

OTS5511DL: INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT (PART 1)
ASHLAND THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

May 11–August 28, 2020; Online

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Email: Contact only through Blackboard

Please Note:

This course utilizes an online component (Blackboard) as a medium for assignment submission and to provide teaching material. Access to a reliable computer and the internet through a high-speed means (dial-up access does not usually work satisfactorily in this course) is required, as is familiarity with the use of Blackboard. For orientation, you will need to take time to study the following information available on your Blackboard homepage: (a) the “Video Help Center for Students,” located at the bottom of the center column, and (b) the “Student Orientation” information (right column, last entry under the heading “My Courses”). It is highly recommended that you be familiar with computer and web functions prior to starting the course since it is not advised to try to learn them while the course is in progress. On-line learning often requires more self-motivation than a regular class and is not suitable for every student.

If you encounter technical computer or Blackboard difficulties, contact the AU help desk at 419-289-5405.

I. Course Description

This study focuses on the content, interpretation, and theology of the books of the Old Testament canon from Genesis through 2 Kings. Besides concerted study in the biblical text, the course explores aspects of the history, societies, and literature of the ancient Near East relevant to the interpretation of these books, and their reception in the New Testament.

Prerequisite: Students must either have completed or be currently enrolled in BSG 5501: Engaging Texts and Contexts.

II. Student Learning Outcomes

This course format consistently meets the same quality, assessment, learning outcomes and requirements of the traditional semester course format.

- 1a. Demonstrate awareness about what how the interpreter’s context shapes interpretation
- 1b. Critically engage the text’s language, literary forms, and flow of thought
- 1c. Access and utilize dependable secondary literature for historical information and alternative interpretations.
- 1d. Explain how the text came to be (from original composition to translation) and the import of this for interpretation.
- 2.-6. Are not assessed in this course.

III. Course Requirements

A. Textbooks

A modern translation of the Bible: New Revised Standard (recommended), Today’s New International Version, Tanakh (JPS), or English Standard Version.

*Alexander, T. Desmond and David W. Baker, ed., *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch (DOTP)*, Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2003. ISBN: 978-0-8308-1781-8. [Kindle edition available]

*Bill. T. Arnold and H.G.M. Williamson, ed., *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Historical Books (DOTHB)*, Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2005. ISBN: 978-0-8308-1782-5. [Kindle edition available]

[*How to access the IVP Bible Dictionaries for FREE

Called "Credo Reference (IVP Bible Dictionaries)" or simply "IVP Bible Dictionaries," this set is a full text online resource consisting of several volumes which is available free of charge to students through the Ashland Theological Seminary Library. You can look up topics, places, Bible books, scholarly debate issues. These are quite current, and come with valuable bibliographies at the end of each article, which you may use for deeper study (many of those secondary resources, however, will not be online). You may use these in your short papers.

Here is one way to access this through the ATS library: go to <http://libguides.ashland.edu/atslibrarysuggesteddatabases>

Under the bold heading "**Ashland Theological Seminary Library Suggested Database Listing : A-C**", you will see 8 blue/white tabs. The tab marked A-C should be clicked by default and open to that page. If not, click it. Scroll down to view the A-C entries. Toward the bottom, in alpha order, will be "CREDO REFERENCE: IVP BIBLE DICTIONARIES". Click it and enter your ATS login information.

The Credo page will appear. First opens a page where you can do research by subject. Just enter a topic and numerous references to it will pop up.

To access the individual dictionary volumes, toward the top left find and click on the three horizontal lines and then click on the drop down 'All Titles'. Now you will see the multiple dictionary volumes comprising the IVP set. For our studies in this course, two volumes will be most relevant. Click on either "The IVP Bible Dictionary Series: Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch" or "The IVP Bible Dictionary Series: Dictionary of the Old Testament: Historical Books." On the next page, the list of articles in that book will appear. Click on an article that interests you, e.g., in the Pentateuch volume, "Sexuality, Sexual Ethics."

Note: to cite an article from a resource like this, go to the top of the article (where title "Sexuality, Sexual Ethics" appears). To the right of the title there is a series of icons: save, citation, print, share, etc. Select the 'Citation' symbol. This will give you a pre-formatted citation for the online source. I would recommend the MLA option, as it appears closest to the Turabian that we specify for seminary work. Cut and paste this citation into your paper.]

