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# OT 610A EXEGESIS OF GENESIS

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FALL SEMESTER, 2004

Prerequisites: IBS-1/OT501/OT520

8:00-9:15 WED/FRI

3 Units/Enrollment limit: 30

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## 1. Course description

This course explores selected exegetical issues in the Book of Genesis, and provides students with opportunities to apply original-language tools to the book's strategic passages. The focus will be on developing appropriate interpretive skills for the pastoral ministry.

## 2. Course objectives

Students in this course will:

- 2.1. confirm and refine by recourse to the Hebrew text of Genesis literary analysis of longer units previously studied in translation,
- 2.2. assess the textual integrity of shorter pericopes of Genesis employing the BHS text and apparatus and basic text-critical methodology,
- 2.3. analyze the significance of the grammar and sentence structure of brief pericopes using primarily the Hebrew text,
- 2.4. present the significance of key terms in a given brief passage by using basic original language word-study tools and techniques,
- 2.5. identify the function of brief passages of Genesis in the framework of immediate context, function in the literary flow of the book and in the section of the canon within which they appear,
- 2.6. situate the thematic emphases of specific passages of Genesis in the context of the Old Testament's unfolding message and in the context of the Bible as a whole,
- 2.7. demonstrate the impact of representative exegetical methods on the study of Genesis, employing relevant scholarly literature, and situating one's own interpretation in the ongoing discussion of biblical interpretation,
- 2.8. illustrate the contribution of exegetical study of the Hebrew text to biblical exposition, instruction, theological reflection, and spiritual formation in order to construct an appropriation of the passage that is integrative and coherent.

## 3. Course procedures and requirements

3.1. Class presentations will hope to model direct study of Genesis, relying primarily on exegetical skills introduced in OT 501 and IBS-I. After an introduction overviewing the contents of the book as a whole, class sessions will walk systematically through the four units of Genesis (Primeval History, and the Abrahamic, Jacob, and Joseph narratives), highlighting specific passages that make notable contributions to the meaning of each unit. Grammatical and linguistic details of selected passages will be highlighted in order to illustrate the chosen pericope's contribution to the message of the larger unit. Students will be required to read selected sections

of Genesis in preparation for each class period. Attendance at all class sessions is expected, and no passing grade will be granted for students missing more than three sessions.

3.2. Students will take brief quizzes weekly (Wednesdays) to review and reinforce elementary grammar and vocabulary. The central requirements during the term will be four exegetical papers on assigned texts from Genesis, utilizing the skills acquired in OT 501 and IBS-1. These papers should be double-spaced, and no more than five-six pages (i.e., approximately 1200-1300 words) in length. No secondary resources are to be consulted for these papers, since the student will be encouraged to rely on his or her own reading of the text. The paper should present the student's observations of the text's components, including for example, causal and temporal particles, connotations of the verbal derived stems and aspects, significance of word order, and where appropriate, implications of a specific word's usage elsewhere in the Old Testament. Also where appropriate to the specific pericope, students should show sensitivity to sociohistorical, canonical, and theological issues arising from the text itself. The four passages assigned will be **Genesis 1.26-28; 12.1-4; 28.13-15; and 49.8-12.**

3.3. Students will write a final paper on **Genesis 35:9-15** using the methods and skills acquired in the course. Secondary sources may be consulted, beginning with the preliminary bibliography provided in 4.3 below. The paper should also conclude in a brief sermon outline or lesson plan based on the specific observations raised in the paper. These papers should be double-spaced, and no more than ten pages (i.e., approximately 2200 words) in length.

#### 4. Course texts

4.1. Required specifically for OT 610.

Moberly, R. W. L. *The Old Testament of the Old Testament: Patriarchal Narratives and Mosaic Yahwism*. Overtures to Biblical Theology. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992.

Sarna, Nahum M. *Genesis: The Traditional Hebrew Text with The New JPS Translation JPS Torah Commentary*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989.

4.2. Required in previous courses (OT 501).

Arnold, Bill T., and John H. Choi. *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. NB: Students who purchased previous versions of this (*A Guide for the Perplexed*) may continue to use the older version.

Elliger, K., and W. Rudolph, eds. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1967-77.

Holladay, William L. *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1971; or Brown, Francis, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs. *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Oxford: Oxford, 1907. Repr., Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1979.

Landes, George M. *Building Your Biblical Hebrew Vocabulary*. Atlanta: Scholars, 2001.

Scott, William R. *A Simplified Guide to BHS*. Berkley, Calif.: BIBAL, 1987.

Seow, C. L. *A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew*. Rev. ed. Nashville: Abingdon, 1995.

