Set all margins to one inch (top, bottom, left, and right).
Double-space the entire paper (including block quotes and the Works Cited page).
Notice on this title page there is no page number; page number begins on the next page.
Place last name followed by the page number in the top right of the header (not on the page itself).

Old (or New) Testament Exegesis

Book x:x-x

[if you choose, you may print the passage here; check with your professor]

Name

Date

Warner Webmail Address

Warner University

Course Number
Part A: Introduction. This section is not a paragraph stating what the paper is about; rather, it addresses the issues listed in Part A—author, date, audience, and so on. You do not need to start with anything more than a sentence stating, “This paper will examine the interpretation and application of Book x:x-x,” or “A study of any passage begins with an understanding of its historical background.”

You may use the headings if you choose (Author, Date, Audience, and so on), but realize this will count against you if you are merely trying to make the paper look longer.

Depending upon the issues involved, you may find it helpful to combine a couple of the areas. Authorship and date are often issues that need to be discussed together.

Note: the examples below are taken from student papers. They are not perfect, but they represent the general style and content of an exegesis paper.
Below are three examples of Part A, the first on the book of Daniel:

The author of Daniel intended to restore hope to the nation of Israel during a time of horrifying persecution. This was done through a combination of narrative stories and apocalyptic revelations, both involving the wise and religious character known as Daniel. The lessons of faithfulness and obedience throughout the book transcend generations and still affect readers today.

DATE/AUTHORSHIP

The setting of Daniel takes place during the “Babylonian exile” within the “courts of Babylonian, Median, and Persian kings” (Collins 33). This exile took place around the sixth century B.C. Contrary to the setting, though, “critical scholarship has established that the book actually comes from the 2nd century B.C.” (33). During this era, the Jewish population was persecuted by Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who went so far as to desecrate the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem by constructing a statue to the Greek god Zeus, much like King Nebuchadnezzar does in chapter 3 (Porteous 57). The biggest clue that Bible scholars notice when questioning the authorship is how accurate the succession of kingdoms is mentioned throughout the book. The
author’s ability to hint at events that occur centuries after Daniel’s lifespan lead scholars to suspect an alternative author (Jeffrey 349).

**Below is a selection from a student paper on Acts:**

The book of Acts seems so straightforward as a mere history of the early Church that one can hardly imagine the controversy behind the tedious details in the critical examination thereof. Before one can begin any type of in-depth study of a particular passage, some questions have to be answered, or at a minimum the issues have to be examined because definitive or absolute answers are not always within one’s grasp. The issues in question are authorship, dating, and purpose of the writing in light of historical circumstance.

Traditionally, the authorship of the book of Acts has been assigned to Luke, the author of the Third Gospel and a friend of the Apostle Paul. However, there is some concern as to how accurate this tradition is. Willimon calls the author of Acts “Luke” only for tradition’s sake. He says that it is unlikely that the Luke mentioned in Philemon is the same person as the writer of one fourth of the New Testament (1). Marshall concedes that there is a problem in the theological portrayal of the Apostle Paul, but that alone is insufficient evidence against Luke as being the author of Luke/Acts (45-46).

[section omitted]

When authorship is in question, dating becomes a major issue. There are arguments for a whole range of dates for the writing of Acts. Willimon is very ambiguous in his dating of the book, but still narrower than many; he dates the book between 70 – 100 CE (1). However, Marshall holds to a date somewhere in the 70s CE. He concedes that much of Luke has the
Gospel of Mark as a source, and since Mark has been dated to about 70 CE, he feels that Luke compiled his data over time and completed it during the 70s CE.