Davis, Ellen F. *Opening Israel's Scriptures*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2019. ISBN: 978-0-19-094894-8. [You have FREE access through the ATS library to this textbook by going to: <http://rave.ohiolink.edu/ebooks/ebc/9780190260545>. There select 'Ashland University' under the drop-down 'Institution' menu and follow the directions to have access to the volume.] [Kindle edition available]

Gorman, Michael J. *Elements of Biblical Exegesis: A Basic Guide for Students and Ministers*. Revised and Expanded. Peabody: Hendrickson, 2010. ISBN: 978-080104640-7. [Kindle edition available] **and/or**

McMickle, Marvin A. *Living Water for Thirsty Souls: Unleashing the Power of Exegetical Preaching* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 2001). ISBN: 0-8170-1358-X.

Rasmussen, Carl G. *Zondervan Essential Atlas of the Bible*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013. ISBN: 978-0-310-31857-6.

B. Attendance

In conformity with the Student Handbook, attendance at all class sessions is expected. An absence of more than 3 hours will require extra assignments. Any student missing more than the equivalent of nine class hours will not receive credit for the course. As this is an online class, lack of participation in any form for a week will constitute missing 3 class hours.

Extensions and Incompletes will be granted only when unanticipated circumstances (which do not include regular business, church, or family obligations) significantly impede the timely completion of course requirements.

A note about classroom etiquette

The practice of civility and the willingness to be fully present are fundamental to ministry. Please see this course as an opportunity to practice these virtues by giving your full attention to your classmates and professor. Especially important is how one interacts with class participants on issues on which there is difference of opinion. An aspect of Christian critical thinking is to listen, understand, and respond with respect based on one's own well thought out position.

C. Assignments/Assessment of Student Learning

1. Reading/viewing quizzes/questions. Each week read all the textbook assignments assigned for that week and watch the assigned videos. There will be a quiz over all the following material which is assigned for each particular week: (1) *DOTP*, (2) *DOTHB*, (3) Rasmussen, and (4) weekly videos (**NOTE:** Gorman and McMickle are not included in this assignment). These could include questions in the form of: true/false, matching, short answer, essay. They will only be accessible once and only for a limited time period, so the assigned study must precede taking the quiz. Some videos will have a study question/assignment rather than appearing in the quiz. **Due weekly.**

2. Discussions. Draft a 2-3 paragraph response to each week's study question or prompt in Word. Then copy and paste it to the discussion forum. Your response is due by midnight of Wednesday each week. Then proceed to provide a substantive response (not just 'I agree/disagree') in a paragraph of at least 3-5 sentences to at least one other student's post. You have until midnight of Sunday each week to post these follow-up responses. Weekly discussion responses that are posted late are not eligible for any credit. **Due weekly.**

3. Davis interaction. For each portion of the Davis textbook as set out in the Course Schedule, write an interaction with her material. Each interaction will be a $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ page long and contain the following: (1) a heading showing the page numbers of the section under discussion; (2) a 2-3 sentence summary of the section; (3) separate discussions on two points which you found particularly intriguing or problematic, explaining why you found each one so; (4) how the section is applicable in your life and/or ministry. **Due weekly (or two per week).**

4. Issues paper. Note: you will probably need to schedule a visit to a library with substantial holdings in biblical resources to complete this assignment, or request materials to be sent to you in advance. **Plan ahead. Due July 26.**

Write a 5-7 page paper (double spaced) arising from a topic found in one of the chapters assigned from the dictionaries, the Rasmussen textbook, the videos, or the Davis textbook which piques your interest. Spend up to two pages summarizing what the textbook/video conveys concerning the topic you have chosen. Title that section “Summary of textbook content”.

