

## Kent Covenant Church and the Pacific NW Conference

Hosting North Park Theological Seminary for:

### Old Testament 1: Pentateuch and Interpretation

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy  
17/S1 BIBL 5210-02

Fall 2017 Week-End Intensive

Three Credit Hours

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#### Course Description

**1. One Week-end Commitment, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday in Kent, WA**

**OCTOBER 19<sup>th</sup>—21<sup>st</sup> 8:30 a.m.—4:30 p.m. daily**

**2. Reading and Writing Assignment Commitment, online.**

Twelve Reading and Writing Assignments with suggested due dates  
in October—November—December 18th

*This course* investigates the over-arching narrative content of the first five books of the Old Testament known as the *Torah* and as *Pentateuch* (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy). It also provides an overview of the main strategies for interpreting these books (hermeneutics) and the varied commitments behind each approach. The approach to the five books is both canonical and historical, so it covers theology of the texts as well as their most prominent interpretive settings in Israel's history. Attention will be given to cultural backgrounds, critical problems, and literary genres as they aid interpretation of specific texts. The primary goal is to prepare students to appreciate, interpret, and teach from these books in ministries of the Church.

The power and passion of the narratives and laws we will read are essential parts of the "Scripture" to which 2 Timothy 3:16 refers. You should begin by reading the primary biblical document from Genesis through Deuteronomy.

#### Course Texts

The books listed below can be found at many online bookseller sites (e.g., [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) ).  
Required

1. Textbook: Birch, Brueggemann, Fretheim, and Petersen, *A Theological Introduction to the Old Testament*, 2nd edition (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005). paperback 9780687066766.
2. *Numerous Articles* posted on our Canvas-site as pdfs will be required reading in preparation for your written assignments.

#### Highly Recommended

D. N. Freeman editor. *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000). The ISBN is 0802824005. NOTE: This is NOT the Eerdmans Bible Dictionary by Allen C. Meyers!

W. LaSor, D. Hubbard, and F. Bush, *Old Testament Survey: the message, form, and background of the OT*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996 (2nd ed. 1996). 0802837883.

## GETTING STARTED

- *First:* Contact me [jbruckner@northpark.edu](mailto:jbruckner@northpark.edu) with your preferred email address so that we can communicate.
- *Second:* Order your textbook for this course (amazon.com is a good source). You will need it very soon.
- *Third:* Mark your calendar for the eight hours per week that you will need to complete this course.
- *Fourth:* Log on to the NPTS Canvas site. When you registered for this course, North Park gave you a new email address (@northpark.edu) and password so that you have access to our course on Canvas. Log on and look around at the site at <https://northpark.instructure.com/>
- *Fifth:* Begin the reading and writing for Assignment #1, described in detail below as well as on the Canvas site.

## READING AND WRITING ASSIGNMENTS with suggested due dates.

\*also described on the North Park Canvas Site.  
All due dates are flexible through December 18<sup>th</sup>.

SUGGESTED DUE DATE: OCTOBER 30 (#1 AND #2)

### #1 Weekly Reading and Writing Assignment

**A. READ:** “The Centrality of the Word of God,” Edited by Bruckner, Clifton-Soderstrom, and Koptak (find the pdf document on Canvas).

#### B. WRITE

In 500-700 words, explain what *each* of the significant words and phrases of the following affirmation mean: “We believe in the Holy Scriptures, the Old and New Testaments, as the Word of God, and the only perfect rule for faith, doctrine, and conduct.” You may, but do not need to, use the Evangelical Covenant Church perspective article listed above as background, but do not quote or attempt to summarize it. Explain the meanings of the words of the quotation in your own words. Upload your document to the Canvas site.

### #2 Weekly Reading and Writing Assignment

**A. READ** “A Mother in Israel” by Cheryl Exum. Find this article as a pdf document on Canvas.

#### B. WRITE

In 500-700 words write a detailed summary of the assigned reading, “A Mother in Israel” by Cheryl Exum. See the “Detailed Summary” instructions for writing this paper at the end of this syllabus.

If you are unsure, please ask for further clarification of this assignment by email. Hand in written work by uploading your Word.doc on Canvas.

SUGGESTED DUE DATE: NOVEMBER 6 (#3 AND #4)

### #3 Weekly Reading and Writing Assignment

**A. READ, in the Bible:** The Book of Genesis, chapters 1-50

**B. WRITE**

In 700 words, tell the entire story of Genesis on one single-spaced page. For the best score, focus on the major characters, plot, and theological significance of chapters 1-50 and attend to the balance of your word count in relation to *all fifty chapters* of the biblical text.

