

Reformed Theological Seminary – Washington, D. C.

Course Syllabus

GENESIS TO DEUTERONOMY 6OT5200

Summer Session

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- **COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course takes an expository approach to the major developments in the history of redemption: creation, covenant, promise, and fulfillment of the promises. This portion of the biblical revelation covers the period from Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden to Israel in the Promised Land.
- **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**
 - Comprehension:
 1. To increase your knowledge of the English Bible in Genesis to Joshua.
 2. To increase your knowledge of introductory issues in each book from Genesis to Joshua.
 3. To increase your knowledge of the development of redemptive themes as they progress in Genesis to Joshua.
 - Competence
 1. To sharpen your ability to interpret Genesis to Joshua in their historical, theological, and literary contexts.
 2. To sharpen your ability to apply the teaching of Genesis to Joshua in your own life and in the life of the local church.
 3. To prepare those who are called to the ministry for licensure and ordination exams at their local presbyteries.
 - Character
 1. To be a person of growing faith.
 2. To be a person of increasing hope.
 3. To be a person of deepening love.

- **REQUIRED READINGS.** There are approximately [A LOT] of pages of required reading (with the exception of the Biblical books). Students are encouraged to do the readings before the start of class *in the order provided below*. For the Biblical books of Genesis to Deuteronomy, students are free to use any English translation of their choice.
 - ❖ Biblical books of Genesis to Joshua in an English translation of student's choice.
 - ❑ Miles V. Van Pelt, editor. *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the Old Testament: Gospel Promised*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2016. Pgs. 23-176.
 - ❑ T. D. Alexander. *From Paradise to Promised Land: An Introduction to the Pentateuch*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academy, 2002.
 - ❑ Victor P. Hamilton. *Handbook on the Pentateuch*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005.
 - ❑ Geerhardus Vos. *Biblical Theology: Old and New Testaments*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948. Pgs. 3-182.
 - ❑ Meredith G. Kline. *Kingdom Prologue*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2006.
- Collection of Essays and articles
 - ❑ Meredith G. Kline, "Old Testament Origins of the Gospel Genre," *WTJ* 38 (1975/76), 1-27
 - ❑ _____, "The Intrusion and the Decalogue," *WTJ* 16 (1953/54), 1-22
 - ❑ Geerhardus Vos, "The Idea of Biblical Theology as a Science and as a Theological Discipline" in *Redemptive History and Biblical Interpretation: The Shorter Writings of Geerhardus Vos* (ed. Richard B. Gaffin; Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R), 91-125
 - ❑ William J. Murnane, "The History of Ancient Egypt: An Overview" in *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East, Vol 2* (ed. Jack M. Sasson; Peabody, MA: Hendrikson), 691-717
 - ❑ Peter Y. Lee, "A Reconsideration of Genesis 12:1-3, Part 1" (Unpublished)
 - ❑ _____, "A Reconsideration of Genesis 12:1-3, Part 2" (Unpublished)

- **REQUIREMENTS:**

- **Attendance:** You are required to attend each class. If you know you cannot make it to a class session, notify me in advance.
- **Genesis 1 Presentation/Paper:** See below for details.
- **Research Paper:** See below for details.
- **Reading Report:** See below for details.
- **Final Exam:** There will be one FINAL EXAM. The exam will cover materials from the class lectures and required readings.¹
- **Due Dates of Assignments:**²
 - ✓ Genesis 1 Paper Due June 14 (Wed) in class
 - ✓ Final Exam Due June 30 (Fri) via email
 - ✓ Term Paper Due July 28 (Fri) via email
 - ✓ Reading Report Due Aug 4 (Fri) via email
- **Total Grade:**
 - ✓ Gen 1 Paper: 15% of total grade
 - ✓ Reading Report: 15% of total grade
 - ✓ Term Paper: 30% of total grade
 - ✓ Final Exam: 40% of total grade

The following scale will be used to determine your final grade: A (97-100), A- (94-96), B+ (91-93), B (88-90), B- (86-87), C+ (83-85), C (80-82), C- (78-79), D+ (75-77), D (72-74), D- (70-71), F (below 70).

- **OFFICE HOURS:**

- I meet with students by appointment. I'm available most evenings during the week of the class except for Tuesday and Thursday. Contact me if you would need to meet. I'd love to get together with you to discuss Scripture, theology, ministry, and life.