Then dig deeper into some aspect introduced in that chapter. Research two or three additional scholarly resources related to the aspect you choose (list these resources in your footnotes, properly formatted). Note: these should be from specialized resources. Here are some sources that will be deemed **insufficient** (i.e., inadequate) for this assignment:

- A study Bible
- A one-volume Bible dictionary
- An introduction to the Old Testament.
- General encyclopedias
- Generalist (insubstantial) web resources

In contrast, here are some resources that would be **suitable**:

- Journal articles that focus on your topic, found in scholarly journals (A list of approved journals is posted under ‘Writing Resources’).
- Articles found in multiple-volume theological/biblical dictionaries (such as IVP Dictionary of the OT series; Anchor Bible Dictionary)
- Monographs (single-volume works on a narrow topic) addressing the area you are studying
- Articles in specialized encyclopedias like Encyclopedia Judaica

What about using solid, recent commentaries? If your topic is thoroughly discussed (not briefly commented on in passing) then a commentary can serve as one of the resources for this assignment.

5. Short papers. A series of short papers will apply components of the exegetical method on several different passages. Details concerning each paper are in [Appendix 1](#) below, with further detail presented in videos under ‘[Writing Resources](#)’.

A. Self-reflection and passage delimitation (Boundaries and me). Who we are impacts how we approach a text. Reflect on your personal history and its potential impact on your reading. Also determine what a passage says, and how one knows where it begins and ends. **Due May 31.**

B. Literary Devices. A writer employs numerous literary devices to bring about her point and to move the audience in some direction. Discuss several devices and indicate what the author is trying to do in the text. **Due June 21.**

C. Historical Background. A discussion of the historical, social, economic, and cultural background necessary to understand the world presented by the passage, with a select bibliography of at least five references used to explain these items. **Due July 12.**

D. **Interpretive questions.** There are elements of a passage which must be understood clearly in order to understand the passage itself. What are these, and what do they mean? **Due August 2.**

E. **Theological Reflection.** A reflection on a theological perspective, claim, or question you see the passage addressing and on the way the passage speaks to contemporary Christian belief and practice. **Due August 16.**

Writing Matters

Papers are to be *descriptive* and *analytical*, exhibit clear organization of thought, and give proper attention to style and grammar. Correct documentation of sources must be followed, as specified in the *ATS Writing Handbook* [A resource sheet is provided under “Writing Resources”]. Papers are to be typed and doubled-spaced with one-inch margins and with font set at 12 point Times New Roman.

Evaluation of papers will be based on the depth of critical interaction with the topic, coherence and organization of ideas, clarity of writing, and informed incorporation of secondary materials. Papers will receive a deduction in grade if:

- The paper is less than or more than the assigned limits (one grade deduction per page)
- The paper is submitted after the due date (one grade deduction after one week).
- The paper does not follow the correct format for documenting sources (up to one grade deduction).

Submissions

All written work is to be uploaded to the appropriate folder on the course Blackboard site.

NOTE: No written work will be accepted for a grade after August 28, 2020.

D. Calculation of Grade and Connection of Learning Outcomes

<i>Assignments</i>	<i>Learning Outcomes</i>	<i>Percent of Final Grade</i>
Boundaries and Me	1a	5%
Literary Devices and Purpose	1b	10%
Historical Background	1c	10%
Interpretive Questions	1b	10%
Theological Reflection	1a	10%
Issues Paper	1a, b, c	15%
Davis interactions	1b, c	10%
Quizzes and queries	1c, 1d	20%
Discussions	1c	10%

IV. Course Schedule

<i>Week</i>	<i>End Date: midnight of</i>	<i>Lecture/Topic</i>	<i>Assignments</i>
1	May 17	Three Biblical Worlds	<u><i>Genesis 1-11</i></u> Week 1 videos

