Chinatown Campus.  
Other times by appointment. Use e-mail to make appointment or to contact us. We will respond to all e-mails within one business day.

**Course Objectives**

At the completion of this course:

- 1.) Students will understand and recognize the difference between drawing meaning from a biblical text and imposing meaning upon a text.
- 2.) Students will have read and explored significant portions from the Jewish and Christian Scriptures [The Bible] as literature in light of the historical times, geographical places, and distinctive cultures in which the texts were produced.
- 3.) Students will be able to identify and distinguish different kinds of ancient literary genre within the Bible, and be able to explain the importance of making such distinctions when seeking to interpret and apply any text in today's world.
- 4.) Students will have developed skill at using contextual and historical critical analysis as tools for evaluating interpretations and applications of biblical texts in modern religious, cultural, and political settings.
- 5.) In keeping with the goals and themes of the Liberal Studies program, students will be able to address how the texts of the Bible as a whole have contributed to and shaped the interpretations of relationships between the human and the divine, the individual and society, and identity and difference.
- 6.) In particular, students will achieve a sensitivity for abusive use of biblical texts and an awareness of the potential constructive use of biblical texts in current debate related to gender roles, the construing, exercise, and challenge of authority, and ethics, especially as ethics relates to justice.
- 7.) Students will be able to discuss and articulate the relationship between this course's goals, those of the Liberal Studies program, and their own individual goals and ambitions.

Georgetown's Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies program is not a one-size-fits-all curriculum; rather, it is a combination of many different programs of study. This interdisciplinary approach provides students with a comprehensive learning experience while helping them achieve

intellectual advancement, enhanced critical thinking abilities, and a greater cultural understanding.

Rooted in Georgetown's Jesuit values, the program prepares students to excel academically and professionally, equipping them with the tools they need to become successful leaders who are committed to serve others and make an impact on the world. Through an emphasis on educating the whole person, Georgetown provides students with a world-class education that teaches them the art of inquiry and innovation. Students learn advanced critical thinking while developing a deeper understanding of past and present human behavior—in all its interconnected complexity.

**Textbook:** *The New Interpreter's Study Bible* (NISB) with *The New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha*, Abingdon Press, 2003, ISBN 978-0-687-27832-9 (available at GU's Mass. Ave. Bookstore). In addition to readings from the textbook, *other material is posted on Blackboard* as reading assignments for individual classes, indicated below.

**Class Requirements (details given under specific classes below):**

1. a weekly academic essay that responds to questions related to the assigned readings, to be submitted throughout the course (25 % of grade)
2. one 4 page paper reflecting a critical reading and analysis of the biblical account of Noah and the Flood (10 % of grade)
3. one 3-4 page current science based "bible-like" creation story (10 % of grade)
4. one 6-to-8 page paper related to a prophetic passage (20 % of grade)
5. one 10-12 page paper related to NT Synoptic Gospel sources (25 % of grade)
6. class attendance and participation (10% of grade).

**Attendance** is essential. This is a 4 credit course that meets once a week. Missing a single class is the equivalent of missing more than four classes in a more traditional class. In accord with BALS policy students with two or more absences, excused or unexcused, may receive a failing grade for the course. On the occasion of a second absence the student's name will be forwarded to the Associate Dean.

Classes will begin and end on time. Students are expected to be present for the entire class. Arriving late is disruptive to the instructor and the class. Repeated late arrival will be counted as an absence. **If you know or anticipate that you are likely to be late for class or to need to leave early on a regular basis for any reason do not take this class at this time.**

**Effort.** This is a content intensive course. **Students should expect to spend on average 400 minutes [6 ½ hours] each week** in reading, preparing assignments, and writing essays and papers for this course. Keeping up with the readings and written assignments is essential. There are no tests and no final exam for this course. Evaluation of student performance is based on attendance, preparation reflected in active class participation and weekly journal submissions, and timely submission of four assigned papers.

**Weekly essays.** As part of the preparation for each class (beginning with the first class,

September 6), each student will prepare an academic essay that responds to one or more posted questions regarding the assigned readings for that specific week, and reflects on the readings for that week as a whole. There is to be one submission for each class, to be completed and submitted on-line on Turnitin **prior** to the class. The entries are to be **two to three double spaced typed pages**. In the papers, students will properly reference the reading materials using **proper MLA citations** [see below under papers]. In their written submissions students will **reflect upon and react to the material in the assigned readings for that class**. Students will be prepared to discuss their essays in class.