¹ Due to the intensive format of the course, the exam will be take-home. Details on the exam will be provided at the end of the week.

² I realize that these due dates do not provide a lot of time in between assignments. My goal is to prevent too much overlap with work that students will have to do with the start of the Fall semester. Also, you want to take the exam while course materials are fresh in your mind. The sooner you complete these assignments, the better it is for you. Regarding the reading report, I definitely encourage students to begin the required readings before the start of class. You don't need to complete them before class, but you certainly want to begin them.

READING REPORT FORM

Provide the date in which you completed each of the required reading assignments and turn this form in on the due date for Reading Reports (**Aug 4, Friday**).

NAME:

- Miles V. Van Pelt
A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the Old Testament: Gospel Promised _____
- T. D. Alexander
From Paradise to Promised Land _____
- Victor Hamilton
Handbook on the Pentateuch _____
- Geerhardus Vos
Biblical Theology (pp. 3-182) _____
- Meredith G. Kline
Kingdom Prologue _____
- Meredith G. Kline
“Old Testament Origins of the Gospel Genre” _____
- Meredith G. Kline
“The Intrusion and the Decalogue” _____
- Geerhardus Vos
“The Idea of Biblical Theology” _____
- William J. Murnane
“The History of Ancient Egypt” _____
- Peter Y. Lee
“A Reconsideration of Genesis 12:1-3, Part 1” _____
- Peter Y. Lee
“A Reconsideration of Genesis 12:1-3, Part 2” _____

GENESIS 1 PRESENTATION

Interpretations on the Creation Days of Genesis 1:1-2:3

Students will write a 4-5 page paper and present it in class. The subject of the paper will be “The Interpretation of the Creation Days of Genesis 1:1-2:3.” **Due June 14.** This paper is to be structured as follows:

1. *What are the options for interpreting Gen. 1:* In the current discussion there are at least three (possibly four) accepted interpretations of Gen. 1. What are they?
2. *The position of the student:* The student will state which view they hold to.
3. *Defense of that position:* The student will defend their view exegetically and theologically.
4. *Critique of other views:* The student will explain why they do not hold to the alternative views.
5. *A statement of positions/doctrines that are not subject to varying positions:* The student will provide a list of nonnegotiable doctrines that cannot be compromised regardless of one’s interpretation.
6. *A statement of whether the student can live at peace with those who hold a position other than their own.*

The *tentative* date for this class-presentation is **Wednesday, June 14.** Part of that class meeting will be dedicated to a group-discussion on this subject. Students will be expected to have a position on the interpretation of Genesis 1 and be able to offer a rudimentary defense for it. Each student will be expected to participate in some capacity.

This assignment is NOT meant to be researched deeply, although such work can (and probably) should be done. It is intended to help students form a thoughtful position of their own on this subject that can be articulated and defended in various ecclesiological settings.

In order to prepare for this class discussion, students will be expected to research this subject ahead of time. The following sources will provide the necessary and relevant descriptions for this assignment. The two creation reports by the PCA and OPC are available online at their respective websites. PDFs can be emailed to students by request.

- Hagopian, David G. (editor). *The Genesis Debate*. Mission Viejo: CruxPress, 2001.
- 2004 OPC Report on Creation. pg. 1609-1650.
- PCA Report on Creation, pg. 2319-2354.

TERM PAPER

Students are required to write a research paper of 15-20 pages. This is to be an academic paper, one that uses scholarly conventions of research and presentation to describe a topic in the study of the Pentateuch. Cite passages from Scripture as needed.

The minimum requirements for the Term Paper are as follows:

- A minimum of 15-20 pages
- Double-spaced lines
- No title page
- A bibliography as the last page of the paper (this is not to be counted as part of the 15-20 pages) which uses at least **EIGHT GOOD** (solid scholarly, not popular theological, non-internet) sources. Thus, utilize ATLA (see the office for access).
- **DUE DATE:** An electronic copy of the paper is to be turned in (emailed) on the due date (**July 28, Friday**). Word document is preferred, but PDF is acceptable. Late papers will not be accepted.
- Inform the instructor of your choice by the end of the week.

OPTION #1: HEBREW EXEGETICAL PAPER

1. If you have had Biblical Hebrew, you are **required** to do this research paper assignment.
2. Choose from one of the following passages and write an exegetical paper on it.

