



Course Syllabus

WYB3314HF/6314HF

Bad Boys and Bad Girls in the Old Testament: Studies in Scriptural

Biography

Wycliffe College

Toronto School of Theology

Fall 2024

Instructor Information

Instructor: Marion Taylor PhD, Full Professor
Office Location: Room 227, Wycliffe College
Telephone: Office – (416) 946-3542
E-mail: m.taylor@utoronto.ca
Office Hours: by appointment Wycliffe College, Rm 227

Course Identification

Course Number: WYB3314/6314HF
Course Format: In-class and Limited Remote Access
Course Name: Bad Boys and Bad Girls in the Old Testament: Studies in Scriptural Biography
Course Location: TBA Wycliffe College
Class Times: Thursdays 9:00am – 11:00am
Prerequisites: Introduction to the Old Testament

Course Description

This course will examine techniques and strategies used for reading Old Testament narratives through history. Special attention will be given to interpretations of such bad boys and bad girls as: Adam and Eve; Sarah, Abraham, and Hagar; Dinah; Rahab; Deborah, Sisera, and Jael; Abimelech; Jephthah and his daughter; Samson and Delilah; the Levite and his concubine; David and his family members. We will talk about how to read and interpret these texts in the church today.

Course Methodology

Lectures, small breakout discussion groups, and readings and assignments as listed below.

Course Resources

Required Course Texts/Bibliography Bad Boys & Bad Girls:
<https://www.uoftbookstore.com/adoption-search-results?ccid=5250619&itemid=38161>

Digital items listed are available for purchase exclusively through our website and are automatically fulfilled. Any physical texts on your list can be ordered online for delivery or store pickup, or purchased in person.

The materials for your course are stocked at the U of T Faculty of Law Bookstore, located at 78 Queen's Park Cres., Level One, Room P125. If you are entering the building through any Jackman Law Building entrance, to the staircase in the atrium, identifiable via a large art piece of a dragonfly. Head down the stairs and turn left. The Bookstore is at the end of the hall. This hall faces the elevators on level 1.

We carry a variety of theological texts, as well as stationary products and merchandise for (Wycliffe/Emmanuel) College. Come and check out our selection!

Our hours are as listed below:

September 3rd-6th: 10am - 6pm Tues-Fri

September 9th – 20th: 11am - 5pm Mon-Fri

September 23rd onward: 11:30am – 2:30pm Mon-Thurs, 2-5pm Fri

1. Yairah Amit, *Reading Biblical Narratives*, Fortress Press, 2001. This book is available through the Bookstore. Three copies are in U of T's system. One will be placed on reserve at Graham Library. If you have read Amit, read relevant sections of *The Oxford Handbook of Biblical Narrative* [electronic resource] /edited by Danna Nolan Fewell. [This book is a comprehensive resource of 644 pages and covers both OT and NT; it is an excellent resource for AD students and available online through the University of Toronto Library].

2. Amanda Benckhuysen, *The Gospel According to Eve*, Grand Rapids: IVP, 2019. This book is available through the Bookstore. It is also available for downloading or reading through the University of Toronto Library.

3. A modern translation of the Bible is also required (e.g. NRSV, RSV, TNIV, NIV, NJPS, NET, or NASB). The NET Bible offers extensive textual notes and is available for use online or as a free download from www.bible.org.

I encourage you to download an audio version of the Bible <http://www.bible.is/apps> and make full use of the Bible Project. This is a fabulous crowd-funded project that has very helpful summaries of each biblical book as well as many other helpful topics.

<https://thebibleproject.com/>

All other readings will be accessible on Quercus

Course Website(s)

- Quercus: <https://q.utoronto.ca/>

This course uses Quercus for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT Quercus login page at <https://q.utoronto.ca/> and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to Quercus using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you'll find the link to the website for all your Quercus-based courses. (Your course registration with ACORN gives you access to the

course website in Quercus.) Information for students about using Quercus can be found at: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701> . Students who have trouble accessing Quercus should contact the registrar's office for further help.

