



Course Syllabus

HEB 620 O1

Hebrew Exegesis 1

Fall 2026

Class Information

Day and Time: Tu Th 3:15 – 4:30

Room Number: Online

Contact Information

Instructor Name: David Brooks

Instructor Email: dbrooks@criswell.edu

Instructor Phone: 214-818-1324

Instructor Office Hours: Mon 11 - 12, Tu/Th 12:15 - 2:15

Course Description and Prerequisites

An advanced continuation of the study of Hebrew grammar, emphasizing exegetical method in Hebrew prose literature. Special attention will be given to syntax, textual criticism, literary analysis, and lexical studies.

(Prerequisite: HEB 302, 502, or equivalent)

Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course you should be able to:

- A. Interpret and evaluate the text critical apparatus in BHS;
- B. Analyze the syntax of words, phrases, and clauses in a passage;
- C. Apply the necessary tools to perform lexical studies; and
- D. Identify, discuss, and apply the basic principles of narrative and rhetorical criticism in the study of biblical Hebrew prose;
- E. Integrate and synthesize the preceding tools in the exegetical process in biblical Hebrew narrative, legal, and historical literature.

Required Textbooks

- A. Brotzman, Ellis R., and Eric Tully. *Old Testament Textual Criticism: A Practical Introduction*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2016. (978-0801097539)
- B. Carson, D. A. *Exegetical Fallacies*, 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1996. (978-0801020865)
- C. Chisholm, Robert B. *From Exegesis to Exposition: A Practical Guide to Using Biblical Hebrew*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1998. (978-0801021718)
- D. Elliger, K., and W. Rudolph, eds. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. Stuttgart, Germany: Deutsche Biblegesellschaft, 1997. (978-1598561630)

- E. Sandy, Brent, and Ronald L. Giese. *Cracking Old Testament Codes: A Guide to Interpreting the Literary Genres of the Old Testament*. Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 1995. (978-0805410938)

Recommended Reading

Waltke, Bruce K., and Michael Patrick O'Connor. *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. Warsaw, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990. (978-0931464317) Highly recommended to make the exegete sensitive to the nuances of Hebrew syntax; but, it is expensive.

Course Requirements and Assignments

A. **Reading Assignments.** *See the schedule in Course Calendar below.*

Here are the required readings—textbooks and book sections/articles—to read and report on the Reading Log:

1. Brotzman and Tully (text criticism)
2. Carson (lexical studies, cautions)
3. Chisholm (entire process)
4. Sandy and Geise (genres)

Also read the following chapters or articles, which will be available on Canvas or on reserve in the Criswell library, and report on the Reading Log.

1. Allen P. Ross, "The Study of Words." (Lexical studies) Available on Canvas Module: Assigned Reading
2. Steven D. Mathewson, "Guidelines for Understanding and Proclaiming Old Testament Narratives," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 154 (Oct-Dec 1997): 410-435. (Genre: Narrative study) Available on Canvas Module: Assigned Reading
3. Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament: A Contemporary Hermeneutical Method* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 227-77. (Christological study of the O.T.) Available on Canvas Module: Assigned Reading
4. Waltke and O'Connor excerpts: pp. 125-35, 136-54, 161-76, 479-95, 505-13, 519-38, 543-63, 632-46. (Syntactical studies) Available on reserve in Wallace Library

B. **Exegetical assignments** are in four major areas: text criticism, lexical study, syntactical analysis, and narrative criticism. Each assignment consists of specific questions for you to study. Your answers must be uploaded to Canvas, but you should bring a copy to class for discussion. The assignments come from Genesis 20 – 21.

C. **Exposition Paper:** This is an exposition of a narrative passage from Genesis. The passage may not be one for which you have done exegetical assignments in class, such as Genesis 20 – 21. All stages of the paper must be uploaded to Canvas.

1. **Preliminary paper #1—Surfacing Issues for Further Study.** Include the following and make each a separate section of the paper with a heading for each of the following six sections:
 - a. The rationale for the limits of the passage (i.e., the beginning and the end),
 - b. A concise description of the literary context (i.e., the book, the section of the book, the immediately preceding and following passages),
 - c. A working (hence, provisional, not final) translation of the passage,
 - d. Parsing of all verb forms,
 - e. A translation of the textual critical apparatus into English (Note: where there is any Greek, Aramaic, or Latin in the note, retrovert them into Hebrew and print the Hebrew along with its English translation—you may use transliteration) and identification of any textual critical problems requiring further study,