**Appropriate topics that can be included in the essays are:**

- How do the readings assigned for this week fit in with the course overall? How do they relate to material already covered?
- Did something confirm what you already knew, believed, or suspected? What was the source of the information you brought to the material? How do the readings relate to your own life experience and background?
- Was anything surprising to you? Why?
- Was anything completely new to you? Does this build on what you already knew, or does it challenge strongly held beliefs? Does it make a difference? Why?
- What questions did the readings raise for you that you would like to see discussed in class? Can you propose some possible answers to your questions based on what you already know.
- **The focus of each essay however is to be on the current reading assignment. Do not merely turn in your notes from the previous class lecture.**

The essays [and papers] will be graded on Turnitin within two weeks. Journals will be graded with:

100 - 90	“meets and exceeds expectations”
80 - 89	“meets expectations”
70 - 79	“adequate” but some spelling, grammar, or content problems
60 - 69	“not adequate” because of significant spelling or grammar issues, or content not related to the assigned readings.
0	skipped assignment or failed to address the assignment.

Instructions for the final essay are in the Schedule. Students will review their weekly submissions, and prepare a longer summary reflection upon the class as a whole for use in the final class discussion.

**Papers** will be accepted late (but by no more than a week) only for exceptional reasons and with prior permission of the faculty member. Late papers may bring a lower grade at the discretion of the faculty.

Papers and essays submitted for this course must consistently use the Modern Language Association [MLA] system of bibliographic references to indicate the sources for all quotations, and to indicate the sources for all concepts and ideas that were acquired in researching and preparing the essay or paper. If you have questions about MLA style and formatting, make an

appointment with the Librarian in the Mass Ave Resource Center on C2. For additional help consult the OWL at Perdue University site:

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

Papers in which the assignment calls for research (papers 2 and 4) will require that the student spend time in an academic Library examining biblical dictionaries and commentaries. Students will find basic reference texts in Georgetown's Lauinger Library, but much more in the Woodstock Theological Library on the Ground Floor of the Lauinger Library. The Woodstock Library's hours are not the same as for the Lauinger library, and is not open on Weekends. Students should check ahead about library hours and access especially during holidays when planning to do their research. Some students may find it more convenient to use the Mullen Library at Catholic University of America, where, as Georgetown students, they do have access and check out privileges. Again, check ahead for hours and plan ahead. (Catholic U is adjacent to the Brookland Station on the Red Line).

### **Georgetown Honor System**

All students are expected to follow Georgetown's honor code unconditionally. We assume you have read the honor code material located at <http://scs.georgetown.edu/academic-affairs/honor-code>, and in particular have read the following documents: Honor Council Pamphlet, What is Plagiarism, Sanctioning Guidelines, and Expedited Sanctioning Process. Papers in this course will all be submitted to turnitin.com for checking.

Submitting material in fulfillment of the requirements of this course means that you have abided by the Georgetown honor pledge:

*In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown Honor System: To be honest in any academic endeavor, and to conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.*

### **Plagiarism**

In accord with university policy, all incidents of suspected plagiarism or other Honor Code violations will be reported to the Honor Council without fail.

If the Honor Council finds that a student has plagiarized or has violated the Honor Code in any other way, the student may receive a grade of F for the course.

### **Turnitin.com**

Students acknowledge that by taking this course all required papers will be submitted to submission for a Textual Similarity Review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the terms of use agreement posted on the Turnitin.com site.

All papers will be graded on Turnitin within two weeks of receipt. [See scoring for essays above].

**Grading:**

The final grade for the course will be calculated as follows:

93-100 % = A	77 - 79 % = C+
90 - 92 % = A-	73 - 76 % = C
87 - 89 % = B+	70 - 72 % = C-
83 - 86 % = B	67 - 69 % = D+
80 - 82 % = B-	60 - 66 % = D
Below 60 % = F	

**Incomplete grades must be requested of the Associate Dean BEFORE the last regular class (December 13, 2017).** Should you have an exceptional situation that you believe requires that you request an incomplete, you must discuss the matter with the Associate Dean and with me, prepare the request form for my signature, and deliver the form to Associate Dean prior to the deadline. An incomplete may bring a lower grade at the discretion of the faculty member.

**Withdrawing from the course:** A student may withdraw from the course at any time up until \*\*\* ##, 2017 (the date published in the University Calendar); however, the student is responsible for filling out the appropriate forms, obtaining the necessary signatures, and properly submitting the paperwork in time to meet the deadline. If the paperwork is not completed, the student automatically receives a grade of “F”.

**Veterans and active duty military personnel** are welcome. Those with special circumstances requiring accommodation (e.g., upcoming deployments, drill requirements, disabilities) should discuss these in advance if possible with the professor. Every effort will be made to work with such students consistent with the integrity of the academic process.

**Disabilities:** If you are a student with a documented disability who requires accommodations or if you think you may have a disability and want to inquire about accommodations, please contact the Academic Resource Center at 202-687-8354 or [arc@georgetown.edu](mailto:arc@georgetown.edu).

**Accommodating Students’ Religious Observances:** Georgetown University promotes respect for all religions. Any student who is unable to attend classes or to participate in any examination, presentation, or assignment on a given day because of the observance of a major religious holiday or related travel shall be excused and provided with the opportunity to make up, without unreasonable burden, any work that has been missed for this reason and shall not in any other way be penalized for the absence or rescheduled work. Students will remain responsible for all assigned work. Students should notify professors in writing at the beginning of the semester of religious observances that conflict with their classes.

