

Regent College

BIBL 610: Old Testament Book Study: Genesis

Bob Ekblad
Fall 2000
Monday 2:30-5:30pm
3 Credit Hours

Prerequisites: Introduction to Exegesis & O.T.

Foundations

Course Description

The book of Genesis tells the story of the origins of the people of God, and the people's account of God's mysterious presence to create, save, call and guide. Learning to read Genesis is a training ground for reading God's presence in our lives and times. The instructor will spend the first six weeks lecturing on Genesis 1-11. This will be followed by three, two-week segments on the Abraham, Jacob and Joseph cycles. Students will be exposed to diverse approaches to Biblical exegesis, (historical-critical, narrative, structural, rabbinic, psychoanalytic, etc....). Special emphasis will be placed on developing an approach to the Scriptures that is intellectually responsible and contemplative while at the sametime being engaged with the world outside the comfortable confines of church and academy. Required readings will help students learn to intergrate careful exegesis, contempative reading and "street reading". The course is designed to provide both knowledge, skills and experience that will help students better do the necessary work to prepare for sermons, Bible studies and their own personal study.

Class Outline

- September 11 Introduction: exegetical method, authorship.
- September 18 The creation account of Genesis. The function of literary structure and genre in communication theological truths.
- September 25 Perspectives on gender in Genesis 2:4-3:24
- October 2 The Origins of alienation, Exegetical the Theological reading of Exodus 2-3
Assignment #1 due: 1-page paper on Genesis 3:1-7 that describes your view of nature of the woman and man's transgression
- October 9 No class, Thanksgiving
- October 16 The origins of violence: Cain and Abel, Genesis 4
- October 23 Reading Week
- October 30 Understanding the flood, Genesis 6:5-8:22
- November 6 The Call of Abraham, Genesis 12
- November 13 Is human sacrifice necessary? The near sacrifice of Isaac, Genesis 22
Assignment #2 due: 1-page structural analysis of Genesis 22:1-14
- November 20 Election by Grace or Salvation by works: theological and psychological readings of Jacob and Esau

November 27 Jacob's struggle at Jabboc and near reconciliation with Esau: Rabinnic readings of Genesis 32.

Assignment #3: 1-page paper on the identity of Jacob's adversary in Gen 32:22-32

December 4 Final reflections on the function of Genesis in the Scriptures and it's significane for today. Assignment: Final paper due

Academic Requirements and Time Investment

1. During the course of the semester, students will be required to write three two page papers on texts on which the instructor will lecture. Specific assignments and due dates will be handed out on the first day of class.
2. Students are expected to write one 15-20 page exegetical paper during the course of the seminar.
3. Students will be required to do their own exegetical work and reading in preparation for weekly classes.

Lectures	33 hrs
One page papers	12 hrs
Exegetical paper	50 hrs
Required reading	<u>45 hrs</u>
Total	130 hrs

Evaluation

By letter grade, on the basis of weekly class preparation, participation and papers.

Class participation	20%
One page papers	30%
Exegetical paper	50%

Bibliography

1. Required Reading

Robert Alter, *Genesis: Translation and Commentary*, New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1996.

Enzo Bianchi, *Praying the Word: An Introduction to Leccio Divina*, Kalamzoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1999.

Stanley P. Saunders and Charles L. Campbell, *The Word on the Streets: Performing the Scriptures in the Urban Context*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.

Nahum Sarna, *The JPS Torah Commentary: Genesis*, Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989.

2. Recommended Reading

Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, New York: Basic Books, 1981.

Walter Brueggemann, *Genesis, Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*, (John Knox Press: Atlanta, 1982).

Umberto Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis, Part One: From Adam to Noah*, Jerusalem: Manes, 1972. *Part Two: From Noah to Abraham*, Jerusalem: Manes, 1974.

Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1-11, A Commentary*, Translated by John J. Scullion S.J. (Augsburg Publishing House: Minneapolis, 1987).