4.3. Recommended for final exercise (see 3.3 above).

- Alter, Robert. *Genesis: Translation and Commentary*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1996.
- Brichto, Herbert C. *The Names of God: Poetic Readings in Biblical Beginnings*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Brueggemann, Walter. *Genesis*. Interpretation, a Bible commentary for teaching and preaching. Atlanta: John Knox, 1982.
- Davies, Philip R., and David J. A. Clines, eds. *The World of Genesis: Persons, Places, Perspectives*. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series 257. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998.
- Fokkelman, Jan P. *Narrative Art in Genesis: Specimens of Stylistic and Structural Analysis*. Studia Semitica Neerlandica 17. Assen: Van Gorcum, 1975.
- Hamilton, Victor P. *The Book of Genesis*. 2 vols. New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1990-1995.
- Hartley, John E. *Genesis*. New International Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament 1. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2000.
- Mathews, Kenneth A. *Genesis 1-11:26*. NAC 1A. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996.
- Rad, Gerhard von. *Genesis: A Commentary*. Translated by John H. Marks. Rev. ed. Old Testament Library. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1972.
- Rendsburg, Gary A. *The Redaction of Genesis*. Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1986.
- Speiser, E. A. *Genesis: Introduction, Translation, and Notes*. AB 1. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1964.
- Turner, Laurence. *Genesis*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000.
- Walton, John H. *Genesis*. NIV Application Commentary. Grand Rapids, Mich: Zondervan, 2001.
- Wenham, Gordon J. *Genesis*. 2 vols. Word Biblical Commentary. Waco, Tex./Dallas: Word, 1987-1994.
- Westermann, Claus. *Genesis*. Translated by J. J. Scullion. 3 vols. Continental Commentary. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1984-1986.
- White, Hugh C. *Narration and Discourse in the Book of Genesis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

## 5. Student evaluation

5.1. Class attendance, preparation, and participation	10%
5.2. Grammatical & vocabulary quizzes	25%
5.3. Exegetical assignments	40%
5.4. Final paper	25%

## 6. Tentative Schedule

Sept 8 Class introduction

Sept 10 **Quiz #1** –Vocabulary (Landes, **lists 1-3**, pages 47-51 verbs only). Prepare for class: Genesis 1-2 (English), and Gen 1:1-8 (Hebrew)

Sept 15 **Quiz #2** (Landes, **lists 4-5**, pages 51-54 verbs only)

Sept 17 **First exegetical exercise due: Genesis 1:26-28**

Sept 22 **Quiz #3** (Landes, **list 6**, pages 54-55 all verbs & cognates over 100+ occurrences and **list 53**, pages 129-130 cognates only over 100+ occurrences)  
Genesis 3:1-11:26 (English), and Gen 6:5-10 (Hebrew)

Sept 29 **Quiz #4** (Landes, **list 7**, pages 56-57 all verbs & cognates over 100+ occurrences and **list 72**, pages 159-160 inclusive)  
Gen 11:27-25:18 (English) and Gen 15.1-6 (Hebrew)

Oct 6 **Quiz #5** (Landes, **list 8**, pages 57-59 all verbs & cognates over 100+ occurrences and **list 54**, pages 130-131 nouns & cognates over 100+ occurrences)  
Gen 15:7-21 (Hebrew)

Oct 8 **Second exegetical exercise due: Genesis 12:1-4**

Oct 13 **Quiz #6** (Landes, **list 9**, pages 59-60 verbs & cognates over 100+ occurrences and **list 73**, pages 160-162 all nouns & cognates over 500+ occurrences)  
Gen 17:1-8 (Hebrew)

Oct 20 **Quiz #7** (Landes, **list 10**, pages 60-62 verbs & cognates over 100+ occurrences and **list 55**, pages 132-133 nouns & cognates over 100+ occurrences)  
Gen 22:1-14 (Hebrew)

Oct 27 **Quiz #8** (Landes, **list 11**, pages 62-63 verbs & cognates over 100+ occurrences and **list 74**, pages 162-163 nouns & cognates over 100+ occurrences)  
Genesis 25:19-37:1 (English)

Oct 29 **Third exegetical exercise due: Genesis 28:13-15**

Nov 3 **Quiz #9** (Landes, **list 12**, pages 63-65 verbs & cognates over 100+ occurrences and **list 56**, pages 133-135 cognates with over 100+ occurrences)  
Genesis 26:1-6 (Hebrew)

Nov 10 **Quiz #10** (Landes, **list 13**, pages 65-67 verbs & cognates over 100+ occurrences and **list 75**, pages 163-165 inclusive)  
Genesis 37:2-50:26 (English)

Nov 12 **Fourth exegetical exercise due: Genesis 49:8-12**

Nov 17 **Quiz #11** (Landes, **list 14**, pages 67- 69 verbs & cognates over 100+ occurrences and **list 57**, pages 135-136 cognates with over 100+ occurrences)  
Genesis 32:22-32 (Hebrew)

Nov 19 – NO CLASS

Dec 1 **Quiz #12** (Landes, **list 15**, pages 69-70 verbs & cognates over 100+ occurrences and **list 76**, pages 165-166 inclusive)  
Genesis 50:15-21

Dec 15 **Final Paper on Genesis 35:9-15** due at 8:00 am