

Humanities 1
Professor John Hoon Lee
Winter 2014

Writing Assignment #1: Hebrew Bible

Choose one of the two following essay topics:

1. Is there a strong sense of justice in the book of Genesis? Is justice ultimately served? How do the writers of Genesis define justice? Using two of the following stories – Jacob and Esau, Judah and Tamar, Dinah-Shechem-Simeon-Levi, or Joseph and his brothers, write a thesis-based essay in which you compare or contrast your two stories on the significance about justice in Genesis.

2. We describe the social system of the Hebrew Bible as patriarchal. The father rules the family; the son, presumably the eldest son, succeeds him. All other members of the family are subordinate to the patriarch. Considering the depictions of father-son relationships in Genesis, is this simple description of the family structure and dynamics accurate? Is the fate of every son of the patriarch determined by the family structure? Look at the examples of Abraham and his sons, Isaac and his sons, and Jacob and his sons, and using two of these examples of the patriarch family, write a thesis-based essay in which you compare or contrast your two sets of father and sons relationships in Genesis.

Thesis: Make sure that your claim meets the standards outlined in the “Thesis” handout.

4 tests for a good thesis:

1. Is it an explanation, not a fact?
2. Can someone argue against it?
3. Is it too obvious to be worth defending?
4. Is it precise?

Evidence: Make sure your argument shows just how the textual evidence supports the thesis.

Length: 4-5 pages.

Due: After lecture, Tuesday 28 January. Late papers will be penalized by the subtraction of one-third letter grade per day. Finally, don't forget turnitin.com!