

REL 110: The Biblical Heritage

Instructor

Garth Kemerling
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Institution

Newberry College, a private liberal arts college

Course Level and Type

Introductory undergraduate course

Hours of Instruction

(required of all students) 3 semester hours (42 contact hours/session)

Enrollment and Last Year Taught

several sections every semester; average enrollment: 30

Content and Objectives:

This course is designed to provide the student with an introduction to the content of the Bible and to investigate the origin, assimilation, function, and transmission of its texts. The focal point of the course will be to examine how biblical texts, individually and collectively, address the question, "Who are we as the people of God?" It will be shown that various crisis points in the experience of the people of Israel raise new issues that lead to a re-evaluation of the central question. The attempt within the texts to incorporate these re-evaluations into a unified tradition will also be investigated. While the course will therefore take seriously the function of the Bible as a book of faith, its impact upon Western culture will also be noted, and exercises in textual analysis will acquaint the student with skills that can be transferred to other disciplines and areas that deal with the examination of written material.

Requirements:

The asynchronous learning format for this course provides individual students with great flexibility in completing the work for this course. Everyone will be expected to keep up with the basic [schedule](#) below, but you may begin early and proceed more quickly if that is convenient for you. **All work for the course must be completed no later than December 10, 1998.** *Assigned Reading:* Since course lessons and written assignments will presuppose material covered in the required reading from the schedule, prior reading of this material is essential to the successful completion of this course. Links to an electronic edition of the NRSV are provided for the convenience of those who might prefer to read assigned chapters from the Bible on-line. Students are encouraged to take notes on their reading, particularly on material that is unclear or which raises questions. *Course Lessons:* After reading materials from the textbook and the Bible, students should review the appropriate Lesson for the day, available on-line by clicking on the Lesson numbers in the schedule. Further questions about issues of interest or concern can be addressed in e-mail communication with the instructor at gkemerling@delphi.com. *Written assignments:* On the dates assigned in the schedule, students

will complete written assignments in which they review significant information, practice the skills of textual analysis, or develop and express their own convictions. Detailed information on each assignment is linked to the assignment number in the schedule below. Completed assignments should be sent by e-mail to gkemerling@delphi.com. No CACP opportunities will arise in this course. *Grading*: Grades for the course will be determined entirely by student performance on the written assignments, each of which will be weighted equally. For all assignments, and for determining the course grade, the following scale will be used:

Numerical Grade	Letter Grade	Quality Points
90-100	A	4.0
87-89	B+	3.5
80-86	B	3.0
77-79	C+	2.5
70-76	C	2.0
67-69	D+	1.5
60-66	D	1.0
0-59	F	0.0

All students should be familiar with Newberry College policies on academic credit, grading, and academic dishonesty, as published in *The Student Handbook* and with the following official statement: "If you are a student with a disability, it is your responsibility to contact the professor during the first week of class to inform him/her of any reasonable accommodations needed."

Textbooks:

The Bible, New Revised Standard Version

Francis I. Fesperman, *From Torah to Apocalypse* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1983)

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

Date	Required Reading	Lesson	Topics	Assignments
9/7	Fesperman, pp. 3-14	<u>1</u>	Introduction Texts	
9/10	Fesperman, pp. 15-24	<u>2</u>	Geography History	
Unit I: Monarchy and Covenant (<u>On-line Readings</u>)				
9/14	Fesperman, pp. 25-28, 31-35 Genesis 2-4, 6-9	<u>3</u>	Yahwist Elohist	<u># 1</u> (9/17)
9/17	Fesperman, pp. 35-38 Genesis 11-15, 17-19, 22, 25-26	<u>4</u>	Abraham Isaac	
9/21	Fesperman, pp. 38-43 Genesis 27-29, 35, 37, 41-43, 47, 50	<u>5</u>	Jacob Joseph	
	Fesperman, pp. 44-51, 56-57			

9/24	Exodus 1-6, 12, 14, 18-29, 32 Numbers 13-14	<u>6</u>	Moses	<u># 2</u> (9/28)
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Unit II: Exile and Exodus ([On-line Readings](#))