- f. An identification of all words, syntactical structures, and rhetorical features that require further study.
- 2. Preliminary paper #2—Preliminary Exegesis.** Include the following, with headings for each section:
 - a. A resolution, with your rationale, of all textual critical matters,
 - b. Actual brief word studies, giving the semantic range (i.e., varying definitions/categories of meaning), precise nuance in this passage, and key parallel passages (e.g., similar contexts) that illustrate the same usage as in your passage,
 - c. The classification and discussion of the exegetical significance of critical or debatable syntactical features (e.g., how the different syntactical decisions affect the meaning of the text),
 - d. An identification of rhetorical features that are exegetically significant,
 - e. A synthetic outline in full sentence form, reflecting the structure of the genre (see Mathewson's article) and the message of the passage,
 - f. A statement of the significance of the passage in its literary context.
- 3. Exposition/final paper.** This is a 10- to 15-page exposition of the passage. The title page and bibliography page (and optional table of contents and appendixes) do not contribute to the page count but must be present. The paper must be double-spaced and conform in format to Turabian specifications. Use the footnote/bibliography reference method, not the parenthetical reference/works cited method. Do not make a footnote that contains only a biblical reference; simply include the verse reference in the text.

The introduction must include statements on what the passage is, the message of the passage (thesis), the significance (why this is important) of the message, and the structure (how you will treat the subject) of your presentation. The body of the paper must be a clear and concise development of the exegetical argument, or message, of the passage in its literary context. If your technical data supporting your exegetical decisions on text critical issues, debated terms or syntactical structures, rhetorical features, etc., would detract from the flow of thought, place them in the footnotes. Your complete translation must be included, either near the beginning of the paper or correlated with the exposition throughout the paper. Your conclusion must include a brief summary of the main points of exposition, a statement of the thesis of the passage, and a correlation of the theological message of the passage with the teaching of related NT passage(s) or themes (yes, New Testament). It must also suggest a homiletic application to a contemporary audience.

Your bibliography page(s) must include at least eight (8) technical reference sources. Technical commentaries, lexicons, word study books, syntaxes, monologues, and scholarly journal articles are all relevant sources.

Course/Classroom Policies and Information

The following is from Criswell College's Credit Hours policy: "For academic purposes, Criswell College uses 'Carnegie' units to measure semester credit hours. A Carnegie unit of credit is awarded to students for the satisfactory completion of at least one 50-minute session of classroom or direct faculty instruction and at least 100 minutes of out-of-class work per week for not less than 15 weeks."

1. This policy does not mean that attending class or doing work for a certain amount of time guarantees a certain grade or credit for the course.
2. This policy does mean that you must complete this many hours of work to qualify for course credit.
3. Therefore, time divided up per week over the course of the semester for a 3-credit course amounts to:
 - a. 150 minutes of class instruction (e.g., two 75-minute course sessions per week)

- b. 300+ minutes of out-of-class work
- 4. This means that each 3-hour course for which you register requires a minimum of 7.5 hours of work per week.
 - a. So, if you are taking 12 hours this semester, you should think of your school commitment as a 30-hour per week job.
 - b. So, if you are taking 15 hours this semester, you should think of your school commitment as a 37.5-hour per week job.

Video Recording

To ensure FERPA compliance when a course is live-streamed or recorded, students can opt out of video recordings by requesting seating in a designated area off camera. Students who sit outside of this area are giving implicit permission to be recorded.

Class Attendance:

Students should only enroll in courses they are able to attend regularly.

- **On-campus** students are expected to attend class **in person** according to the course syllabus.
- Students enrolled in the **online section** must pay any applicable online course fees.
- Online students are expected to attend class **synchronously** at the scheduled time via the designated video conferencing platform, Zoom, found in the left-hand global menu in Canvas.
- Online students must have their **cameras turned on with sound muted** during class, and actively participate in discussions and activities. In order to be properly identified, students must upload a picture ID to their Canvas Account Profile *prior to the first online meeting*. For instructions on how to upload a profile picture, [click here](#).

Missed Classes:

- Each instructor may decide how attendance impacts your grade and learning objectives. Details are provided within the course syllabus.
- Students are responsible for catching up on any material missed due to absence or tardiness.
 - Instructors are **not required** to allow make-up work for missed classes.

Attendance & Financial Aid:

- Students receiving **grants, loans, or scholarships** must meet participation requirements set by the college.
- It is the student's responsibility to:
 - Review relevant sections of the Academic Catalog.
 - Contact the **Financial Aid Office** for details on how attendance affects aid.
 - Understand the consequences of non-participation.

Census Period Attendance Requirement:

- Though Criswell College does not officially take attendance, it must verify that students **begin their courses** to meet federal aid regulations.
- **During the census period** (first two weeks of a 16-week semester or first week of shorter terms), students must participate in **academically related activities**, or they may be dropped from the course.