Course Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Course Outcomes

COURSE OUTCOMES	COURSE ELEMENT	PROGRAM OUTCOMES
By the end of this course, students	This outcome will be achieved through these course elements:	This course outcome corresponds to these aspects of Wycliffe's statements of outcomes (MTS, MDiv)
Select and interpret Old Testament narratives featuring bad boys and bad girls	reading the primary texts, commentaries and secondary readings; through lectures; and the final assignment	MTS: 1.1 M.Div: 1a; 1e
Evaluate various ways Old Testament texts have been interpreted throughout history, including current issues in Old Testament scholarship	reading secondary articles; lectures	MTS: 1.2; 1:4; 1:5 M.Div: 1a
Interpret a biblical book and suggest ideas for its application for the church today	class discussions and final assignment	MTS: 1.2, 1.3 M.Div: 1a, 1e
Evaluate how knowledge of the biblical world and our own world influences our reading of Old Testament.	Written assignments and class discussion	MTS: 1.1 M.Div: 1a; 1e

Learning Outcomes: Advanced Degree

The Advanced Degree Council has developed detailed statements of "learning outcomes" for each of the advanced degree programs (ThD, MA and ThM). They are available as appendices in the respective Handbooks. "Learning outcomes" have to do in part with the level of knowledge and skill that will be characteristic of a typical graduate of the program. In accordance with this overall statement, instructors are required to develop a statement of learning outcomes for each course. These outcomes will provide one of the benchmarks for evaluation and grading.

COURSE OUTCOMES	COURSE ELEMENT	PROGRAM OUTCOMES
By the end of this course, students will be able to:	This outcome will be demonstrated through these course elements:	This course outcome corresponds to this aspect of the TST outcomes statement for the individual graduate programs:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpret selected narratives using a variety of traditional and innovative interpretive techniques and strategies (including narrative criticism). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> course requirement as a whole 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PhD: 1.1 MA: 1.1,2,3 ThM: 1.1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choose and compare the content and critical issues surrounding the interpretation of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> in-class discussion final paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PhD: 1.1 MA: 2.3, 5 ThM: 1.1

a biblical text featuring a bad boy or bad girl		
• Design and deliver an oral presentation in a clear and effective manner	• leading in-class discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PhD: 5 • MA: 2.5 • ThM: 2.5
• Select and prepare a research project and present the assembled results in a clear and cogently argued manner	• final paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PhD: 2 • MA: 2.5 • ThM: 3.1

Evaluation

Requirements

The final grade for the course will be based on following evaluations:

Basic Degree Students

- (1) Participation (30%) – In addition to participating in the regular activity of the class, including the reading of the required texts, students are expected to post on the course discussion board. After you do the readings, prepare a thoughtful answer of approximately 200-300 words to one or more of the posted questions by Wednesday at 12:00 noon at the latest so that others can respond to your post. After you and others have posted their answers, start engaging one another in ongoing conversation about their posts and other issues raised in the chapter and readings. Here, further engagement and reference to the class materials will be an important part of these conversations. As you reflect together, you are encouraged to ask questions to take the conversation deeper, voice disagreement and suggest alternate understandings or possibilities, and respectfully listen to and engage others' comments and perspectives. At the least, you must engage at least one other student's post and complete this by class time Thursday 9am.

Response Posts Discussion Board Posts: Guidelines and Rubrics

Initial Post

The rubrics below establish the requirements necessary for our posts to become a rewarding part of the learning experience. They also indicate how contributions to the discussion boards will be graded. In each discussion board there are 4 points available for each initial post, and 1 point for the subsequent responses.

Please note that the discussion boards are primarily intended to take us further in understanding the texts and their ancient contexts. It is important that in your initial posts especially you back up the points you make by drawing on evidence from the Bible and/or course readings.

Please also note that in the category 'Relevance' the reference to reading does NOT mean that all initial posts must include quotation. It means rather that you must display a level of knowledge of the topic consistent with having done the required reading. Quotation may sometimes help you to make a point well, but in short writing assignments it is often just as helpful to indicate when a point made is based upon the work of a particular scholar by inserting a reference within brackets, e.g., "(Amit, 100)".

CATEGORY	Exceeds Standards (4)	Meets Standards (3)	Approaches Standards (2)	Below Standards (1)
----------	-----------------------	---------------------	--------------------------	---------------------

Relevance	entirely relevant to the topic with superior use both of reading and of evidence drawn from the biblical text	entirely relevant to the topic with clear evidence of reading and engagement with the biblical text	somewhat relevant to the topic with some evidence of reading and engagement with the biblical text	largely irrelevant to the topic with little or no evidence of reading or engagement with the biblical text
Coherence	entirely coherent and easy to follow	entirely coherent and easy to follow	largely coherent and possible to follow	significantly incoherent and difficult to follow
Presentation	appropriate length, written in complete sentences with proper use of words, and a good standard of spelling and punctuation, commentary bibliography included	appropriate length, written in complete sentences with proper use of words, and a good standard of spelling and punctuation, commentary bibliography included	only occasional failures to meet the standards	frequent failures to meet the standards

Response Posts

The rubrics below establish the requirements for response posts. In each discussion board, students are expected to respond to at least one post by other students, although I hope that the discussion will be sufficiently engaging that you may want to do more and especially that authors of initial posts will want to reply to the responses they receive.

