



GENESIS – RUTH OT 501 §2

SYLLABUS

FALL 2011

DR. PAUL W. FERRIS, JR.

THURS 8:00-12:00 AM

Office A201; 651-638-6175

Office Hours: by appointment

Home office 651-636-6369

email: pferris at bethel.edu

Website: <http://people.bethel.edu/~pferris>

"Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?"

"That's depends a good deal on where you want to get to."... (*Alice in Wonderland*)

The passion of Bethel Seminary is to advance the Gospel of Jesus Christ among all people in culturally sensitive ways. As a Spirit-empowered, biblically grounded community of learning, Bethel strives to develop and equip whole and holy persons to serve and lead so that churches and ministry agencies can become all they are called to be and do in the world for the glory of God.

The objectives and assignments of OT501 are designed in light of this statement of mission.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

An examination of the books of Genesis through Ruth, including the contents, major themes, and theological messages of each. Special emphasis is placed on the nature and significance of God's promises and covenants with His people. Special attention also is given to legitimate ways of reading the Bible. This involves understanding the particular qualities of narrative literature and Old Testament law, and developing a valid hermeneutic for interpreting them. Attention is given to the application of these biblical texts to current issues in society and your personal life. **Prerequisite or concurrent enrollment: BT501/BI501.**

COURSE CONTENT

When I started seminary I was most familiar with the New Testament by far. So, no surprise...that's where I was most comfortable both in my own personal devotions and in preaching and teaching. It dawned on me that what I was almost purposely ignorant of was the only Bible Jesus and Paul ever read (Matt. 4; 2 Tim 3:15-16; Rom. 15:4, etc). It was the Bible Phillip and Peter used in evangelism and Paul used in church planting. It was a text that has profoundly influenced Western civilization.

So, I am eager to help you both broaden and deepen your understanding of the Torah and the first few "historical books" of the Hebrew Bible so that you can better understand the details "on the ground" you will be studying later, both in elective courses and in your ongoing ministry as you prepare to communicate "the whole counsel of God."

COURSE BENEFITS

Upon completion of this course you should be able to

- ✓ state the basic facts with respect to each book's setting, theme, and content and recount the "story line" of this portion of the Hebrew Bible. As you prepare for vocational ministry, this is essential to teaching and preaching the "whole counsel of God." As St. Jerome (340?-420AD) claimed in the prologue to his commentary on Isaiah, "ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ." (Knowledge)
- ✓ trace and synthesize core theological themes. A good facility in biblical theology is essential to "doing" theology in contemporary settings. (Analysis & synthesis)
- ✓ locate the historical/geographical/cultural setting of main events recorded in this portion of the Hebrew Bible. Whether in the pulpit, study group, or counsellor's office, clear exposition requires an understanding of the context of revelation. (Knowledge & synthesis)
- ✓ describe the key characteristics of the main literary genres and show how such understanding affects your understanding of the text (Knowledge & synthesis)
- ✓ demonstrate greater skill in interpreting the Scripture. This will benefit both you and all those to whom you minister. (Application & articulation)
- ✓ describe and assess modern critical theories regarding the Torah. These are issues that educated layfolk grapple with and, therefore, pastors and teachers must be familiar with. (Knowledge & analysis)
- ✓ more effectively and faithfully apply the 77% of Scripture we call the Old Testament in life and ministry. This is critical because the whole Bible really is the Christ-follower's Bible. (Valuing & application)
- ✓ articulate achievement of personal objectives.

COURSE LITERATURE

Primary literature: (required)

Bible. (Whichever translation you are comfortable with. International students may use a translation in their mother-tongue) An on-line concordance featuring several Bible translations can be found at [BibleGateway](#).

Secondary literature: (required)

Alexander, T.D. and D.W. Baker, eds. *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2003.

Alter, Robert. *The Art of Biblical Narrative*. New York: Basic Books, 1981.

Dillard, Raymond and Tremper Longman. *Introduction to the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994. (Abbr. IOT in Agenda)

Vogt, Peter T. *Interpreting the Pentateuch: An Exegetical Handbook*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2009.

Supplemental resources: (*assigned reading but not required to purchase)

Abrahams, Samuel. "A Black Theological Perspective on the Old Testament," *OT Essays: Journal of the OT Society of S. Africa* 7/4 (1994) 244-53.

Ackroyd, Peter. "the Place of the Old Testament in the Church's Teaching & Worship." *ET* 74 (1963): 164-7.

Anderson, Bernhard. "Introduction: The Old Testament as a Christian Problem." In *The O.T. & Christian Faith*. N.Y.: Harper & Row, 1963.