Upload your paper to Canvas.

### #4 Weekly Reading and Writing Assignment

**A. READ**

Chose and read one of the social location perspective essays on Exodus from the six listed here and found on Canvas: Pixley, (Latin American); Ela, (Black African); and Moon, (Korean); Asian Feminists; Warrior (Native American); and Ateek (Palestinian). These are from the book *Voices from the Margin: Interpreting the Bible in the Third World*. Edited by R.S. Sugirtharajah. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1995.

**B. WRITE**

Write a 700 word “detailed summary” of the *one* article that you read. Be sure to adequately summarize the author’s thesis and how he/she/they develop the argument for the thesis. Save your critique and perspective for the final paragraph. See the directions for writing a “Detailed Summary” near the end of the syllabus.

PLEASE NOTE: Degree-seeking NPTS students will replace this assignment with a Portfolio writing project. Please contact the professor for this alternate assignment.

SUGGESTED DUE DATE: NOVEMBER 13TH (#5 ONLY)

### #5 Weekly Reading and Writing Assignment

This is a new kind of reading and writing assignment.

**A. READ the first four chapters of your textbook.**

The textbook for this course is written by four highly-regarded Old Testament scholars: Bruce Birch, Walter Brueggemann, Terence Fretheim, and Petersen, *A Theological Introduction to the Old Testament*, 2nd edition (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005).

- chapter 1 “The OT as Theological Witness”
- chapter 2 “The Created Order and the Re-creation of Broken Order” on Genesis 1-11
- chapter 3 “Promises Made, Threatened, and Fulfilled” on Genesis 12-50
- chapter 4 “Bondage, Exodus, Wilderness” on Exodus 1-18

**B. WRITE**

After reading each chapter in the textbook, respond to it by writing about 250 words for each chapter. To write your response:

- 1) Begin by writing the bibliographic information (author, title, publisher, page numbers).
- 2) First state the focus of the reading and the author’s primary interest and thesis.
- 3) Then simply state what you found most engaging or helpful.
- 4) Write a 250-word response *for each* of the chapters (1000 words total).

SUGGESTED DUE DATE: NOVEMBER 20 (#6 AND #7)

**#6 Weekly Reading and Writing Assignment**

**A. READ** "Embracing the Law: a biblical theological perspective," by E. Martens.  
Find this article as a pdf document on Canvas.

**B. WRITE**

Write a 500-700 word detailed summary of the Martens article that you read. Be sure to adequately summarize the author's thesis and how he develops the argument for the thesis. Save your critique and perspective for the final paragraph.

**#7 Weekly Reading and Writing Assignment**

**A. READ in the Bible: The Book of Numbers**

**B. WRITE**

After surveying the book of Numbers, write a guide (about 700 words) of key teaching points for use in the church from Numbers *content*. Be sure to cite biblical texts in referring to the themes for full credit.

OR memorize and recite the Ten Commandments for the professor (before the end of the semester). You may use any version and either Exodus 20:1-5a, 7-10a, 12-17 OR Deuteronomy 5:6-8, 11-14a, 16-21. Please notify me by email when you are ready to recite.

SUGGESTED DUE DATE: NOVEMBER 27 (#8 ONLY)

**#8 Weekly Reading and Writing Assignment**

**A. READ** "Introduction to the Book of Deuteronomy," in *NIB vol. 2*, pp. 271-289, by Clements.  
Find this article as a pdf document on Canvas.

**B. WRITE**

Write a 500-700 word detailed summary of the article that you read by Clements. Be sure to adequately summarize the author's thesis and how he develops the argument for the thesis. Describe his thought without adding your commentary. Save your critique and own perspective for the final paragraph only.

SUGGESTED DUE DATE: DECEMBER 4TH (#9)

**#9 Weekly Reading and Writing Assignment**

**A. READ** "What is Black Theology?" in *Introducing Black Theology*, pp. 11-36, by Bruce L. Fields.  
Find this article as a pdf document on Canvas.

**B. WRITE**

Write a 500-700 word detailed summary of the article that you read by Fields. Be sure to adequately summarize the author's thesis and how he develops the argument for the thesis. Describe his thought without adding your commentary. Save your critique and own perspective for the final paragraph only.