			<p>Davis 1–8 <i>DOTP</i>: “Adam”; “Eve” Rasmussen: chapters 1-3 Quiz Discussion 1</p>
2	May 24	Hebrew Narrative	<p><u><i>Genesis 1-11</i></u> Week 2 videos Davis 8–14 Rasmussen: chapters 4-5 <i>DOTP</i>: “Authorship of the Pentateuch”; “Source Criticism” Quiz Discussion 2</p>
3	May 31	The Primeval History	<p><u><i>Genesis 12-36</i></u> Week 3 videos Davis 15–26 Rasmussen: chapter 6 <i>DOTP</i>: “Cosmology”; extra credit: “Creation” Quiz Discussion 3 Boundaries and me paper [Deuteronomy 22:28-29] Discussion 3</p>
4	June 7	The Patriarchs, Matriarchs, and Joseph	<p><u><i>Genesis 37-50</i></u> Week 4 videos Davis 27–39 Rasmussen: chapter 7 <i>DOTP</i>: “Abraham”; “Promises, Divine” Quiz Discussion 4</p>
5	June 14	The Exodus from Egypt	<p><u><i>Exodus 1-15</i></u> Week 5 videos Davis 40–49 <i>DOTP</i>: “Exodus, Date of”; extra credit: “Egypt, Egyptians” Quiz Discussion 5</p>
6	June 21	The Covenant at Sinai	<p><u><i>Exodus 16-24</i></u> Week 6 videos Davis 50–61 <i>DOTP</i>: “Covenant”; extra credit: “Decalogue”</p>

			Quiz Discussion 6 Literary Devices and Purpose Paper [Exodus 15:1-21]
7	June 28	Leviticus	<u>Exodus 25-40; Leviticus 1-27</u> Week 7 videos Davis 62–71 Davis 72–81 Rasmussen: chapter 8 DOTP: “Holy and Holiness, Clean and Unclean”; “Sacrifices and Offerings”, sections 2 and 3 Quiz Discussion 7
8	July 5	Numbers	<u>Numbers 1-36</u> Week 8 videos Davis 82–94 Davis 95–104 DOTP: “Law”, “Sabbath, Sabbatical Year, Jubilee”; extra credit: “Wilderness, Desert” Quiz Discussion 8
9	July 12	Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomists	<u>Deuteronomy 1-34</u> Week 9 videos Davis 105–116 Davis 117–128 DOTP: “Deuteronomy, Book of”; “Theology of the Pentateuch” Quiz Discussion 9 Historical Background Paper [Genesis 19:1-13]
10	July 19	Joshua	<u>Joshua 1-24</u> Week 10 videos Davis 129–143 Davis 144–147 Rasmussen: chapter 9 DOTHB: “Joshua” [not “Joshua, <u>Book of</u> ”]; “Narrative Art of Israel’s Historians”; extra credit: “Historiography, Old Testament” Quiz Discussion 10

11	July 26	Judges	<u><i>Judges 1-21</i></u> Week 11 videos Davis 148–163 <i>DOTHB</i> : “Canaan, Canaanites”; “Judges”; extra credit: “Judges, Book of” Quiz Discussion 11 Issues Paper
12	August 2	1 Samuel	<u><i>1 Samuel 1-31</i></u> Week 12 videos Davis [173–174, read but no write], 175–184 Rasmussen: chapter 10 <i>DOTHB</i> : “Kings and Kingship”; “Propaganda” Quiz Discussion 12 Interpretive questions paper [1 Samuel 13-15]
13	August 9	2 Samuel	<u><i>2 Samuel 1-24</i></u> Week 13 videos Davis 185–197 <i>DOTHB</i> : “David”, “Davidic Covenant”; “Royal Family” Quiz Discussion 13
14	August 16	1 Kings	<u><i>1 Kings 1-22</i></u> Week 14 videos Davis 198–208 Davis 209–219 Rasmussen: chapter 11-12 <i>DOTHB</i> : “Oral Tradition and Written Tradition”; “Sources, References to”; “Scribes and Schools” Quiz Discussion 14 Theological Reflection paper [1 Samuel 8]
15	August 23	2 Kings	<u><i>2 Kings 1-25</i></u> Week 15 videos Davis 246–255 Rasmussen: chapters 13-14 <i>DOTHB</i> : “Assyria, Assyrians”; “Babylonia, Babylonians”; “Non-Israelite Written

			Sources: Assyrian” and “Non-Israelite Written Sources: Babylonian” Quiz
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V. Recommendations for Lifelong Learning

1. Purchase relevant modules from [Logos Bible Software](#).
2. Utilize your alumni access to the Ashland University Library Page for online resources through Ministry Matters and journal articles through the ATLA Serials and Academic Search Complete databases.
3. Regularly listen to a podcast or watch an online video featuring a lecture or discussion by biblical scholars on topics of interest. An excellent one on the ongoing study of the Bible in general is by [Craig Keener](#). See particularly the Bible Odyssey site hosted by the Society of Biblical Literature at [Bible Odyssey](#).