Alexander, David, Pat Alexander. *Zondervan Handbook to the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999. (This is especially helpful if one has never read a particular book of the Bible)

Averbeck, Richard E. "The Sumerian Historiographic Tradition and Its Implications for Genesis 1-11" In *Faith*,

- Tradition, & History*, ed. A.R. Millard, J.K. Hoffmeier, and D.W. Baker, 79-102. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1994.
- Barr, Stephen. *Modern Physics and Ancient Faith*. Notre Dame: Univ. of Notre Dame, 2003.
- Beecher, Willis. *The Prophets and the Promise*. Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2002
- Clines, David J.A. *The Theme of the Pentateuch*. JSOTS 10. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1978.
- Dalley, Stephanie. *Myths from Mesopotamia : creation, the flood, Gilgamesh, and others*. N.Y.: Oxford, 2000.
- Dembski, William A. *Intelligent Design: The Bridge Between Science and Theology*. Downers Grove: IVP, 1999.
- Dorsey, David. "The Use of the O.T. Law in the Christian Life." *Ev J* 17 (1999) 1-18.
- Eckart, Otto. *A Critical Study of the Pentateuch: an Encounter Between Europe and Africa*. Münster: LIT Verlag, 2005.
- Getui, Mary N , ed. *Interpreting the Old Testament in Africa : papers from the International Symposium on Africa and the Old Testament in Nairobi, October 1999*. N.Y.: Oxford 2001
- Hoffmeier, James K. *Israel in Egypt: The Evidence for the Authenticity of the Exodus Tradition*. NY: Oxford, 1997.
- Holter, Knut. *Tropical Africa & the O.T.: A selected & Annotated Bibliography*. Oslo: University of Oslo, 1996
- Kabasele Lumbala, Francois. "Exodus 20:1-17: An African Perspective." pp. 43-48 in *Return to Babel* ed. by Priscilla Pope-Levinson, et al. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1999.
- Kaiser, Walter. *The Christian & the "Old" Testament*. Pasadena: Carey, 1998.
- _____. *Mission in the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000.
- _____. *Preaching and Teaching from the Old Testament: A Guide for the Church*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003.
- _____. *The Old Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?* Downers Grove: IVP, 2001
- _____. *The Promise-Plan of God*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008.
- _____. *Toward Old Testament Ethics*. Grand Rapids: Academic, 1983.
- _____. *Toward Rediscovering the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Academic, 1987.
- *Kitchen, Kenneth. "The Patriarchal Age : Myth or History?" *BAR* 21 (1995) 48-57, 88, 90-92, 94-95.
- Kline, Meredith. *The Treaty of the Great King :the Covenant Structure of Deuteronomy*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963.
- Livingston, G. H. *The Pentateuch in its Cultural Environment*, 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987.
- Longman, Tremper. *How to Read Genesis*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2005
- Mafico, Temba. "The O.T. & Effective Evangelism in Africa." *Int. Rev. of Missions* 75 (1986):400-409.
- _____. "Contribution of the O.T. to Missionary Effectiveness in Africa." *Missiology* 7 (1979):110-111.
- Oduyoye, Modupe. *The Sons of God and the Daughters of Men: An Afro-Asiatic Interpretation of Genesis 1-11*. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1984.
- Ogunrinu, T.B. "The Genesis Account of Creation and Its Relationship to Cosmogony," *UMTC - Journal of Theological Studies* (United Missionary Theological College, Nigeria) 1 (1995) 47-55.
- Pope-Levinson, Priscilla and John Levinson, eds. *Return to Babel : global perspectives on the Bible* . Louisville: John Knox, 1999.
- *Pritchard, J.B. *The Ancient Near East: An Anthology of Texts & Pictures*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1958. (Abbreviated ANE1 in assignments)
- *Pritchard, J.B. *The Ancient Near East: An Anthology of Texts & Pictures*, Vol. 2. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976. (Abbreviated ANE2 in assignments)
- Rasmussen, Carl. *NIV Atlas of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989. (Abbreviated NAB in assignments)
- *Robinson, Haddon. "The Heresy of Application." *Leadership Journal* 18 (1997) 20-27.
- Sailhamer, John H. *The Pentateuch as Narrative*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992.
- Schreiner, Thomas. "[Preaching and Biblical Theology](#)," *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 10,2 (sum. 2006): 20-29.
- Soares-Prabhu, George. "Exodus 20:1-17: An African Perspective." pp. 49-54 in *Return to Babel* ed. by Priscilla Pope-Levinson, et al. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1999.
- Thompson, J.A. *Handbook of Life in Biblical Times*. Leicester: InterVarsity, 1986.
- Vogt, Peter. *Deuteronomistic Theology and the Significance of the Torah*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2006.
- Walton, John H. *Ancient Israelite Literature in its Cultural Context*. (2nd ed.) Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990.
- _____. *The Lost World of Genesis One*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2009.
- _____. *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Background Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009.
- West, Gerald and Musa Dube, eds. *The Bible in Africa*. Boston: Brill, 2001.
- Wright, Christopher. *The Mission of God*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2006.
- _____. *Old Testament Ethics for the People of God*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004.