**Extreme weather, Emergencies, and Instructional Continuity:** During inclement weather and other emergencies on a day when we are scheduled to meet face-to-face, check the university’s

Web site or call (202) 687-7669 for information on whether the university is open. If the university is open this class will meet. If the university is closed, this class will meet through distance means such as online video conferencing; check your e-mail for a message from me on how we will proceed in that situation. Due dates for written assignments submitted through Blackboard will not be changed due to campus closings.

The university has the capability to send text messages and recorded messages about emergencies to cell phones and other mobile devices. Sign up on MyAccess.

### **Title IX at Georgetown**

<https://titleix.georgetown.edu/>

#### ***Sexual Misconduct***

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (“Title IX”) prohibits discrimination based on sex in any educational programs, which includes sexual harassment or any acts of sexual misconduct. Title IX requires the University, upon becoming aware of any incident of sexual harassment and misconduct to respond appropriately to protect and maintain the safety of the University community, including students, faculty, and staff.

Georgetown University prohibits sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic/dating violence, and stalking.

Discrimination based on sex, including sexual misconduct and discrimination based on pregnancy or parenting status, subverts the University's mission and threatens permanent damage to the educational experience, careers, and well-being of students, faculty, and staff.

Please know that as a faculty member I am committed to supporting survivors of sexual misconduct, including relationship violence and sexual assault. However, University policy also requires me to report any disclosures about sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator, whose role is to coordinate the University’s response to sexual misconduct.

Georgetown has a number of fully confidential professional resources who can provide support and assistance to survivors of sexual assault and other forms of sexual misconduct. These resources include:

**Jen Schweer, MA, LPC**

Associate Director of Health Education Services for Sexual  
Assault Response and Prevention  
(202) 687-0323  
jls242@georgetown.edu

**Erica Shirley**

Trauma Specialist  
Counseling and Psychiatric  
Services (CAPS)  
(202) 687-6985  
els54@georgetown.edu

More information about campus resources and reporting sexual misconduct can be found at:  
<https://sexualassault.georgetown.edu/get-help>.

#### ***Pregnancy Adjustments and Accommodations***

Georgetown University is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive environment for pregnant and parenting students. Students may request adjustments based on general pregnancy

needs or accommodations based on a pregnancy-related complication. Specific adjustments will be handled on a case by case basis and will depend on medical need and academic requirements. Students seeking a pregnancy adjustment or accommodation should follow the process laid out at: <https://titleix.georgetown.edu/student-pregnancy>.

### **Important Dates:**

Wednesday, September 6 – First Class

Sunday, September 10 – Academic essay responding to initial readings and first class due on Turnitin at 11:59. This is in fulfillment of the SCS policy that there be a graded assignment from each student within the first two weeks of class.

Wednesday, September 13 – Second Class. Required weekly academic essays due on Turnitin by 6:00 pm.

Saturday, September 23 – First paper [A Critical Analysis of the Biblical Flood Narrative] due on Turnitin at 11:59 pm.

Saturday, October 21 – Research paper on a selected Prophetic passage due on Turnitin at 11:59.

Monday, November 6 – Last day to withdraw from the course.

Saturday, November 11 – Your “modern bible-like creation account” is due on Turnitin at 11:59 pm.

Wednesday, December 13 – Last Class. Requests for a grade of incomplete must be signed and turned in to the Associate Dean prior to this class.

Tuesday, December 19 – Your final paper on Matthew and Luke’s use of their sources is due on Turnitin at 11:59pm.

### **Class Schedule and Assignments**

*(Note: This Schedule may be subject to modification)*

Wednesday, September 6: WEEK ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

#### **Student Preparation:** (Prior to the first class)

1. Purchase the textbook: *The New Interpreter’s Study Bible* (NISB) with *The New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha*, Abingdon Press, 2003.
2. In the textbook read:
  - a. “Introduction” by Walter J. Harrelson, pp. xv – xvi
  - b. “To the Reader” by Bruce M. Metzger, pp. xvii – xx
3. In the textbook become familiar with:
  - a. “Alphabetical List of Biblical Books”, pp. xxi.
  - b. “List of excurses”, pp. xxiv-xxvi.
  - c. “The Canons of Scripture”, pp. xxvii-xxxii.
  - d. “Glossary”, pp. 2281-2292.
  - e. “Chronologies”, pp. 2293-2298.

- f. "Index to Colored Maps" and 19 Maps at the end of the textbook.
4. Prepare and submit a two page, double spaced self-introduction for the professors. In the self-introduction, say something about your background, education, and ambitions and goals. It is helpful to know something about your previous experiences with or exposures to the Bible. If you wish you may share something about your own religious persuasions or lack thereof.

