

**11-602 Biblical Hermeneutics: The Book of Judges**  
**Spring Semester 2022**  
A Synchronous Online Course

Thursdays, 1:00 to 2:30 pm  
Professor: Cheryl Anderson  
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Course Objectives:

- introduction to biblical hermeneutics and the history of scholarly methods of biblical interpretation
- introduction to the newer trends in biblical interpretation such as ecological criticism and postmodern interpretations
- appreciation for the richness in interpretive possibilities that arise if a variety of historical and contemporary contexts are considered
- awareness of the theological and ethical implications of the book of Judges

Required Texts:\*

*The HarperCollins Study Bible, revised edition* (2006), ISBN-13: 9780060786854  
\$29.99 with 33% discount at amazon.com **OR**

*The New Oxford Annotated Bible 5<sup>th</sup> edition* (2018), ISBN-13: 9780190276089  
\$28.29 at amazon.com with 19% discount.

Dennis Olson, "Judges" in the *New Interpreter's Bible (NIB)*, Volume II (available online at [ministrymatters.com](http://ministrymatters.com))

Gale Yee, ed. *Judges and Method: New Approaches in Biblical Studies*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., (2007).  
ISBN-13: 9780800638580. \$25.32 with 6% discount at amazon.com.

Steven L. McKenzie and John Kaltner, eds., *New Meaning for Ancient Texts: Recent Approaches to Biblical Criticisms and their Application* (2013), ISBN-13 9780664238162.  
\$23.25 with 34% discount at amazon.com.

Athalya Brenner and Gale Yee, *Joshua and Judges*, text@contexts series,  
(2013), a Kindle version is available at amazon.com for \$34.49 with a 30% discount.

\*Prices accessed on October 25, 2021

**Additional readings will be posted on the course Moodle site.**

Course Requirements:

Regular attendance and active participation

(including 3 presentations in class on different assigned articles or chapters) 20%

Each student's presentation should include the following elements: (1) a brief summary and analysis of the reading, (2) thematic connections between that reading and other materials discussed in the course, (3) a probing question that goes beyond the reading for the class to discuss.

Violence and the book of Judges: An Essay

The Book of Judges has numerous violent and/or problematic texts. Choose one of them for the following 2-part assignment:

A. Exegetical exercise

Choose a text in Judges, research its historical-critical background and literary and linguistic features. You will present your analysis during one of the scheduled class periods and submit the written paper afterward. Length: 4-5 pages.

Due: March 11, 2022 25%

B. Contemporary Application

After exploring the exegetical background of your text, explore hermeneutical or methodological approaches that can provide new insights into the text. Pay attention to how the text is normally understood in the Church and the positive/negative aspects of such interpretations. Length: 4-5 pages.

Due: April 8, 2022 25%

Final assignment: a brief analytical paper that develops a chosen theme that was covered in the readings for the course. Length: 6-8 pages

Due: May 16, 2022 30%

Template for the reading in *New Meanings for Ancient Texts*:

As you read the material on each method in this book, make sure you identify answers to the following questions:

- name of the scholar associated with the method
- the scholar's objective in developing the method
- the differences between this method and one other method
- the advantages of this method
- the disadvantages of this method
- any questions that surface as you consider this method

Attendance at all class sessions is mandatory. Our class discussions will supplement and integrate the readings rather than repeat that material. For this reason, missing a class damages

the learning process. Consequently, two absences will result in the substantial lowering of your final grade. Missing more than 2 classes will mean that you are unable to pass the course. If you have to miss a class for any reason, please inform the professor in advance by telephone or email. Furthermore, to facilitate your engagement with the class, cellphones and earpieces must be turned off and put away, and your laptops should be used only for taking notes.

All course requirements must be completed to receive a final grade in the course. Furthermore, all assignments must be submitted on the date specified. Requests for extensions are strongly discouraged. Any extension granted for an assignment will result in the lowering of your grade.

## **Academic Policies**

All students are required to abide by the academic policies detailed in the [Academic Handbook](#) for the current academic year. The following policies are of particular importance to the successful completion of one's coursework:

### **Writing**

- Academic integrity and [plagiarism](#): (See 19-20 Handbook, 12, 78-83) All professors are required to respond to all suspected incidents of academic dishonesty, especially plagiarism. Repeated incidents of plagiarism or academic dishonesty may result in dismissal from the school.
- Writing and citations: The *Turabian Manual for Writers* and the *Chicago Manual of Style* footnote/bibliography format provide the standard formats for all introductory courses. Basic information on these formats is available online [here](#). In advanced courses an instructor may require another style guide appropriate to the discipline (such as APA). (19-20 Handbook, 84)
- Writing Support: The Writing Center at Garrett-Evangelical offers programs to support all students' theological research and writing. See <https://www.garrett.edu/student-life/student-services> "Writing Center" for more detailed information.