Examples of Qualifying Activities:

- Attending class in person or via live video with the instructor present
- Submitting an assignment, quiz, or exam
- Taking part in assigned tutorials, study groups, or discussion boards
- Having documented communication with the instructor about course content

Important Note:

Simply logging into Canvas or a Zoom session without participating (e.g., camera off, no interaction) **does not count** as attendance.

Canvas:

- Criswell College uses Canvas as its web-based Learning Management System (LMS).
- **For online courses** at Criswell College, instructors use Canvas to:
 - Organize course content on a module basis using organizational tools within Canvas
 - Control the timing of course requirements through module control or assignment due dates to ensure that students are engaged for the full length of the semester or term
 - Accept assignments from students only inside the Canvas course (emailed assignments are not acceptable)
 - Provide written feedback on assignments only within Canvas, preferably through Speedgrader
 - Use the Announcement or e-mail feature in Canvas to communicate with the students rather than by broadcasting to a class email listserv outside of canvas
 - Use Zoom in Canvas for all "live" (synchronous) class sessions

Important Note:

Students needing assistance with Canvas should contact the Canvas Help Support line at 844-358-6140. Tech support is available at this number, twenty-four hours a day.

Campus Closure

To ensure the health and safety of students and employees, college administrators may decide it is necessary on rare occasions to close the campus. Once this decision is announced, instructors will contact students to provide further details regarding the campus closure's impact on those courses. Students are responsible to watch for communication from their instructors and respond appropriately. (Unless otherwise specified by the instructor in this syllabus, this communication will be sent to the student's Criswell College e-mail account.)

In order to make progress toward the courses' objectives, instructors have the freedom during most campus closures to require students to participate in activities as alternatives to meeting on campus. An instructor may, for example, hold class remotely (through Zoom) at the scheduled time, provide a recording of a class or presentation for students to watch independently, or assign other activities that students are to accomplish before returning to campus. Students are responsible for accomplishing these alternative activities as well as any course requirements listed in this syllabus during the period of the campus closure. If, during the period of the campus closure, personal circumstances prohibit a student from accomplishing these alternative activities or course requirements and assignment listed in the syllabus during the campus closure, the student is responsible for communicating with the instructor as soon as possible. Instructors will not penalize students who do not have the means to accomplish the alternative activities during the period of the campus's closure and will work with students whose circumstances during the campus closure prohibited their timely completion of course requirements and assignments in the syllabus.

Grading Scale

A	93-100	4.0 grade points per semester hour
A-	90-92	3.7 grade points per semester hour
B+	87-89	3.3 grade points per semester hour
B	83-86	3.0 grade points per semester hour
B-	80-82	2.7 grade points per semester hour
C+	77-79	2.3 grade points per semester hour

C	73-76	2.0 grade points per semester hour
C-	70-72	1.7 grade points per semester hour
D+	67-69	1.3 grade points per semester hour
D	63-66	1.0 grade point per semester hour
D-	60-62	0.7 grade points per semester hour
F	0-59	0.0 grade points per semester hour
Weighted grading:		
1. Reading		10%
2. Exegetical assignments		60%
3. Preliminary paper 1		5%
4. Preliminary paper 2		10%
5. Exegetical paper		15%
Total		100%

Incomplete Grades

Students requesting a grade of Incomplete (I) must understand that incomplete grades may be given only upon approval of the faculty member involved. An "I" may be assigned only when a student is currently passing a course and in situations involving extended illness, serious injury, death in the family, or employment or government reassignment, not student neglect.

Students are responsible for contacting their instructors prior to the end of the semester, plus filing the appropriate completed and approved academic request form with the Registrar's Office. The "I" must be removed (by completing the remaining course requirements) no later than 60 calendar days after the close of the term or semester in which the grade was awarded, or the "I" will become an "F."

Academic Honesty

Absolute truth is an essential belief and basis of behavior for those who believe in a God who cannot lie and forbids falsehood. Academic honesty is the application of the principle of truth in the classroom setting. Academic honesty includes the basic premise that all work submitted by students must be their own and any ideas derived or copied from elsewhere must be carefully documented.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- cheating of any kind,
- submitting, without proper approval, work originally prepared by the student for another course,
- plagiarism, which is the submitting of work prepared by someone else as if it were his own, and
- failing to credit sources properly in written work.

Course Policy on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

(Instructors may use, modify or replace these guidelines as appropriate for their course.)

Examples of AI-related functions you **may not use** without permission:

- Text Generation – You may not use AI to generate text for use in an assignment.
- Outline Generation – You may not use AI to generate an outline for an assignment.