Longenecker notes Acts would be more appropriately dated to 63-64 CE, because it does not record the martyrdom of Paul (Introduction, CD-ROM). He continues by saying that it would not be logical within the scope of the writing to not record such events. He acknowledges the problem areas, but says common sense must win out in this particular issue. According to Longenecker,

After all, dating the Synoptics and Acts depends largely on one's view of the origin of the material making up the Olivet Discourse. And ultimately dating the Olivet Discourse comes down to the question of the possibility or impossibility of genuine predictive prophecy on the lips of our Lord during his earthly ministry--a possibility that this commentary affirms. (Introduction, CD-ROM)

Below is an example of the “Concern” of the book of Exodus:

CONCERN

There are several prevailing themes in the book of Exodus, but the dominating thoughts addressed are 1) God is the LORD who redeems his people and dwells with them; and 2) the people of God are a peculiar people, set apart to testify to the world. During their first encounter in chapter three, God tells Moses “I have observed the misery of my people…and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians” (3:7-8). When Moses questions God about his identity, God said, “Thus you shall say to the Israelites, ‘the LORD has sent me to you.'” (3:14).

Throughout the entire book, God reminds Moses and the Israelites that God is the LORD who rescues them, who redeems them, and who dwells with them. The law given in chapter 20 and the instructions for worship emphasize the peculiarity of God’s people. They had to be
taught how to live for the Almighty God as an example to the world around them. They would worship differently, eat differently, and treat each other differently. Their peculiarity would tell the world of a God who is above all gods. He is LORD of all and there is no other god like Jehovah.

TRANSPORTION: This section should be approximately one-half page long. Give a general description of the passage being studied. Describe how the passage functions in its immediate context. How does the passage fit with what comes before and after? How does the passage relate to the themes of the book? Below is an example of a student paper on Exodus:

Moses’ Refusal, Exodus 4:10-17

This passage concludes the call of Moses that began with the burning bush in 3:2. An ongoing dialogue characterizes the call of Moses during which he freely questions God’s methods and objects to His plans (Fretheim 51-52). God pursued conversation with Moses through His answers and explanations. Apparently God did not interpret Moses’ questions and objections as challenges to His authority and power. The remainder of chapter four tells of Moses’ obedience as he leaves Midian to meet Aaron and share with him God’s plan as they travel to Egypt together.

PART B: EXPLANATION OF THE TEXT: In this section you will explain the literal meaning of the verses. You are seeking to describe the meaning the author intended for the first readers of the book. There are a couple of ways to do this, depending upon what the passage actually contains. What kind of writing is it? Poetry is handled differently than narrative, narrative differently than a letter, and so on. What needs to be explained? Are there customs or history that gives us more understanding of what the message is about? Are there key words that need to be defined and explained? Below is an example from Acts:
PAUL IN ATHENS, ACTS 17:22-31

Paul’s entire experience in Athens differed from anywhere else he travelled. It was not on his original travel plans, but he quickly embraced the change and began preaching in the market place (Longenecker 472). The Athenian philosophers of the time were hungry for knowledge about anything and everything, so Paul’s entrance enticed them to invite him to speak to the Areopagus, which was considered the “Supreme Court” of Athens (474). This invitation differed from some of the responses Paul normally received. The Athenians’ curiosity, not anger and indignation, urged the conversation forward (Munck 169).

Paul began his speech complimenting their religious fervor and pointing out one of their own temples, the one “TO AN UNKNOWN GOD” (Acts 17:22). Paul analyzed his audience best he could before beginning. Because his audience contained only the highly educated philosophers within Athens, Paul knew that if he recited promises within Jewish prophecies that he would not keep their interest very long (Longenecker 475). The altar of the “UNKOWN GOD” served to tie together both the understood religion of the Athenians and the one true God Paul was attempting to teach them about (Barclay 171). He praised their attempts at worship because at least they were searching for something, even if it was misguided, and he was there to guide them in the right direction (Willimon 143).

