



Course Syllabus Wycliffe College Toronto School of Theology

Course Identification

Course Number: WYB 2314HF

Course Name: Bad Boys and Bad Girls in the Old Testament: Studies in Scriptural Biography

Campus: St. George

Instructor Information

Instructor: Marion Taylor PhD

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Office Hours: By appointment: Wycliffe College, Rm 227

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 the following bad boys and bad girls: Adam and Eve; Sarah, Abraham and Hagar; Rahab; Deborah, Sisera and Jael; Jephthah and his daughter; Samson and Delilah; the Levite and his concubine; David and his family members. We will ask questions about how to read and interpret texts in the church today. The pre-course assignment is described below. If you are not familiar with the characters listed above, it would be a good idea

Course Methodology

A pre-course assignment, lectures, small group discussions, readings and a final paper will be used in this course.

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)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> will have increased their familiarity with Old Testament narratives featuring bad boys and bad girls 	Pre-course assignment, daily reading assignments, and final paper	MTS: 1.1 MDiv: 1.1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> will have developed a greater familiarity of pre-modern and modern Christian approaches 	daily reading assignments, small group discussions and final paper	MTS: 1.2 MDiv: 1.2

to the interpretation of Scripture		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> will have developed a greater familiarity with key eras, interpretive traditions and figures in church history 	daily reading assignments, small group discussions and final paper	MTS: 1.4 MDiv: 1.4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> will have developed a greater competence in the processes of theological reasoning and the ability to communicate in both oral and written forms 	Written assignments and class discussion	MTS: 2.1; 2.2; 2.3 MDiv: 2.1; 2.2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> will continue to develop a character marked by positive and effective relationships with others and an appreciation of the limits of their own knowledge, the breadth of the Christian tradition and the complexity of theological discourse 	Small group work	MDiv: 3.3 MTS: 3.1

Course Resources

Required Course Texts

- Yairah Amit, *Reading Biblical Narratives: Literary Criticism and the Hebrew Bible*, Fortress, 2001.
- Women of War, *Women of Woe: Joshua and Judges through the Eyes of Nineteenth-century Female Biblical Interpreters*, eds., Marion Ann Taylor and Christiana de Groot Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, May 25th 2016. Unfortunately it is coming on a week too late. We will read PDF's of draft chapters.
- A modern translation of the Old Testament is also required (e.g. ESV, 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.

Course Website(s)

- Blackboard <https://weblogin.utoronto.ca/>

This course uses Blackboard for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT portal login page at <http://portal.utoronto.ca> and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to the portal using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you'll find the link to the website for all your Blackboard-based courses. (Your course registration with ROSI gives you access to the course website at Blackboard.) Note also the information at <http://www.portalinfo.utoronto.ca/content/information-students>. Students who have trouble accessing Blackboard should ask Thomas Power for further help.

Class Schedule

Day 1 (April 18) Introduction: The Study of Hebrew Narrative: Adam and Eve; the sacrifice of Isaac; Judah and Tamar, Genesis 38; Robert Alter: one of the founding fathers of OT Narrative Criticism.

***Read** Genesis 1-3, 22, 38.

How would a literary critic such as Amit approach the story of Adam and Eve, the story of the sacrifice of Isaac and the story of Judah and Tamar in Genesis?

Day 2 (April 19) More Bad Boys and Girls: Sarah, Abraham and Hagar and Rahab

Guest: Rachel Krohn

***Read** Genesis 12, 16, 18, 20, 21 and Joshua 2

***Read** the posted modern readings by Thompson, Tribble and Frymer-Kensky as well as the 19th readings on Sarah, Abraham, Hagar and Rahab.

*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.

*Tikva Frymer-Kensky, "Hagar. My Other, My Self," *Reading the Women of the Bible*, 225- 237.

Day 3 (April 20) Bad Boys and Girls in Judges: Deborah, Sisera and Jael, and Jephthah and his daughter

***Read** Judges 4-5, 11-12

***Read** Joy A. Schroeder, *Deborah's daughters: gender politics and biblical interpretation* chapter 4 106-138, and conclusion, 247—258 . (UTORid needed for remote access). Use the Oxford Scholarship Online version. Text may be printed or saved. Link found under Readings on left hand side bar on Portal.

