

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FIRST PAPER

Paper length: not more than 5 pages (1.5 spacing). This is not a “research” paper; rather it is an opportunity for you to read and reflect on a biblical book that we will be unable to treat in class in sufficient detail (or, in some cases, a biblical book that we will be unable to treat at all). You are not to consult any resource except our course books: the Jewish Study Bible, and Kugel’s *How to Read the Bible*. Please acknowledge the sources that you use; that is, credit Kugel, and the annotations of the JSB if you have learned something from them. In the body of your essay refer to the biblical text by chapter and verse, not by page number of the JSB. If you feel constrained to consult other sources beyond Kugel, and JSB, make sure to acknowledge them as well.

Here is your opportunity to read a biblical book entire. Read the book in the JSB; check the annotations; read the introduction to the biblical book. (Remember: the JSB is “Jewishly-informed,” but does not speak for all Jews and certainly does not speak for Judaism. For the most part the opinions that it presents in the Introductions and in the Annotations are those of standard MBS; they do NOT necessarily represent “the” Jewish view,” and they certainly do not represent “the traditional” Jewish view.) Check to see what Kugel has to say about the book. Some questions you may wish to consider in your report: what is the book about? What are the highlights of the book? How is the book structured? Are there signs of composite authorship? What are the major issues in its interpretation?

Some biblical books for consideration (or come to me with another suggestion):

- Leviticus
- Numbers
- Deuteronomy
- Joshua
- Judges
- 1 Samuel
- 2 Samuel
- 1 Kings
- 2 Kings
- Isaiah 1-39 or 40-66
- Jeremiah
- Ezekiel 1-39
- Hosea
- Jonah
- Any of the five scrolls
- 1 Chronicles
- 2 Chronicles

The due dates for this paper are:

M Sep 30th: First draft submitted to your TF.

M Oct 7th:: first draft returned by your TF (approx..)

M Oct 14th Columbus Day – no session; submission of final version to your TF

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M Oct 21st midterm exam; final version returned by your TF.

The point of this bi-partite arrangement is not (just) to make more work for students and TFs, but (also) to help students generate better papers. Past experience confirms this fact: the more work you invest in your first draft, the better your final version will be.