**Class:**

1. Introduction to the academic study of the Bible as literature.
2. Overview of the syllabus and course requirements
3. The relationship of the course to the BALS the core curriculum
  - a. The Human and the Divine;
  - b. The Individual and Society;
  - c. Identity and Difference
    - sub-themes**
    - i. Women and Men and gender roles;
    - ii. Authority: how it is construed, exercised, and challenged;
    - iii. Ethics, with an emphasis on justice.
4. Overview of biblical history and books of the OT

Thursday, September 7 Last day for late registration / add / drop

Sunday, September 10 – Academic essay responding to initial readings and first class due on Turnitin at 11:59. This is in fulfilment of the SCS policy that there be a graded assignment from each student within the first two weeks of class.

**FIRST MODULE: WEEKS TWO – SEVEN: THE HEBREW BIBLE WITHIN THE  
CULTURE OF THE FERTILE CRESCENT**

September 13: WEEK TWO - ORIGINS OF ISRAEL

Second Academic Essay due due on Turnitin by 6:00 pm.

**Student Preparation** (N.B. Read all assigned Biblical Readings from the NISB along with the accompanying notes. You are encouraged to compare with other biblical translations of your choice.)

- 1.) In the textbook read
  - a. "Reliability of Scripture" by Walter J. Harrelson, pp. 2243-2247.
  - b. "Authority of the Bible" by Phyllis Tribble, pp. 2248-2254.
  - c. "Inspiration of Scripture" by Robert Gnuse, pp. 2255-2260.
  - d. "Guidelines for Reading and Interpretation," by John R. Donahue, pp. 2261-2267.
  - e. "Varieties of Readings and Interpretations of the Biblical Text," by Edgar V. McKnight, pp. 2268-2273.



- f. "Culture and Religion Among the Ancient Israelites," by James VanderKam, pp. 2274-2279.
- 2.) The emergence of Israel:  
 Read "Excursus: The Israelite Conquest of Canaan" (NISB pp 307-308.)  
 Read Genesis 15:12-17; Exodus 23:20-33; Deuteronomy 9:1-5; 31:1-8.  
 Read "Joshua Introduction" (NISB pp 303-305)  
 Read Joshua 1; 5 – 8; 10 – 13; 24; Judges 1; 2 Samuel 5  
 Read "Excursus: "Social Structures in Ancient Israel" (NISB pp 362)  
 Read "Excursus: Shechem and Covenant" (NISB 338-339)
- 3.) Israel's ancient ancestors:  
 Read "Genesis Introduction" (NISB pp 1-3)  
 Read "Excursus: The Promises to the Patriarchs" (NISB pp 26-27)  
 Read "Excursus: The Ancestors in their Environment" (NISB pp 28)  
 Read Genesis 12 – 13; 15; 17; 20 – 21; 26; 28 – 35; 37; and 41 – 47.
- 4.) Write weekly academic essay.

**Class:**

- 1.) Geographic and Historical background. Role of archaeology.
- 2.) Use of archaeological information (and its lack) to construct theories about the origins of Israel:
  - conquest
  - immigration
  - internal Canaanite social revolution
  - indigenous populations join with immigrants
- 3.) The theory of oral tradition and sources and the gradual composition of the Pentateuch. Examples illustrating each of the theoretical sources with their religious perspectives and foci.
- 4.) Selected texts from the narratives of the ancestors in Genesis 12-50:
  - purposes
  - claims about God, family, identity as a community
  - a distinctive people's relation to the wider culture and their difference from the wider culture
- 5.) Role play assignments for September 20 class: "The Bible says . . . ."

September 20: WEEK THREE - EXODUS FOUNDATION NARRATIVE

**Student Preparation**

- 1.) Hebrew life in Egypt  
 Read "The Exodus Event" pp 127-142 from Lawrence Boadt, *Reading the Old Testament* (2d ed. 2012) [Blackboard]
- 2.) Israel's Exodus from Egypt  
 Read "Exodus Introduction" (NISB pp 85-86)  
 Read Exodus 1 – 4; 7 – 15  
 Read "Excursus: Salvation and the Sea" (NISB pp 106-107)

- 3.) Israel becomes a people  
 Read “Excursus: Covenant” (NISB pp 113-114)  
 Read Exodus 19 – 23, 32 – 34  
 Read “Excursus: The Character of Israel’s God” (NISB pp 134-135)  
 Read Leviticus 19, 25 – 26; Deuteronomy 5 – 7; 10 – 11; 15 – 17; 29 – 30.  
 Read Deuteronomy 26:5-15.
- 5.) Read your assigned texts and prepare for role play during class:  
 “The Bible says . . . “
- 6.) Write weekly academic essay.

**Class:**

- 1.) Egyptian background:
  - The Hyksos and the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Egyptian dynasties.
  - Theories about Hebrew life in the Egyptian delta region.
- 2.) Liberation:
  - Pharaoh, a god of oppression and death
  - YHWH, the God of life and freedom.
  - The transition from Pharaoh’s slaves to YHWH’s people.
- 3.) Covenant:
  - The Way of Life for YHWH’s people.
  - The Commandments
  - The law codes
  - Living as YHWH’s people in YHWH’s land
- 4.) Role play: “The Bible says . . . “

Saturday, September 23 – First paper [A Critical Analysis of the Biblical Flood Narrative] due on Turnitin at 11:59 pm.

