Choose one of the two following essay topics:

1. There are numerous deception stories in Genesis, most notably centered around Jacob (Israel) and his family – see Jacob and Esau, Rachel and Leah, Judah and Tamar, and Joseph and his brothers. According to the authors of the Bible, when is it permissible to lie and when is it not? What are the consequences of the use of deception, if any? Write a thesis-based essay in which you examine the role of deception in Genesis.

2. The Bible presents numerous sets of sibling rivalries – Issac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, Rachel and Leah, Moses and Aaron, and Joseph and his brothers. What do these conflicts tell us about the Israelite family and the role of the family unit within the broader community? What issues lead to conflict within the family and what is at stake for the individuals involved in these conflicts? What do these conflicts tell us about the roles of men versus roles of women in Israelite society? Using two sets of sibling relations listed above (you must choose two), write a thesis-based essay in which you compare or contrast your two sets of sibling rivalries.

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 27 January. Late papers will be penalized by the subtraction of one-third letter grade per day. Finally, don’t forget turnitin.com!