



Course Syllabus

(Tentative until course begins. Texts confirmed; assignments and readings may be slightly modified)

WYB1009HS Introduction to the Old Testament II Wycliffe College Toronto School of Theology

Course Identification

Course Number:	WYB1009HS
Course Name:	Introduction to the Old Testament II
Campus:	In Person at Wycliffe College; Zoom possible for geographically distant students
Time:	Tuesdays, 9:00-11:00 ET
Prerequisite:	None

Instructor Information

Instructor:	Lissa M. WRAY BEAL, PhD, Professor of Old Testament
Teaching Assistants:	TBD
Office Location	Wycliffe College Faculty Offices, Room 228
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Office Hours:	Tuesdays and Thursday, 11:00-1:00 ET

Course Description

Introduction to Old Testament literature and history, with emphasis on application within the church.

Course Methodology

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

Course Resources

Required Course Texts

While you may wish to purchase the course text, it is available from The Graham Library, which has acquired the eBook edition of Hess' *the Old Testament*. Please use the following link: <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/lib/utoronto/detail.action?docID=4901264>

- Richard S. Hess, *The Old Testament: A Historical, Theological, and Critical Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016. ISBN 9780801037146
- A modern translation of the Old Testament is also required, e.g. the *New Revised Standard Version*, the *New International Version (2011)*, *Tanakh: The New JPS Translation According to the Traditional Hebrew Text*.

- Additional readings as outlined on the course outline below and posted to Quercus or available online through the U of T Library.

Recommended Books and Resources

- I encourage you to download an audio version of the Bible <http://www.bible.is/apps>.
- <https://thebibleproject.com/> This is a fabulous crowd-funded project that has very helpful summaries of each biblical book as well as many other topics. I recommend you watch the video of each biblical book before you read it and the textbook.
- For help in building your OT library see <http://bestcommentaries.com/>. Great guides to classic commentaries include two older works: Brevard S. Childs, *Old Testament Books for Pastor and Teachers* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977) and Charles Spurgeon's *Commenting and Commentaries: A Reference Guide to Book Buying for Pastors, Students, and Christian Workers* (reprint ed.; Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1988).
- Check out other great resources:
 - www.bibleodyssey.org
 - Tyndale House's StepBible: www.stepbible.org
 - the series of podcasts <https://onscript.study/biblicalworld/>
 - <https://www.amazon.ca/Africa-Bible-Commentary-One-Scholars/dp/0310291879> (Links to an external site.)
 - <https://www.amazon.ca/South-Asia-Bible-Commentary-One-ebook/dp/B00UF7W66E>

Course Website(s)

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

This course uses Quercus for its course website. To access it, go to the U of T 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>.

Course Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Wycliffe College

BD Level

Students successfully completing this course will be able to demonstrate the following learning outcomes.

AREA OF OUTCOME	COURSE OUTCOMES	ACHIEVED THROUGH COURSE ELEMENT
	By the end of this course, students will	This outcome will be achieved through these course elements
IN RESPECT OF GENERAL ACADEMIC SKILLS	-critically analyze and evaluate a thesis and its presentation -demonstrate basic-degree-level writing skills	-preparation of inductive study, exegetical paper, and weekly online discussion of readings
IN RESPECT OF THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE	-identity the content, structure, and themes of the books of Chronicles-Zechariah	-inductive study on Esther or Amos; final exegetical paper