September 27: WEEK FOUR - PROPHETS: INTERPRETERS OF THE LAW & EXILE

**Student Preparation:**

- 1.) Prophecy  
 Read “The Prophetic Literature” and “The Prophetic Word” by Bruce Vawter (*NJBC* 11:22-25) [Blackboard]  
 Read Genesis 20:1-7; Exodus 4:10-17; 7:1-7; Deuteronomy 13:1-5; 18:15-22; 34:10-12; 1 Samuel 3:1 B 4:1; 8; 9:5-10:27; 2 Samuel 12:1-15; 1 Kings 1; 1 Kings 18 – 19; 21 – 22.  
 Read “Excursus: Biblical Ambivalence to Government” (NISB pp 407-408).  
 Read “Excursus: True and False Prophets” (NISB pp 522-523)
- 2.) Prophets of Judgment  
 Read Hosea 1 – 3; 10 – 14; Amos 1 – 4; 6 – 7; Isaiah 1 – 6; 9:8 – 10:34; Micah 1 – 3; Jeremiah 1 – 3; 23; 34; Ezekiel 7 – 10; 24.  
 Read “Excursus: God’s Broken Family” (NISB pp 1059)  
 Read “Excursus: Covenant as Marriage” (NISB p 1313)

- Read “Excursus: The Divine Character in Jeremiah” (NISB pp 1093-1094)
- 3.) Prophets of Hope  
Read Jeremiah 30 – 31; Isaiah 40:1 – 44:8; 58 – 62; 65 – 66; Ezekiel 36 – 37; 43. Micah 5; Habakkuk 2.
  - 4.) Events surrounding the Babylonian Exile and the Return  
Read IV. “(J) The Last Years of Judah (699-587)” and “(K) The Exile (587-539)” by Roland E. Murphy. (*NJBC* 75:112-116) [Blackboard]
  - 7.) Write weekly academic essay.

**Class:**

- 1.) What is biblical prophecy?
  - Origins and history
  - Prophets and politics
  - Authentic and false prophets
  - From narratives about prophets to prophetic texts
  - Oral tradition
  - Genres of prophetic speech
  - Prophetic books
- 2.) Prophets of judgment
  - Authentic worship of the one God of freedom and life
  - Covenant fidelity: living as God’s people in God’s land
- 3.) Prophets of hope
  - Communal salvation and restoration
  - The individual within the community
- 4.) The Babylonian Exile

**Assignment 2 (The Writing Prophets and their message):**

Students will select a biblical passage from a list of suggested texts from the writing prophets, and will prepare **a six to eight page paper due at Midnight, Saturday, October 21**. Students will **research** the historical context of the biblical prophet, the prophet’s general teaching, and the message of the assigned text in light of the history of the time and the prophet’s general message. For this assignment, students must use and quote from at least four of the resources on the provided bibliography.

October 5: WEEK FIVE - BEGININGS OF JUDAISM, WISDOM LITERATURE

**Student Preparation:**

- 1.) Events surrounding the Return from the Babylonian Exile  
Read V. A The Early Postexilic Period (539-333 BC) by Roland E. Murphy. (*NJBC* 75:117-125) [Blackboard]  
Read Psalm 137; Jeremiah 29; Ezekiel 18; Ezra 1; 3 B 7; 9 B 10; Nehemiah 8 B 9;13; Exodus 34:11-16; Deuteronomy 7:1-5; 23:1-7; Ruth 1 B 4; Isaiah 45; 48 B 56

- Read “Excursus: Vicarious Suffering” (NISB p 1031)
- 2.) Themes in Israelite Wisdom  
 Read Exodus 35:30-33; 1 Kings 5:10-13; Daniel 1; Deuteronomy 4:5-8; 6:1-9; 10:12 – 11:31; 28; 30:11-20.  
 Read “Excursus: Fear of the LORD” (NISB pp 897 and 1455).  
 Read “Excursus: Wisdom and Life” (NISB p 905)  
 Read “Excursus: Retribution” (NISB pp 1460)  
 Read “Excursus: Consequences and Prosperity” (NISB p 912)  
 Read Proverbs 1 – 5; 9 – 12; 31; Job 1 – 4; 7 – 8; 19; 21 – 22; 38; 40; 42  
 Read “Excursus: The Portrayal of God in Job” (NISB p 748)  
 Read Ecclesiastes 1-4; 9; 11-12; Sirach 1 – 4; 14:11 – 16:23; 34:1 - 36:22; 38:24 – 39:11; Wisdom 1 – 3; 6; 7:22 – 8:1.  
 Read Job 28; Proverbs 8; Sirach 24
- 3.) Write weekly academic essay.