APPROACHES TO LEARNING

In any field of study, new concepts and new vocabulary may make the work seem a bit heavier at the beginning, but it will lighten up as we go (assignments will become somewhat lighter and, as you get used to them, they will become easier).

Since we take matters of personal growth and preparation for ministry seriously, a high value is placed on regular and intentional participation in preparation and in class sessions.

And remember Joshua 1:5-9! That would be a good passage to commit to memory if you haven't already.

Assignment Checklist:

- ✓ READINGS (10%) : Due as assigned on Agenda You get to dig into primary sources. Be looking for how an ancient Israeli believer saw the world. This will be supplemented with readings in selected secondary literature. To facilitate “getting the big picture” you will read each Bible book at one sitting before the class session on that given book. You are responsible to keep a record of completing your reading assignments on-time. You will be asked to report your reading record on the exam. See Agenda for due dates.

- ▶ The entire text of each Bible book (any version) is to read at one sitting prior to classtime.
- ▶ The associated chapters in Dillard & Longman are to be studied along with your Bible reading.
- ▶ Pritchard's *ANET* selections
- ▶ Kitchen's “The Patriarchal Age”
- ▶ Robinson's “Heresy of Application”
- ▶ Vogt's *Interpreting the Pentateuch*

- ✓ INVESTIGATION (20%): You get to engage in a more detailed research in engaging in investigation of Deuteronomy 6 and writing a 2000-2500 word **exegetical paper** (excl. bibliography & appendix) of the results of your investigation.

The paper will be accompanied by an appendix containing a syntactical layout (map) with exegetical outline and a one page homiletical outline. (For an approach refer to W.C. Kaiser, *Toward an Exegetical Theology* (esp. syntactical layout. See pp. 99-103, 165-181) and H.W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*.) See [guidelines on web site](#).

- ✓ ANALYSIS & REFLECTION (20%): You get to enhance your spiritual development under the discipline of the Word of God through Personal Application Portfolio. In addition to being mini-exegetical exercises, these are intended to *facilitate personal reflection on the texts* we are working with. Be faithful in doing your Personal Applications. Be sure they are *personal, specific and practical*. [guidelines on website](#).

Assigned passages are: Genesis 22:1-19; Exodus 18:13-23; Leviticus 16:1-22; Numbers 14:1-19; Deuteronomy 11:1-18; Joshua 24:1-15; Judges 2:6-23; Ruth 4:13-22.

You are encouraged to do the P.A.'s as you do the assigned reading rather than leaving it to the end. The P.A.'s will be submitted as a portfolio on date indicated on the Course Agenda. (10pts)

Through the worksheets you get to reflect on ways God is engaging your life through the study of Scripture. In addition to worksheets for each Bible book, the class will use the vehicle of Gidi Dar's cinema *Ushpizim*. After viewing the cinema and reflecting on your study of Torah you get to write up your reflections of ways that your study of Scripture is having an impact on your life. (10pts)

- ✓ INTERACTION (5%): One of the opportunities you have to develop life-long learning skills is your involvement interacting with others' perspectives on issues. You get to interact with others on issues related to the material you are studying by means of readings and [Interactive Reviews](#). As you interact with these persons, analyze the perspective they bring to the issue, their philosophical and theological presuppositions, evaluate their handling of the evidence, and respond to the conclusions they offer. The fruit of this interaction will evident in your class discussions and in the assigned interactive reviews.

Interactive reviews:

K. Kitchen, "Patriarchal Age" (limit 500 words)

H. Robinson, "Heresy" (limit 500 words)

- ✓ PARTICIPATION (20%): Consistent, constructive participation in our common enterprise is expected. This involves prepared interaction in class sessions and via Moodle.
- ✓ EXAM (25%): Taken via Moodle, the exam is designed to assess progress toward realizing the intended Course Benefits as well as your personal objectives. The best preparation for the exam is to keep these objectives in mind as you study throughout the term. See the [Review Guide](#) on the course website.