VI. Seminary Guidelines

A. ATS Academic Integrity Policy

Ashland Theological Seminary expects each student to uphold the Seminary’s core value of academic excellence by contributing to an environment that is both challenging and supportive. In such an environment a student will neither seek nor offer improper assistance. All students have an obligation to be forthright in their academic endeavors and to respect ethical standards. The work that one submits for academic evaluation must be one’s own, unless an instructor expressly permits certain types of collaboration. Academic integrity requires that each student will use one’s own capabilities to achieve one’s fullest potential and will neither offer nor accept aid that is not in keeping with regularly accepted standards of academic integrity. Failure to conform to this conduct shall constitute academic dishonesty. The full Academic Integrity Policy statement may be found in the *Student Handbook*.

B. Seminary Writing Consultation Service

The Seminary Writing Consultation Service can help you brainstorm, draft, and revise your writing assignments in your graduate Seminary classes. Masters and doctoral qualified Consultants can advise you online or in person. To schedule an appointment, visit [Writing Center Online](#) and select “Graduate and Online” from the schedule menu.

C. Accessibility Resources and Accommodations

It is Ashland University’s goal that learning experiences be as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on a disability, please contact the Student Accessibility Center at 419-289-5904, or send an email to dservices@ashland.edu. The Student Accessibility Center office and the course instructor will work together in order to establish accommodations and to meet your learning needs.

D. ATS Grading Scale

Grade	Quality	Percent	Description
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A	4.0	97-100	Superior achievement of course objectives, diligence and originality, high degree of freedom from error, outstanding evidence of ability to utilize course knowledge, initiative expressed in preparing and completing assignments, positive contributions verbalized in class.
A-	3.7	92-96	
B+	3.3	89-91	
B	3.0	86-88	Good work submitted, commendable achievement of course objectives, some aspects of the course met with excellence, substantial evidence of ability to utilize course material, positive contributions verbalized in class, consistency and thoroughness of work completed.
B-	2.7	83-85	
C+	2.3	80-82	
C	2.0	77-79	Acceptable work completed, satisfactory achievement of course objectives, demonstrating at least some ability to utilize course knowledge, satisfactory class contribution.
C-	1.7	74-76	
D+	1.3	71-73	
D	1.0	68-70	Passing but minimal work, marginal achievement of course objectives, poor performance in comprehension of work submitted, inadequate class contributions.
D-	0.7	65-67	
F	0.0	Below 65	Unacceptable work resulting in failure to receive class credit, inadequacy of work submitted or of performance and attendance in class.

Hawk's Interpretation of the ATS Grading Scale

- A** Signifies work that generally exhibits a depth of research, thought and critical thinking, and may include an insight I haven't thought of before or information I haven't encountered. Sparks are flying. You've got me thinking!
- B** Signifies work that exhibits thoughtful integration, a direct and careful engagement with the assignment, and sound critical thinking. I experience a deep sense of fulfillment that learning has taken place.
- C** Signifies a minimal engagement with the assignment characterized by a perfunctory or hackneyed response and shallow critical reflection. I yawn.
- D** Signifies gaps in thinking or a deficient response to the readings or written work. I reach for my Tums.
- F** Signifies failure to address the core components of the reading or written assignments. I turn on Green Acres in a vain attempt to restore my cheery disposition.

VII. Select Bibliography

- Brown, Jeannine K. *Introducing Biblical Hermeneutics: Scripture as Communication*. Grand Rapids, Mi.: Baker Academic, 2007.
- Brown, William P. *A Handbook to Old Testament Exegesis*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2017. ISBN: 978-0-664-25993-8.

Fretheim, Terence E. *The Pentateuch. Interpreting Biblical Texts*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1996.
Available as an e-book through the [ministrymatters](#) link on the ATS Library website.

Goldingay, J. *Old Testament Theology*. 3 vols. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003.

Kibbe, Michael. *From Topic to Thesis: A Guide to Theological Research*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2016. ISBN 978-0-8308-5131-7

King, Philip J., and Lawrence E. Stager. *Life in Biblical Israel*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox, 2001.

