

WRITING PAPERS:  
A GUIDE TO FORM

B. H. CARROLL THEOLOGICAL  
SEMINARY  
AT  
EAST TEXAS BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF B. H. CARROLL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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## WRITING PAPERS: A GUIDE TO FORM

### Introduction

Many students are petrified by the following phrase: “The form is to be the latest edition of Turabian.” The faculty of B. H. Carroll Theological Seminary is providing the following guide with the intent of bringing some measure of comfort to the suffering. The following content is a simple guide; it is not intended to substitute for the latest edition of Turabian. This guide is intended to inform the student as to the expectations, preferences, and requirements of B. H. Carroll Theological Seminary at ETBU faculty. All written assignments are to conform to the latest edition of Turabian (except in situations where guidelines state specifically a different requirement) and should have a title page, a table of contents page (except for book reviews), and be typed on white paper.

### An Example of a Title Page

A title page should be vertically and horizontally centered on the page. The first heading should be one (1) inch or more from the top of the page and the last heading on the page should be a distance from the bottom of the page that is equal to or greater than the distance between the top of the page and the first heading. An example is as follows (see Turabian for other examples):

**(Space down at least two inches from the top of the page)**  
B. H. CARROLL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

AT

EAST TEXAS BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF THE LAMENT PSALMS

A RESEARCH PAPER SUBMITTED TO

DR. JOHN L. HARRIS

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE

REQUIREMENTS OF THE COURSE

INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT

SCPT 5321

BY

JOHN JAMES DOE

MARCH 21, 2026

### An Example of a Table of Contents

The table of contents, sometimes called CONTENTS, lists all the parts of the paper except the title page, blank page (if appropriate), dedication, and epigraph. No page number appears on the page; a lower-case Roman numeral (e.g., ii) appears at the bottom of the page. Example is as follows (see Turabian for other examples):

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### Examples of Proper Font, Margins, and Page Numbers

Please use Times New Roman, twelve (12) point font. Margins are to be one (1) inch on all sides. Page numbers are to be bottom centered on pages that begin with a major heading and top centered on all other pages. All page numbers are to be one (1) inch from the top or bottom of the page. Indent paragraphs and footnotes either **six or eight spaces**, but not both. Block quotes are indented **four spaces**, and the second line in a bibliographic entry is indented five spaces.

### Examples of Headings: Introduction, Chapters, Conclusion, and Bibliography

Examples are as follows (see Turabian for other examples):

**(major heading is two inches from the top of the page)**  
INTRODUCTION

**(triple space between major heading and text)**

People who pray figure prominently in the Hebrew Bible. Some pray in a mood of submissive penitence. Others, however, stand up to God and use prayer to demand their due. It is within this type of prayer that one finds the phenomena of complaint. Prayers of complaint often take the form of questions directed to and/or against God and are indispensable and vital parts of the dynamics of the relationship to and with God in which an afflicted one meets the divine presence. In the Hebrew Bible, faith in God is not so defined as to rule out complaints or the questioning of God. Balentine states, "If one cannot question God, then to whom does one direct the questions? If God is a God whom we cannot question, then what kind of God is this to whom we are committing ourselves?"

A complaint is an expression of deep pain, grief, distress, dissatisfaction, or discontent. Its use is prevalent throughout the Hebrew Bible: the Israelites complained of their slavery; Israel protested in the wilderness about physical needs and misfortunes; Moses objected to the grumbling of the people; Job disapproved of his sufferings; Jeremiah complained when he was convinced that he was treated unjustly; Habakkuk complained and questioned God; and the psalmists often complained about their troubles. The complaint preserves Israel's most powerful and eloquent statements of the effort both to survive and to be transformed into a people of faith;

**(second page has page number centered at top, one inch from the top)**

thus, complaint was considered to be an integral and proper expression within the practiced religion of Israel and functioned as an appeal.

**(Major heading is two inches from the top of the page, centered)**

## CHAPTER 1

### VOICES OF COMPLAINT IN THE WILDERNESS NARRATIVES

**(second level heading is centered underlined, not all caps)**

#### Introduction

Within the biblical books of Exodus and Numbers are narratives which chronicle voices of community complaint that arose out of distressful conditions, were often mediated through Moses, and were directed toward Yahweh. These utterances occurred from oppression (Exod 2:23), terror (Exod 14:10-12; Num. 14:1-3), thirst (Exod 15:24; 17:2-3; Num 20:2-5), hunger (Exod 16:3; Num 11:4-6), and general hardships (Num 11:1; 21:5). These cries of distress were more than simply a bemoaning of unfortunate circumstances; they were prayers that called the God of Israel to action.

