

# BIBLE AS LITERATURE

Dr. David Wilson-Okamura English 3630 Spring 2007 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. 5	F	Introduction
8	M	Genesis chs. 1–3 (Creation and Fall)
10	W	Gen. 4–11 (After the Fall)
12	F	Gen. 12–24 (Abraham)
<b>15</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Martin Luther King Day</b>
17	W	Gen. 25–36 (Isaac, Jacob, Esau)
19	F	<b>Library research session</b>
22	M	Gen. 37–50 (Joseph)
24	W	Exodus 1–15 (Egypt)
26	F	Ex. 16–23 (Law)
29	M	Psalms 1–13; also “Reading Biblical Poetry” ( <i>Jewish Study Bible</i> , pp. 2097ff.)
31	W	Ps. 14–27
Feb. 2	F	Ps. 28–41 [Note: Ps. 1–41 = Book I]
5	M	Ecclesiastes 1–2 (the Gatherer)
7	W	Ecc. 3–6 (Observations)
9	F	Ecc. 7–12 (Counsel)
12	M	Job 1–3 (God, Satan, Job)
14	W	Job 4–14 (Job’s friends: first dialogue; there are two more, 15–21 and 22–31)
16	F	Job 29–42 (Job and God)
19	M	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]
21	W	Is. 24–27 (Apocalypse)
23	F	Is. 28–35 (conclusion of First Isaiah)
26	M	Mark 1–2 (coming of Jesus)
28	W	Mk. 3–5 (teaching and healing I)
Mar. 2	F	Mk. 6–8 (teaching and healing II)
5	M	Mk. 9–10 (disciples)
7	W	Mk. 11–13 (Jesus in Jerusalem)
9	F	Mk. 14–16 (passion)
<b>12–16</b>		<b>Spring Break</b>
19	M	John 1 (coming of the Word)
21	W	Jn. 2–6 (ministry, disciples)
23	F	Jn. 7–12 (Jesus in Jerusalem)
26	M	Jn. 13–17 (farewell discourse, prayer)
28	W	Jn. 18–21 (passion, post-resurrection appearances)
30	F	
Apr. 2	M	Gospel of Thomas and Gospel of Mary Magdalene
4	W	Ephesians 1–2 (doctrine)
<b>6</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Good Friday</b>
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)

## 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 itself, 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 a wedding.

**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 Mar. 2.

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.

**Cell phones** should be turned off before class starts.

**Office hours** in Bate 2137 are held MWF 12:30-1:00, 1:50–3:00, and by appointment. If you need to set up a time, the best way is to grab me after class or give me a phone call. My office number is 328-6714. If you call my office and I'm not there, do try me at home, though not after 9:00 pm, please. My number there is in the phone book.

## PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is using someone else's words or ideas in such a way that a reader cannot distinguish them from your own work. As such, it is a form of cheating. If you have questions about plagiarism, please ask me about it before your paper is due; after a paper is handed in it's too late to claim ignorance. The penalty for plagiarism is an automatic F for the course, in addition to whatever penalty the University sees fit to impose.