AI-related tools you **may use** without permission:

- Spellcheck and grammar – built into Word, Pages, and Google Docs
- AI re-writing tools – tools that take what you’ve written and help make it clearer, such as what Grammarly offers. However, you must cite Grammarly or other sources in your assignment/paper and submit both original draft of paper and the final paper.
- AI research and summarize – tools that help you find sources to cite, such as the new AI tools built into Logos Bible Software.)

Institutional Assessment

Material submitted by students in this course may be used for assessment of the college’s academic programs. Since programmatic and institutional assessment is done without reference to specific students, the results of these assessments have no effect on a student’s course grade or academic standing at the college. Before submitting a student’s work for this type of assessment, the course instructor redacts the work to remove anything that identifies the student.

Institutional Email Policy

All official college email communications to students enrolled in this course will be sent exclusively to students’ institutional email accounts. Students are expected to check their student email accounts regularly and to respond in an appropriate and timely manner to all communications from faculty and administrative departments.

Students are permitted to setup automatic forwarding of emails from their student email accounts to one or more personal email accounts. The student is responsible to setup and maintain email forwarding without assistance from college staff. If a student chooses to use this forwarding option, he/she will continue to be responsible for responding appropriately to all communications from faculty and administrative departments of the college. Criswell College bears no responsibility for the use of emails that have been forwarded from student email accounts to other email accounts.

Disabilities

Criswell College recognizes and supports the standards set forth in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and similar state laws, which are designed to eliminate discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities. Criswell College is committed to making reasonable accommodations for qualifying students, faculty, and employees with disabilities as required by applicable laws. For more information, please contact the Student Services Office.

Intellectual Property Rights

Unless otherwise specifically instructed in writing by the instructor, students must neither materially nor digitally reproduce materials from any course offered by Criswell College for or with the significant possibility of distribution.

Research and Writing Standards

The default writing style for written assignments in Criswell College Courses is the latest edition of *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations* by Kate Turabian. However, instructors are free to require alternative writing styles in their courses. These styles include but are not limited to the American Psychological Association (APA), Chicago Manual of Style, Modern Language Association (MLA), and Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) writing guides.

Resources and Supports

Canvas and SONIS: Criswell College uses Canvas as its web-based learning tool and SONIS for student data. Students needing assistance with Canvas should contact the Canvas Help Support line at (844) 358-6140. Tech support is available at this number, twenty-four hours a day. Students needing help with SONIS should contact the Campus Software Manager at studenttechsupport@criswell.edu.

Student Services: The Student Services Office exists to foster and encourage success in all areas of life—physical, intellectual, spiritual, social, and emotional. Students are encouraged to reach out for assistance by contacting the office at 214.818.1332 or studentservices@criswell.edu. The Student Services Office also works with local counseling centers to ensure that every student has access to helpful mental health resources. More information is located on the college website at [Criswell College Mental Health Resources](#), and students may contact the Director of Student Services if they have any questions.

Wallace Library: Students can access a wide range of academic resources and receive research assistance by contacting or visiting the Wallace Library, located on the second floor of the Education Building.

Login credentials for accessing the library's databases are emailed to students near the beginning of each semester.

For more information or assistance, email the Wallace Library at library@criswell.edu or visit www.criswell.edu/academics/wallace-library/.

Tutoring Center: Students are encouraged to consult with tutors to enhance their skills and build confidence. All tutors are recommended by faculty to ensure they are qualified to support the student body. To meet with a tutor, students can schedule an appointment through Calendly at <https://calendly.com/criswell-tutoringcenter>. The Tutoring Center is located in room E203 of the Education Building.

For questions, email tutoringcenter@criswell.edu.

Course Outline/Calendar

	Date	Subject	Reading Assignment Due	Written Assignment Due
1	Aug 18	Intro, syllabus, textual criticism		
2	Aug 20	Text criticism	Brotzman, 9-35	
3	Aug 25	Text criticism	Brotzman, 36-64	Translation of Genesis 20
4	Aug 27	Text criticism	Chisholm, 7-28	