N.b.: [Guides and resources](#) for these assignments are available on the OT501 website.

Submitting Assignments:

All written assignments are to be submitted in either MSWord or WordPerfect format. The filename given each assignment **must** follow a prescribed protocol. The filename will include *course number, section, term, your last name, and assignment name*. For example **ot501-2-f11-jones-PAPortfolio**. Documents submitted without this filenaming protocol may not be registered and graded. All written assignments are to be submitted via Moodle. Weekly preparation is due by classtime. Projects (e.g. portfolio, paper, case study) are due by midnight Saturday. The exegetical paper will be submitted via *Safe Assignment* on Bb.

N.b., The Seminary Catalog stipulates: "students are expected to submit all work by the dates set by the course instructors and complete all course requirements on or before the last day of the quarter." A deduction of 10% will be taken for each day past a published due date, up to five days. Work more than five days late will not be accepted.

Miscellany:

- Policies: Refer to the seminary catalogue and student handbook for policies that apply to all courses.
- Attendance: Unexcused absence and multiple tardiness will result in reduction of grade.
- Auditing: Since auditors, by definition, are not expected to complete assignments and assessments, it is expected that they will not normally participate in class discussions.
- Digital device use: Digital devices are useful for note-taking and impromptu data searches related to class discussion. Out of respect for your classmates and the financial- and time-investment both you and they are making, you are requested not to use these devices for web-surfing, game-playing, e-mailing, texting, etc. during classtime.
- Etiquette: Phones and beepers to be turned off during class. Since audio recording can inhibit class participation for some, students are asked not to record. Men: hats off, please.
- Accessibility: Accommodations for student with documented disabilities are arranged through the Office of Disability Services. Contact Natalie Beazer at 651-635-8759 (on campus ext. 8759).
- The professor may modify or otherwise supplement this syllabus and/or class instructions via Moodle or e-mail. Other course material is available on Moodle. It is the student's responsibility to avail herself or himself to such resources and check Moodle and/or their email for such notices.

COURSE AGENDA _____ OT501 §2 - Th 8AM-Noon

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT DUE
29 Sep	Course Introduction OT Introduction issues Hebrew Bible backgrounds;	Worksheet 1 (Submit via email prior to class); Read Vogt, chs 1-3; Read IOT 13-37
6 Oct	Hebrew Narrative; Genesis: Prolegomena - Chs .1-11 Genesis: Promise and Fulfilment - Chs 12-50	Read Genesis (in one sitting– about 3 hrs); Read IOT 38-62; Read: Akkadian Creation Epic, Enuma Elish, tablet 4-6a , ANE1 31-39 & sketch impressions; Read: Kitchen, “Patriarchal Age” - post interactive review; Read Vogt ch 4 & pp. 194-209; Worksheet 2
13 Oct	Exodus: Plan of Redemption & Instruction in Righteousness	Read: Exodus (in one sitting– about 2:25); Read IOT 63-80; Worksheet 3; Skim: Code of Hammurabi, ANE1 138-167 ;
20 Oct	Leviticus: Attributing Worth to a Holy God & Living in His Presence Numbers: The Wages of Sin, The Hope of a New Beginning	Read Leviticus (in one sitting – about 1:45); Read IOT 73-82; Read Vogt, pp. 179-193 Worksheet 4 Read: Numbers (in one sitting – about 2:30); IOT 83-90; Worksheet 5
27 Oct	Reading & Research on Exegetical Project	Read Robinson, “Heresy” - post interactive review
30 Oct	“At Home”	...drop in at Ferris’ 7:00 PM... R.S.V.P.
3 Nov	Reading & Research on Exegetical Project	
10 Nov	Deuteronomy: Living Under the Treaty of the Great King	Exegetical Project (due midnight, Nov 7) Read: Deuteronomy (in one sitting – about 2:10); Read IOT 91-106; Read: Hittite Treaty, ANET², 203-205 (ANET³ 548-550) & sketch impressions; Worksheet 6
17 Nov	Life shaped by Torah: <i>Ushpizim</i>	Worksheet 7 PAPortfolio (due midnight Nov. 19)
24 Nov	Thanksgiving	
1 Dec	Joshua: Living with the God Who is There	Read: Joshua (in one sitting – about 1:25); IOT 107-117; Worksheet 8
8 Dec	Judges: Law & Grace Ruth: Providence of God Preaching & Teaching from Torah & Former Prophets	Read: Judges (in one sitting – about 1:25); IOT 119-127; Read: Ruth (in one sitting – about :15) IOT 129-134; Worksheet 9 Read Vogt, chs 5 Online Exam (12/5-9)