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BS 502 Introduction to Biblical Studies

Hunn Choi

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ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

BS502 XL Introduction to Biblical Studies Spring 2005 (NOT FINAL)

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INTRODUCTION

1. Welcome

Welcome to Exl version of BS502 Introduction to Biblical Studies. Good to have you on board!

2. Personal Profile

a. Myself

It is my privilege to welcome you into the New Testament part of “Introduction to Biblical Studies.” My prayer is that as you delve into our ExL version of BS 502 you will have a rewarding and enriching time for your life!

My name is Hunn Choi. I am a Korean-American, born in Korea, but educated in the states. I moved here in 1974. I am an ordained United Methodist minister, currently serving as Senior Pastor at Lexington Korean United Methodist Church, a multi-ethnic congregation, though predominantly Korean. I am a fourth generation Christian, and my father was a United Methodist Church minister. My wife, Meesaeng Lee, is an assistant professor of Church History and Historical Theology at Asbury Theological Seminary. We both graduated from Asbury. I’ve got my M.Div. in 1992 and my wife her Th.M. in 1991.

I am currently pursuing a doctoral degree in New Testament Studies at Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago under the supervision of Dr. David Rhoads, a great teacher, a great scholar.

This is my second ExL class, and I will myself be learning a great deal more about this innovative way of learning and teaching.

b. Yourself

Now it's your turn:

If you have not set up your Resume on the FirstClass email system, please do so now. There is a place for a picture on the Resume, but that is optional. Also, would you please expand on

your Resume (limit it to 100 words) and place it in the BS 502 Discussion Center by the end of the first week of class. If you prefer, make it a casual profile. You are more than your work and educational experience.

Feedback is important. I look forward to interacting with you not only on the biblical material but also on the IBS method online! I will need your feedback in order to "see your facial expressions."

COURSE DESCRIPTION

1. The two-course sequence, BS501-502, comprises three interrelated sections: (1) an introduction to the concept and significance of the canon of Scripture, the discipline of hermeneutics, and a contextual, text-centered approach to biblical interpretation; (2) an introduction to the Old Testament in its historical, literary, and canonical contexts; and (3) an introduction to the New Testament in its historical, literary, and canonical contexts.
2. Course participation, reading, and projects will be configured in part so as to reflect the character of the degree specialization represented among the course participants.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. The student will be able to trace the development of canonization, discuss the meaning and significance of the canon and of canonicity, especially the canon and canonicity of the New Testament, and articulate the major issues involved in the relationship between the testaments.
2. The student will be able to discuss the historical background of the Bible, including the historical setting of the biblical story, and especially the story of the New Testament, and the critical historical issues surrounding the production of the various New Testament books, and will demonstrate the ability to make appropriate use of this historical information in the interpretation of the biblical text.
3. The student will be conversant with the major issues in hermeneutics (i.e., will be able to identify these issues, articulate the main contemporary positions surrounding these issues, and present in a reasonable and informed fashion his/her own perspective regarding these issues), and will demonstrate the ability to make use of these hermeneutical insights in the actual interpretation and application of the New Testament text.
4. The student will demonstrate the ability to observe, interpret, and apply the New Testament text, and to show the significance of this interpretation and application of the biblical text for the tasks of his/her ministerial vocation. Specifically, the student will be able (a) to identify the macrostructure of a biblical book (including the structural development of the book in terms of its units and sub-units, and major structural dynamics within the book) and show the significance of these insights for the interpretation of the New Testament text; (b) to engage in a "close reading" of individual passages so as to make relevant observations useful for interpretation; (c) to employ various kinds of exegetical determinants, e.g., context, word usage, historical background, literary genre, the history of interpretation, for the

interpretation of the New Testament text; (d) to move from interpretation of the New Testament passage to specific and creative application to contemporary Christian life, including the ability to exemplify principles that must be kept in mind in the use of the New Testament for Christian application.

5. The student will demonstrate the ability to show how the teachings of individual passages within the New Testament contributes to the flow of biblical revelation in the large, and to trace, in at least a general way, the development of major biblical themes and motifs throughout the whole of scripture so as to articulate a biblical theology of these major themes and motifs.
6. The student will be able to articulate the issues involved in the integration of biblical studies and ministry.

COURSE MATERIALS AND TEXTS

1. Required Course Texts

- deSilva, David A. *An Introduction to the New Testament: Contexts, Methods and Ministry Formation*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2004 [hereafter abbreviated *INT*].
- Willimon, William. *Shaped by the Bible*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1990.
- Thompson, David. *Bible Study that Works*. Nappanee, IN: Evangel, 1994.
- Bauer, David. *Biblical Resources for Ministry*. Nappanee, IN: Evangel, 1995.