***Read** the second shorter essay by Schroeder on Deborah in the 19th c and then the selected 19th interpretations of Deborah, Jael and Jephthah's daughter.

***Read** Thompson, Sacrificing Jephthah's Daughter

Day 4 (April 21). More Bad Boys and Girls in Judges and in the book of Esther: The Levite and his Unnamed Concubine, Samson and Delilah, Manoah and his wife, and the characters in Esther- Vashti, Esther and Mordecai and Haman who have all been read as "bad" by various times in history.

***Read:** Judges 13, 16, 19-21, the book of Esther

***Read** Thompson and Jones-Warsaw on story of the Levite and his concubine in Judges 19-21 and then read selected 19th c readings on the selected stories.

Day 5 (April 22). More Bad Boys and Girls in Samuel and Kings: David and Bathsheba, Amnon and Tamar, the Man of God in I Kings 13, Jeroboam

Guest: Manhee Yoon

***Read** 2 Sam 11: 1-12:25; 13:1-22, 1 Kings 11-15, read especially carefully 1 Kings 12:25-13:34; 2 Kings 9

***Read** Josephus version of the 1 Kings 13, I Kings 13 in the Septuagint (The Greek OT) and Peter Leithart's helpful commentary on 1 Kings 12:25-13:34.

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

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

On David and His Wives and Family

***Read** Andrew Sloane, "Narrative: 2 Samuel 11-2" in *At Home in a Strange Land*, 49-61.

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.

Evaluation

Requirements

1) Class Participation (20%) Students are expected to attend every class and to involve themselves fully through preparatory reading and active participation in discussion.

2) Book Report (30%) In preparation for the class, each student will read *Reading Biblical Narratives: Literary Criticism and the Hebrew Bible*. Yairah Amit, Fortress, 2001. The book report on Amit is due May 8th. If you have read Amit before and want a suggestion for another book on narrative, please contact the professor for suggestions.

The report should 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?** Your answer should include a summary of the main points of the book and answer the above question (2-4 pages, double spaced).

3) Term Paper (50%)

The final paper can be exegetical or topical in nature. It may take the form of a traditional essay (9-12 pages) or it may take the form of a series of studies on biblical characters to be used in a small group or parish. Please consult with the professor. This assignment is due August 9.

Grading System

Letter Grade	Numerical Equivalents	Grade Point	Grasp of Subject Matter
A+	90–100%	4.0	Profound & Creative
A	85–89%	4.0	Outstanding
A-	80–84%	3.7	Excellent
B+	77–79%	3.3	Very Good
B	73–76%	3.0	Good
B-	70–72%	2.7	Satisfactory
FZ	0–69%	0	Failure

Grades without numerical equivalent:

CR	Designates credit; has no numerical equivalent or grade point value
NCR	Designates failure; has no numerical equivalent, but has a grade point value of 0 and is included in the GPA calculation
SDF	Standing deferred (a temporary extension)
INC	Permanent incomplete; has no numerical equivalent or grade point value
WDR	Withdrawal without academic penalty
AEG	May be given to a final year student who, because of illness, has completed at least 60% of the course, but not the whole course, and who would not otherwise be able to convocate; has no numerical equivalent and no grade point value

Policy on Assignment Extensions

Basic Degree students are expected to complete all course work by the end of the term in which they are registered. Under **exceptional circumstances**, with the written permission of the instructor, students may request an extension (SDF = “standing deferred”) beyond the term. An extension, when offered, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. An SDF must be requested no later than the last day of classes of the term in which the course is taken. The request form is available on the college website or from the Registrar’s office.

One percentage point per day will be deducted on the course grade if an extension has not been requested by the stated deadline.

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. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University grading policy (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/grading.pdf>) or college grading policy.

Policies

Accessibility. Students with a disability or health consideration are entitled to accommodation. Students must register at the University of Toronto’s Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>. 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* (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).

Other academic offences. TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>).

Writing Style. The writing standard for the Toronto School of Theology is Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, 8th edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), which is available at Crux Books.