Responses are intended to be short (a few sentences each) and should further the discussion. Response posts that are unclear, irrelevant, or simply repeat points already made by other students will be deemed not to further the discussion.

Productive responses will usually fall into two categories: (i) "curiosity" questions/comments, i.e., the response seeks clarification or expansion from the author of the initial post, or (ii) "persuasive" questions/comments, i.e., the response seeks to prompt the author of the initial post to deeper reflection in some way.

Response posts should meet the standards set out above for initial posts in the categories of "Coherence" and "Presentation." In addition, response posts should also meet the following standards:

CATEGORY	Meets/Exceeds Standards (2)	Approaches Standards (1)	Below Standards (0)
General	the whole reply furthers the discussion or clarifies it	parts of the reply further the discussion or clarify it	the reply fails to further the discussion or clarify it
Questions	all questions asked are succinct, relevant, and courteous	most questions asked are succinct and relevant; all are courteous	most questions asked are either not succinct or not relevant; some fail to be courteous

(2) Book Report/Reading Reflection Paper (30%) –Each student will do a book report/reflection paper on Yairah Amit, *Reading Biblical Narratives: Literary Criticism and the Hebrew Bible* (Fortress, 2001). Your paper should summarize the main points of the book in brief fashion, giving evidence that you have read and understood the book. **It should also** answer the following question: what does Amit's book teach about reading biblical narratives that you can apply to your own reading and teaching of narrative texts in the Bible (4-5 pages, double spaced). This assignment is due third class, September 26th.

(3) Final paper (40%) – The final paper can be exegetical or topical in nature. It may take the form of a traditional essay on a character or text or on the history of the interpretation of a particular character or text (10-12 pages). For example, Was Abigail and Saint of a Sinner? Was Bathsheba a saint or a sinner? What about Jehu? What about the prophet in 1 Kings 13? What about God as a character? [See Paul Copan, Is God a Moral Monster? Making Sense of the Old Testament God and many other articles which open this question]. A comparison of the nineteenth Scripture biographies written by Henry Ward Beecher 's *Illustrated Bible Biography; Or, The Lives And Characters of the Principal Personages Recorded In the Sacred Writings*, 1870 and his sister Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Woman in Sacred History*, 1873. This comparison will open up the question do men and women read texts differently? Please consult with the professor. This assignment is due December 12th or earlier.

Graduate Students

(1) Participation (30%) – In addition to participating in the regular activity of the class, including the reading of the required texts, students are expected to post on the course discussion board. After you do the readings, prepare a thoughtful answer of approximately 200-300 words to one or more of the posted questions by Wednesday at 12:00 noon at the latest so that others can respond to your post. After you and others have posted their answers, start engaging one another in ongoing conversation about their posts and other issues raised in the chapter and readings. Here, further engagement and reference to the class materials will be an important part of these conversations. As you reflect together, you are encouraged to ask questions to take the conversation deeper, voice disagreement and suggest alternate understandings or possibilities, and respectfully listen to and engage others' comments and perspectives. At the least, you must engage at least one other student's post, and complete this by class time Thursday 9am. See rubrics and instructions on posting on the discussion board above.

(2) Book Report/Reading Reflection Paper (15%) –Each student will do a book report/reflection paper on Yairah Amit, *Reading Biblical Narratives: Literary Criticism and the Hebrew Bible* (Fortress, 2001). Your paper should summarize the main points of the book in brief fashion, giving evidence that you have read and understood the book. **It should also** answer the following question: what does Amit's book teach about reading biblical narratives that you can apply to your own reading and teaching of narrative texts in the Bible (4-5 pages, double spaced). This assignment is due third class, September 26th.

(3) Book Report Book report (15%) –Book report on a book on narrative criticism or on a book that applies narrative criticism to a particular text or biblical book (i.e., Keith Bodner, *1 Samuel: A Narrative Commentary* or series of books. Due October 31st.