Nelson, Richard D. *The Historical Books. Interpreting Biblical Texts*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1998.

Newsom, Carol A. et al., eds. *Women's Bible Commentary*. 3rd ed. Revised and Updated. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2012.

Patte, Daniel. *Global Bible Commentary: Biblical Interpretation from Worldwide Perspectives*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2004.

Richter, S. L. *The Epic of Eden: A Christian Entry into the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008.

Sugirtharaja, R. S., ed. *Voices from the Margin: Interpreting the Bible in the Third World*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2006. (Especially articles in Part Three: Many Readings: Exodus, pp. 205-278.)

Walsh, Jerome T. *Old Testament Narrative: A Guide to Interpretation*. Westminster John Knox, 2009

Weems, Renita. *Just a Sister Away: A Womanist Vision of Women's Relationships in the Bible*. Philadelphia: Innisfree, 1988. ISBN: 978-0931055522

Yee, Gale, Hugh R. Page, Jr. and Matthew J. M. Coomber, eds. *Fortress Commentary on the Bible: Old Testament and Apocrypha*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2014. 978-0800699161

Appendix 1: Instructions for Exegesis Short Papers

Do not use separate title page with any of the following. Label each exercise at the top of the first page with your name, date, and the assignment number, title, scripture passage, and English version you are using, as shown here:

J.Q. Student

July 15, 2057

Short Paper # 1, Recognizing Boundaries (Exod. 15:22-27; NRSV)

Read instructions and examples carefully. Check the following syllabus page to see if instructions may continue there. There are videos posted under 'Writing Resources' which provide additional assistance.

Exegetical skill and corresponding question	Specific instructions	Example passage	Assignment passage(s) in which to apply this skill	Grading rubric
1. Recognizing boundaries of a	Introduce yourself, reflecting on how your background	Example focal passage: Gen. 22	Deut 22:28-29	Be sure to follow all instructions, not simply the bulleted items below. ½ page, double spaced – who am I: reflect on your own personal

<p>passage; you and the passage</p> <p><i>Who am I? What is the passage about? Where should this passage begin and end?</i></p> <p>Resources: McMickle chapter 2 Gorman, pp. 35-38, 63-68, 195-202 Writing Resources videos</p>	<p>might impact your interpretation of the passage.</p> <p>Read over these verses. Give a summary of what is found in your focal passage.</p> <p>Then read material before and after these verses. Ask yourself, “Based on what precedes and follows these verses, do these verses form a somewhat well-delimited section, or should the boundaries for this section be placed at some other verses?”</p> <p>Caution: do not simply rely on paragraph divisions and titles found in your Bible. Do your own thinking.</p>	<p>Who and why? I am a white, middle-aged male who went through bankruptcy and divorce, which might affect my understanding of it since...</p> <p>Summary of focal passage: Near-sacrifice of Isaac.</p> <p>Preceding material (upper boundary): Gen. 21:22-34 is different from the focal passage since it deals with Abraham’s covenant with Abimelech.</p> <p>Succeeding material (lower boundary): The account of Isaac’s near-sacrifice actually stops in v. 19. At Gen. 22:20 there begins a listing of Nahor’s children (brother of Abraham), lasting through Gen. 22:24. So the lower boundary for the near-sacrifice of Isaac should be set at 22:19.</p>		<p>background (race, gender, socio-economic status, religious/theological upbringing, etc.) and how this might affect your interpretation of the text</p> <p>½ page, double spaced for each: how do you determine that the passage is a self-contained unit, with a clear beginning and end?</p> <p>1 paragraph: Give a summary of what is contained in the focal passage.</p> <p>75 points possible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 pts. summary • 20 pts. Upper/beginning boundary explanation • 20 pts. Lower/ending boundary explanation • 25 pts. personal reflection <p>DUE MAY 31</p>
<p>2. Recognizing literary devices and author’s purpose</p> <p><i>How are literary devices helping to advance the message of this passage? What is</i></p>	<p>List in bold font five of the literary devices at work in this passage. After each device, briefly assess—in your opinion—how significant is the contribution of that device for propelling the message of this passage. (A helpful way to assess significance of a device is to ask yourself, “If the author had not employed</p>	<p>In Ps. 23:1 the poet employs a metaphor. Significance: Without this device, the message would be flatter (losing imaginative analogy), and would become more verbose (requiring articulation of a long list of traits</p>	<p>Exod. 15:1-21</p>	<p>1-2 pages, double spaced</p> <p>125 points possible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 pts. each for 5 substantial devices • 10 pts. each for 5 effective statements of significance • 25 pts. For determining the

