

BIHB9401 INTERPRETING THE PENTATEUCH SPRING SEMESTER 2015

Professors: Dr. R. Dennis Cole, Ph.D
Professor of Old Testament and Archaeology
NOBTS, 3939 Gentilly Blvd., New Orleans, LA 70126
(800) 662-8701, ext. 3248
rdcole@nobts.edu

NOBTS Mission Statement: The mission of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries.

NOBTS Core Values Emphasized

Doctrinal Integrity: Knowledge and Practice of the Word of God

Characteristic Excellence: In Pursuit of God's Revelation with Diligence and Reverence

Spiritual Vitality: Allowing the Transforming Power of God's Word to Change and Mold Our Lives as His Servants

2014-2015 Core Value Emphasis > Spiritual Vitality: We are a worshiping community emphasizing both personal spirituality and gathering together as a Seminary family for the praise and adoration of God and instruction in His Word.

Seminar Description: This seminar is an intense study of select portions of the Pentateuch, integrating the hermeneutical principles of narrative and legal literature. This seminar includes introductory and background issues related to the development of Old Testament historiography in the context of the Ancient Near East. This study includes narrative analysis, social and cultural anthropological study, and analysis of the legal literature of the Ancient Near East. The study intersects with the current critical scholarly literature in Pentateuchal study.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Students who successfully complete the seminar will have:

- A. Become acquainted with the key literature reflecting the development of modern literary analysis of the Pentateuch
- B. Learned the key conceptual developments involved in the history of the study of the Pentateuch and how they are related to current trends in interpretation
- C. Examined various methods for reading and interpreting the Pentateuch and the OT
- D. Developed the skill of analyzing the literary structure in of narrative, poetic, and legal genre in the interpretation of the Pentateuch

Required Textbooks:

Alexander, T. D. *From Paradise to the Promised Land: An Introduction to the Pentateuch*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002.

Fretheim, Terence E. *The Pentateuch*. Interpreting Biblical Texts. Abingdon, 1996.

Sailhamer, John H. *The Pentateuch as Narrative*. Zondervan, 1992.

Vogt, Peter T. *Interpreting the Pentateuch: An Exegetical Handbook*.

Watts, James W. *Reading Law: The Rhetorical Shaping of the Pentateuch*.

Whybray, R.N. *The Making of the Pentateuch*. JSOT Supp. 53. JSOT, 1987.

Seminar Requirements

- A. Read closely all required texts and be prepared to discuss their content in Seminar meetings: See seminar schedule for listing of texts as well as other required readings from other selected sources
- B. Prepare detailed, written reviews on Pentateuchal literature, summary study guides on broad Pentateuchal texts, and close textual studies on selected pericopes
- C. Lead extended discussion of Pentateuchal texts, their interpretation, and the corresponding literature, with particular focus on their narrative nature
- D. Produce a clear and usable written methodology of narrative analysis/interpretation
- E. Prepare a comprehensive research paper on a critical issue in Pentateuchal studies, present findings, and defend conclusions.
- F. Prepare a teaching plan for one of the Pentateuchal books that includes a course description, learning objectives, requirements, projected course schedule, and selected bibliography

Seminar Evaluation

A.	Book Reviews (Written and oral components)	10%
B.	Summary History of Critical Study	10%
C.	Narrative Methodology	10%
D.	Study Guide (Written and oral components)	15%
E.	Textual Study (Written and oral components)	20%
F.	Research paper (Written and oral components)	30%

Seminar Schedule and Assignments

January 23 Introductions to the Pentateuch

Alexander, T. D. *From Paradise to the Promised Land: An Introduction to the Pentateuch*

Baden, Joseph. *The Composition of the Pentateuch: Renewing the Documentary Hypothesis*

Cassuto, Umberto. *The Documentary Hypothesis and the Composition of the Pentateuch*

Fretheim, Terence E. *The Pentateuch. Interpreting Biblical Texts*

Laffey, Alice L. *The Pentateuch: A Liberation Critical Reading.*

Seters, John Van. *The Pentateuch: A Social-Science Commentary.*

Watts, James W. *Reading Law: The Rhetorical Shaping of the Pentateuch.*

Wellhausen, Julius. *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel*

Whybray, R.N. *The Making of the Pentateuch.*

Hebrew Texts: Genesis 1-3, 6-8, 11-12

February 20 OT Historiography & the Narrative Structure of the Pentateuch

Alter, Robert. *The Art of Biblical Narrative*

Barstad, Hans M. *History and the Hebrew Bible: Studies in Ancient Israelite and Ancient Near Eastern Historiography*

Esler, Phillip. *Sex, Wives, and Warriors: Reading Biblical Narrative With Its Ancient Audience*

Halpern, Baruch. *The First Historians: The Hebrew Bible and History*

Sailhamer, John H. *The Pentateuch as Narrative*

Hebrew Texts: Exodus 1-12, Numbers 20-22

April 10 Biblical Law

Anderson, Gary A. *Sacrifices and Offerings in Ancient Israel: Studies in Their Social and Political Importance*

Brin, Gershon. *Studies in Biblical Law: From the Hebrew Bible to the Dead Sea Scrolls*

Douglas, Mary. *In The Wilderness: The Doctrine of Defilement in the Book of Numbers.*

Klingbell, Gerald. *Bridging the Gap: Ritual and Ritual Texts in the Bible*

Milgrom, Jacob. *Studies in Cultic Theology and Terminology.*

Milgrom, Jacob. *Studies in Levitical Terminology*

Porter, Anne and Glenn Swartz *Sacred Killing: The Archaeology of Sacrifice in the Ancient Near East*

Watts, James W. *Reading Law: The Rhetorical Shaping of the Pentateuch.*

Watts, James W. *Ritual and Rhetoric in Leviticus: From Sacrifice to Scripture*

Westbrook, Raymond. *Law from the Tigris to the Tiber: Cuneiform and Biblical Sources*

Hebrew Texts: Leviticus 1, 4, 9, 16-17, 23

May 1 Research Paper Presentations

Some Suggested Areas of Research

Continuity and Discontinuity in the Pentateuchal Narrative

Dual Type Scenes Before and After Sinai (e.g.-water, quail)

Structural Analysis of a Large Pericope of the Pentateuch

“One Law” -- Law Equality: Resident Aliens in the Pentateuch

Blood Purification Ritual in Israel and the ANE

Recent Studies in Creation Narratives in Israel & the ANE

Narrative Development of a Theological Theme

..... etc.

Papers will be evaluated on the following criteria:

1. Grammar and Style: Spelling; sentence and paragraph development; punctuation; conformity to Turabian; use of quotations (use them sparingly to clarify your analysis and interpretation).
2. Clarity and Coherence: Organization; logical development; overall sense of the paper.

3. Research: Bibliography; type and variety of sources (primary, secondary monographs, journal articles, etc.); [Most bibliographic entries should be accompanied by footnote citations].
4. Interpretive awareness and insight: Factual accuracy; awareness of context and connection to other material (i.e., continuity/discontinuity; cause/effect; relationships/comparisons; sensitivity to context; awareness of persons, movements, or forces, historical and otherwise).
5. Analysis and Evaluation: Going beyond the mere reporting of facts to include explanation, interpretation, analysis of material; evaluation of the material at hand; demonstration that you have done a thorough critique of the material that you have researched.

Selected Bibliography

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