

DAVID Anderson

COURSE #280 THE BIBLE AS CONTROVERSYFALL 1999

ANCIENT SCRIPTURAL DOCUMENTS HAVE ERUPTED INTO MODERN CONTROVERSIES, RANGING FROM QUESTIONS OVER BIBLICAL FUNDAMENTALISM TO THE CONTROVERSIAL VIEWS ESPOUSED BY THE JESUS SEMINAR. THIS COURSE WILL EXAMINE THE NOTION OF CONTROVERSY BOTH 'WITHIN' & 'ABOUT' THE BIBLE AND ITS TEXTS. QUESTIONS OF CONTROVERSY CONCERNING THE CREATION STORIES, THE MONARCHY OF ISRAEL, THE MOVEMENT OF JESUS THE JEW, THE GOSPEL OF PAUL, THE BOOK OF REVELATION, HISTORICAL & CONTEMPORARY USE & ABUSE OF THE BIBLE WILL BE EXAMINED IN DETAIL

GOAL:

To draw students into the world of biblical history, probing the texts that history has produced, being attentive to the thematic of controversy that permeates almost every portion and passage. Special focus will be given the controversies that have erupted in modern times concerning the formation and interpretation of these Judaeo-Christian documents. The scrolls themselves carry essential freight that bespeaks controversy with regards to people & events past, present & future. Effort will be made to survey various layers of controversy within & about the books of scripture, all-the-while highlighting the truth, beauty and depth of vision & fire they contain

Objectives:

- 1) To expose the biblical world in a way that allows the element of controversy to emerge for the sake of appreciating the complex character & nature of the material both as a whole as well as in its component parts
- 2) To sift a multitude of controversial texts, events, characters, messages, interpretations of and approaches toward scripture which excite and alarm both believers & non-believers
- 3) To foster critical use of the biblical material on the basis of contemporary biblical scholarship, utilizing available historical, scientific, linguistic & theological tools which enable examination and consideration of variant points of view with regards to the textual issues
- 4) To contextualize the controversial character of scripture within the scope of conflict that defines the human condition & which ranges through the bulk of human literature, religious & secular
- 5) To enhance knowledge of and appreciation for the spiritual value of the biblical content so long in its formulation and preservation, treasured yesterday and today by diverse individuals and religious communities dependent upon these texts for birthing and bearing faith forward

Requirements:

- 1) presence and participation in all scheduled classes for this course
- 2) completion of all assignments/projects as given throughout the course
- 3) satisfactory completion of all examinations during the semester

Recommendations:

- 1) notebook for recording information during class presentations and assigned readings
- 2) research and reading of extra materials relevant to the course
- 3) attentive and participative class presence to foster learning attitude and aptitude

Grading:

20% class presence & participation
20% course paper

40% mid-course examinations
20% final exam

[Paper: 5 page report on any scriptural book/event/character relevant to the theme of controversy:
3 page subject summary/1 page reason for selection/1 page contemporary correlation]

