

Old Testament Stories and Themes: Interpreting the Old Testament Within History and Scripture

Center for Christian Study
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Faith & Life Course
Meadows Presbyterian Church
Instructor: Bill Wilder

Fall Semester 2007
Fridays 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Sept. 14, 21, 28; Oct. 12, 19; Nov. 2, 9, 16, 30; Dec 7
Midterm exam: Oct 26; Final exam: Dec 14th

COURSE SYLLABUS

General Purpose:

The purpose of this course is to familiarize the student with the storyline and some of the major themes of the Old Testament with a view toward their fulfillment in Christ and the church in the New Testament.

Specific Objectives:

By the end of this course, the student should have an appreciation and general understanding of the following items:

1. The shape and movement of redemptive history in the Old Testament, from the primeval period and the patriarchs through the exodus to the history of national Israel as far as the exile and return.
2. The development of key themes, images, and doctrines within the Old Testament in the light of their further development and interpretation in the New Testament.

In other words, the student should have a solid introduction to (and appreciation for) a redemptive-historical interpretation of Scripture, otherwise known as biblical theology.

Class Procedure:

This course will be conducted on a lecture/discussion basis. Classes will meet from 9:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. on Fridays throughout the term on the following dates: Sept. 14, 21, 28; 12, 19; Nov. 2, 9, 16, 30; Dec 7. (Exams will be given on Oct 26 and Dec 14.) There will normally be one break during each class period. Discussion is encouraged at any time. Assigned readings on the Topic and Assignment Sheet should be read prior to the class lecture and discussion.

Topic and Assignment Sheet (Fall 2007)

Lecture 1: Friday, September 14

Time Period: Creation and the Fall

Topics: Introduction to the Course; Christology and Eschatology; Rulership and the Seven Days of Creation; The Image of God; The Covenant and the Curse; The Second Adam—and Us

Scripture Reading: Genesis 1-3; Psalm 8; 1 Corinthians 15

Other Required Reading: Wilder, “Sesame Street, Study, and Sanctification”: Hafemann, “Why do We Exist?”; Wilder, “Illumination and Investiture: The Royal Significance of the Tree of Wisdom in Genesis 3”

Lecture 2: Friday, September 21

Time Period: Abraham and the Patriarchs

Topics: The Abrahamic Covenant; The Nature of Faith; The Typological Fulfillment of the Abrahamic Promises; The Varying Approaches of Covenant Theology and Historic Dispensational Theology

Scripture Reading: Genesis 12-15; Romans 4

Other Required Reading: Moore: “Kingdom Eschatology and the Emerging Evangelical Consensus”

Lecture 3: Friday, September 28

Time Period: The Story of the Exodus

Topics: The Pattern of the Exodus in Redemption; God’s Supreme Goal in Redemption

Scripture Reading: Exodus 1-20

Other Required Reading: Piper, “The Goal of God in Redemptive History”

Lecture 4: Friday, October 12

Time Period: The Encounter with God at Sinai

Topics: Introduction to Forms; Covenant and the ANE Treaty Form; The Prophetic Call Form and the Transformation of the Prophet

Scripture Reading: Exodus 20; Joshua 24

Other Reading: Niehaus, “The Light of God’s Countenance”; Hafemann, “The Glory and Veil of Moses”; Kline, “A Prophetic Model of the Image of God”

Lecture 5: Friday, October 19

Time Period: Conquest, Judges, and Saul

Topic: Holy War

Scripture Reading (by this class): Deuteronomy 20; Judges 6-7

Other Required Reading: Yoder, “God will Fight for Us”; Kline, “The Intrusion and the Decalogue”; Longman, “The Divine Warrior: The New Testament Use of an Old Testament Motif”

Recommended Reading: Longman, “Psalm 98: A Divine Warrior Victory Song,” JETS 27:3 (Sept 1984); Timothy Gombis, “Ephesians 2 as a Narrative of Divine Warfare,” JSNT 26.2 (2004): 403-418.