### **Attendance and Class Participation**

- Inclusivity/Diversity: The basic commitments of the seminary to mutual love and searching for the truth in Christ lead to a principle that in the classroom and in course assignments, persons are always to be respected and ideas are to be freely discussed.... All participants in the teaching-learning process have an obligation to honor and respect varying perspectives on relevant issues.

(See 19-20 Handbook, 9)

- Attendance and lateness policies: Attendance is required. Students who miss more than 20% of the class sessions (e.g., more than 2 classes in the weekly schedule, a proportionate amount for other class formats) should not expect to pass the class. (19-20 Handbook, 19)
- Some faculty may limit on the usage of electronic devices such as cell phones during class. At the least, all cell phones should be silenced during the whole of a class session.

## Academic Accommodations

- Student accommodations for documented conditions should be developed and requested before the beginning of the semester. See the *Accessibility, Special Needs, and Disabilities* policy and process set out in the Academic Handbook (19-20 Handbook, 12). Such accommodations are developed in consultation with the Registrar.
- Extensions: For Masters students, extensions, if granted, are normally for four weeks following the last day of class in spring and fall semesters or the final due date for coursework for January and summer terms. Extensions may not exceed three months following the end of the term. (19-20 Handbook, 20)

## Class Schedule

### **February 3: Session 1**

Introduction, NIB, 723-730

Fidele Ugira Kwasi, "Judges," in the Global Bible Commentary, ed. Daniel Patte (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2004), 74-85.

Steven L. McKenzie, *How to Read the Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 46-64.

Brenner and Yee, Chapter 7

Randall Bailey, "Judges," in *The Africana Bible: Reading Israel's Scriptures from Africa and the African Diaspora* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010), 120-122.

### **February 10: Session 2**

Judges 1:1-2:5

NIB, 731-749

Judges and Method, Chapter 1 (Introduction)

McKenzie and Kaltner, Chapter 1 (Cultural-Historical Criticism)

Ellen F. Davis, "Critical Traditioning: Seeking an Inner Biblical Hermeneutic," in Ellen F. Davis and Richard B. Hays, eds., *The Art of Reading Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2003), 163-180.

Brenner and Yee, Chapter 4

**February 17: Session 3**

Judges 2:6-3:6

NIB, 750-761

Judges and Method, Chapter 2 (Narrative Criticism)

McKenzie and Kaltner, Chapter 2 (Disability Studies)

Stephen E. Fowl, ed., The Theological Interpretation of Scripture: Classic and Contemporary Readings (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), 26-69. [contributions by Steinmetz, Lindbeck, and Camp]

**February 24: Session 4**

Judges 3:7-31

NIB, 762-773

McKenzie and Kaltner, Chapter 3 (Ecological Criticism)

Judges and Method, Chapter 3 (Social Scientific Methods)

Deryn Guest, "Judges," in *The Queer Bible Commentary* (London: SCM Press, 2006), 167-189.

**March 3: Session 5**

Judges 4:1-5:31

NIB, 774-790

McKenzie and Kaltner, Chapter 4 (New Historicism)

Judges and Method, Chapter 9 (Gender Criticism)

Brenner and Yee, Chapters 8, 9, and 10

David J. Zucker and Moshe Reiss, "Subverting Sexuality: Manly Women; Womanly Men in Judges 4-5," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 45 no. 1 (2015): 32-37.

**March 10: Session 6**

Judges 6:1-8:35

NIB, 791-811

McKenzie and Kaltner, Chapter 5 (Bible and Popular Culture)

Daniel Patte, Ethics of Biblical Interpretation: A Reevaluation (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995), 1-36.

Judges and Method, Chapter 5 (Structuralist Criticism)

Brenner and Yee, Chapter 11

**March 17: Session 7**

Judges 9:1-10:5

NIB, 811-821

McKenzie and Kaltner, Chapter 6 (Postcolonial Biblical Criticism)

Danna Fewell, "Imagination, Method, and Murder," in Reading Bibles, Writing Bodies: Identity and the Book, ed. Timothy K. Beal and David Gunn (London: Routledge, 1997), 132-152.