<p><i>the author doing in the passage?</i> Resources: Gorman, pp. 74–81, 83–100, 202–205, 207–209 McMickle, chapter 3 Writing Resources videos</p>	<p>this device [i.e., if the author had conveyed the same content but had done so in a bald, straightforward fashion without the help of this device], what would have been lost?). From your own reading, what does the author seem to be doing in writing the passage?</p>	<p>which instead are subsumed in “shepherd”). The author seems to be providing comfort for...</p>		<p>author’s goal(s) in writing DUE JUNE 21</p>
<p>3. Exploring historical background of a passage <i>What information concerning historical setting is vital for understanding the passage?</i> Resources: Gorman, pp. 69–74, 80–81, 205–207 McMickle chapter 5 Writing Resources videos</p>	<p>After reading the focal passage, list five elements found in the passage itself that contribute to its historical context. These may include (but are not limited to): customs, events, government, worldview, geography, climate, employment. What do each of these elements mean in the society of the time? Often understanding of these elements arises from secondary sources (commentaries, Bible dictionaries) which will increase your awareness of ancient history. Insight also will come from the writings of cognate cultures (e.g., ancient deluge accounts can shed light on the biblical flood account). Credit these secondary sources with footnotes. After each element which you list and discuss, indicate its importance negatively. I.e., briefly forecast what wrong thinking might follow if a modern reader were ignorant of the feature you have listed.</p>	<p>Example passage: “A false balance is an abomination to the Lord, but a just weight is His delight” (Prov. 11:1, NASB). Historical element: Balances were widely used, for fair measure both of consumables and for precious metals; coins not requiring weighing did not appear until the mid-7th century. Importance (negative): If unaware how common were balances for everyday exchanges, one might mistakenly think that this precept had a rather narrow, rare application.</p>	<p>Genesis 19:1-13</p>	<p>3-5 pages, double spaced Indicate sources by footnotes; a separate bibliography is not needed. 100 points possible 20 pts each for five (5) substantial historical insights, together with accounting of importance of each one, with at least one secondary resource for each DUE JULY 12</p>
<p>4. Forming interpretive questions</p>	<p>Form a handful of questions (more than four) which are prompted by this passage.</p>	<p>Example passage: Genesis 3</p>	<p>1 Sam. 13-15</p>	<p>2 pages, double-spaced 100 points possible</p>

<p>fundamental to the passage</p> <p><i>What central question(s) does the text hope the reader will raise as a result of reading this passage?</i></p> <p>Resources: Gorman, pp. 101–138, 209–226 McMickle chapters 4, 6, 7 Writing Resources videos</p>	<p>Answer them as best you can (use commentaries and Bible dictionaries when answers lie beyond your field of reasoning or knowledge).</p> <p>Now review these questions, asking yourself which of them strike at the heart of the passage. (If you have not yet identified the central thrust of the passage, do so first.) Discard questions which are peripheral, whether because (a) the text seems unconcerned in resolving those questions or because (b) they are useful-but-dead-end questions (not leading to larger ideas of the central thrust).</p> <p>Retain four (4) of your questions and their answers—those four which you feel qualify as “fundamental questions,” i.e., questions which strike at the central thrust of the passage. Give a brief explanation for each question–answer combination, clarifying why you feel that question is so significant.</p>	<p>Interpretive Question: Why was a consequence so disproportionately severe as death the result following an infraction of disobedience (as opposed to reserving death for a larger infraction such as murder)?</p> <p>Explanation of question’s significance: Asking about the disproportionate consequence (death) can lead one to realize that any rejection of God (as in this disobedience) constitutes a rejection of the one who gave humanity life. Rejection of the life-giver will necessarily result in death. Death is not so much the penalty of an angry God, but the chosen preference of a creature who is determinedly (and foolishly) less interested in life.</p>		<p>25 pts. each for four (4) significant questions, together with explanation of its importance.</p> <p>DUE AUGUST 2</p>
<p>5. Theological reflection</p> <p><i>What is the passage saying theologically, and how is it relevant to me, the church,</i></p>	<p>Theology involves, among other things, an understanding of God, of ourselves as humans, our relationships with him and our fellows, and how we live considering all of this.</p>	<p>Example passage: Genesis 1 List: God is creator, God is powerful, God discerns, God delegates</p>	<p>1 Samuel 8</p>	<p>1-1.5 pages double-spaced. List items, chose most significant, and justify that choice. Indicate areas of relevance.</p> <p>75 pts possible</p>