MIDTERM EXAM: Friday, October 26

Lecture 6: Friday, November 2

Time Period: United Monarchy

Topic: Son of God and Vicegerency

Scripture Reading: 2 Samuel 5-8; Psalm 2; Psalm 89; Psalm 110, Romans 8

Other Reading: McCartney, “Ecce Homo”; Wilder, “The Flesh/Spirit Contrast in Jesus” (blogpost); Wilder, “The Two Stages of Jesus’ Sonship (blogpost); Wilder, “The Two Stages of Sonship—in Us” (blogpost); Wilder, “New Stages—In More Ways than One” (blogpost)

Lecture 7: Friday, November 9

Time Period: Israel and Judah

Topic: The Day of the Lord; The Temple and the Coming Exile

Scripture Reading: Amos 5-6; Jeremiah 7, 26; Jeremiah 25; Daniel 9

Listening: Wilder, [I Love to Tell the Story: The Narrative Substructure of Paul's Theology](#)

Lecture 8: Friday, November 16

Time Period: The Exile and Beyond

Topic: Isaiah 53, Israel, and the Suffering Servant; The Servant and the Second Adam

Scripture Reading (by this class): Isaiah 42-53; Philippians 2

Listening: Wilder, [Adam, Israel, Servant, Christ: Does Covenant Theology Get It Wright?](#)

Lecture 9: Friday, November 30

Time Period: Apocalyptic Literature

Topic: Daniel 7 in its Context; Jesus as the Son of Man;

Scripture Reading (by this class): Ezekiel 1; Daniel 1-12

Listening (by next class): Wilder, “Your Kingdom Come”

Lecture 10: Friday, December 7

Time Period: Wisdom Literature

Topic: The Wisdom/Word Tradition; Jesus as the Wisdom of God

Scripture Reading (by this class): Genesis 1; Proverbs 8; John 1

Other Reading (by next class): Scobie, *Ways of Our God*, pp. 372-376, 388-399

FINAL EXAM: Friday, December 14

Course Requirements

Readings:

The student is expected to read the biblical passages, book chapters, and scholarly articles listed on the **Topic and Assignment Sheet** according to the schedule found there. The instructor may hand out additional or alternative articles and chapters during the course of the term.

Study Logs:

This course is a graduate level course. The key to success in such a course is consistent interaction with the material on a regular basis throughout the term. In order to encourage and enable such ongoing study in the midst of very busy schedules, students will be permitted to receive credit for a wide range of studying activities to be recorded on a weekly study log.

This study log will record the amount of time spent on the class during the previous week. Such study time should certainly include required reading for the class, but may also include studying your class screenshots or notes, going over material in a weekly study group, engaging in a focused discussion—over coffee perhaps—with a mentor or friend about class material, listening to audiotapes of class lectures while making your daily commute, or reading one or more of the books from the reading list at the end of this syllabus.

Simply completing this weekly study time will result in 2.5 percentage points toward your final grade each week for a total of twenty-five percentage points over the course of the term. Those who study more during the week will receive more credit, up to seven hours per week (3.5 percentage points) and a total of thirty-five percentage points over the course of the term. Note that studying the full seven hours each week would add a 10% extra credit bonus to your grade, in addition to any benefits realized on your exam grades.

To receive credit for your hours of study each week, a study log must be submitted to the instructor at the beginning of class on Friday morning. No study logs will be accepted after this point. The study log, which may be downloaded from the course website, must be complete with all elements filled out. No more than seven hours per week will be awarded credit toward the final grade, though of course you're welcome to study more than that, if you like!

Examinations:

There will be two one-and-a-half-hour examinations. Each will be a mixture of objective and essay questions, drawn from class lecture/discussion and assigned reading. Please note that anything mentioned or discussed in class, even if it is not formally indicated on the syllabus, is fair game for the examination. The exam will be completely closed-book, closed-notes, and closed-Bible. Study guides will be provided closer to the time of each exam. Help from former Fellows is allowed and encouraged, as long as this does NOT include access to previous study guides or examinations.

Final Grade Computation:

Reading logs: 25 percentage points (with a potential of 10 points extra credit)

Mid-term exam: 35 percentage points

Final exam: 40 percentage points

The final grade may also be affected by attendance, attention, and participation in class.