	Date	Subject	Reading Assignment Due	Written Assignment Due
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16	Oct 8	Syntactical studies: nouns	Chisholm, 57-112	
17	Oct 13	Syntactical studies: verbs	Waltke and O'Connor, 479-95, 496-513	Syntax of nouns
18	Oct 15	Syntactical studies: verbs	Waltke and O'Connor, 519-38, 543-63	
19	Oct 20	Syntactical studies: clauses	Waltke and O'Connor, 632-46	Preliminary paper #1
20	Oct 22	Syntactical studies: clauses	Chisholm, 113-17	Syntax of verbs
21	Oct 27	Syntactical studies: clauses		
22	Oct 29	Syntactical studies: clauses		
23	Nov 3	Genre criticism	Woodard and Travers, "Literary Forms and Interpretation," in Sandy and Giese, 29-43	Syntax of clauses
24	Nov 5	Genre criticism	Feinberg, "Literary Forms and Inspiration," in Sandy and Giese, 45-67	
25	Nov 10	Narrative criticism	Matthewson, "Guidelines for Understanding and Proclaiming Old Testament Narratives," 410-35	Preliminary paper #2
26	Nov 12	Narrative criticism	Kaiser, "Narrative," in Sandy and Giese, 69-87	
27	Nov 17	Legal literature	Averbeck, "Law," in Sandy and Giese, 113-36	Narrative: plot analysis
28	Nov 19	Historical literature	Merrill, "History," in Sandy and Giese, 89-110	
Nov 23 - 27		Reading Week and Thanksgiving—No Classes Meet		
29	Dec 1	Accents		
30	Dec 3	Theological and Christological analysis	Greidanus, <i>Preaching Christ from the Old Testament</i> , 227-77	
	Dec 8			Reading report, final paper

Selected Bibliography

- Alter, Robert. *The Art of Biblical Narrative*. 2d e. N. Y.: Basic, 2011.
- Alter, Robert, and Frank Kermode, eds. *The Literary Guide to the Bible*. Cambridge: Belnap Press of the Harvard University Press, 1990.
- Armstrong, Terry A., Douglas L. Busby, and Cyril F. Carr. *A Reader's Hebrew-English Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1989.
- Bar-Efrat. *Narrative Art in the Bible*. 3d ed. London: T & T Clark, 2004.
- Beall, Todd S., Colin S. Smith, and William S. Banks. *Old Testament Parsing Guide*. 2d ed. Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2000.
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- Bodine, Walter R., editor. *Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1992.
- Botterweck, G. Johannes, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, eds. *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*. 15 vols. Translated by John T. Willis, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, David E. Green, and Douglas W. Stott. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1974-2006. (TDOT)
- Even-Shoshan, Abraham, ed. *A New Concordance of the Old Testament*, 2d ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1990.
- Greidanus, Sidney. "Preaching Hebrew Narratives." In *The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text*, 188-227. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988.
- Gunn, David M., and Danna Nolan Fewell. *Narrative in the Hebrew Bible*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Hayes, John H., and Carl R. Holladay. *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook*, 3d ed. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2007.
- Jenni, Ernst, and Claus Westermann. *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Translated by Mark E. Biddle. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997. (TLOT)
- Joüon, Paul, and T. Muraoka. *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*. 2d ed. Rome: Pontifical Bible Institute, 2006.
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- Koehler, Ludwig, Walter Baumgartner, and Johann Jakob Stamm, eds. *Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. 2 vols. Translated by M. E. J. Richardson. Leiden: Brill, 2002. (HALOT)
- LaSor, William Sanford. *Handbook of Biblical Hebrew: An Inductive Approach Based on the Hebrew Text of Esther*. 2 vols. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979

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- McCarter, P. Kyle. *Textual Criticism: Recovering the Text of the Hebrew Bible*. 2d ed. Guides to Biblical Scholarship: Old Testament Guides, edited by Gene M. Tucker. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2001.
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- Price, James D. *The Syntax of Masoretic Accents in the Hebrew Bible*. Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity, 27. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1990.
- Ryken, Leland. *How to Read the Bible as Literature*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984.
- Scott, William R. *A Simplified Guide to BHS*. 4d ed. North Richland Hills, TX: D & F Scott/BIBAL, 2007.
- Sternberg, Meir. *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1985.
- Tov, Emanuel. *Textual Criticism of the Bible*. 2d ed. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2001.
- VanGemeren, Willem A., editor. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, 5 vols. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997. (NIDOTTE)
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- Wegner, Paul D. *A Student's Guide to Textual Criticism of the Bible: Its History, Methods and Results*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2006.
- Williams, Ronald J. *Williams Hebrew Syntax: An Outline*, 3d. ed. John C. Beckman. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007.
- Wonneberger, Reinhard. *Understanding BHS: A Manual for the Users of Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, 2d ed. Subsidia Biblica, no. 8. Translated by Dwight R. Daniels. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute Press, 1990.
- Würthwein, Ernst. *The Text of the Old Testament: An Introduction to the Biblia Hebraica*. 2d ed. Translated by Erroll F. Rhodes. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994.