**Class:**

- 1.) Historical overview
- Babylonian Exile and Return
  - Theological shifts
  - Self-identity
  - Separatism vs. Universality
  - Worship and Sacred Books
  - Suffering
  - Eschatology — From present reality to believed future
- 2.) Crisis in Wisdom
- Wisdom in the Old Testament and the ancient Near East
  - Deuteronomistic Optimism and Proverbs
  - Challenges: Job and Ecclesiastes
  - Sirach’s conservatism
  - A liberal response from Egypt – The Book of Wisdom
- 3.) Wisdom personified

**October 11: WEEK SIX – PRIESTLY TRADITIONS, THE FORMATION OF THE HEBREW BIBLE, AND THE RISE OF APOCALYPTIC**

**Student Preparation:**

- 1.) The Priestly Writer’s Revision of History
- Read “Excursus: The Priestly View of History” (NISB pp 34)
  - Read Genesis 1:1 – 2:4; 6:9-22; 8:1-5; 9:1-17; Psalms 96; 104; 136
  - Read “Excursus: Creation: Ordering Chaos” (NISB p 5)
  - Read “Excursus: In God’s Image” (NISB p 7-9)
  - Read “Excursus: Domination or Dependence?” (NISB 8)
  - Read “Excursus: Gender in Genesis” (NISB 10-11)
- 2.) Apocalyptic Literature

### Apocalyptic Literature

Read “IV. Apocalypticism.” John J. Collins (*NJBC* 19:19-24) [Blackboard]

Read “Excursus: Suffering and Apocalyptic in 4 Ezra” (NISB p 1686)

Read “Excursus: The Influence of the Maccabean Martyrs” (NISB p 1611-1612)

Read 1 Maccabees 1 – 4; 2 Maccabees 2:19 – 10:38

Read Daniel 7; 10 – 12

- 3.) Write weekly academic essay.

### Class:

- 1.) Embracing the Exile
  - The Goodness of Creation
  - Human dignity
  - Human freedom and responsibility
  - Restoration and Redemption
- 2.) The formation and centrality of Torah
- 3.) The formation and shape of the Hebrew Bible (TaNaKh)
- 4.) Apocalypticism and Apocalyptic Literature

### October 18: WEEK SEVEN - THE INTRATESTAMENTAL PERIOD AND THE HISTORICAL JESUS

#### Student Preparation:

- 1.) Reinterpretation of prophecy into messianic expectations in Judaism and Christianity
  - Read Hosea 11:1-2; Isaiah 7:10-25; 9:1-7; 11:1-9
  - Read Matthew 1:18-25; 2:13-15; 4:12-17
  - Read “Excursus: Christian Interpretations of Isaiah’s Hymns of the Ideal King” (NISB p 974-5)
  - Read “Hope for a Messiah” from Lawrence Boadt, *Reading the Old Testament*, pp 531-35 [Blackboard]
- 2.) Jesus’ relation to Torah as further revision
  - Compare Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Leviticus 19:17-18; Matthew 22:34-40; Mark 12:28-34; Luke 10:25-37; Galatians 5:13-15; James 2:8
  - Read Matthew 5:17-20; Mark 10:17-22
  - Read “The Gospel According to Mark” in *The New Interpreter’s Study Bible*, with its introduction and notes, pp 1801-1845,
- 3.) The distinction between the Jesus of History and Christ of Faith
  - Read “The Quest for the Historical Jesus” by Anthony Tambasco [Blackboard]
- 4.) Write Weekly Academic Essay

### Class:

- 1.) Reinterpretation of prophetic texts and the development of messianic expectations
  - Development of royal covenant theology
  - Hopes of restoration of monarchy after Exile
  - Other currents: YHWH as king; foreign kings; collective kingship

- Development of messianic hope
- Christian re-reading of texts
- 2.) Jesus' relationship to the Torah
  - Fulfillment, not abolition
  - Law as response to the kingdom of God
  - Law summed up in love
- 3.) The threefold stages of gospel development
  - Importance of oral tradition
  - Importance of the resurrection of Christ
  - Gradual development of written traditions
  - Distinction between the Jesus of History and Christ of Faith
  - Principle purposes of each gospel
  - Synoptic problem

Saturday, October 21: **Assignment 2:** Your research paper on a prophetic passage is on Turnitin at 11:59 pm