(4) Final paper (40%) – The final paper can be exegetical or topical in nature. It may take the form of a traditional essay on a character or text or on the history of the interpretation of a particular character or text (15 pages+). For example, Was Abigail and Saint of a Sinner? Was Bathsheba a saint or a sinner? What about Jehu? What about the prophet in 1 Kings 13? What about God as a character? [See Paul Copan, Is God a Moral Monster? Making Sense of the Old Testament God and many other articles which opens up this question]. Consult the professor for lots more ideas for papers about understudied writings about the bad boys and girls that would make for a great topic for your paper. A comparison of the nineteenth Scripture biographies written by Henry Ward Beecher *Illustrated Bible Biography; Or, The Lives And Characters of the Principal Personages Recorded In the Sacred Writings*, 1870 and his sister Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Woman in Sacred History*, 1873, for example would open up the question do men and

women read texts differently? Please consult with the professor. This assignment is due December 12th or earlier.

Grading System - Basic Degree Students

1000, 2000 and 3000 level courses use the following numerical grading scale (see section 11.2 of the BD Handbook):

90-100 (A+)	Exceptional
85-89 (A)	Outstanding
80-84 (A-)	Excellent
77-79 (B+)	Very Good
73-76 (B)	Good
70-72 (B-)	Acceptable
0-69 (FZ)	Failure

Grading System - Graduate Degree Students

5000, 6000 and 7000 level courses use the following alpha grading scale;

A+	(90-100)	Profound & creative
A	(85-89)	Outstanding
A-	(80-84)	Excellent
B+	(77-79)	Very Good
B	(73-76)	Good
B-	(70-72)	Satisfactory at a post-baccalaureate level
FZ	(0-69)	Failure

Please see the appropriate handbook for more details about the grading scale and non-numerical grades (e.g. SDF, INC, etc).

Policy on Assignment and Course Extensions

Assignment Extension (BD). Basic Degree students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. Under exceptional circumstances a student may request a short extension to be determined with the instructor. Instructors are not obliged to approve a request for an extension or accept papers that are late where no extension has been requested. If the instructor chooses to accept an assignment, where an extension has **not** been requested and approved before the due date, then **for that assignment one percentage point per late day will be deducted.** The final deadline for the submission of assignments is the date set by the instructor in the syllabus, the examination day scheduled for the course, or the last day of exam week for the semester in which the course is taught, whichever is sooner. If the student fails to submit the assignment by the agreed deadline a mark of zero will be calculated for the assignment.

Policy on Course Extension (BD) Students with documented medical difficulties or exceptional reasons (e.g., a death in the family or a serious illness) who are unable to submit their work by the end of the term must talk with their instructor and request a course extension. The deadline for obtaining a course extension is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of examination week, whichever is sooner. The course extension, when approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline, with an absolute deadline of the last day of the examination week within the twelfth month following the end of the course. (The course extension must also be approved by the Basic Degree Director and confirmed by the Registrar.) Under extraordinary situations a student may request an extension on the initial extension. To do this, students must complete a second course extension form, include sufficient documentation (e.g. a doctor's letter) and receive the approval of both the instructor and the BD director.

An approved course extension will appear on the student's record as an SDF. If the student completes coursework before the new deadline approved by the professor and the student's college, the grade SDF will be changed to a letter and number grade. If the student does not complete the work by the deadline set by the professor and no further extension is granted, the professor will assign a zero for the unsubmitted work and submit a final grade (numerical or letter, including FZ) or, if the student successfully petitions for one, a permanent incomplete (INC). For late papers (with or without a course extension) students will receive a grade but minimal comments.

The link for the course extension form is at <https://www.wycliffecollege.ca/basic-degree-request-extension-pdf>

Late work (Graduate). The prima facie deadline for the completion of work in a course is the last day of the examination week for the trimester in which the course is taken. Students are expected to meet the course deadlines of the instructor offering the course and are advised to plan their research projects accordingly. Students who find themselves unable to meet deadlines for completing coursework can, under certain conditions, receive extensions for completing the work after the dates set by the college in which the course is offered.

The authority to grant an extension for the completion of work in a course beyond the original TST or college deadline (whichever is earlier) for that course rests with the student's college Graduate Director, not the instructor of the course. Nevertheless, the instructor's signature is required for course extension requests to be processed. Students will petition their college Graduate Director for extensions, using a standard form provided by TST on its website. See Section 7.11 of the Conjoint Graduate Degree Handbook.