Paul continued by explaining who this one true God is. God is the one “who made the world and everything in it” and is the “Lord of heaven and earth” (Acts 17:24). Paul went even further to say that God cannot be confined within man-made materials because he does not depend on man’s created idols in order to be worshiped (Longenecker 476). Paul elaborated even more so to say that God “exists over the face of the whole earth that we all may find our true purpose in his service alone” (Willimon 143). This idea linked all of mankind from one common
history, a history that started with God alone. Paul again at this point attempted to draw in his audience by quoting some of their own poets who had stated at one point, “In him we live and move and have our being” and “For we too are his offspring” (Acts 17:28). Much like before, Paul used these quotes as an attempt to tie together what he was trying to explain to them and what they already knew (Longenecker 476).

At this point in his speech, Paul reached the overarching goal: to let the Athenians know that God’s patience had worn thin with the practices of the pagans so he had sent Jesus Christ to remedy the situation (Barclay 143). Paul warned them that the day of judgment was coming but that salvation was available through the resurrection of Jesus Christ (143). This was about the time that Paul lost most of his audience. The Athenians refused to accept the possibility of resurrection at this time in their history (144). Paul would have had more luck had he mentioned immortality, which was an idea that Athenians could grasp and understand (Longenecker 478).

**APPLICATION:** Summarize the meaning of the passage in a sentence or two, and then describe how we can live out that meaning today. Discuss what the passage tells us about how we relate to God, to other people, and to the world around us.

Below is an example from the Exodus 4 passage used above in the Transition:

Application

God spoke to Moses from a burning bush and commissioned him as the messenger through whom God would deliver His people from slavery to Pharaoh. God’s answer to Moses’ questions and doubts was His abiding and enabling Presence. God’s purposes would be accomplished through Moses, not by Moses. God’s power would be perfected through Moses’ inadequacies. God became angry at Moses’ refusal, yet His response was a merciful and gracious ‘plan B.’ Moses was the man of God’s choosing for this great undertaking.
Approximately fifteen hundred years later, God appeared as the Christ to personally deliver all people from slavery to sin. God’s abiding and enabling Presence lived among His people for three years, working until redemption was complete. Before Jesus left, He sent messengers of the Gospel out into the world. They became empowered with the abiding and enabling Presence of the Holy Spirit. God’s purposes would be accomplished through His people. God’s power would be made perfect through our weaknesses. God continues to respond to human frailty with mercy and grace.

God calls and commissions us to partner with Him, equipping and empowering each and every one of us. God is present in us through the Holy Spirit, instructing and encouraging us. So what accounts for our reluctance, resistance, and outright refusal at times? Many understandably accuse Moses of a lack of faith, and there certainly is a shortage of faith in our world today too. Reviewing the call narrative of Moses beginning in Exodus 3:1, it is interesting to note that each question, concern, and objection raised by Moses focused on himself: who am I (3:11); what shall I say (3:13); what if they don’t believe me or listen to me (4:1); my speaking ability is inadequate (4:10). God’s patient, gracious responses redirect Moses’ attention to Himself: His purposes, His Presence, His power. The mission God was calling Moses to join was all about God, not Moses.

The Lord Jesus is our example of fulfilling God’s purposes. Even though He was one with the Father, Jesus did not initiate His ministry. Jesus was sent by the Father to do work given Him by the Father (John 5:36). The Source of Jesus’ teaching was the Father, who told Him what to say and how to say it (John 7:16; 14:29). Jesus did nothing on His own (John 8:27). Clearly, Jesus focused on the Father, not on Himself.
Perhaps our lack of cooperation with God has more to do with our focus than with our faith. God has provided all that is needed to fulfill His purposes, and He continues to respond lovingly to our human frailty with His amazing grace. How can we refuse?

Here is another example, taken from the paper dealing with Acts 17, used above as an example in Part B:

Paul’s sermon to the Athenians leaves current readers with three main conclusions: find ways to stay relevant to today’s society and culture, always stay true to the message despite the audience, and sharing your faith may not always turn out the way you had hoped but you will grow in the process. These ideas are vital for today’s churches. In a constantly changing culture, it can be just as much a struggle to reach people today as it was for Paul in Athens.