2. Biblical Texts

- Assumed: It is assumed that students have access to at least two contemporary translations of the Bible, preferably the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), Revised Standard Version (RSV), New International Version (NIV), English Standard Version (ESV), or New American Standard (NAS). The Living Bible, New Living Translation, *The Message*, the King James, and New King James, whatever their other merits, do not well serve the objectives of this course.
See Comparisons of reading levels of several major translations, go to <http://www.zondervanbibles.com/translations.htm>.
- Recommended: Meeks, Wayne A. et al., eds. *The HarperCollins Study Bible, New Revised Standard Version with Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books*. New York: HarperCollins, 1993.

3. Web Resources

- Resources for Near Eastern, Mesopotamian and Biblical Studies: <http://www.sas.upenn.edu/~ekondrat/neareast.html>
- Bible History Online: <http://www.bible-history.com/>
- Resource Pages for Biblical Studies: (<http://www.torreys.org/bible/>)
- New Testament Gateway (<http://www.ntgateway.com>)
- Exploring Ancient World Culture (Near East): <http://eawc.evansville.edu/nepage.htm>

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Required Reading and Reports (15%)

- The total reading comes to about 1,000 pages of moderate difficulty. Students will read weekly the assigned portions of the *INT*, the New Testament, and assignment articles. Careful reading will be integral to preparation for the final exam and for the NT Intro Notebook.
 - For *Shaped by the Bible* students will post reflection essays in FirstClass on the course discussion site in the team folders. These will be brief personal reflections on the book (500-800 words). This is not a “book review”; and it should not include any summary of the book’s contents. The student will answer two kinds of questions: (1) How did you benefit from reading this book? That is, what did you learn from or enjoy about the book? (2) What questions, loose ends, or disagreements are you left with that might motivate further study? (2/20/05).
 - Team Discussion
- 2. Final Essay Exam (30%)**
- Ten short-answer and four long-answer questions.
 - Students will answer seven of the ten short- and three of the four long-answer questions and return their completed exams by email to BS502 XL Office. *Students may use any resources they wish in order to answer the questions—Bibles, textbooks, notes, and electronic resources.* In fact, students may even cut and paste their own pre-written answers and submit them.
- 3. Three Critical and Interpretive Exercises (60%)**
- Students will engage in at least three of the following four exercises that will require a hands-on engagement with various NT methods. The highest three grades will count toward the final grade. This means students may skip one of the assignments with no penalty.
 - General Instructions: Please keep your papers to no more than three pages single-spaced. An introduction is not necessary, nor is a title page.
 - Conclusions should be brief and merely summarize.
 - For each assignment there will be a separate handout with more specific instructions.

GRADING

This assignment will be graded as follows: I will scan the whole installment to assess the general quality of engagement, and I will select two books from each installment to read closely in order determine the grade.

1. Summary

- Reflection Essays on *KJOT*, *LLP*, 10%
- Final Essay Exam, 30%
- Three Critical and Interpretive Exercises, 60%

2. Scale (descriptions from ATS Catalogue, 28)

94-100 = A “Exceptional work: surpassing, markedly outstanding achievement of course objectives”

92-94 = A-

90-92 = B+

86-90 = B “Good work: strong, significant achievement of course objectives”

84-86 = B-

82-84 = C+

77-82 = C “Acceptable work: basic, essential achievement of course objectives”

75-77 = C-

73-75 = D+

= D “Marginal work: inadequate, minimal achievement of course objectives”

<70 = F “Unacceptable work: failure to achieve course objectives”

EXL SUPPORT COMMUNITY

From the outset, this community has a tremendous support staff. For general help with anything contact:

- a. For **general questions regarding the ExL program**,
contact ExL_Office@asburyseminary.edu
- b. For **technical support**,
contact ExL_Office@asburyseminary.edu
- c. For **library research support**,
contact the Information Commons at Information_Commons@asburyseminary.edu
- d. For **library loans**,
contact Dot James at Library_Loan@asburyseminary.edu
- e. **Obtaining Library Materials and Assistance**
 - **General Questions:** Information_Commons@asburyseminary.edu, or Toll-free 1-866-454-2733
 - This is the best place to start when you have questions about library resources. Help is available Monday-Thursday from 8am – 7pm and Friday and Saturday from 8am - 5:45pm. If the people at the Information Commons desk cannot answer your questions, they will direct you to the person or department who can.
 - **Materials Requests:** Library_Loan@asburyseminary.edu, or Toll-free 1-866-454-2733
 - ExL Students may request books, photocopies or email attachments of journal articles/reference books from Asbury Seminary’s Library. Please allow 3-10 business days for all requests to be filled. Contact the library loan office for information on costs and instructions on how to make requests.
 - ExL students are also encouraged to make use of local library resources. Students who live within a 50 mile radius of either the Florida or the Wilmore campus should come to campus to obtain their materials.
 - **Research Questions:** Information_Commons@asburyseminary.edu
 - Or call the toll-free number and then **Information Commons x2233**.
 - ExL students are encouraged to contact Hannah Kirsch (x2189) for advanced research assistance including help choosing a paper topic, determining the best sources to use for a paper, finding book reviews, or research questions about using the online databases or any other library materials.
 - **Online Databases:**

- To access the online library resources including the library catalog and full-text journal databases, go to <http://www.asburyseminary.edu/icommons/index.shtml> and enter your 10-digit student ID# number in the login box. Your student ID# is provided on the biographical information section of the student registration webpage. Add a 2 and enough 0's to the front to make a 10-digit number (20000XXXXX where XXXXX = your student id). If you have questions, contact the Information Commons desk.