CONTENT OF ONE OR MORE THEOLOGICAL DISCIPLINES	<p>-discuss explanations of Old Testament violence</p> <p>-identify the basic timeline of events in the Old Testament</p> <p>-identify and evaluate examples of interpretation of Old Testament texts throughout history, including current issues in Old Testament scholarship</p>	<p>-seminar discussions on use of OT in church, troubling texts</p> <p>-course readings and online discussion questions</p> <p>-reading and discussion of premodern and modern examples of biblical interpretation</p>
IN RESPECT OF PERSONAL AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION	<p>-read and analyze a biblical book and suggest ideas for its application for the church today</p> <p>-reflect on the value of the Old Testament for New Testament faith and ecclesial formation</p>	<p>-inductive study on Esther or Amos, exegetical paper</p> <p>-seminars, course lectures and discussion personal reflection paper</p>
IN RESPECT OF MINISTERIAL AND PUBLIC LEADERSHIP	<p>-evaluate the value of the Old Testament for discipleship in personal and ecclesial contexts</p> <p>-reflect on and evaluate troubling biblical texts</p>	<p>-course readings, online discussion, lectures</p> <p>-personal reflection paper</p> <p>-exegetical paper</p>

Evaluation

Requirements

Classes will be held once a week for two hours. Attendance is mandatory and expected. Consistent lateness or absence can result in penalty up to and including course failure.

Unless otherwise indicated, all written assignments are due before class begins and are to be submitted on Quercus.

All written work must be your own. Plagiarism is a serious offense and is using the ideas and writings of others and representing them as your own. Even if you do not copy another source word-for-word, but rather rephrase the source without attributing it to the original author by including a footnote, you are guilty of plagiarism. See Wycliffe's plagiarism policy later in this syllabus. The minimum penalty for a plagiarized paper is the grade of zero.

The final grade for the course will be based on evaluation in the following areas:

Grade summary:

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| 1) Weekly Discussion Board Posts and Responses (due weekly) | 25% |
| 2) Inductive Study on Amos or Esther (due January 30) | 25% |
| 3) Exegesis paper (due March 26) | 30% |

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 4) Personal Reflection Paper (due April 2) | 15% |
| 5) Attendance and Participation | 5% |

Assignment outline:

- Weekly Discussion Board Posts and Responses (25% total. Initial post due weekly by *Monday by noon*; at least one response to another student by *Monday evening by 11:59 pm*).**

The week before each Tuesday class, do the preparatory reading. For the classes in Weeks 2-12 once you've done that, write a thoughtful answer of approximately 200-300 words to one or more of the questions posted in your Quercus Discussion Group. These questions will be released on Friday morning the week before each Tuesday class. Post your initial answer no later than *Monday at noon*. This will enable others to respond to your initial post. Then, start engaging one another in ongoing conversation about their posts and other issues raised in the chapter and readings. For both your initial post and responses, engagement with 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 before class no later than *Monday evening by 11:59 pm*.

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 2 points 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 Hess.

Please also note that in the category 'Relevance' the reference to reading does NOT mean that all initial posts must include quotations. It means rather that you must display a level of knowledge of the topic consistent with having done the required reading. Quotations of Hess and other readings 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., "(Hess, 127)".

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. Inductive Study of Amos or Esther (25%. Due on Quercus before class begins January 30).

This study should be between 7-10 pages of written work excluding the title and contents pages and bibliography (if needed for Bible Atlases or Dictionaries – see below), typed in 12-point Times New Roman font, double spaced with one-inch margins – For this assignment, simply work with the biblical text. No further engagement of secondary resources is required (such as commentaries, annotated Bibles, textbook). You may use an Atlas or Dictionary for place names or puzzling terms, but make sure to cite it properly. Use the inductive study guideline found at the end of this syllabus.

3. Exegesis Paper (30%. Due on Quercus before class begins March 26).

This paper should be 10 pages (and no more than 12) of written work excluding title page, contents, and bibliography, typed in 12-point Times New Roman font, double spaced with one-inch margins. Use the exegetical paper guideline found at the end of this syllabus, and choose *one* of the following passages for your paper:

