

WESTERN SEMINARY
Portland, Oregon 97215

BLS 501 and BLS 511 (Genesis - Song of Solomon)
Fall Semester 2010

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This course is designed to help students learn the major themes and developments within biblical history and to understand the "big picture" of God's redemptive program.

Course Description

This course in Biblical Literature lays a foundation for further study of the Bible by introducing the biblical covenants and God's kingdom program. Our examination of the Pentateuch will focus on the great attributes of God. The historical books will show how God works among His people. We will conclude with a consideration of the practical lessons found in the Wisdom Books and Psalms. Four semester hours credit.

Course Goals and Objectives

1. The Curriculum Objective for all the BLS courses is that students will know the major themes and developments of God's redemptive activity revealed in Scripture.

To achieve this you will be introduced to the framework of biblical history, the contribution of each book to the canon, the argument of each book, and its relevance for contemporary ministry.

2. You will have a meaningful experience in studying God's Word and experience the transforming power of the gospel.

To achieve this goal we will give attention to the practical application of biblical principles and explore what it means to practice the "the fear of the Lord."

3. Through careful synthesis and analysis of Scripture you will acquire a biblical foundation on which to build a future ministry.

To achieve this goal we will introduce and practice Bible study skills. Study questions in the class notes will provide opportunity to apply these study skills.

4. You will master the basic message of each book studied.

To achieve this goal, you will learn the theme, purpose, theological contribution

and contemporary relevance of each book.

5. You will know the major themes and developments in God's plan for the ages.

To accomplish this, you will be introduced to the Abrahamic Covenant and shown how this unconditional promise of a land, nation and blessing lays a foundation for God's future dealings with his people.

You will also be able to explain the beginnings of God's redemptive program, the place and purpose of the law in the religious life and society of believing Israel, and describe how people were saved in the Old Testament economy.

6. You will know the basic framework and major developments within biblical history.

To accomplish this goal you will be able to outline the history of the period, identifying the significance of the following key dates (2166, 1876, 1446, 1406, 1375, 1050, 970, 966, 931, 722, 701, 586, 473).

7. You will become familiar with the literature of the books studied in this course.

To accomplish this goal you will be introduced to (1) the major elements of the covenant form (suzerain-vassal treaty), (2) the various categories of the psalms and types of Hebrew parallelism, (3) the distinctive features of Hebrew Wisdom literature and explain what is meant by "the fear of the Lord."

Course Texts

Federal law now requires institutions to provide ISBN numbers and retail prices for all required books. Western Seminary encourages students to visit our campus bookstore, Windows Booksellers, in order to obtain these titles at a reduced rate.

Required: New American Standard Bible *or* English Standard Version.

Helpful: J. Carl Laney, Concise Bible Atlas (ISBN 1-56563-366-0) \$16.95 _____

Your On-Line Classroom

I have prepared an on-line classroom where you will be able to download your class notes, Bible reviews and other class resource material. Go to <http://www.wscll2.net/classrooms>. In the category "Fall 2010 Campus Courses" choose Dr. Carl Laney BLS 501 Resources." You will come to a login page. On the right hand side are instructions for beginning a new account. Follow those instructions to set up a user name and password. You will be asked for an enrollment key. This will be given to you on the first day of class. If you have trouble accessing the site, please contact Jon Raibley: jraibley@westernseminary.edu; 503-517-1899.

Course Requirements - For BLS 501 students; BLS 511 students see syllabus supplement

1. Maintain a record of your reading and submit your reading report it on the last day of class.

Required reading includes selections of Genesis through the Song of Solomon (see reading report for assigned chapters), the class notes and the assigned journal articles. Estimated time: 30 hours.

The Journal articles are available in PDF format in the On-Line Classroom. Report your journal reading WEEKLY by writing a paragraph or two (up to a page) on how the article contributes to our understanding of the Bible. Students are required to read and respond to 10 of the journal articles.

2. Complete preparation for each class. After reading the Scripture section for the lecture, read the class notes and write a brief response to the study questions.

Estimated preparation time: 20 hours. A check list will be provided to record your preparation. The check list must be turned in at our **last class**.

3. Complete four take-home Bible Reviews which are designed to help you master the course objectives. Estimated time is 20 hours (5 for each review).

4. Complete a series of assignments designed to help you practice your Bible and teaching/preaching skills. The assignments will be based on your study of a text (a paragraph—six to ten verses) selected from one of the books you are studying this semester. Estimated time: 40 hours (4 for each assignment).