#### SECOND MODULE: WEEKS EIGHT -- TEN: THE NEW TESTAMENT ERA

October 25: WEEK EIGHT – THE EPISTLES OF PAUL AND THE CHRIST OF FAITH

#### Student Preparation:

- 1.) The Jewish world of the New Testament  
Read “The Closing of the Old Testament” from Lawrence Boadt, *Reading the Old Testament*, pp 517-529 [Blackboard]
- 2.) The Greco-Roman context of the New Testament  
Read “The Roman Period” from *The New Oxford Annotated Bible: College Edition*, pp 519-525 [Blackboard]
- 3.) Paul's call and commission  
Read Galatians 1 – 2; Acts 9; 15; 17; Philippians 3
- 4.) Paul's theology  
Read Philippians 2 (Lordship of Christ); 1 Corinthians 12; 15 (Body of Christ; Resurrection); Romans 1; 5 – 8 (sin; justification; sanctification; law; the Holy Spirit)  
Read “Excursus: The Righteousness of God” (NISB p 2011)  
Read “Excursus: Sanctification” (NISB p 2018)  
Read “Excursus: Paul and the Law” (NISB p 2020)
- 5.) Paul's ethics  
Read Galatians 3 – 6 (law and freedom; virtue/vice lists); Romans 12 (politics); 1 Corinthians 11 (women; the poor); Ephesians 5 B 6 (household codes)  
Read “Excursus: Christians and Government” (NISB p 2029)  
Read “Excursus: Household Codes” (NISB p 2096)
- 8.) Write Weekly Academic Essay

**Class:**

- 1.) The Jewish World
  - Religious groups at the time of Jesus
  - Observations about the Historical Jesus
- 2.) The Greco-Roman World
  - Politics
  - Social World
  - Religion
  - Philosophy
- 3.) Paul's initial experience of the risen Christ (Christ of Faith)
  - Differences and similarities between Acts and Epistles
  - Resurrection as presence of Christ and transformation
  - Overview of Paul's epistles within chronology of his journeys
- 4.) Paul's theology of the Christ of Faith and of redemption
  - The human situation and need for Christ
  - Christ as Lord, New Adam, and giver of the Spirit
  - Paul's positive and negative view toward the law
  - Nature of community in Christ
- 5.) Paul's ethics
  - Imperatives founded on indicatives
  - True freedom
  - Attitudes toward women
  - Politics and social justice issues

**Assignment 3:** Students will watch the video "How the Earth was Made" [Blackboard (about 75 minutes)] and write a three and one half to four page original, bible-like account of the creation, using imagery from current scientific geological and astronomical findings. All the some 20 plus different creation accounts found in the Bible are based upon and reflect the best common scientific knowledge of the time in which they were written. The task here is to produce an account, similar to the biblical accounts in style, but based on what we know today. Due on Turnitin at Midnight Saturday, November 11.

November 1: Week NINE – THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

**Student Preparation:**

- 1.) The Jewish world of Matthew and problems of supersessionism  
 Read "A Revised Story for the Church: Supersessionism Replaced" from Mary Boys pp 75-85 [Blackboard]  
 Read "Supersessionism" Articles for *Commweal* [Blackboard]
- 2.) Major purposes of Matthew
- 3.) Read Introduction to the Gospel According to Matthew (NISB pp 1745-47)  
 Read Matthew 1 – 2; Matthew 5 – 7; Matthew 14:22-33; Matthew 16:13-20

(compare with Mark 6:45-52); Matthew 18; 22:15-22; 23; 26 – 28

- 4.) Write Weekly Academic Essay

**Class:**

- 1.) The relationship of early Christians to Judaism
  - Conventional view
  - More recent and alternative view
- 2.) Major purposes of Matthew
  - Manual of Church teaching and discipline
  - Fulfillment of Jewish prophecy
  - Polemic against rabbinic Judaism
  - Openness to Gentiles
  - Alternative community in the Roman Empire
- 3.) Matthew presents Jesus as authentic interpreter of Torah
  - Sermon on the Mount as charter document of the kingdom
  - Jesus as New Moses
  - Beatitudes
  - Jesus teaches “higher righteousness”
  - Antitheses
  - Examples from Jewish works of piety

Monday, November 6 – Last day to withdraw from the course.

**Assignment 4:** Students will begin a **ten to twelve page paper**, Due Tuesday, December 19.

Using the readings posted on Blackboard by Raymond Brown and from the Anchor Bible Dictionary, as well as other provided materials, discuss Matthew and Luke’s use of sources, especially the Gospel according to Mark and another source [Q] in the composition of their Gospels. Illustrate how the evangelists are similar in their use of Mark and Q and how they use Mark and Q quite differently.

November 8: WEEK TEN – THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

**Student Preparation:**

- 1.) Major purposes of Luke
- 2.) Read Introduction to the Gospel according to Luke (NSIB pp 1847-49  
Read Luke 1 – 2 (compare with Matthew 1 – 2); Luke 6:20-49 (compare with Matthew 5 – 7); Luke 9:18-20(compare with Matthew 16:13-20); Luke 12 – 18;  
Luke 24.
- 4.) Write Weekly Academic Essay

**Class:**

- 1.) Luke’s purpose: “That you may know the truth concerning the things about which you have been instructed”



- 2.) Universal Salvation
- 3.) “There shall be no poor among you”
- 4.) Emphasis on women
- 5.) Guided by the Spirit
- 6.) Up to Jerusalem

Saturday, November 11 – Your “modern bible-like creation account” is due on Turnitin at 11:59 pm.

