

Syllabus

Overview			
Course code	OT5030	Lecture name	Theology of Evil and Suffering in the Ancient World: A Biblical and Extrabiblical Survey
Hours	Mon 13:00~15:50 TBA	Designated interview time	
Credit / Unit	2	Instructor	Rata, Cristian Gheorghe
E-mail	c.rata@ttgu.ac.kr		
I. Course Description			
(by Dr. Cristian G. Rata)			
<p>The problems of evil and suffering are real for all human beings, and even more for believers in the good God of the Bible. Suffering is here to stay and strikes often in unpredictable, and many times, even in crushing ways. In this context, it is imperative for the Christian theist to “have an answer...to anyone who happens to ask...for the reason for the hope within” him or her, and so in this course, the student will attempt to rationally work through the issues and understand why God allows evil and suffering (in so far as it is given to know in this life).</p> <p>While the focus will be on the Bible, the intention is to interact with extrabiblical texts from around the world. This should help clarify these issues and also nuance the distinctive Biblical view.</p> <p>★1. Class Time: 13:00-15:50; January 2-4, 8, 9, 10, 12, 18, and 23. The sessions during Jan 8, 9, 10, 12 are in person (if possible). The other sessions are on ZOOM.</p> <p>★2. Please note that this modular course is not available for the graduating seniors (e.g., MDiv 3rd year).</p> <p>★3. PLEASE NOTE that this course requires preparation in advance!!!</p>			
II. Course Objective			
<p>Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:</p> <p>A.Describe the various forms of the problem of evil.</p> <p>B.Defend the existence and goodness of God in the face of evil pain and suffering.</p> <p>C.Differentiate various theodicies and defenses offered in response to the problem of evil highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of each.</p> <p>D.Develop a practical apologetic plan to address the problems of evil and suffering.</p> <p>E.Appraise the various arguments against God's existence and/or his goodness based on the existence and nature of evil.</p>			
III. Textbooks (Required Books)			
<p>Latto Antii and Johannes C. deMoor. Eds. Theodicy in the World of the Bible. Brill: 2003.</p> <p>A Bible - preferably ESV.</p>			

IV. Course Requirements & Grading

A. Reading Assignments & Review - 25 + 15%

Read the book of Job and Genesis 37-50 before the class. You are also expected to read 350 pages from the required textbook by the end of January. You must write and present a review of a book (to be approved in class). The review should be 2 to 3 pages.

B. Memorization - 10%

The Bible is the book of life and wisdom. As such, God has used it through the centuries to comfort and encourage believers in their pain and suffering. Choose and memorize 10 verses from the Bible that you find useful for the problems of evil and suffering. The professor may provide you with suggested verses upon request.

C. Student Presentation - 30%

Each student will write a brief paper based on a chapter in the book (e.g. "Theodicy in Judaism") designed to initiate a discussion. See the list of possible topics below. The paper should be 5-8 pages. You will need to provide the instructor and the rest of the students with a copy of the paper.

D. Summative Reflection - 20%

Write a 2-3 page reflection on the following. The reflection should be double spaced, 12 pt font, Times New Roman.

Offer a personal reflection on enrichments and changes to

(i.) your view of God

(ii.) your view of suffering

(iii.) your view of evil and the world

(iv.) how Scripture and Christ help you deal with the problems of evil and suffering

• Grading Scale:

Aggregate Score	Grade	Point per credit	Aggregate Score	Grade	Point per credit	Aggregate Score	Grade	Point per credit
			95.0-100	A	4.0	90.0-94.9	A-	3.7
87.0-89.9	B+	3.3	84.0-86.9	B	3.0	80.0-83.9	B-	2.7
77.0	C+	2.3	74.0-86.9	C	2.0	70.0-83.9	C-	1.7
65.0-69.9	D+	1.3	60.0-64.9	B	1.0	-59.9	F	0.0

• Attendance Policy

(1) Unexcused absences for more than 1/4 of the class will result in an automatic F.

(2) One case of tardiness or early departure from the class counts as 1/3 of an absence.

(3) Missing more than 1/4 of a course will result in a failing grade.

(4) Absences for the following reasons may be regarded as excused absence by handing in the Report of Absence to the instructor, and be counted as present. However, if the total number of absences including the excused absences is 1/3 of the class or more, the student will receive an F.

- Death of grandparents, parents, spouse or parents-in-law, siblings, or children

- Call up for military service

- When the student participates in a TTGU's special event with the approval of the Dean of Academic Programs

- Natural disaster

- Hospitalization of the student caused by accident or illness; In case of hospitalization for childbirth,

VI. Reference

Solomon, Lon. Brokenness: How God Redeems Pain and Suffering. Red Door Press: 2005.

Tada, Joni E. and Nigel Cameron. How to Be a Christian in a Brave New World. Zondervan: Grand Rapids, 2006.

Waters, Larry J. and Roy B. Zuck. Why, O God? Suffering and Disability in the Bible and Church. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2011.

Wolterstorff, Nicholas. Lament for a Son. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company: 1987. Yancey, Philip. Disappointment with God. Zondervan: Grand Rapids, 1988.

VII. Evaluation Criteria

Midterm	Final exam	Assignment	Attendance	Other	Total	Remark
0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%	

male students may have up to 5 consecutive days of excused absence.

Weekly Schedule

Week	Subject	Contents	Remark
1	Introduction	"Syllabus Review. Introduction to the problem of theodicy. Student presentation #1."	
2	Ancient Egypt	Theodicy in Ancient Egypt. Student presentation #2.	
3	Mesopotamia	Theodicy in Mesopotamia. Student presentation #3.	
4	Pentateuch	Theodicy in the Pentateuch. Student presentation #4.	
5	Historical Books	Theodicy in Historical books. Student presentation #5.	
6	Prophetical Literature	Theodicy in Prophetical Literature. Student presentation #6.	
7	PSALMS	Theodicy in the Psalms. Student presentation #7.	
8	JOB	Theodicy in Job. Student presentation #8. Book reviews.	
9	Qoheleth and Lamentations	Theodicy in Qoheleth and Lamentations. Book reviews.	
10		<p>Possible student presentations (based on the chapters in the textbook):</p> <p>Theodicy in Hittite texts.</p> <p>Theodicy in the Texts of Ugarit.</p> <p>Theodicy in the Book of Ruth.</p> <p>Theodicy in the Book of Esther.</p> <p>Theodicy in Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles.</p> <p>Theodicy in Various Early Jewish Writings (e.g. Ben Sira, Wisdom of Solomon, etc.)</p> <p>Theodicy in the New Testament.</p> <p>Theodicy in the Book of Revelation.</p> <p>Theodicy in Judaism.</p> <p>Theodicy in the Targumim.</p>	
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			