9/28	Fesperman, pp. 28-31, 52-55, 58-62 Genesis 1-2 Leviticus 16 Deuteronomy 34, 6, 12, 16, 28	<u>7</u>	Deuteronomist Priestly Source	
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10/1	Fesperman, pp. 63-92 Joshua 4-6, 10, 24 Judges 1-2, 7, 11, 14 I Samuel 2-4, 7-13, 16-18, 31 II Samuel 3-7, 11-12, 15 I Kings 1, 3-5, 8, 10-11	<u>8</u>	Conquest United Kingdom David and Solomon	<u># 3</u> (10/5)
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10/5	Fesperman, pp. 92-109 I Kings 12, 16-18, 21-22 II Kings 2, 5, 9-12, 15-18 Amos 5, 7 Hosea 1-4, 6, 11 Isaiah 1, 5-8, 11 Micah 1	<u>9</u>	Divided Kingdoms Prophets Assyrian Crisis	
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10/8	Fesperman, pp. 109-130 II Kings 22-25 Jeremiah 1, 22, 26, 20, 36, 29, 31-34, 38 Ezekiel 2-4, 18, 34, 37 Isaiah 40, 44-45, 52-53	<u>10</u>	Josianic Reforms Babylonian Exile Prophets	<u># 4</u> (10/12)
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Unit III: Diaspora and Restoration ([On-line Readings](#))

10/12	Fesperman, pp. 131-139 Ezra 1, 3-4, 6-7, 10 Nehemiah 1-2, 4, 8 Ruth 1-4 Jonah 1-4	<u>11</u>	Restoration Dissidents	
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10/15	Fesperman, pp. 140-151 Psalms 8, 21-23, 44, 51, 100, 121, 137 Song of Solomon 4 Proverbs 1, 6, 10-12 Ecclesiastes 1-3 Job 1-4, 38-42	<u>12</u>	Poetry Wisdom	<u># 5</u> (10/19)
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10/19	Fesperman, pp. 152-161, 171-177 Joel 2 Daniel 1-7, 11-12	<u>13</u>	Apocalypse Diaspora	
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Unit IV: Gospel and Law ([On-line Readings](#))

10/22	Fesperman, pp. 168-170, 246-249 I Thessalonians 1, 3-5	<u>14</u>	Paul's Epistles	<u># 6</u> (11/2)
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11/2	Fesperman, pp. 251-261 Galatians 1-2, 5 I Corinthians 1, 4-8, 11-15	<u>15</u>	Freedom Factions	
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11/5	Fesperman, pp. 262-272 Philippians 1-2, 4 Colossians 1-4 Philemon Romans 1-3, 5, 8, 12-13	<u>16</u>	Prison Epistles Grace and Faith	<u># 7</u> (11/9)
Unit V: Temple Destruction and Messianic Fulfillment (<u>On-line Readings</u>)				
11/9	Fesperman, pp. 162-168, 178-190 Mark 1-3 Matthew 1-4 Luke 1-4	<u>17</u>	Great Rebellion Gospels	
11/12	Fesperman, pp. 191-210 Mark 4-9 Matthew 5-7, 13, 16 Luke 6-7, 10-13	<u>18</u>	Jesus (Galilee)	<u># 8</u> (11/16)
11/16	Fesperman, pp. 211-227 Mark 10-16 Matthew 23-25, 28 Luke 19, 21-24	<u>19</u>	Jesus (Jerusalem)	
11/19	Fesperman, pp. 228-246, 250-251, 272-275 Acts 1-2, 5-6, 8-11, 13, 15-19, 21-22, 28	<u>20</u>	Apostles	<u># 9</u> (11/30)
Unit VI: Parousia Expected but Delayed (<u>On-line Readings</u>)				
11/30	Fesperman, pp. 283-293 I Peter 1, 4 Hebrews 1, 3, 7, 10-12 Revelation 1, 4-5, 7, 12-14, 21	<u>21</u>	Persecution	
12/3	Fesperman, pp. 276-282 James 1-3 Ephesians 2, 4 I Timothy 3-5	<u>22</u>	Paul's Influence	<u># 10</u> (12/7)
12/7	Fesperman, pp. 294-301 I John 1-2, 4 John 1-4, 9-11, 15, 17, 20 II Peter 3	<u>23</u>	Johannine Literature Last Words	
12/10		<u>24</u>	Our Heritage	

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Questions, comments, and suggestions may be sent to: gkemerling@delphi.com