Please don't hesitate to contact these people in an emergency. Moreover, I may refer you to them if a question is most applicable to their expertise.

To order textbooks or for textbook information contact:

Asbury's Bookstore
859-858-4242
exlbooks@asburyseminary.edu

OUR VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

1. The Course Icon is a manila file folder labeled BS502 XL. Everything that is needed for and happens in this course is “inside” this folder.
2. The Discussion Center will be used for all public, class communication. Anytime you have a question or comment about the course, the modules, the assignments, or anything else that would be of interest to your classmates and the professor, you should post to the Discussion Center. Note that the Discussion Center is not called the “Discussion Center” but is merely labeled “BS502 XL” and is marked by an icon of people sitting around a table.
3. The Course Center will contain a copy of the syllabus as well as all class modules. No interaction takes place here. This is where the professor posts course materials only.
4. The BS502 XL Office is for private correspondence between you and the professor. This will contain items that you do not want to appear publicly before all of your classmates, including assignments, papers, projects, and personal correspondence. This should *not* be used to ask general course-related questions.
5. The Archives Center will be used for storing conversations that have already taken place during the course of the semester. This keeps the Discussion Center from becoming too unmanageable.
6. The Chat Center is intended primarily for real-time interaction among students. You can get together with other members to study, ask questions, or to explore topics. *Remember:* None of the conversations carried on in this location are ever saved.
7. The Resource Center provides access to a number of specific tools available to all ExL students. These include access to the B.L. Fisher Library, chapel services in Estes Chapel,

ExL Updates, Guidelines for Success, Helpful Hints, Interesting Links, a Powerpoint Viewer, and a Real Audio Player.

HOW TO SUBMIT WORK

Interpretive assignments, the BS Intro Notebook, and the final exam should all be sent as word processing email attachments addressed to the BS502 XL Office (not to my personal email). MS Word file format is preferred, but RTF or WordPerfect formats are also acceptable. Your graded work will be returned electronically with my comments and grade embedded into the document by means of the comment feature of MS Word (or WordPerfect).

Since things can go wrong in cyberspace, it is strongly recommended that you protect your efforts by doing the following:

1. Save and backup often (set up a timed backup or auto recovery in very short intervals). Backup your work on a secondary medium besides your computer hard drive.
2. Send your emails with attachments by registered email and save the sent emails and receipts.
3. Do not open and modify files on your computer *after* they have been sent (or if you do, “save as” with a new filename). The “last modified” date is your irrefutable evidence for when an assignment was completed even if lost in transit or by the addressee. When push comes to shove, I will treat the “last modified” date on a file as the completion date.

COURSE SCHEDULE

DATE	TOPICS AND TEXTS	READING	ASSIGNMENTS, QUIZZES, AND EXAMS
Week 1 2/7-13	Introductions: Personal, Course Approaching the Study of the New Testament The New Testament Canon	INT 19-36 Class Note 1	***
Week 2 2/14-20	Second Temple Judaism Cultural Scripts of the 1 st Century	INT 37-144 Class Note 2	<i>Shaped by the Bible</i> Reflection, (post online by 2/20)
Week 3 2/21-27	Historical Jesus	INT 145-93 Class Note 3	***
Week 4 2/28-3/6	Introduction to Biblical Criticisms The Synoptic Problem	Class Note 4	Assignment #1:
Week 5 3/7-13	MARK MATTHEW	INT 194-297 Class Note 5	***
Week 6 3/14-20	LUKE-ACTS	INT 298-390 Class Note 6	Assignment #2:
3/21-27	Spring Reading Week: No Class		
Week 7 3/28-4/3	Pauline Theology	INT 475-92, 500-501; 518-19 Class Note 7	
Week 8 4/4-10	THESSALONIAN LETTERS GALATIANS	INT 493-554 Class Note 8	Assignment #3:
Week 9 4/11-17	CORINTHIAN LETTERS ROMANS	INT 555-639 Class Note 9	***
Week 10 4/18-24	CAPTIVITY EPISTLES: Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians	INT 640-732 Class Note 10	***
Week 11 4/25-5/1	PASTORAL EPISTLES: 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus HEBREWS	INT 733-813 Class Note 11	
Week 12 5/2-8	JAMES , 1 PETER, 2 PETER, JUDE	INT 814-84 Class Note 12	Assignment #4:
Week 12 5/9-15	JOHANINE WRITINGS: John, 1-3 John REVELATION	INT 391-474, 885-932 Class Note 13	
Finals Week 5/19	Final Essay Exam: Due on at 2:May 19, at noon		