Exodus 17:1-7 or 8-16

3. Provide your English translation of the text as the first page of your paper. Provide notes to your translation regarding textual emendations, text critical analyses, and/or variant readings.
4. In this paper you need to state clearly the thesis of the paper and organize the paper using literary, linguistic, historical-cultural, and/or theological arguments to defend it. The bulk of your paper can be a verse-by-verse analysis that shows how your passage is connected to your thesis, but students are not required to follow this format. You are also to show the historical-redemptive themes in the passage. Minimal to no materials should focus on introductory matters (date, authorship, etc.), unless it is absolutely warranted.

OPTION #2: BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OPTIONS

Describe the theme of the PEOPLE OF GOD as found in the covenant of Abraham. Discuss the development of this theme from a biblical-theological analysis in terms of its promise and its fulfillment.

Grading Criteria: A successful paper will conform to the following standards.

- **Thesis:** The thesis is well stated without any ambiguity and reflects accurately the message/theology of the passage/theme in question.
- **Organization:** The paper is well organized and thoughtful in its presentation. The structure of the paper flows from the thesis and the paragraphs interconnect seamlessly where the author's development of thought can be clearly seen.
- **Content:**
 - ✓ The paper shows a command of the subject matter and an academic and scholarly level of analysis that is insightful and fresh.
 - ✓ The arguments used to defend and/or describe the thesis were persuasive.
 - ✓ The paper shows an understanding of the current issues with the theme/paper in question.
 - ✓ The paper interacts with the relevant Biblical materials (in the original language) and demonstrates a thorough comprehension of the theme/passage in its grammatical-historical context.
 - ✓ Although originality is desired, a new contribution is not always a necessary ingredient in a successful academic paper.
 - ✓ The paper interacts with a variety (ancient and modern, commentaries, monographs, journal articles) of relevant and useful resources, which are used to enhance the thesis of the paper – not substitute for it.
 - ✓ Minimal to none of the paper focuses on introductory matters (date, authorship, etc.), unless it is absolutely required.
 - ✓ There is no question about plagiarism or any other dishonest or academically questionable activity.

- **Style:** The writing style is *cogent* (logical), *clear* (easy to understand), and *concise* (stating thoughts without redundancy, or treading into irrelevant materials).
- **Proof-read:** There are no spelling errors or run on sentences.
- **Logistics:** The paper meets the minimum page requirement, minimum resources in bibliography. The pages are numbered. Formatting of the paper follows the guidelines found in either *The Chicago Manual of Style* (15th ed.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003) or *The SBL Handbook of Style* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1999).

SCHEDULE

Provided below is a proposed schedule for the assigned readings and lecture topics. The instructor takes the liberty to alter this schedule as time permits. Students are encouraged to follow the reading schedule as provided below.

	Date	Lecture Topic	Assigned Reading
	Jan. 12 Mon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • Biblical Theology as Theological Discipline • Center of Biblical Theology: Theme of the Kingdom of God 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vos, “The Idea of Biblical Theology” • Vos, <i>BT</i>, ch 1
	Jan. 13 Tues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genesis • Exodus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Van Pelt, chs 1-2 • Alexander, chs 7-15 • Hamilton, chs 1-5, 6-10 • Kline, <i>KP</i>, pgs 1-137 • Vos, <i>BT</i>, chs 2-7 • Murnane, “Egypt”
	Jan. 14 Wed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leviticus • Numbers • Deuteronomy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Van Pelt, chs 3-5 • Alexander, chs 16-Conclusion • Hamilton, chs 11-23 • Kline, <i>KP</i>, pgs 138-241 • Vos, <i>BT</i>, chs 8 • GENESIS 1 PAPER DUE
	Jan. 15 Thurs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History of Pentateuchal Criticism • The Covenants of the Pentateuch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Van Pelt, “Introduction” • Alexander, chs 1-6 • Kline, “Gospel Origins” • Kline, <i>KP</i>, 242-291
	Jan. 16 Fri.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biblical Theological Overview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lee, “Part 1,” “Part 2” • Kline “Intrusion Ethics” • Kline, <i>KP</i>, 292-382
	Jan. 30	FINAL EXAM DUE	
	Jul 28	TERM PAPER DUE	
	Aug 4	READING REPORT DUE	

STUDY GUIDE FOR EXAMS

This study guide is to help prepare students prepare for the exam. It will be based on the questions from this guide. If you can maneuver through these questions, then you will do well.