- Alter, Robert & Kermode, Frank, eds. The Literary Guide to the Bible.
Cambridge, MA.: Belknap Press/Harvard University Press, 1987.
- Anderson, Bernhard W. From Creation to New Creation (Old Testament Perspectives). [Overtures to Biblical Thought] Minneapolis: Augsburg/Fortress Press, 1994.
- Understanding the Old Testament.
Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1998.
- Armstrong, Karen. In the Beginning (A New Interpretation of Genesis).
New York, N.Y.: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996.
- Bailie, Gil. Violence Unveiled (Humanity at the Crossroads).
New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1997.
- Barrett, C.K. Paul (An Introduction to His Thought).
Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994.
- Beasley, James R., ed. et al. An Introduction to the Bible.
Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991.
- Bellis, Alice Ogden. Helpmates, Harlots, and Heroes (Women's Stories in the Hebrew Bible).
Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Know Press, 1994.
- Boyarin, Daniel. A Radical Jew (Paul and the Politics of Identity).
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- Borg, Marcus J. Jesus, A New Vision (Spirit, Culture and the Life of Discipleship).
San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987.
- Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time (The Historical Jesus & the Heart of Contemporary Faith). San Francisco: Harper Collins Publishers, 1994.
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Valley Forge, PA.: Trinity Press International, 1994.
- The God We Never Knew (Beyond Dogmatic Religion to a More Authentic Contemporary Faith). San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1997.
- & Wright, N. T. The Meaning of Jesus (Two Visions).
New York, N.Y.: HarperSanFrancisco, 1999.
- Brown, Raymond E. Responses to 101 Questions on the Bible.
New York/Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1990.
- The Birth of the Messiah (A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew & Luke). Doubleday, 1993.
- The Death of the Messiah (A Commentary on the Passion Narratives - 2 Vol)
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- Bruggemann Walter. The Prophetic Imagination.
Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1978.
- Old Testament Theology (Essays on Structure, Theme and Text).
Patrick D. Miller, ed. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992.
- A Social Reading of the Old Testament (Prophetic Approaches to Israel's Communal Life). Patrick D. Miller, ed. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994.
- The Bible Makes Sense.
Winona, MN.: Saint Mary's Press, 1997.
- Theology of the Old Testament (Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy).
Minneapolis, MN.: Fortress Press, 1997.
- Buhlmann, Walbert. The Chosen Peoples.
Slough, England: St. Paul Publications, 1982.
- Burridge, Richard A. Four Gospels, One Jesus? (A Symbolic Reading).
Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1994.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Presentation</u>	RE#280 <u>Bible As Controversy (M-W-F: 9 AM)</u>
8/30	M	1	Introduction	
9/1	W	2	Israel: A History of Controversy [Text: 15-22]	
9/3	F	3	The Genesis Debate [Text: 153-157]	
9/6	M		No Class (Labor Day Holiday)	
9/8	W	4	Creation Stories: History & Myth	
9/10	F	5	Patriarchal Stories: History & Characters [Text: 93-104]	
9/13	M	6	The Exodus Event [Text: 104-117]	
9/15	W	7	Controversy Between Joshua & Judges [Text: 119-134]	
9/17	F	8	The Pentateuch: Debate About Authorship	
9/20	M	9	The Kingdom Controversy: The Making & Unmaking of Israel [Text: 135-153]	
9/22	W	10	Israel's Kings: Controversial Characters [Text: 159-180]	
9/24	F	11	Israel's Prophets: Controversial Messages [Text: 181-250]	
9/27	M	12	The Job Story: Controversy About Good & Evil [Text: 264-266]	
9/29	W	13	Review	
10/1	F	14	* Exam I	
10/4	M	15	Inter-Testamental Period: Religious Controversies in Judaism [Text: 280-289]	
10/6	W	16	Jesus of Nazareth: A Life of Controversy [Text: 319-344]	
10/8	F	17	Jesus as Scandal	
10/11	M		No Class (Discoverers' Day)	
10/13	W	18	Paul: Controversy in the Early Church [Text: 389-407]	
10/15	F	19	Paul: Controversial Mission & Letters [Text: 409-449]	
10/18	M	20	Gentiles/Jews/Christians: Groups in Controversy [Text: 473-482]	
10/20	W	21	The Book of Revelation: Conflict & Controversy [Text: 482-490]	
10/22	F	22	The Gospels: Chronologies in Conflict [Text: 345-363]	
10/25	M	23	The Gospels: Theologies of Contrast [Text: 365-387]	
10/27	W	24	The Church: Shift From Charismatics to Custodians [Text: 451-471]	
10/29	F	25	Scriptural Images of God: Conflictual & Complementary	
11/1	M	26	Review	
11/3	W	27	* Exam II	
11/5	F	28	Scriptural Debates: Revelation/Inspiration/Interpretation	
11/8	M	29	Canonicity Debates: Jewish/Catholic/Protestant	
11/10	W	30	The Jesus Seminar Debate: Quests for the Historical Jesus	
11/12	F	31	Fundamentalism & The Debate about Scriptural Interpretation	
11/15	M	32	Old Testament: Theological Controversy I	
11/17	W	33	Old Testament: Theological Controversy II	
11/19	F	34	Old Testament: Theological Controversy III	
11/22	M	35	New Testament: Theological Controversy I	
11/24	W	36	New Testament: Theological Controversy II	
11/26	F		No Class (Thanksgiving Holidays)	
11/29	M	37	New Testament: Theological Controversy III	
12/1	W	38	Review	
12/3	F	39	* Exam III	
12/6	M	40	Christian Scripture in Conflict with the Sacred Texts of Other Faiths	
12/8	W	41	Christian Scripture & the Controversy about Human Salvation	
12/10	F	42	Semester: Overview & Evaluation	

- 1) The above schedule of presentations may be amended as deemed necessary during the semester. Please be advised.
- 2) Course Text: Introduction to the Bible (Beasley)
- 3) Prof. David Anderson (Humanities Department)/Phone: 926-5162
- 4) Final Exam: Monday - December 13th (10:30 AM - 12:30 PM)