Judges and Method, Chapter 6 (Deconstructive Criticism)

Brian Irwin, "Not just any king: Abimelech, the Northern Monarchy and the Final Form of Judges," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 131, no. 3 (2012): 443-454.

**Spring Break: March 21-25, 2022**

**March 31: Session 8**

Judges 10:6-12:15

NIB, 821-840

McKenzie and Kaltner, Chapter 7 (Postmodernism)

Alice Keefe, "Rapes of Women/Wars of Men," *Semeia* 61:79-97 (1993).

Vanessa Lovelace, "We don't give birth to thugs": Family Values, Respectability Politics, and Jephthah's Mother in Gay Byron and Vanessa Lovelace, eds., *Womanist Interpretations of the Bible: Expanding the Discourse* (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016), 239-261.

Judges and Method, Chapter 10 (Cultural Criticism)

Brenner and Yee, Chapter 12

**April 7: Session 9**

Judges 13:1-16:31

NIB, 840-862

McKenzie and Kaltner, Chapter 8 (Psychological Biblical Criticism)

Brenner and Yee, Chapter 13

Susan Niditch, "Samson as Culture Hero, Trickster, and Bandit: The Empowerment of the Weak," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 52:608-624 (Oct 1990).

Uriah Kim, "More to the Eye than Meets the Eye: A Protest Against Empire in Samson's Death," *Biblical Interpretation* 22 (2014): 1-19.

Wil Gafney, "A Womanist Midrash of Delilah: Don't Hate the Playa Hate the Game," in *Womanist Interpretations of the Bible: Expanding the Discourse* (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016), 49-72,

**Maundy Thursday and Good Friday (April 14-15, 2022)**

**April 21: Session 10**

Judges 17:1-18:31

NIB, 863-872

Mercedes L. Garcia Bachmann, *Judges: Wisdom Commentary* vol. 7 (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2018), 195-209.

Judges and Method, Chapter 4 (Feminist Criticism) and Chapter 8 (Postcolonial Criticism)

McKenzie and Kaltner, Chapter 9 (Queer Criticism)

Randall Bailey, “He Didn’t Even Tell Us the Worst of It!,” *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 59:15-24 (2005).

**April 28: Session 11**

Read only Judges 19

NIB, 872-888 (portions relevant to Judges 19)

Brenner and Yee, Chapters 14 and 15

Judges and Method, Chapter 7 (Ideological Criticism)

J. Cheryl Exum, “Raped by the Pen,” in Fragmented Women: Feminist (Sub)Versions of Biblical Narratives (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1993), 170-201.

Phyllis Trible, “An Unnamed Woman: The Extravagance of Violence,” in Texts of Terror: Literary-Feminist Readings of Biblical Narratives (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 65-91.

Koala Jones Warsaw, “Toward a Womanist Hermeneutic: A Reading of Judges 19-21,” in A Feminist Companion to Judges, ed. Athalya Brenner (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 172-186.



**May 5: Session 12**

Read: Chapter 20

Ken Stone, "Gender and Homosexuality in Judges 19: Subject-Honor, Object-Shame?," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 67:87-107 (1995).

Cheryl B. Anderson, "Reading Genesis 19 and Judges 19 in the Context of HIV and AIDS: Exploring Biblical Interpretation as Violence," in *Violencia and the Bible* (2016).

James Harding, "Homophobia and Masculine Domination in Judges 19-21," *The Bible and Critical Theory* 12 (2) (2016): 41-74

Ryan Kuja, "Remembering the Body: Misogyny through the Lens of Judges 19," *Feminist Theology* 25 (1) (2016): 89-95.

**May 10 (Tuesday): Session 13**

Read: Chapter 21

Jacqueline E. Lapsley, Whispering the Word: Hearing Women's Stories in the Old Testament (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 35-67.

Yani Yoo, "Han-Laden Women: Korean 'Comfort Women' and the Women in Judges 19-21," *Semeia* 78:37-46 (1997).

Yani Yoo, "The Demand to Listen to Korean "Comfort Women" and to Two Biblical Women," in Susanne Scholz, *The Oxford Handbook to Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible* (2020), pgs. 97-112.

Patrick S. Cheng, "Multiplicity and Judges 19: Constructing a Queer Pacific American Biblical Hermeneutic," *Semeia* 90-91 (2002): 119-133.

Final (thematic) papers are due on May 16, 2022