SUGGESTED DUE DATE: DECEMBER 11TH (#10)

**#10 Weekly Reading and Writing Assignment, also due December 2<sup>nd</sup>**

**A. READ the following articles and chapters (found on Canvas)**

- A. Cain Hope Felder, "Racial Motifs in the Biblical Narratives" in *Voices from the Margin*, edited by R.S. Sugirtharajah, 172-188.
- B. "The Structures of Covenant Life" chapter 5 in Bruce Birch, Walter Brueggemann, Terence Fretheim, and Petersen, *A Theological Introduction to the Old Testament*. (your textbook)
- C. Tremper Longman III, "Before the Land" in *A Biblical History of Israel*, 107-123.
- D. Justo Gonzales, "Reading the Bible in Spanish" in *Mañana: Christian Theology from a Hispanic Perspective*, 75-87.

**B. WRITE FOUR SHORT RESPONSES**

After reading each article, respond to it by writing about 250 words for each one.

To write your responses:

- 1) Begin by writing the bibliographic information (author, title, publisher, page numbers).
- 2) First state the focus of the reading and the author's primary interest and thesis.
- 3) Then simply state what you found most engaging or helpful.
- 4) Write a 250-word response *for each* of the articles/chapters (1000 words total). Keep each of the four responses in ONE Word document. Upload your four responses in a single Word.doc on Canvas.

DUE DATE: DECEMBER 18TH (#11 AND #12)

All assignments are due by Monday, December 18<sup>th</sup> at midnight.

**#11 Weekly Assignment**

**A. READ the Exam Study Guide** (this is an "open book" exam.)

Find this pdf document on Canvas.

**B. WRITE**

**After reading the Study Guide, write a four-point description** of each of the items listed in the Study Guide. Upload your work to Canvas.

**#12 Weekly Reading and Writing Assignment, also due December 9<sup>th</sup>**

**A. READ the Study Guide again, looking only for the people who are listed.**

**B. WRITE**

**Write a list, in chronological order**, including all the people listed on Study Guide. To each name, **add the biblical book and chapter(s)** in which they are found. Upload your work to Canvas.

## GUIDELINES

### For papers that call for a “Detailed Summary” of an article.

These papers should be a brief summary of essential points or precise abstract of the article or chapter that you have read.

#### Format and Content

These papers should be on one page, single spaced, block-style paragraphs, about 500 words.

Do not quote more than a phrase or two.

In 3/4ths of the page (3-4 paragraphs) answer these questions:

- a. What is the author’s interest? What question or problem is she addressing?
- b. What is the main point of the author’s “answer” to that question?
- c. How does the author build her argument? What warrants (proof or logic) does she offer?
- d. Briefly summarize the main argument, step by step.

In 1/4<sup>th</sup> of the page offer your “critique” of the arguments. These may include:

- a. What’s missing?
- b. What assumptions do you question?
- c. Is the author’s “interest” a helpful approach?
- d. What did you learn? What questions remain?

Always be sure to add the bibliographic reference of your article (Author, Title, Publishing information, page numbers). If you quote a text, put the citation in parentheses.

#### Submission Guidelines

- Papers can be submitted ANY TIME during the course, but the modules are designed to help you spread out your work over the whole course. Papers must be submitted by uploading to our course site in Canvas. To turn in your writing assignments, go to the Canvas homepage.
- click on the appropriate assignment and upload your paper.
- All documents should be saved/titled with your last name and assignment number (e.g., *Smith, Assignment 1.doc*).
- You will also find your feedback there, by clicking on the grade in the gradebook.

#### Grading

- Attendance and Participation at all Madison face to face sessions: 40%
- Writing Assignments: 60% (twelve papers, five percent each)
- NPTS Grade percentages operate as follows: A (93+), B (86+), C (78+), D (70+).

