

**Pentateuch: Genesis—OT 6302**  
**Austin Graduate School of Theology**  
**Syllabus, Fall 2008**

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**Office Hours:** Mon., Tues., Wed. 1:00-4:00 P.M., Thurs. 10:00-12:00 A.M.

**Course Goals:**

- 1) Students will identify and engage in informed discussion of major issues primarily in the interpretation of Genesis and secondarily, the Pentateuch in general.
- 2) All students will prepare presentations on a passage from Genesis which reflects awareness of literary and theological issues which the book raises and conduct research for these presentations using appropriate commentaries, indices, and databases.

**Course Objectives:**

- 1) The student will acquire an in-depth knowledge of Genesis in its literary, historical, and theological setting.
- 2) The student will acquire knowledge of and be able to discuss and debate the methods and arguments of the several commentators listed in “required texts” below.
- 3) The student will learn how to write an exegesis paper on a passage from Genesis, using appropriate library and technological resources.
- 4) The student will learn how to go from “text to sermon” in practical, ministerial application of the research done on the exegesis paper.

**Required Texts:**

Consult the listing of commentaries attached for other helpful works on Genesis. All students are encouraged to make use of all relevant helps in their pursuit of the understanding of the text of Holy Scripture. The following are intended to orient you, but you will wish to consult other books and articles, particularly for your papers.

*The New Oxford Annotated Bible of the New Revised Standard Standard Version*, or another good study Bible.

Brueggemann, Walter. *Genesis*. Interpretation Commentary. Philadelphia: W/JKP, 1983.

Gowan, Donald E. *From Eden to Babel: A Commentary on the Book of Genesis 1-11*. International Theological Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988.

Janzen, J. Gerald. *Abraham and All the Families of the Earth: A Commentary on the Book of Genesis 12-50*. International Theological Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993.

Towner, W. Sibley. *Genesis*. Westminster Bible Companion. Louisville: W/JKP, 2001.

Occasional articles.

**Recommended Texts:**

Gorman, Michael. *Elements of Biblical Exegesis: A Basic Guide for Students and Ministers*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 2001.

**Means of Assessment:**

Regular class attendance and participation is required.

1-2 hour mid-term exam.

2-3 hour final exam.

One 5-7 page, typed exegesis paper on one passage in Genesis, plus oral report of rough draft.

One 5-10 page sermon or Bible study based on the exegesis passage above.

**Preparation of Papers:**

*Exegesis Paper:*

We will be doing a close reading and exegesis of Genesis. The course will entail “hands on” experience with exegesis of the English text. Those who have had Hebrew or Greek, of course, are encouraged to use those abilities and tools in their exegesis. Exegesis papers must use the proper research style as laid out in K. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers* (6th, or latest, edition). Exegesis papers should pay careful attention to the literary context (extended and immediate), use of important terminology, and historical setting. You may wish to structure your paper along these lines. Most importantly, students are expected to use *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance*, Whitaker’s *NRSV Concordance*, and/or a Hebrew concordance in order to determine the author’s use of words and phrases. For historical background, you will find John Bright *A History of Israel* (4th edition) particularly helpful. Commentaries and other resources will be suggested throughout the semester (see select bibliography attached). While I am most interested in your own exegesis of the texts, you should be aware of and make use of important commentaries, dictionaries, word books, introductions, etc. Your final exegesis paper must have at least three sources (articles, books, commentaries, etc.) which you found via the ATLA database in the library. You will find a written guide for the preparation of exegesis papers on the Austingrad web site under “faculty resources,” which you are expected to utilize in the preparation of your exegesis papers. The oral reports will involve your paraphrasing a rough draft of your exegesis paper. Student reports should take 10–15 minutes, followed by a period of discussion about your paper.

*Sermon or Bible Study:*

The sermon will be based upon the results of your exegesis paper. The sermon itself is not an exegesis, but uses the results of exegesis to make practical application in the life of the church. I will be handing out a guide for the writing of a sermon based upon your exegesis by the third or fourth week of class.

The Bible Study can be based on a series of texts or topics from Genesis, 4-5 lessons, 1-2 pages per lesson.