- Alter, Robert & Kermode, Frank, eds. The Literary Guide to the Bible.
Cambridge, MA.: Belknap Press/Harvard University Press, 1987.
- Anderson, Bernhard W. From Creation to New Creation (Old Testament Perspectives). [Overtures to Biblical Thought] Minneapolis: Augsburg/Fortress Press, 1994.
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- Schussler-Fiorenza, Elizabeth. Revelation: Vision of A Just World.
Minneapolis, MI.: Fortress Press, 1991.
- Schwartz, Regina M. The Curse of Cain (The Violent Legacy of Monotheism).
Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1997.
- Segal, Alan F. Paul the Convert (The Apostolate and Apostasy of Saul the Pharisee).
New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1990.
- Smith, D. Moody. The Theology of the Gospel of John. [New Testament Theology]
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- Song, C.S. Jesus, The Crucified People.
New York, N.Y.: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1990.
- Jesus & the Reign of God.
Minneapolis, MI.: Fortress Press, 1993.
- Jesus in the Power of the Spirit.
Minneapolis, MI.: Fortress Press, 1994.
- Spong, John Shelby. This Hebrew Lord (A Bishop's Search for the Authentic Jesus).
New York, N.Y.: HarperSanFrancisco, 1988.
- Rescuing the Bible from Fundamentalism (A Bishop Rethinks the Meaning
of Scripture). San Francisco: Harper Collins Paperbacks, 1992.
- Resurrection: Myth or Reality? (A Bishop's Search for the Origins of
Christianity). New York, N.Y.: HarperSanFrancisco, 1994.
- Liberating the Gospels (Reading the Bible with Jewish Eyes/Freeing Jesus from
2000 Years of Misunderstanding). New York, N.Y.: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996.
- Stambaugh, John E. & Balch, David. The New Testament in Its Social Environment.
Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1986.
- Stark, Rodney, The Rise of Christianity (How the Obscure, Marginal Jesus Movement Became the
Dominant Religious Force in the Western World in a Few Centuries). New York, N.Y.:
HarperSanFrancisco, 1996.
- Suchocki, Marjorie Hewitt. The Fall to Violence (Original Sin in Relational Theology).
New York, N.Y.: The Continuum Publishing Company, 1995.
- Takenaka, Masao & O'Grady, Ron. The Bible Through Asian Eyes.
Auckland, N.Z.: Pace Publishing, 1991.
- Tully, Mark. Four Faces (A Journey in Search of Jesus the Divine, the Jew, the Rebel, the Sage).
Berkeley, CA.: Ulysses Press, 1997.
- Van Gemeren, Willem A. Interpreting the Prophetic Word (An Introduction to the Prophetic
Literature of the Old Testament). Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1990.
- Vawter, Bruce. Job & Jonah (Questioning the Hidden God).
New York/Ramsey: Paulist Press, 1983.
- Vermes, Geza. The Religion of Jesus the Jew.
Minneapolis, MI.: First Fortress Press, 1993.
- Wcela, Emil A. The Bible (What It is and How It Developed).
New York, N.Y.: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1976.
- Wenham, David. Paul (Follower of Jesus or Founder of Christianity?).
Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995.
- Wilson, A. N. Paul (The Mind of the Apostle).
New York, N.Y.: William Norton & Company, 1997.
- Witherington III, Ben. The Jesus Quest (The Third Search for the Jew of Nazareth).
Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1995.
- The Paul Quest (The Renewed Search for the Jew of Tarsus).
Downers Grove, Il.: InterVarsity Press, 1998.

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- Kreeft, Peter & Tacelli, Ronald. Handbook of Christian Apologetics (Hundreds of Answers to
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- Maguire, Daniel C. The Moral Core of Judaism and Christianity (Reclaiming the Revolution).
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- Mahan, Wayne W. Is It Possible To Be Christian And Modern?
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- Mays, James L., ed. Harper's Bible Commentary.
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- Meeks, Wayne A. The Moral World of the First Christians. [Library of Early Christianity: Vol 6]
Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1986.
- . The Origins of Christian Morality (The First Two Centuries).
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- Meier, John P. A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus. [Vol I: The Roots of the Problem &
the Person, 1991/Vol II: Mentor, Message & Miracles, 1994] New York: Doubleday.
- Meier, Rabbi Levi. Ancient Secrets (Using the Stories of the Bible to Improve Our Everyday Lives).
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- Nolan, Albert. Jesus Before Christianity.
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