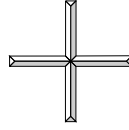


# BETHEL SEMINARY



## GENESIS – RUTH OT 501 §V3

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SYLLABUS

SPRING 2009

DR. PAUL W. FERRIS, JR.  
Office A201; 651-638-6175  
Office Hours: Thurs. 1-3PM  
Home office 651-636-6369  
email: pferris@bethel.edu

"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 OT101 are designed in light of that statement of mission.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

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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

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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

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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 personal objectives achieved.

## COURSE LITERATURE

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### 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)

Alter, Robert. *The Art of Biblical Narrative*. N.Y.:Basic Books, 1981. (Abbr. ABN in Agenda)

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

### 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.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Old Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?* Downers Grove: IVP, 2001
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Toward Old Testament Ethics*. Grand Rapids: Academie, 1983.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Toward Rediscovering the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Academie, 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. *Deuteronomic 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.
- 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

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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. 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.
- ▶ The associated chapters in Dillard & Longman are to be studied along with your Bible reading.
- ▶ Alter’s *Art of Biblical Narrative*
- ▶ Pritchard’s *ANET* selections
- ▶ Kitchen’s “The Patriarchal Age”
- ▶ Beecher’s *Prophets and the Promise* chs 8-9
- ▶ Robinson’s “Heresy of Application”
- ▶ Schreiner’s “Preaching and Biblical Theology”

- ✓ INVESTIGATION (25%): 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 (15%): 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. The P.A.’s will be submitted as a portfolio on date indicated on the Course Agenda.

- ✓ INTERACTION (15%): 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:

- R. Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, chs 3-5 (limit 750 words)
- W.J. Beecher, *The Prophets & the Promise*, chs 8-9 (limit 750 words)
- K. Kitchen, “Patriarchal Age” (limit 500 words)
- H. Robinson, “Heresy” (limit 500 words)
- T. Schreiner, “Preaching” (limit 500 words)

You also get to engage with peers in a case study in formation & leadership. (Worksheet 9) *For students beginning seminary in the fall of 08-09 school year: In addition to submitting this assignment to the course instructor, you are also required to upload your assignment to your Integrative Portfolio once the Integrative Portfolio technology is introduced.*

- ✓ PARTICIPATION (10%): Consistent, constructive participation in our common enterprise is expected. This involves interaction both in the classroom and via Blackboard.
- ✓ EXAM (25%): Taken via Blackboard, 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 OT101 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-v3-sp09-jones-PAPortfolio**. Documents submitted without this filename protocol may not be registered and graded. All written assignments are to be submitted via Blackboard. Weekly preparation is due by classtime. Projects (e.g. portfolio, paper, case study) are due by midnight Saturday.

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.
- Etiquette: Phones and beepers to be turned off during class. Tape recording is not permitted inasmuch as it can inhibit class participation. Men: hats off, please.
- Accessibility: Accommodations for student with documented disabilities are arranged through the Office of Disability Services. Contact Kathy McGillivray at 651-635-8759 (on campus ext. 8759).
- The professor may modify or otherwise supplement this syllabus and/or class instructions via Blackboard or e-mail. Other course material is available on Blackboard. It is the student's responsibility to avail herself or himself to such resources and check Blackboard and/or their email for such notices.

## COURSE ASSESSMENT ---

The course grade will be earned on the basis of the following factors:

Class preparation & participation	
Reading assignment completed on time. . . . .	10%
Constructive participation . . . . .	10%
Written assignments	
Personal Application Portfolio . . . . .	15%
Interactive Reviews . . . . .	15%
Exegetical Paper . . . . .	25%
Exam. . . . .	25%

COURSE AGENDA \_\_\_\_\_ OT501 §V3 - M 5:30-7:30 PM

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT DUE
3/23	Course Introduction OT Introduction issues Hebrew Bible backgrounds;	Worksheet 1 (Submit via Blackboard prior to class)
3/30	Hebrew Narrative; Genesis: Prolegomena - Chs .1-11	Read: Alter, chs 3-5; Post Interactive Review Read: Genesis (in one sitting-- about 3 hrs); Read IOT 17-56; Post Worksheet 2 Read: <a href="#">Akkadian Creation Epic, Enuma Elish, tablet 4-6a (blue text)</a> , ANE1 31-39 & sketch impressions
4/6	Genesis: Promise and Fulfilment - Chs 12-50	Read: Kitchen, "Patriarchal Age" - post interactive review; Read: W.J. Beecher, <i>The Prophets &amp; the Promise</i> , chs 8-9 - post Interactive Review;
4/13	Exodus: Plan of Redemption & Righteous Expectations	Read: Exodus (in one sitting--about 2:25); Read: IOT 57-71; Post Worksheet 3 Skim Code of <a href="#">Hammurabi, ANE1 138-167</a> ; <a href="#">Mesopotamian Sale-Adoption Contract (#2) ANET 219-20</a> ; Amarna Letters EA <a href="#">286, 287</a> , ANE1 269-274; Scan NAB 86-92 Read Robinson, "Heresy" - post review; Read Schreiner, "Biblical Theology" - post review;
4/20	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; Post Worksheet 4 Read Numbers (in one sitting--about 2:30); Read: IOT 83-90; Post Worksheet 5
4/26	"At Home"	...drop in at Ferris' 7:00 PM... R.S.V.P.
4/27	Deuteronomy: Living Under the Treaty of the Great King	Read: Deuteronomy (in one sitting--about 2:10); Read: IOT 91-106; Post Worksheet 6 Read: <a href="#">Hittite Treaty, ANET<sup>3</sup>, 203-205 (ANET<sup>3</sup> 548-550)</a> & sketch impressions
5/4	Joshua: Living with the God Who is There	Read Joshua (at one sitting--about 1:25); Read: IOT 107-117; Post Worksheet 7 Case study (Worksheet 9 + Case Study Narrative) - engage with your assigned group to develop the case study wiki
5/11	Judges: Law & Grace Ruth: Providence of God	Read: Judges (in one sitting--about 1:25); Read: IOT 119-127; Read: Ruth (in one sitting--about :11); Read IOT 129-134; Post Worksheet 8; Complete Case Study wiki by Sat. PA Portfolio (due Sat.)
5/18	Preaching & teaching from Torah & Former Prophets	Exegetical paper (due Sat.)
5/25	No Class	Online Exam (5/21-27)