- Micah 4:1-5; Isaiah 49:13-18; Jeremiah 4:23-28; Zechariah 9: 9-13

4. Personal Reflection Paper (15%. Due on Quercus before class begins April 2)

This paper should be 5 pages, excluding any title page, typed in 12-point Times New Roman font, double spaced with one-inch margins. Read the chapter, “Prologue: The Bible as a Grand Story” in *The Drama of Scripture* by Bartholomew and Goheen (posted in Quercus Module for April 2). Consider their understanding of the Bible as a single, unfolding story. Also reflect on what you’ve learned in this class about the Old Testament and consider your personal and ecclesial context. Answer this question: what have you learned in this course about what the Old Testament brings to the whole story of the Bible that makes it essential (or perhaps troubling) to your personal faith in Christ, and essential for the health of the church? Give approximately 3 specific examples and reflect on them. As this is a 2-semester course, you can draw upon the whole of the Old Testament for your answer, but you must give at least one of your examples from the second semester’s material. You do not need to use further resources but if you do, provide a bibliography and appropriate citation.

5. Attendance and Participation (5%).

Preparation for each class and active participation in class discussions and seminars is also expected and will enrich your own learning experience and that of your colleagues. See the course outline for assigned biblical text, textbook, and additional readings for preparation. See the participation rubric at the end of this syllabus.

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

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

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.

Policy on Assignment and Course Extensions (Nov 2022)

Late Assignments and Extensions (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.

Wycliffe Plagiarism Policy (November, 2022)

1. In cases of academic dishonesty, Wycliffe College will follow the policy and procedures in the [University of Toronto's 'Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters'](#), as understood in the TST *Basic Degree Handbook*, section 15.1.2-4 (see appendix).

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* (linked from <http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks> and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>), a student who plagiarizes in this course. Students will be assumed to have read the document "Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing" published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm

2. When a professor has reasonable grounds to suspect academic dishonesty, the professor shall notify the student and invite the student to discuss the matter. If it is established that a violation of the policy has occurred, or if the student fails to respond to the professor's invitation, a report shall be made to the program director and copied to the Registrar and to the student.
3. If the student is a member of another college, the professor shall make an additional report to the Principal, who will bring the matter to the attention of the appropriate college head.
4. We recognise that in many cases the first occurrence can be a useful teaching moment. When an incident is a first offense, it lies within the professor's discretion to issue a warning, to ask for work to be resubmitted, or to assign a zero for the assignment. In any event, notification of action taken shall be reported to the program director and Registrar.
5. When it is determined by the program director or the Registrar that a student has committed a second offense of academic dishonesty, the matter shall be referred to the Principal.

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.

Class Schedule

Week 1 (January 9) Chronicles; the Old Testament in the Christian Church.

Read: 1-2 Chronicles, Hess ch. 11.

Week 2 (January 16) Ezra-Nehemiah.

Read: Ezra, Nehemiah, Hess ch. 12.

Week 3 (January 23) Esther, Song of Solomon.

Read: Esther, Song of Solomon, Hess, chs. 13, 18.

Week 4 (January 30) Psalms of Praise, Thanksgiving, Covenant History, Wisdom, & Royal/Enthronement.

Read: Psalms 146-150 (Hymnic praise), 18 & 124 (Thanksgiving), 105-106 (Covenant history), 1 & 19 (Wisdom), 2 & 93, 95-99 (Royal/Enthronement); Hess, ch. 15.

Due: Inductive Study

Week 5 (February 6) Psalms of Lament and Imprecation, Proverbs.

Read: Psalms 3-4, 12 (Lament), 88, 109 (Imprecatory); Proverbs 1-9, 10; Hess, ch. 16.

Week 6 (February 13) Job, Ecclesiastes; Introduction to Hebrew.

Read: Job, Ecclesiastes, Hess, chs. 14, 17.

February 20 Reading Week; No Class. This week, pick your text for the exegesis paper.

Week 7 (February 27) Isaiah; Hebrew Quiz (Alphabet), and more Hebrew.

Read: Isaiah, Hess, ch. 19.

Quiz: You will be expected to know the Hebrew alphabet – i.e. you should know the names of the Hebrew letters and be able to identify them.