November 15: WEEK ELEVEN: THE GOSPEL OF JOHN, ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

**Student Preparation:**

1. Acts of the Apostles
  - Read: Introduction to the Acts of the Apostles, (NISB pp 1953 – 1954)
  - Read Acts 1 – 4, 6 – 8, 10 – 12, 21 – 28
2. The Gospel according to John
  - Read “Introduction to the Gospel according to John” (NISB pp 1905 - 1907)
  - Read John 1 – 4, 6, 9, 11 – 17, 21 – 22.
3. Write Weekly Academic Essay

**Class:**

- 1.) Acts and the Gospel of Luke as a single work in two volumes
- 2.) The Gospel From Jerusalem to Rome
- 3.) Christianity as no threat to the empire
- 4.) Jesus in the Johannine Tradition
- 5.) The Gospel of John as a reflection of the living resurrected Jesus / Parallels with Acts
- 6.) The evolution of Christology as reflected in the Gospels

November 22: WEEK TWELVE: THE RISE OF CHRISTIANITY

**Student Preparation:**

- 1.) Read “The Emergence of Christianity” by François Bovin. *Annali di Storia dell’ Egesi* 24 (2007) 3-29 [Blackboard].
- 2.) Read “The Book of Rain” pp. 195-281 from *The Book of Heaven* by Patricia Storace. Vintage Books. 2014. [Blackboard].
- 3.) Read “Sexual Vulnerability and the Spirituality of Suffering in the Writing of Etty Hillesum” by Richard R. Gaillardetz, *Pacifica* 22 (2009) 75-89 [Blackboard].
- 4.) Write Weekly Academic Essay

**Class:** How does a movement become a Religion?

THIRD MODULE: WEEKS TWELVE – FOURTEEN: THE POST-BIBLICAL WORLD

## November 29: WEEK THIRTEEN – THE BEGINNINGS OF RABBINIC JUDAISM

**Student Preparation:**

- 1.) Overview of Judaism from The Jewish War to the end of the Bar Kokhba Revolt  
Read “Judaism from the Destruction of Jerusalem to the End of the Second Jewish Revolt: 70-135 C.E.” by Lee Levine in Shanks, *Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism*, (2d ed. 2011), pp. 139-166 [Blackboard]
- 2.) Write Weekly Academic Essay

**Class:**

- 1.) The Jewish uprisings against the Romans
- 2.) From Rabbinic Judaism to the Mishnah
- 3.) A nomadic religion

Note: Wednesday, December 13 is the last class. Requests for a grade of incomplete must be signed and turned in to the Associate Dean prior to that class.

## December 6: WEEK FOURTEEN – DEVELOPMENTS IN CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

**Student Preparation:**

- 1.) Read “The Story of New Testament Communities” from Edward Schillebeeckx, *Ministry: Leadership in the Community of Jesus Christ*, pp 5-41 [Blackboard]
- 2.) Read “Christianity from the Destruction of Jerusalem to Constantine: 70 – 312 C.E.” by Harold Attridge in Shanks, *Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism*, (2d ed. 2011), pp 167-209 [Blackboard]
- 3.) Write Weekly Academic Essay

**Class:**

- 1.) Jewish influence in Christian worship
- 2.) Ministry in the First Century
- 3.) Role of women in early Christianity
- 4.) Christianity in the Hellenistic world
- 5.) Early concerns about orthodox teaching about Christ
  - Marcion and the Jewishness of Jesus
  - Gnosticism
  - Schools in Antioch and Alexandria
  - Early Apologists

**Assignment:** Students will prepare a final and longer academic essay (**at least 4 pages**) for the last class, December 13. Students are to reflect on the entire course and its pertinence to the **major themes** of the core curriculum, (1) The Human and the Divine; (2) The Individual and Society; (3) Identity and Difference, and the **sub-themes**, (1) Women and Men and gender roles; (2) Authority: how it is construed, exercised, and challenged; (3) Ethics, with an emphasis on justice. Student insights into these topics will be the discussion material for the last class. Students should bring a copy of their essay to the last class, but also **submit a copy on Turnitin**

**prior to the class.**

Note! Requests for a grade of incomplete must be signed and turned in to the Associate Dean prior to the next class.

December 13: WEEK FIFTEEN – CLOSING SESSION: DISCUSSION OF JOURNALS AND WRAPUP FOR THE COURSE

**Student Preparation:**

Students will come with copies of their final essay that reflects on the relevance of the course for major themes and sub-themes of the core curriculum, as indicated under the assignment for Week Twelve.

**Class:**

Class will be devoted principally to a student led and guided discussion of the course as a whole, its goals and objectives, its relation to other courses, to the Liberal Studies program, and to their own life and aspirations. Faculty will share some concluding thoughts on the course.

**Wednesday December 19** – Your final paper, on the Matthew and Luke’s use of sources in the composition of their Gospels is due on Turnitin by **midnight** today.

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