- (1) Setting: Select your text. Then discuss the historical setting of the book where your text appears. What do we know about this period of history? What does the historical setting contribute to your understanding of your text? Discuss relevant cultural features referred to in your text. 1-2 pages

- (2) Purpose: What is the purpose of the book? Why was this book written? Look for clues in the text. After doing your own work, check a commentary to see if there is another viewpoint. What would be missing if this book was not in the Bible? 1 page

- (3) Theme: What is the theme of the book? What is the theme or big idea being communicated in your text? What evidence can you present in support of your conclusion? 1 page

- (3) Context: You have studied the historical setting of the book. Now discuss the literary context of the text you have selected. What goes before? What follows? What would the book be lacking if *your* text was missing? 1-2 pages

- (3) Outline: Construct an outline of the text you have selected. Is there some natural structure in the biblical text that leads to an exegetical outline? Explain your

understanding of the structure. Enumerate your points with Roman Numerals and provide a reference for each point and sub-point. See if you can create a visual alternative to the traditional outline. 1 page

- (3) **Expositional Summary:** Prepare a summary or synopsis of the text highlighting the key points which you would develop in a more complete presentation or sermon. Include the outline you developed in the previous assignment. This is a condensed version of the exposition/commentary on your text. 2 pages
- (3) **Theology:** What theological contribution does your text make to our understanding of God and His truth? Where is the Gospel in this passage? Does it anticipate, declare or develop the implications of the Gospel? Is Jesus revealed directly or does the text point to Jesus in the outworking of redemptive history? 1-2 pages
- (3) **Principles:** Biblical principles are truths from Scripture which have abiding significance and application for believers. What abiding truths have you discovered in the study of your text? State them concisely with biblical references from your text and other relevant texts. Explain how each principle is relevant and has application to life. 1-2 pages
- (3) **Introduction:** Based on your study of a biblical text, prepare an engaging introduction (using a personal story or illustration) which serves to catch the attention of your listener/reader. Include a clear transition from your introduction into the presentation or exposition of the text. 1 page
- (3) **Bibliography:** Prepare a bibliography of resources that you have used in your study or would draw from when doing further research on your text (8 to 10 entries). Which resource would you recommend to another student? Explain your answer. 1 page

Evaluation

Course grading will be done on a point and percentage system.

Bible Reviews: 40% (10 each)	Bible Project: 40% (4 each)
Reading: 10%	Class Preparation: 10%

100-93 = A	[A+ = 99-100; A = 95-98; A- = 94-93]
92-86 = B	[B+ = 92-91; B = 90-88; B- = 87-86]
85-79 = C	[C+ = 85-84; C = 83-81; C- = 80-79]
78-70 = D	[D+ = 78-77; D = 76-74; D- = 73-70]

Study Schedule

Western Seminary's academic standards call for 2 hours of homework for each hour of class. That means students taking a 4 hr. class are expected to do 8 hours of work outside class each week (120 hrs/semester). Here is a suggested division of your 8 hrs/week study time:

- 4 hours per week reading
- 1 hour responding to study questions in notes.
- 3 hours per week on the weekly assignment or Bible Review

Course Policies

Every week you owe BLS 503 eight hours of your time. If you choose to give those eight hours to other activities or another class, don't expect to receive credit for assignments you have not completed. Since late work *will not be accepted*, submit whatever work you have completed on the due date. Forgetting to submit an assignment is not an acceptable excuse for turning it in after the due date.

Incompletes: According to Western Seminary policy, in cases of serious illness or family emergency an instructor may grant an incomplete providing a maximum extension of six weeks to finish the semester's work. Note that incompletes turn into an "F" if the class work is not completed by the end of the six week extension. The maximum grade granted for a student receiving an incomplete is a "B."

Attendance: It is expected that the students will be in attendance for all class sessions to benefit from the lecture, discussion, and visual presentations. Students who are frequently tardy or noticeably absent can expect to receive a lower semester grade.

Notification of Disability Assistance: Western Seminary is committed to responding to the needs of students with disabilities as outlined in both the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Western students are assisted individually as their needs dictate. It is the responsibility of students with disabilities to identify themselves and the nature of the disability. Any student who has a disability should contact the seminary's Disability (Section 504) Coordinator, Ken Epp, at 503-517-1815/1-877-517-1800, ext. 1815. His office is at the Portland campus. Appropriate forms will be provided and must be submitted to the Disability Coordinator's office.