Week 8 (March 5) Jeremiah, Lamentations; Workshop on Text Criticism. **Trigger warning:** the sexual imagery in Jeremiah may be disturbing.

Read: Jeremiah, Lamentations, Hess, chs. 20, 21, Hess Introduction pp. 9-17. Also read the brief article in the online *Oxford Companion to the Bible* by Bruce Metzger at <https://www-oxfordreference->

com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/display/10.1093/acref/9780195046458.001.0001/acref-9780195046458-e-0723?rskey=Xleycp&result=7.

I've also placed a copy in this week's Quercus Module.

Workshop on Text Criticism: explaining differences between the various English versions to a confused parishioner in your church.?

Week 9 (March 12) Ezekiel, Obadiah; Exegesis. **Trigger warning:** the sexual imagery in Ezekiel may be disturbing.

Read: Ezekiel, Obadiah, Hess, chs. 22, 27.

Seminar: Come to class prepared to discuss John L. Thompson's article "Gomer and Hosea: Does God approve of wife abuse?" in *Reading the Bible with the Dead: what you can learn from the history of exegesis that you can't learn from exegesis alone*. (Eerdmans, 2007) 93–111.

If you have time read Brevard Childs' highly recommended posted article, "The Canonical Shape of the Prophetic Literature"

Week 10 (March 19) Select Minor Prophets (Hosea, and Jonah); Exegesis Workshop.

Read: Hosea, Jonah, Hess, chs. 24, 28. **Trigger warning:** the sexual imagery in Hosea may be disturbing. Also read T. D. Alexander, "Jonah and Genre," *Tyndale Bulletin* 36 (1985) 35–59. What is the message of the book of Jonah?

Week 11 (March 26) Select Minor Prophets (Nahum, Habakkuk); The Canon.

Read: Nahum, Habakkuk, Hess, chs. 30, 31

Due: Exegesis Paper

Seminar Readings:

Week 12 (April 2) Daniel, Zechariah.

Read: Daniel, Zechariah, Hess chs. 23, 34

Due: Personal Reflection Paper

Discussion on current futurist approaches to Apocalyptic texts: Check out the blog called The Daily Joy and the youtube link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mQ4BP3sACho> Pastors' Point of View Episode 64. Prophecy Update! Red Heifer in Israel. Start at 6:10 minutes. The pastor talks very slowly so speed it up. Listen to enough to get a sense of how the Bible is being interpreted in light of current events.

Guidelines for Writing an Inductive Study

Use the following headings to organize your paper. Be sure that the amount of space devoted to each section reflects its value. For instance, the statement of theme is worth 25 marks while the suggestions for preaching and teaching are only worth 5 marks so you should have proportionally more work given to the statement of theme. The total study should be between 7-10 pages.

1. Outline of book using caption headings (10%)

Outline the book using caption headings and (if appropriate) sub-headings. These should be appropriate and concise. Don't be constrained by the traditional chapter divisions; remember that they are a late addition to the text and may not always be helpful in outlining the structure of a biblical book). Esther and Amos are short books, so the outline should be between ½ to 1 page total.

2. Analysis of the book's structure (35%)

Discuss and justify your outline of the book's contents. What are the major sections of the book and how did you determine this? How are these sections subdivided? Are the sections of a different literary style (poetry, biographical or sermoniac material)? Be sure to defend your assessment of the book's structure.

3. Theme of the book (25%)

What is the one central message or theme of the book? How is this theme developed? Be sure that you don't confuse the theme of the book with sub-themes or motifs. Be sure to support your assessment of the theme with evidence from the biblical text.

4. General observations and theological insights (20%)

What are some of the more prominent theological emphases of the book? How are they developed? How do these emphases relate to other books in the Bible?

5. Ideas for preaching or teaching: questions for further study (5%)

Briefly consider how you might preach or teach this book. What would you emphasize, and how might you connect it to congregational life? Be sure to indicate your intended audience (adult congregation, Sunday school, etc.). Also include a list of questions for further study that emerge from your paper.