Course grades. Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor's college before being posted to ACORN. Grades are not official until they are posted to ACORN. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy found at <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/grading-practices-policy-university-assessment-and-january-26-2012>, policies found in the TST conjoint program handbooks, or college grading policy.

Policies

Accessibility. Students with a disability or health consideration, whether temporary or permanent, are entitled to accommodation. Students in conjoint degree programs must register at the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as>. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

Plagiarism. Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* and the Graduate program Handbooks linked from <http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks> and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code->

[behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019](https://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/library/research/theology/avoiding-plagiarism-in-theological-writing/). A student who plagiarizes in this course will be assumed to have read the document “Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing” published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges:

<https://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/library/research/theology/avoiding-plagiarism-in-theological-writing/>

Use of AI. Students are not to submit work generated by AI chatbots such as ChatGPT. If students are found to have done so, they will receive a mark of ‘zero’ for the assignment concerned.

Recording Policy. Students may not create audio or video recordings of classes with the exception of those students requiring accommodation for a disability (as identified by the Accessibility Services). These students should speak to the instructor in advance of the class.

If a course is to be recorded (either by a student or the instructor), the following guidelines apply:

- Students must be given notice that lectures or a lecture will be recorded, preferably well before the recorded class. Consent forms are available from the Registrar’s office.
- Students must be given the option to opt out of recorded classes without penalty. Students who wish to remain anonymous in a recorded lecture will not be penalized for this choice – if, for example, participation is a required component of the course, students will be given another option to earn participation credit that will not be recorded.

Students creating unauthorized audio and/or video recording of lectures violate an instructor’s intellectual property rights and the Canadian Copyright Act. Students violating this agreement will be subject to disciplinary actions under the Code of Student Conduct.

Other academic offences. TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019>.

Back-up copies. Please make back-up copies of essays before handing them in.

Obligation to check email. At times, the course instructor may decide to send out important course information by email. To that end, all students in conjoint programs are required to have a valid utoronto email address. Students must have set up their utoronto email address which is entered in the ACORN system. Information is available at www.utorid.utoronto.ca. The course instructor will not be able to help you with this. 416-978-HELP and the Help Desk at the Information Commons can answer questions you may have about your UTORid and password. Students should check utoronto email regularly for messages about the course. **Forwarding** your utoronto.ca email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that emails from your course instructor may end up in your spam or junk mail folder. Students in non-conjoint programs should contact the Registrar of their college of registration.

Email communication with the course instructor. The instructor aims to respond to email communications from students in a timely manner. *All email communications from students in conjoint programs must be sent from a utoronto email address.* Email communications from other email addresses are not secure, and also the instructor cannot readily identify them as being legitimate emails from students. The instructor is not obliged to respond to email from non-utoronto addresses for students in

conjoint programs. Students in non-conjoint programs should only use the email address they have provided to their college of registration.

Course Schedule

Week 1 (September 12) Introduction to Reading Old Testament Narratives.

Start reading Yairah Amit, *Reading Biblical Narratives*. Your assignment on this book is due week 3, September 26.

The Bible project:

<https://bibleproject.com/podcast/how-read-bible-part-7-understanding-plot-and-narrative-bible-stories/on-plot>

<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/plot-biblical-narrative/>

<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/character-biblical-narrative/>

<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/setting-biblical-narrative/>

<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/design-patterns-biblical-narrative/>

Read: Marina Hoffman, "Narrative and Narrative Criticism"

Week 2 (September 19) The First Bad Girl and Bad Boy. First Post to Discussion Board on Quercus due Wed at noon!

Start or continue to read Yairah Amit, *Reading Biblical Narratives*. Your assignment on this book is due next week, September 26.

Read Genesis 2-3 What do these chapters say about the characters of Adam and Eve? **Was Eve a Bad Girl? What about Adam?** How do other tools of narrative criticism open up these chapters?

Read and be prepared to discuss in class Amanda Benckhuysen's, *The Gospel of Eve*, pages 7-51, and try to read one other chapter :109-143, 172-199, 200-229. What were the most significant insights that you gained from these chapters?

- Provide examples of how interpretations of Adam and Eve impacted the lives of men and women in the past and into the present.
- **AD students** are expected to read all the chapters of *The Gospel of Eve*

Week 3 (September 26) More Bad Boys and Girls in Genesis: Sarah, Abraham, and Hagar **The Assignment on *Reading Biblical Narratives* is due TODAY.**

Read Genesis 12, 16, 18, 20-21.