**(triple space between text and secondary heading)**

#### History, Epic, and Biblical Narrative

These voices of community complaint in the wilderness narratives often have been classified as "history" or "historical." The term "history" is derived from the Greek word *h̄storía*. It has the connotation of "inquiry" or "investigation" and was used by the Ionians to describe their search for knowledge. It is not certain when *h̄storía* came to be used for "history," but early in its usage, it denoted a description of what happened on the basis of research.

In the nineteenth century, much emphasis was placed upon the necessity of writing an objective account of the past. The historian's task was to probe beneath the presuppositions, biases, and intentions of the sources to discover "what really happened." It is, however, currently recognized that a totally objective historical reconstruction is an unattainable goal. Words like

**(page number following major heading is top of the page, centered)**

"history" and "historical" are ambiguous; they have several different, overlapping connotations.

In its most common usage, "history" refers to either the past events or to a written reconstruction of these incidents. In its most obvious sense, "historical" means factual: the way it actually happened.

## CONCLUSION

The nation of Israel was comprised of people living amid enormous pressures and tensions. The Hebrew Bible reflects these stresses and is a multi-dimensional work, a picture of the various literary, social, political, and religious traditions coexisting within the life and cult of the nation of Israel. It exhibits a long history of development in which the received tradition was selected, transmitted, and shaped by countless numbers. The analysis of history, epic, and biblical narrative demonstrated this complexity and helps explain how the diversity of thought, formulation, and action arose out of the life of Israel. It is clear that all scriptural accounts are socially, politically, and religiously influenced literary compositions.

Praying by complaint was a common action in the ancient Near East. This practice had great influence upon the nation of Israel, for complaints are present early in Israel's religious literature. This form of communicating with God was used throughout Israel's history, from the period of the patriarchs through the era of the exile.

As Israel suffered Egyptian bondage, they relied upon the long tradition of praying by complaint and offered a protest to God (Exod 2:23-25). In response to this objection, God was moved to action. Complaint thus initiated the act of deliverance that became the basis of Israel's relationship with God.

Throughout the wilderness wanderings, there arose distressful situations. When the nation of Israel was thirsty, hungry, or fearful, they followed the common and accepted pattern of prayer and cried out in complaint to God, trusting in God's power to provide needed assistance. In their Mosaic origins, these complaints had their roots in the miserable conditions

of wilderness life, the constant privations of food and water, and were positive examples of complaint-divine response. God gave sustenance to all those who were hungry and water to all who were thirsty.

As the nation of Israel developed, Deuteronomic thought began to dominate its religious structure. The accepted view was that obedience brought blessing but disobedience resulted in punishment. Pain and suffering were seen as results of God's displeasure and wrath. The standard and prescribed response to suffering was that penitence, not protest, secured the "lifting of the head." The cult maintained that God only heard the confession of sin, not accusations and charges; anything less was a mockery and served to nullify any consideration before God and condemned the one from whose mouth it escaped. Thus, the voicing of complaints was not accepted as a legitimate expression of prayer to God.

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### An Example of a Block Quote

Block quotes are to be indented **four spaces** from the left-hand margin. Do not block quote unless the quote runs both two or more sentences and four or more lines, unless you are using the block quote for emphasis. Block quotes DO NOT take quotation marks! An example is as follows (see Turabian for other examples):

The biblical writer records the memory of Israel's complaint in Exod. 14:11-12:

Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us, bringing us out of Egypt? Is this not the very thing we told you in Egypt, "Let us alone and let us serve the Egyptians"? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness.

### Examples of Footnotes: First and Second References (see Turabian for other examples)

The footnote is always under the text, not at the bottom of the page. It is separated from the text by a separator line, which is twenty spaces in length; it never runs the length of the page.

**(first reference is full citation; indent as a paragraph on all footnotes)**

<sup>1</sup>Sheldon H. Blank, "Men Against God: The Promethean Element in Biblical Prayer," Journal of Biblical Literature [JBL] 72 (March 1953): 1.

<sup>2</sup>See Ee Kon Kim, "Outcry: Its Context in Biblical Theology," Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology [Int] 42 (July 1988): 231.

<sup>3</sup>Geoffrey W. Bromiley, ed., The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [ISBE], vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1979), s.v. "Complain; Complaint," by Edgar W. Conrad.

<sup>4</sup>Walter Brueggemann, "From Hurt to Joy, From Death to Life," Int 28 (January 1974): 3; Craig C. Broyles, The Conflict of Faith and Experience in the Psalms: A Form-Critical and Theological Study, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 52 (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1989), 53; and Westermann, "The Role of Lament," 26.

**(second references, not immediately following the first is abbreviated with last name only)**

<sup>7</sup>Broyles, 14.

**(second references immediately following is as follows:)**

<sup>8</sup>Ibid. (if page number is the same)

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 16. (if page number is different)