Essentials to remember:

1. Grammar, spelling, and style will account for 5% of your grade. Be sure to proof-read your paper carefully before handing it in!
2. **Do not use secondary resources** (textbook, annotated Bible, commentaries etc.) You may use an Atlas or Dictionary for place names or puzzling terms, but make sure to cite it properly.
3. Papers should be typewritten and between 7-10 pages (not including the title page), Papers should be double spaced with margins of no less than 1 inch; use 12 pt Times New Roman font.

Guidelines for Writing an Exegetical Paper

Exegesis is a word for the systematic process by which a person arrives at a reasonable and coherent sense of the meaning and message of a biblical passage. What you are after is the text's meaning, not your own. Let the text be the lead partner in the dance of meaning, your job is to follow and observe, and interpret the dance with sensitivity and precision.

Guidelines

1. **Prayer.** Begin and proceed with prayer asking God for wisdom and insight.
2. **Context.** Acquire an understanding of the book in which your passage appears by reading the book, and if necessary, an introduction to the book in OTS.
3. **Textual matters.** Read the selected passage in several translations (i.e. ESV, TNIV, NASB, NRSV, NRSV, Tanakh, JPS, NEB, King James). Online resources will be very helpful for this. If there are significant differences note them. If the footnotes of the versions do not note textual difficulties, then the differences between the versions are likely due to preferences in translation. The point of this exercise is to uncover text-critical and/or interpretive issues. You do not need to explain the reasons for the textual differences between the texts, unless you are familiar with biblical languages. If no textual problems are evident, say so and move on.
4. **Discuss the rhetorical nature of the passage.** State what translation you will be using for your exegesis. **Copy** the passage as a column with one grammatical unit or clause per line. Indent those clauses that are subordinate to the main clauses. E.g.

6a God said,

b "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the water,

c that it may separate water from water."

7a God made the expanse,

b and it separated the water which was below the expanse

c from the water which was above the expanse.

d And it was so.

8a God called the expanse Sky.

b And there was evening

c and there was morning,

d a second day.

The following example is from Phyllis Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism*, p.196. Trible marks clusters of words that are one word in Hebrew with hyphens. Her analysis is not as detailed as the one above. Her analysis shows how the parallel clauses using the verb "burn" frame Jonah 4:1-4.

And it-was-evil to Jonah an-evil great and-it-burned to-him.

And-he-prayed to Yhwh and-he-said:

"Ah! Yhwh,

Was-not this my-word while I-was in my-homeland?

Therefore I-hastened to-flee to-Tarshish

because I-knew that

You God (are)

gracious and-merciful

long-of nostrils

and-abundant-of faithfulness
and repenting about the-evil

And-now Yhwh,
take, please, my–nephesh from-me
for better my-death than-my-life.”

And-said Yhwh, “Is –it good it burns to-you? 4:1–4

After studying your rhetorical outline, you will become familiar with the movement of the text, the way it divides itself, its structure etc. Follow the versification as given in English Bibles as in the first example above.