Read and Be prepared to discuss the posted readings by Thompson, Tribble, and England and **read** the posted poems on Hagar by Bibb, Moise, and Aguilar

John Thompson, "Patriarchs Behaving Badly" in *Reading the Bible with the Dead*, 71-92.

Phyllis Tribble, "Hagar: The Desolate Rejection," *Texts of Terror*, 9-35. See also the short article <https://postbarthian.com/2019/07/18/hagar-a-symbol-of-the-oppressed/>

Yaffa England, "The Expulsion of Hagar: Reading the Image, (Re)viewing the Story," in *Religion and the Arts* 22 (2018) 261-293.

For a fuller treatment of Hagar see Nyasha Junior, *Reimagining Hagar: Blackness and Bible*. Biblical Refigurations. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019.

https://brill.com/view/journals/rart/22/3/article-p261_1.xml?language=en

AD Readings: B. P. Robinson, "Characterization in the Hagar and Ishmael Narratives," *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament*: 27(2) (2013), 198–215. Available as a pdf from the UT Library website.

Week 4 (October 3) Is Dinah Really a Bad Girl and What about Rahab? (Trigger Warning)
Second Post to Discussion Board due Wed at noon!

Read Genesis 30:21; 34; 46:15; Joshua 2 How does narrative criticism help you read the story of the rape of Dinah and the character of Rahab in Joshua 2?

Read John Thompson, "Reading Sex and Violence," in *Reading the Bible with the Dead*, 185–214.

Read Joy Schroeder, "Fallen Virgin, Violated Daughter: The Rape of Dinah (Genesis 34)" in *Dinah's Lament: The Biblical Legacy of Sexual Violence in Christian Interpretation*, (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007) 11-56.

Read Robin Parry, "Feminist Hermeneutics and Evangelical Concerns: The Rape of Dinah as a Case Study," in *Tamar's Tears: Evangelical Engagements with Feminist Old Testament Hermeneutics* ed Andres Sloan (Eugene: Pickwick 2012) 30- 64.

Read posted 19th c. selections on Rahab from *Women of War* by Cecil Frances Alexander, Etty Woosnam, Leigh Norval, Josephine Butler, and E. C. Stanton

Week 5 (October 10) What about Miriam?

Third Post to Discussion Board due Wed at noon!

Read Exodus 2:1-10; 15:20-21; Numbers 12:1-16. Miriam is a complex character as she is surrounded by conflicting descriptions. How is the narrator presenting Miriam in each of these stories?

Read Phyllis Trible, "Bringing Miriam out of the Shadows", in Athalya Brenner (ed.), *A Feminist Companion to Exodus to Deuteronomy* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 166-86.

Read Marion Ann Taylor, "Bringing Miriam Out of the Shadows: Harriet Beecher Stowe and Phyllis Trible," in Joyce Rilett Wood et al eds., *From Babel to Babylon: Essays on Biblical History and Literature in Honour of Brian Peckham* (London/New York: T & T Clark International, 2006): 263–72.

Read Mukti Barton, "The Skin of Miriam Became as White as Snow: The Bible, Western Feminism and Colour Politics," *Feminist Theology*, 2001-05, Vol.9 (27), 68-80.

AD students peruse Caris Kim, "Women's Interpretations of Miriam in the Long Nineteenth Century (1789–1914)," <https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/handle/1807/139169>.

Week 6 (October 17) Who are the Bad Boys and Girls among the Characters Deborah, Jael, Barak, and Sisera and Jephthah and his Daughter

Fourth Post to Discussion Board due Wed at noon!

Read Judges 4-5, 11 How does narrative criticism help you interpret the characters in these stories? Who are the bad girls and boys?

Read Joy Schroeder, A 'Heroick and Masculine-Spirited Championess? In Deborah's Daughters (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 106-138. Available to download at the library website.

Read David M Gunn, "Judges 10-12: Jephthah" in *Judges: Blackwell Bible Commentaries*, 133-169.

Read posted nineteenth-century readings on Deborah and Jael from Taylor and DeGroot, *Women of War, Women of Woe* 105-113; 138-153.

Read posted nineteenth-century readings on Jephthah's Daughter from *Women of War*, 191-202;

AD students skim Adelia Graves, *Jephtha's Daughter: A Drama in Five Acts*, <https://archive.org/details/jephthahsdaughte00grav>

Week 7 (October 24) More Bad Boys and Girls in Judges: Samson and his women and the Levite and His Concubine and Civil war (Trigger Warning)

Fifth Post to Discussion Board due Wed at noon!

