RELIGIOUS STUDIES 106

The Hebrew Bible and its Interpretations

A course taught at Vanderbilt University (5,800 undergraduates and 4,200 graduate and professional students) in Fall of 1998. It is an introductory course that met for 3 hr/week for a 14-week semester. It was conducted as part lecture, part discussion.

Fall, 1998

Prof. Peter Haas

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Garland 301-F; T2:30-3:45

ph: 322-6339

The course will be divided into six two-week modules, each centered around a particular Biblical text. Each module will run as follows:

- FIRST TUESDAY: introduce the passage, discuss its place in the Bible and read the text so as to identify its crucial parts.
- FIRST THURSDAY: discussion of the various ways in which the passage has been interpreted in theology, literature and art. On the basis of this discussion, students will prepare a 3-page draft personal exegesis of the passage.
- SECOND TUESDAY: 3-page papers are due. Discussion of other themes or broader issues (historical, theological, etc) raised by the passage.
- SECOND THURSDAY: Return of 3-page papers with comments. Conclusion of discussion of the passage.
- THIRD (FIRST) TUESDAY: Final exegesis paper due for previous module. Introduction of new passage...

EXAMPLE PAPER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MODULE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>DUE DATE</th>
<th>% GRADE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>Noah's Flood</td>
<td>Sept 15</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Israel Gets a King</td>
<td>Sept 29 15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>Prophecy</td>
<td>Oct 13 15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Four</td>
<td>Biblical Society</td>
<td>Oct 27 15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Five</td>
<td>Bible in Western Religion</td>
<td>Nov 10 15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Six</td>
<td>Creation and Science</td>
<td>Dec 1 15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>FINAL</td>
<td>Sisera and Yael</td>
<td>Dec 15 15%</td>
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### Aug 27
Intro to course and the Bible

### Sept 1-10: Module One: Noah's flood:
- *Genesis* 7-8;
- Ancient Near East, the Documentary Hypothesis

### Sept 15-24: Module Two: The Kingship [Samuel annoints Saul]
- *I Samuel* 10-13
- The Bible and Archeology

### I DIGGEZER COMPUTER MODULE

### Sept 29-Oct 8: Module Three: Prophecy
- *The Book of Habakkuk*
- Prophecy, Apocalypse and the End of Time
  - William Brownlee, *The Midrash Pesher of Habakkuk*

### Oct 13-22: Module Four: Story and Law: Ruth
Oct 27-Nov 5: Module Five: Binding of Isaac

- Genesis 21-22
- Abraham and Isaac in Judaism, Christianity and Islam
  - Jan Knappert. Islamic Legends, pp. 78-83

Nov 10-19: Module Six: The Creation

- Genesis 1-2
- The Bible and Science
  - Matthews and Benjamin, Op. Cit., pp. 28-31 (Ra and the Serpent); 32-34 (Memphis Creation)
  - Psalm 104

* * * *THANKSGIVING BREAK* * * *

Dec 1-8: How the Bible Came to Be

Dec 15: FINAL PAPER: The Story of Sisera and Yael

- Judges 4-5
- Bible & History; feminist readings; narrative vs song
  - Anchor Bible, Judges, pp. 3-29