Course Schedule (Reading to be completed in preparation for class lecture)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Lecture Text</u>	<u>Lecture Topic</u>
Sept 3	Gen. 1-2 Gen. 3-11	God's Plan; Creation Fall, Flood, Covenant
Sept 10	Gen. 12-50 Exod. 1-12	Themes of Genesis The Exodus & Passover Setting Due

Sept 17	Exod. 13-24 Exod. 25-27, 32-34	The Mosaic Covenant The Tabernacle Purpose Due
Sept 24	Lev. 1-11 Lev. 16-23	Sacrifice & Separation Holy Convocations Theme Due
Oct 1	Num. 1-6, 13-14 Num. 22-25	Wilderness & wrath Balaam Oracles Context Due
Oct 8	Deut. 1-6, 27-30 Joshua 1-12,24	Laws and Decisions The Conquest 1st Bible Review Due
Oct 15	Judges 1-12 Judges 13-21, Ruth	Cycles of Apostasy A Pearl in the Swine Pen Outline Due
Oct 22	1 Samuel 1-15, 31, 1 Samuel 16-17, 2 Samuel 1-12	Rise of the Monarchy (Samuel & Saul) David Expositional Summary Due
Oct 29	1 Kings 1-11 1 K 12 - 2 K 17	Solomon Divided Monarchy (Elijah and Elisha) 2nd Bible Review Due
Nov 5	2 Kings 18-25 Ezra 1-6 Ezra 7-10	Solitary Monarchy 1st Return from Exile 2nd Return from Exile Theology Due
Nov 12	Esther Chronicles Nehemiah	Preservation in Exile Lessons from Chronicles Rebuilding Jerusalem Principles Due
Nov 19	Job 1-14, 32-42 Psalms 1-24, 51	Job's Tragedy & Triumph Categories of the Psalms 3rd Bible Review Due
Nov 26	Thanksgiving Break – no class	
Dec 3	Psalms 93-124, 139 Proverbs 1-9	Praise! Successful Living Introduction Due Bibliography

Dec 10	Proverbs 10-31 Ecclesiastes Song of Solomon	Interpreting Proverbs Coping with Life's Frustrations Lessons on Love Class Preparation Checklist Reading Report 4th Bible Review
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Reference and Resource Works

See my web site www.carllaney.com for additional Bible Study materials, books and articles, answers to questions about the Bible *and* pictures of the restoration of my jeeps.

Introduction to the Bible

Ray Lubeck, Read the Bible for a Change
Randall Price, Searching for The Original Bible

Pentateuch and Historical Books

Avi-Yonah and Aharoni, The Macmillan Bible Atlas
F. F. Bruce, Israel and the Nations
William Dyrness, Themes in Old Testament Theology
Larry R. Helyer, Yesterday, Today and Forever
Walter C. Kaiser, Toward An Old Testament Theology
_____, ed. Classical Evangelical Essays
J. Carl Laney, First and Second Samuel
_____, Ezra-Nehemiah
_____, Answers to Tough Questions
_____, Concise Bible Atlas
Eugene H. Merrill, Kingdom of Priests.
James B. Pritchard, The Ancient Near East
Gary Edward Schnittjer, The Torah Story
Leon Wood, A Survey of Israel's History (revised ed.)

Poetic and Wisdom Literature

Ronald B. Allen, Praise!, When Song is New & Lord of Song
James B. Crenshaw, Old Testament Wisdom
J. Carl Laney, Everything I know about Success
Gerhard von Rad, Wisdom in Israel
Claus Westermann, Praise and Lament in the Psalms

Helpful Articles

Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., "The Blessing of David: The Charter for Humanity," in The Law

and the Prophets, ed. John H. Skilton (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing House, 1974): 298-318.

J. Carl Laney, "A Fresh Look at the Imprecatory Psalms," Bib Sac (January-March, 1981): 35-45.

_____. "Deuteronomy 24:1-4 and the Issue of Divorce," Bib Sac (January-March 1992): 3-15.

Cleon L. Rogers, "The Covenant With Moses and Its Historical Setting," JETS (Summer 1971): 141-56.

John J. Bimson & David Livingston, "Redating the Exodus," Biblical Archaeology Review (Sept.-Oct. 1987): 40-68.

Gordon J. Wenham "The Deuteronomic Theology of the Book of Joshua," JBL 90 (1971): 140-148.

J. Stafford Wright, "The Interpretation of Ecclesiastes" in Classical Evangelical Essays, ed. Walter C. Kaiser (Baker Book House, 1971): 133-150.

BLS 501/511 Reading Report

Name _____

Box _____

This **Reading Report** tells me that you have completed the required reading for this course. The **Check List** is the place to report that you have completed the reading and study questions before class. Due: Last day of class

If incomplete, record the approximate percentage completed.

Genesis	_____
Exodus 1-15, 19-27, 32-34	_____
Leviticus 1-23	_____
Numbers 1-6, 13-14, 22-25	_____
Deuteronomy 1-6, 27-30	_____
Joshua 1-12, 24	_____
Judges	_____
Ruth	_____
1 Samuel 1-17, 31	_____
2 Samuel 1-12,	_____
1 Kings 1-20	_____
2 Kings 17-25	_____

Ezra _____
Nehemiah _____
Esther _____
Job 1-14, 32-42 _____
Psalms 1-24, 51, 93-124, 139-150 _____
Proverbs _____
Ecclesiastes _____
Song of Solomon _____

Ten Journal Articles _____
(BLS 501 students only)