Read Judges 13-16, 19-21

Read David M. Gunn, "Judges 13 to 16: Samson," in *Judges: Blackwell Bible Commentaries*, 170-230.

Read David M Gunn, "Judges 19-21; The Levite and the Benjamites," in *Judges: Blackwell Bible Commentaries*, 243-275.

Read select short 19th readings of Delilah from Taylor and DeGroot, *Women of War, Women of Woe* 231-243, focus especially on Stowe, Wilcox, and Neyman

Read Mary Cornwallis [very short] and Josephine Butler on The Levite's Concubine in Taylor and DeGroot, *Women of War, Women of Woe* 244-257. **AD students:** Compare Butler's two pieces. What is her interpretive approach?

Read Black American scholar Koala Jones-Warsaw, "Toward a Womanist Hermeneutic: A Reading of Judges 19-21," *A Feminist Companion to Judges*, 172-86.

Week 8 (October 24) Reading Week. No class.

Week 9 (November 7) Fatal Attractions: David and Bathsheba and Amnon and Tamar (Trigger Warning) **Sixth Post to Discussion Board due Wed at noon!**

Read 2 Samuel 11-13; 1 Kings 1, 2

Read Andrew Sloan, "A Narrative Reading of 2 Sam 11-12," in *At Home in a Strange Land: Using the Old Testament in Christian Ethics* (Peabody; Hendrickson, 2008), 49-60.

David M. Gunn, "Bathsheba Bathing: Artistic Views" in

<https://www.bibleodyssey.org/en/passages/related-articles/bathsheba-bathing>

Read Katharine Doob Sakenfeld, "Michal, Abigail and Bathsheba: In the Eye of the Beholder," *Just Wives? Stories of Power and Survival in the Old Testament and Today*, 2003, 69-90.

***AD Reading:** Danna Nolan Fewell and David Gunn, "In the Shadow of the King," in *Gender, Power and Promise*, 140-163.

Read Joy Schroeder, "Violated Sister: The Tears of Tamar (2 Samuel 13)" In *Dinah's Lament: The Biblical Legacy of Sexual Violence in Christian Interpretation*, 153-190.

Read Miriam J. Bier, "Colliding Contexts: Reading Tamar (2 Samuel 13:1-22) as a Twenty-First Century Woman," in Andrew Sloane ed. *Tamar's Tears: Evangelical Engagements with Feminist Old Testament Hermeneutics* (Eugene OR: Pickwick 2012) 171-190.

***See also** Miriam J. Bier, "Is There a God in this Text? Violence, Absence, and Silence in 2 Samuel 13:1-22" in *Reconsidering Gender: Evangelical Perspectives*, edited by Myk Habets, Beulah Wood (Eugene, Or. : Pickwick Publications, 2011) 148-160.

***Gerald West** "Global Thefts of Biblical Narratives: Biblical Leakage," in *The Oxford Handbook of Biblical Narrative*, edited by Danna Fewell. Available online at the library website. Peruse this rich collection of articles.

For how not to read David see Mark Boyer, "David: Leader of Abandon," in *Biblical Reflections on Male Spirituality*, 52-54.

Week 10 (November 14) What about Absalom: A Bad Boy or a Warrior for Justice?

Read 2 Samuel 17-18 Seventh Post to Discussion Board due Wed at noon!

Keith Bodner. (2014). *The Rebellion of Absalom*. Routledge (2014) see library for online link
Read the chapters "Game Change," "Hanging Heir," and Conclusion "A Kingdom for a Stage."

AD students should read the entire book as it's accessible and relevant to the issues raised in this course.

Read Yairah Amit, 'Absalom; A Warrior for justice – A life Story in Seven Stages' in *Characters and Characterization in the Book of Samuel*, edited by Keith Bodner and Benjamin J. M. Johnson (London: T & T Clark, 2020), 255-270.

Week 11 (November 21) Bad Boys and Girls in Kings

Eighth Post to Discussion Board due Wed at noon!

1 Kings 16:1-22:53; 2 Kings 9-10 Jehu and Ahab and Jezebel

Read Lissa M. Wray Beal, "Dancing with Death; Dancing with Life: Ahab Between Jezebel and Elijah," in *Characters and Characterization in the Book of Kings*, edited by Keith Bodner and Benjamin J. M. Johnson (London: T & T Clark, 2020), 103–120.