Bibliography

Introductory Reading:

- Bruce, F.F. *This is That: The New Testament Development of Some Old Testament Themes*. Exeter: The Paternoster Press, 1968.
- Clowney, Edmund P. *The Unfolding Mystery: Discovering Christ in the Old Testament*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 1988.
- Fee, Gordon D., and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth: A Guide to Understanding the Bible*. Second edition. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1993.
- Goldsworthy, Graeme. *According to Plan: The Unfolding Revelation of God in the Bible: An Introductory Biblical Theology*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1991.
- Hafemann, Scott. *The God of Promise and the Life of Faith: Understanding the Heart of the Bible*. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2001. OR
- Leithard, Peter J. *A House for My Name: A Survey of the Old Testament*. Moscow, Idaho: Canon Press, 2000.
- Long, V. Philips. *The Art of Biblical History*. Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation, vol. 5. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994.
- Piper, John. *Desiring God: Meditations of a Christian Hedonist*. Sisters, OR: Multnomah Press, 1986.
- Williams, Michael. *Far as the Curse is Found: The Covenant Story of Redemption*. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 2005.
- Wright, N. T. *Simply Christian: Why Christianity Makes Sense*. HarperSanFrancisco, 2006.

Other Recommended Books and Articles:

The books listed below are supplementary but highly recommended reading.

- Blocher, Henri. *In the Beginning: The Opening Chapters of Genesis*. Translated by David G. Preston. Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1984.
- Bratcher, Robert G. *Old Testament Quotations in the New Testament*. Helps for Translators. New York: United Bible Societies, 1984.
- Collins, John J. "A Pre-Christian 'Son of God' Among the Dead Sea Scrolls." In *Bible Review* 9, no. 3, (June 1993): 34-38, 57.
- Dorsey, David A. *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999.
- Ephrem the Syrian, St. *Hymns on Paradise*. Introduction and translation by Sebastian Brock. Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1998.

- Gaffin, Richard B., Jr. *Resurrection and Redemption: A Study in Paul's Soteriology*. 2nd Edition. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1987.
- Hoerth, A., *Archaeology and the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998.
- Kaiser, Walter C., Jr. *Toward an Old Testament Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978.
- _____. *The Old Testament Documents: Are They Reliable and Relevant?* Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2001.
- Kitchen, K. A. *The Bible in its World: Archaeology and the Bible Today*. Exeter: The Paternoster Press, 1977.
- Ladd, George Eldon. *The Blessed Hope: A Biblical Study of the Second Advent and the Rapture*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1956.
- Longman, Tremper, III and Daniel G. Reid. *God is a Warrior. Studies in Old Testament Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995.
- Longman, Tremper, III. "The Divine Warrior: The New Testament Use of an Old Testament Motif." In *Westminster Theological Journal* 44 no. 2 (Fall 1982): 290-307.
- Millard, Alan. *Treasures from Bible Times*. Tring: A Lion Book, 1985.
- Moore, Russell D. *The Kingdom of Christ: The New Evangelical Perspective*. Wheaton, Ill: Crossway Books, 2004.
- McCartney, Dan G. "Ecce Homo: The Coming of the Kingdom as the Restoration of Human Viceregency." In *Westminster Theological Journal* 56, no. 1, (Spring 1994): 1-21.
- Niehaus, Jeffrey J. *God at Sinai: Covenant and Theophany in the Bible and the Ancient Near East*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995.
- Reichenbach, Bruce R. "Genesis 1 as a Theological-Political Narrative of Kingdom Establishment." *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 13.1 (2003): 47-69.
- Sailhamer, John. *Genesis Unbound*. Sisters: Multnomah Books, 1996.
- _____. *Old Testament History*. Zondervan Quick Reference Library. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998.
- Scobie, Charles H. H. *The Ways of Our God: An Approach to Biblical Theology*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2003.
- Sheler, Jeffery L. *Is the Bible True? How Modern Debates and Discoveries Affirm the Essence of the Scriptures*. Zondervan: Harper San Francisco, 1999.
- Walton, John H. *Ancient Israelite Literature in its Cultural Context: A Survey of Parallels Between Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Texts*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1989.
- Westerholm, Stephen. *Perspectives Old and New on Paul: The 'Lutheran' Paul and His Critics*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004.