**Software, Database, and Internet Resources:**

There are several application software and database resources which Austin Graduate School of Theology provides which are especially helpful for the graduate student. All students in OT 6302 are expected to become familiar with these resources and utilize them especially in the research and preparation of papers:

Accordance Bible Search software (Oak Tree Software): Computer concordance, Bible, and Bible-related database and search engine. Available on one or two of the library Macintosh computers. This is the “Cadillac” of Bible search software, in terms of ease of use and power.

Gramcord for Windows (Gramcord Institute) This is more or less the PC version of Accordance, although not as fully featured. It is installed on one of the PCs in the library.

Bible Windows (Silver Mountain Software): An easy to use, PC based Bible concordance. It has an excellent interlinear view, which other programs lack. You will find it on one of the PCs in the library.

You may elect to use your own Bible search software, such as Bible Works for Windows, On-Line Bible, or Logos/Libronix. On-Line Bible is also on one of the library Macintosh computers. It is free for download for PCs or Macs on the Internet.

Online Periodicals: Through EBSCO, Austin Graduate School has access to over 200 full-text journals on the web. See the librarian for access.

ATLA Database: The American Theological Library Association maintains a massive bibliographic database of theological journals and books. You must use this resource for identifying important books and articles for writing the exegesis paper (see above). See the librarian for training and access to this database.

In addition, there are numerous Bible and Bible-related Internet sites which may help your research. The Bible Gateway is one such site. Please see the librarian for a list of other sites.

**Select Bibliography on Genesis:** This will be provided to you soon.

**Lecture Schedule and Schedule for Oral Presentations:**

*Aug. 28:* Introduction; Syllabus; Genesis in the Pentateuch.

*Sept. 4:* Chapter 1 \_\_\_\_\_.

*Readings:*

Brueggemann, 1-39.

Gowan, 1-32.

Towner, 1-32.

*Sept. 11:* Chapter 2 \_\_\_\_\_.

*Readings:*

Brueggemann, 40-53.

Gowan, 33-61.

Towner, 33-40.

*Sept. 18:* Chapters 3 \_\_\_\_\_.

*Readings:*

Brueggemann (cont.).

Gowan (cont.).

Towner, 41-54.

*Sept. 25:* Chapter 4-5 \_\_\_\_\_.

*Readings:*

Brueggemann, 54-69.

Gowan, 62-81.

Towner, 55-76.

Oct. 2: Chapter 6-8 \_\_\_\_\_.

*Readings:*

Brueggemann, 70-87.

Gowan, 82-101.

Towner, 77-93.

Oct. 9: Chapter 9-10 \_\_\_\_\_.

*Readings:*

Brueggemann, 88-96.

Gowan, 102-114.

Towner, 94-106.

Oct. 16: Chapter 11 \_\_\_\_\_.

*Readings:*

Brueggemann, 97-104.

Gowan, 115-123.

Towner, 107-124.

Oct. 23: Chapters 12 \_\_\_\_\_.

*Readings:*

Brueggemann, 105-124.

Janzen, 1-27.

Towner, 125-142.

Oct. 30: Chapters 13-14 \_\_\_\_\_.

*Readings:*

Brueggemann, 125-139.

Janzen, 27-34.

Towner, 143-148.

Nov. 6: Chapters 15-16 \_\_\_\_\_.

*Readings:*

Brueggemann, 140-153.

Janzen, 34-47.

Towner, 148-161.

Nov. 13: Chapters 17-19 \_\_\_\_\_.

*Readings:*

Brueggemann, 153-177.

Janzen, 47-67.

Towner, 162-175.

Nov. 20: Chapters 20-21 \_\_\_\_\_.

*Readings:*

Brueggemann, 177-184.

Janzen, 67-77.

Towner, 175-184.

*Nov. 27: no class, Thanksgiving holiday.*

*Dec. 4: Chapters 22-24 \_\_\_\_\_.*

*Readings:*

Brueggemann, 185-203.

Janzen, 77-94.

Towner, 184-198.

**All final exegesis papers and sermons will be due no later than Dec. 4.**

*Dec. 11: Final Exam.*