Essay Questions: I will choose 6 from the list below. Those 6 questions will be on your exam. From that list, you will choose 4 and answer them as completely as possible.

1. The following is a quote from the definition of Biblical Theology by Geerhardus Vos:
“Biblical theology lies in this, that it discusses both the form and content of revelation from the point of view of the revealing activity of God Himself. In other words, it deals with revelation in the active sense, as an act of God, and tries to understand and trace and describe this act, so far as this is possible to man and does not elude our finite observation.”
From this definition, describe what he means by “form,” “content,” and the “revelation in the active sense, as an act of God.”
2. Discuss the literary structure of the Book of Genesis and how that is related to the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant.
3. Discuss the literary structure of the Book of Exodus and its relationship to the genre of the Gospels in the New Testament.
4. Describe the difficulty in the traditional understanding of the activity of God in tenth “wonder” against Egypt in Exodus 12. In your description provide and defend the meaning of the “Passover.”
5. What are the major types of sacrifices in the Book of Leviticus? Describe how they “atone” for sins.
6. Discuss the significance and function for the two censuses in the Book of Numbers. How are these genealogies significant in the structure and message of the Book of Numbers?
7. Discuss how the theme of the Kingdom can unify both the literary and historical analyses of the Old Testament.
8. How is the Book of Deuteronomy central to the organization of the Hebrew Old Testament?
9. Describe how the Book of Deuteronomy conforms to the literary style of a treaty.

10. What is the Documentary Hypothesis? What major contribution did Julius Wellhausen make to this theory?
11. According to Peter Enns, what are the three “problems” with the Old Testament? Respond to him.
12. Defend the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch as discussed in class lectures.
13. How has “essential Mosaic authorship” caused us to *recalibrate* our understanding of inerrancy?
14. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses in the various definitions offered of a “covenant”? Provide a Biblical one.
15. Discuss the components that make up a loyalty oath (suzerain-vassal treaty) and explain how Exodus 20 (the Ten Commandments) fits into that genre.
16. Discuss what we know about the Divine name in Exodus 6:1-8 (cf. Ex. 3:11-14).
17. Discuss how a literary understanding of a covenant helps our understanding of canon.
18. Is it significant to see God’s dealings with Adam as a covenant of works? Why or why not?
19. Describe what is meant by man being made in the image of God.
20. Describe how the creation of humanity in Gen. 1:26-27 is unique from the rest of creation.
21. Discuss the corporate and individual interpretations of the “seed of the woman” in Gen. 3:15.
22. Discuss how Genesis 9:24-27 provides a panoramic view of the history of redemption.
23. Describe why Genesis 22:1-14 is significant in the Abrahamic narratives and the history of redemption. Include in your description the linguistic difficulty in the name of the altar in v.14 and offer a better analysis.
24. Discuss the theme of kingship in Genesis 49:8-12 and how it is fulfilled in the history of salvation.
25. Explain how the Abrahamic covenant is both a singular promise and multiple promises.

26. What is the two-fold fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant? Show these levels of fulfillment as they are realized in the history of salvation.
27. Define Theocracy. Give examples of theocracies in the history of salvation and describe each.
28. Define Intrusion Ethics and how this helps our understanding of the Conquest.

If you feel overwhelmed by this review sheet, consider the possible alternative questions that I have used in previous final exams:

- Take the measurements of the Ark of Noah and build a miniature at 1/1000 scale. Be sure to include the “souls” within the Ark.
- Find a nonbeliever and save him/her using texts only from Leviticus.
- As an application of Genesis 1, create life. You are free to choose the “kind” of life to create.
- Memorize the Book of Deuteronomy. Recite it to your proctor and have them sign in the space provided: _____ (proctor signature).
- Solve the conundrum of the Divine Name YHWH. Leave no questions unanswered.
- Reenact the Day of Atonement. Be sure to follow the details of the garments of the High Priest. You need not to offer an actual sacrifice.
- Like Joshua 10:13, stop the sun. Once you do so, you are free to have the resulting time extension until the sun continues in its rotation.
- Predict the second coming of Christ. Proof-text your answer by using the Book of Deuteronomy only.