America’s main focus is consumerism, whether a person is the consumer or the retailer. Often church can be viewed in a similar light. People ask themselves: how does this apply to me and do I really need to spend my time here? In order to fulfill the command Jesus gave in Acts 1:8 to reach people to the ends of the earth, the necessary response to such questions is to prove to people they need Jesus and it is not a waste of their time to be in church. How does one do that? Some churches sponsor events within the community. Others advertise with billboards, newspaper ads, or radio ads. Others push their members to build relationships and then bring their friends with them to church. Our church band played one secular song every Sunday for an entire sermon series, which caused several people to leave the church because they disagreed with this attempt to stay relevant.

Though the idea of staying relevant is very important, it is only second best to making sure the message stays intact. Paul used quotes from Athenian poets and discussed their altars to one god in particular, but he never strayed from his true message. The goal at the end of his
speech was to share the gift of salvation that God has bestowed upon us through Jesus. In turn, Jesus’ overall message was to love God and love others. Our job as Christians is to make sure the message becomes clear to those around us so we can share with them this gift that has been given to us. This has created a current disconnect between the purpose of the church and what people think the church stands for. Those who are not in church believe that the last thing Christians are about is love. They see Christians picket abortion clinics and walk the streets with signs that say, “Repent for the end is near. We are all sinners who have fallen short.” Their good intentions caused confusion within the message and so their medium needs to be reevaluated to keep the message pure.

After Paul shared his message, most of the Athenians gawked at such a thought. Resurrection was a foreign concept to them. Very few of them actually decided to become Christians. Paul did not give up though. He moved on to the next town and kept preaching. As Christians today, we cannot give up just because someone does not want to agree with us and become a Christian. We have to continue being the same example that Jesus was for us. A change might need to be made to the medium of exchange in order to try and be relevant in a different way. We must do whatever is necessary to follow Acts 1:8 to the fullest.

Some say that Paul failed when he gave his speech in Athens because of how few people he was able to reach (Barclay, 172). But if you really look at it, he tried. Paul put forth his best effort and attempted to stay relevant while still portraying a message that was foreign to the philosophers within Athens. He even convinced a few people to change their beliefs. How can that really be considered a failure?

**WORKS CITED**: Your paper can be only as good as the sources you cite; be sure to use sources from creditable scholars. Alphabetize by the author’s last name. The next page is a sample Works Cited page following MLA format:
Works Cited


For this section of the paper, you need to consider how the passage relates to the broad context of biblical and theological teaching. You need to discuss how your passage relates to what Christian theology says about faith in God and human conduct. Here are a couple of examples:

1. Your exegesis considers 1 Samuel 15:1-3, which reads,
   
   Samuel said to Saul, “The L ORD sent me to anoint you king over his people Israel; now therefore listen to the words of the L ORD. Thus says the L ORD of hosts, “I will punish the Amalekites for what they did in opposing the Israelites when they came up out of Egypt. Now go and attack Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have; do not spare them, but kill both man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.

   In this passage God appears as vindictive and unforgiving. How would you explain this? Does God act this way toward outsiders? How does this compare to how we see God in other places, such as the prophets Hosea and Jonah? How does it compare with what Jesus said? The message of this passage stands contrary to many other passages that describe God’s love for us. Therefore, before you apply this passage, you must place it in the context of the rest of the Bible and of Christian theology as a whole.

2. Your exegesis considers Matthew 10:5-6, which reads,
   
   These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: “Go nowhere among the Gentiles, enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

   This is a command of Jesus; we are obligated to obey it. How do we do that? Is this passage saying that evangelism should not be done among people who don’t know have an understanding of God or Jesus? Sounds like it; but it must be taken into the full context of the Gospel of Matthew. The book ends with a new command from Jesus, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations.” So now we can understand that 10:5-6 was a command that applied only during Jesus’ lifetime, and not to us today. For your paper, write a discussion comparing the temporary command of Matthew 10:5-6 to the permanent command of 28:19-20.