5. **Identify a meaningful unit.** Determine the scope of the text to make sure you are dealing with a meaningful literary unit. Supposing the chapter has 30 verses and that the passage you have chosen goes from 5–19. Show how your passage begins with verse 5 and ends with verse 19. That is to say, show how it is thematically and/or syntactically independent from its surrounding context. Would you choose a different place to begin or end the unit?
6. **Describe the unit.** Outline the various subsections of the passage using the same method described in 5 above. Show how the unit hangs together. Highlight the presence of such things as contrast, similarities, repetitions of key words or phrases, wordplays, development in argumentation, etc. Does it contain obvious forms (law form, messenger speech, judgment oracle), formulae, or literary techniques (poetic parallelism)?
7. **Comment on the meaning of the text.** Comment in detail on the significance and function of your passage in light of the book that it is in as well as the section that it is in. How does it fit within the overall structure of the book? What bearing does the main thrust of your passage have on the theme of the book? Does it emphasize or advance the theme or does it bear only a loose connection with the theme?
Comment on each subsection and verse individually. If, for example, in the “rhetorical section” of your paper you argued that your passage may be divided into three sections, then briefly introduce the first section and then comment on the particular verses of that section; do the same thing for the second and third sections. When you find a word that is of particular importance be sure you do a word study of it at this point in order to determine its particular meaning in the given context. Use the tools introduced in class for your word studies- i.e. a concordance, a theological wordbook and/or various online or computer resources. Ask the following kind of questions. What meaning or nuance do these words have in the rest of the book as well as in the rest of the Old Testament? In what context do these words appear in other sections of the book? What particular nuance do they have in your passage?
8. **Interpretation/ Application**
Write three or four sentences about what you think the passage meant in its original context. Ask yourself why the passage was included in the canon. Ask how the first readers would have heard the text. How did later readers use it or understand it (if it is a passage that is referred to elsewhere in Scripture)? Now you make the critical hermeneutical shift from what the passage meant to what it means. How would you appropriate the passage to a modern context? If the passage addresses the community of faith in the OT then it should address the community of faith today. The greatest danger at this point is to make your application too general or too vague. State the essential message of the passage briefly- we do not want a homily or sermon at this point.

Participation Rubric

CLASS	5 - Excellent	4 - Good	3 - Average	2 - Below Average Participation	1 - Unacceptable
PARTICIPATION	Participation	Participation	Participation	Participation	Participation
Guide and Rubric					
Class discussion/ Peer interaction/ Pair work	Consistently and actively supports, engages, listens and responds to peers. Takes initiative in interaction. Participates in a meaningful way in class discussions. Stays on task.	Makes a real effort to interact with peers daily but does not take initiative. Some active participation in class discussions. At times deviates from task.	Some effort to interact with peers but does not take initiative. Minimal participation in class discussions. Sometimes deviates from task.	Limited interaction with peers and rarely participates in class discussions and/or does not stay on task.	Virtually no interaction with peers and does not participate in class discussions.
Preparation	Arrives fully prepared at every class session.	Arrives mostly, if not fully, prepared.	Arrives generally prepared.	Preparation is inconsistent.	Rarely or never prepared.
Contributes in a meaningful way	Comments often advance the level and depth of classroom <u>dialogue</u> ; elicits the contributions of others.	Relevant comments are based on assigned material; elicits the contributions of others.	When prepared, (which is most of the time) relevant comments are based on assignments.	When prepared, some relevant comments are based on assignments, some comments not relevant and deviate from assignments.	Class contributions lack relevance or almost never comments.
Attention	Consistently attends to instruction and presentations; does not disrupt others ability to listen. Always pays attention.	Mostly attends to instruction and presentations and does not disrupt others; does not do other work during instruction and pays attention well.	Sometimes attends to instruction and does not disrupt others; does not do other work during instruction and/or pays attention some of the time.	Sometimes disruptive of others during instruction; sometimes does other work during instruction and/or lacks attention sometimes.	Frequently disruptive during instruction and/or does other work during instruction; rarely pays attention.

You may positively affect your participation grade by:

1. Attending class and actively participating in a meaningful way.
2. Preparing for each class.
3. Making effective comments that raise overall level of discussion. (Comments that are off task and disruptive will negatively affect your grade).
4. Assisting and helping other classmates during active class work and staying on task.
5. Asking thoughtful questions that will enhance discussion and engage peers.
6. Asking questions when you don't understand or would like a second explanation. Often there are others that will benefit as well.
7. Listening carefully to, supporting, and engaging your peers in discussion. This will essentially improve other's learning experience and your own.
8. Taking care never to make negative, offensive, and/or disrespectful comments during discussion.
9. Being respectful and kind towards every person in the class.

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