- Wilder, William N. "Illumination and Investiture: The Royal Significance of the Tree of Wisdom in Genesis 3." *Westminster Theological Journal* 68 (2006): 51-69.
- Witherington, III, Ben. *Jesus the Sage: The Pilgrimage of Wisdom*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994.
- Wright, Christopher J. H. *God's People in God's Land: Family, Land and Property in the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990.
- Wright, N.T. *The New Testament and the People of God*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992.
- Yoder, John Howard. "God Will Fight For Us." In *The Politics of Jesus*. Second Edition. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994.

Resources for Research

The books listed below are excellent resources of a more academic or technical nature.

- Arnold, Bill T. and Bryan E. Beyer. *Readings from the Ancient Near East: Primary Sources for Old Testament Study*. Encountering Biblical Studies. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002.
- Beckman, Gary. *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*. SBL Writings from the Ancient World Series, vol. 6. Edited by Harry A. Hoffner, Jr. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996.
- Callender, Dexter E., Jr. *Adam in Myth and History: Ancient Israelite Perspectives on the Primal Human*. Harvard Semitic Studies 48. Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2000.
- Cline, D. J. A. "The Image of God in Man." Renamed "Humanity as the Image of God." <http://www.shef.ac.uk/~biblst/Department/Staff/BibsResearch/DJACcurrres/Postmodern2/Humanity.html>
- Garrett, Duane. *Rethinking Genesis: The Sources and Authorship of the First Book of the Pentateuch*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1991.
- Hafemann, Scott J. *Paul, Moses, and the History of Israel: the Letter/Spirit Contrast and the Argument from Scripture in 2 Corinthians 3*. Tuebingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1994.
- _____. "The Glory and Veil of Moses in 2 Cor 3:7-14: An Example of Paul's Contextual Exegesis of the OT – A Proposal." *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 14.1 (June 1992): 31-49.
- Hugenberger, Gordon P. *Marriage as a Covenant: Biblical Law and Ethics as Developed from Malachi*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994.
- Kline, Meredith G. *Images of the Spirit*. South Hamilton: Self-published, 1986.
- _____. "Genesis," in *The New Bible Commentary: Revised*. Edited by D. Guthrie et al. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1970.
- _____. "The Intrusion and the Decalogue." In *The Structure of Biblical Authority*. Second Edition. South Hamilton: Self-published, 1989: 154-171.

- Long, V. Philips. *The Reign and Rejection of King Saul: A Case for Literary and Theological Coherence*. SBL Dissertation Series 118. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989.
- Manek, J. "The New Exodus in the Books of Luke," *Novum Testamentum 2* (1957): 8-23.
- Mausser, Ulrich W. *Christ in the Wilderness: The Wilderness Theme in the Second Gospel and its Basis in the Biblical Tradition*. Studies in Biblical Theology No. 39. Naperville, Ill: Alec R. Allenson, Inc., 1963.
- Pritchard, James B., ed. *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*. Second edition, corrected and enlarged. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1955.
- , ed. *The Ancient Near East: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures*. London: Oxford University Press, 1958.
- , ed. *The Ancient Near East in Pictures Relating to the Old Testament*. Second edition with supplement. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1969.
- Scott, James M. *Adoption as Sons of God: An Exegetical Investigation into the Background of ΥΙΟΘΕΣΙΑ in the Pauline Corpus*. Tuebingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1992.
- Stone, Edward Noble. *Adam: A Religious Play of the Twelfth Century*. Translated from the Norman French and Latin into English Verse. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1926.
- Stuart, Douglas. *Hosea-Jonah*. Word Biblical Commentary. Waco: Word Books, 1987.
- Swartley, Willard M. *Israel's Scripture Traditions and the Synoptic Gospels: Story Shaping Story*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994.
- Wright, N. T. "New Exodus, New Inheritance: The Narrative Structure of Romans 3-8." In *Romans and the People of God: Essays in Honor of Gordon D. Fee on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*. Edited by Sven K. Soderlund and N. T. Wright. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999: 26-35.

Many other good books may be found at the Splintered Light Bookstore (www.splinteredlightbooks.com) at the Center for Christian Study.