<p><i>and the world at large?</i> Resources: Gorman, pp. 139–166, 226–231 McMickle chapters 8, 9 Writing Resources videos</p>	<p>What does this passage show regarding each of these issues? Make a list of all the relevant issues you see in it, then choose one you view as most important. Explain why you think so, and reflect on its ethical implications and relevance for you, the church, and the world at large.</p>	<p>God’s delegation of both creative ability and authority has great import for human action because...</p> <p>The church thus has the responsibility to...</p>		<p>25 pts. List of theological themes 25 pts. Choice and justification 25 pts. Relevance</p> <p>DUE AUGUST 16</p>
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Appendix 2: Hawk’s Compositional Caveats (With thanks to ATS professor L. Daniel Hawk)

1. Each paper should present a thesis: an argument or perspective on the topic that will be developed in the paper. At some point (usually early on), the thesis should be articulated in a statement that clearly and succinctly defines the topic and your approach to it.
2. Your thesis should be developed in an organized and coherent fashion. Paragraphs should follow in logical order, with transitional sentences to guide your reader. To achieve coherence, you may find it helpful to make an outline of the paper before writing it.
3. Each paragraph should develop a single idea, introduced by a topic sentence.
4. Generally, paragraphs should comprise three or more sentences. Fewer sentences rarely allow the opportunity to develop an idea. Paragraphs, however, usually should not be longer than one page.
5. Your analysis and perspective should provide the primary focus and organization of the paper. Do not let secondary sources draw most of your conclusions for you. Use secondary sources to support and supplement your own research.
6. Support all assertions, conclusions, and assessments with relevant information. Give examples. Your position is stronger if you draw support from the biblical text rather than from secondary sources alone.
7. Be sure to spell out the implications of your observations. Draw explicit conclusions. Explain the significance of your findings. Always ask yourself, “So what?”
8. Information of a general nature should be synthesized from a number of sources and presented in your own words. Information unique to a particular source must be documented.
9. Use quotations sparingly – only when the information or perspective is unique or is presented in a distinctive and particularly helpful fashion.
10. Make sure all quotations are explained and integrated into the paper so that your reader can appreciate their relevance.

11. Present most information from secondary sources in your own words. Paraphrasing shows that you understand the material. Be sure to recast the information completely; changing a word here or there is not paraphrase but an inaccurate and unacknowledged quotation.
12. Document both quotations and paraphrases from secondary sources. Follow Turabian format carefully. If more than one of your paragraphs refers to the same source, document each paragraph.
13. Use good scholarly sources, those which not only give conclusions but define the issues, offer relevant supporting material, and/or survey scholarship on the topic. Don't neglect journal articles (through Religion Index I, ATLA and ATLA Serials).
14. Avoid wordiness. Strive for clarity.
15. Use active voice whenever possible. Referring to yourself in the first person (as "I") is permissible as long as you do so sparingly and don't put yourself in the foreground.
16. Use complete sentences. Sentence fragments are rarely effective in formal writing.
17. Don't join independent clauses with a comma; use a semicolon, as in this sentence.
18. When beginning a sentence, a modifier must refer to the subject of the sentence, as in this example.
19. The pronoun "they" is still considered a plural pronoun in most formal writing. For inclusive language, use a plural noun with "they" or use a singular noun with "he or she."
20. Proofread your paper carefully! If you have difficulty doing this, find an editor.
21. Good writing is rewriting.