Read Helen Paynter, "Ahab—Heedless Father, Sullen Son: Humor and Intertextuality in 1 Kings 21," *JSOT* 41 (2017): 451–474.

Read Melissa Jackson, "Reading Jezebel from the 'other' side: Feminist critique, postcolonialism, and comedy," *RevExp* 112 (2015): 239–255.

AD also Read Athalya Brenner-Idan, "Jezebel Now: Gazing Through Multiple Windows," in *Characters and Characterization in the Book of Kings*, edited by Keith Bodner and Benjamin J. M. Johnson (London: T & T Clark, 2020), 121–134

Read Mark Roncace, "He's Driving like Jehu- Like a Madman: Humor and violence in 2 Kings 9-10," in *Characters and Characterization in the Book of Kings*, edited by Keith Bodner and Benjamin J. M. Johnson (London: T & T Clark, 2020), 167-181.

Read Phyllis Trible, "Exegesis for Storytellers and other Strangers" *JBL* 11 (1995) 3-19.
See also Tina Pippin, Jezebel Re-Vamped in *A Feminist Companion to Samuel and Kings*, 196-206.

Week 12 (November 28) Subaltern Studies (2 Kings 4:1-7) and Athaliah, Another Bad Girl in Kings (2 Kings 8:26-7, 11)

Ninth Post to Discussion Board due Wed at noon!

Read 2 Kings 4:1-7 paying special attention to the creditor [bad] and the neighbours [good].

Read 2 Kings 8: 26-27 and focus on the character of Athaliah in 2 Kings 11.

Read: Gina Hens-Piazza, "Artifacts of Scenery or Agents of Change" A Subaltern Character in 2 Kings 4:1-7," in *Characters and Characterization in the Book of Kings*, edited by Keith Bodner and Benjamin J. M. Johnson (London: T & T Clark, 2020), 199-213.

Read Patricia Dutcher-Walls, "Athaliah: The Queen Who Was Not" in *Characters and Characterization in the Book of Kings*, edited by Keith Bodner and Benjamin J. M. Johnson (London: T & T Clark, 2020), 182-198.

Read Robert Kuloba Wabayanga, "Athaliah of Judah (2 Kings 11): A Political Anomaly or an Ideological Victim?" in *Looking through a Glass Bible: Postdisciplinary Biblical Interpretations from the Glasgow School*. (2014) 139–152.

Week 13 (December 5) Bad Girls and Bad Boys in the Book of Esther

Tenth Post to Discussion Board due Wed at noon!

Read Esther chapters 1-2, and 9 focusing on the characters of Vashti and Esther. Then **Read** Esther 3, 5, 7, 10 focusing on Mordecai, Haman, and Xerxes. How would you describe each of these men, using the tools of narrative criticism?

Read Taylor's commentary on Esther 1-2, pp 100-112, 115-126 and on "Esther 7:1-10," pp. 176-187; and "Esther 8:1-17," pp. 188-199.

Read Denise Flanders, "Freeing Ahasuerus, Haman, and Mordechai: Liberating the Oppressor in the Book of Esther," *Journal of Theological Studies*, 71.1 (2020) 36–61.

Read Katharine Doob Sakenfeld, "Vashti and Esther: Models of Resistance," in *Just Wives? Stories of Power & Survival in the Old Testament & Today*, 27-49.

Read Madipoane Masenya, "Limping yet made to climb mountains, rereading the Vashti character in the HIV and AIDS South African context" in Yvonne Sherwood, *The Bible and Feminism: Remapping the Field*, Oxford. You can download the PFD from the library link on Quercus or go directly to the library site.

Study Rembrandt's image of Haman: Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn. (n.d.). *Haman Recognizing his Fate*. "The composition of the painting is concentrated on three people. Here Rembrandt dispenses with all the archaic iconographic attributes and instead portrays the spiritual conditions of the three people. We see Haman, who by his boundlessly evil action has brought upon himself guilt and disgrace. He had planned to have all the Jews in the Persian kingdom killed in one night, not knowing that Esther, the wife of Ahasuerus, King of Persia, was a Jewess. The plan was foiled, and the painting shows Ahasuerus commanding Haman to put royal robes on Mordecai, the old Jew who had told the Queen about Haman's plan. Rembrandt has caught the moment in which Haman foresees his downfall."

https://library.artstor.org/#/asset/ARTSTOR_103_41822003070875