### VALUE ADDED READING (Optional and available on Canvas as pdfs)

- Blenkinsopp, "Introduction to the Pentateuch" in *New Interpreters' Bible*, vol. 1, 305-18.
- "Archeology" in LaSor, *OT Survey*, 641-52.
- Walton, "A Historical Adam"
- "Transcripts of the Trinity" Cheryl Bridges Johns, *Ex Auditu*, volume 30.
- "Collapse of Historical Criticism," Tremper Longman III, in *Introduction to the OT*, 42-51.
- Friedman, "Deception for Deception" (on deception in Genesis narratives)
- Achtemeier, "Why God is Not Mother"
- "Genesis: Patriarchal History" by LaSor in *OT Survey*
- Mary Douglas, *Leviticus as Literature*, chapter one.
- "What Every Christian Should Know about Exodus," James K. Bruckner, in *Word and World*.
- John Walton, *Equilibrium and the Sacred Compass: The Structure of Leviticus*, 293-304.
- Carol Redmount, "Bitter Lives," 58-89, ed. Coogan, *Oxford History of the Biblical World*, 2001.
- "Communion and Koinonia: Pauline Reflections on Tolerance and Boundaries," by N. T. Wright, a paper given at the *Future of Anglicanism Conference*.
- Abraham Heschel, "The Meaning and Mystery of Wrath" in *the Prophets*, 358-382.
- "Theological Reflections on the Wrath of God in the OT," Terence Fretheim, in *Horizons in Biblical Theology*, vol. 24, 1-26.
- Marilyn Robinson, "Moses," in *When I Was a Child, I Read Books*, 95-124.
- Kathryn Green-McCreight, "Restless Until We Rest in Thee." For a contemporary account of a Christian advocating a return to Sabbath-keeping, see Mathew Sleeth, *24/6* (Tyndale, 2012).
- Rabbi Eckstein: "Festivals of the Jewish Year" pp. 93-130.
- "What About the Canaanites", Christopher Wright, in *The God I Don't Understand* (part I, part II). The primary source for translated ancient Canaanite literature is J. Gibson, *Canaanite Myths and Legends*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Edinburgh: T&T Clark) 1978.

The Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible includes these relevant articles. I recommend it for every Christian teacher's library.

- sixteen maps inside the back cover
- *On Interpretation*: Archeology; Tell; Pottery; Gezer; Hazor. Beth-Shean (e.g.s of archeological digs); Interpretation-Biblical; Haggadah; Halakhah; Biblical criticism; Yahwist; Elohist; Priestly document.
- *On Genesis One*: Genesis-Book; Abyss; Chaos; Creation; Deep; Darkness; Day; Leviathan; Light.
- *On Interpretation*: Pentateuch; Revelation; Genre; Dispersion (diaspora); Canon of the OT; Masoretic Text; Leningrad Codex; Text of the OT (long); Bible
- *On Genesis 1-3*: Dominion; Image of God; Adam; Eve; Eden; Death; Fall.
- Bible translation; Emendations of the Scribes; Greek Versions (of OT).
- *On Genesis*: Flood; Noah; Genealogy; Generation; Ham, Canaan (person); Humanity; Nephilim; Original Sin; Cain; Babel.
- *On Interpretation*: Deuteronomistic History; Hezekiah-King; Josiah-King; Hilkiyah; Historiography-Biblical.

- Abraham, Sarah; Euphrates River; Ur; Sumerians; Aram; Haran (place and person); Padan-Aram; Palestine (geographical); Beersheba; Herding (culture); Hebron (place); Bless; Election; Abimelech; Hagar, Ishmael; Isaac, Rebekah; Moriah; Esau; Jacob; Rachel, Leah; Matriarchs; Israel (long); Bethel (place); Dinah; Joseph; Aseneth; Famine; Simeon, Reuben, Levi; Judah; Zebulun; Issachar; Dan; Gad; Asher; Naphtali; Joseph (Manasseh; Ephraim); Benjamin.
- Exodus-Book; Exodus (event); Egypt (ten columns); Pharaoh; Ramses II; Hyskos (Egyptian rulers); Goshen; Hebrew (people); Moses; Miriam; Aaron; Nile; Plagues; Destroyer; Midian; Kenites; Jethro; Zipporah.
- Many Waters; Sea Monster (Exod 15); Massah-Meribah; Amalekites; Wilderness; Negev; Manna; Rephidim; Covenant; Yahweh; God-Names; El-Elohe-Israel; El Elyon; El Shaddai; El (four columns); GOD (long); Covenant-Book; Debt, Interest, Loans; Hammurapi; Orphans; Widow.
- *On Exodus*: Grace (*khesed*); Repentance; Redemption; Tabernacle; Bread of the Presence; Glory; Ephod.
- *On Leviticus*: Leviticus-Book; Clean and Unclean; Water of Purification; Holiness; Levites, Levitical Cities; High Priest; Priesthood (long); Altar; Sacrifices and Offerings (long); Burnt Offering; Elevation Offering (wave); Libation; Peace Offering.
- Law (long); Judge, Judgment, Justice, Justification; Righteousness; Sanctification; Atonement, Day of Atonement; Expiation; Firstborn; First-fruits; Blood; Lex Talionis (law of just retaliation); Jubilee, Year of (Lev. 25).
- Numbers-Book; Cities of Refuge; Edom; Peor (ba'al peor); Korah; Face; Wrath; Plague; Balaam; Zelophad's Daughters.
- Deuteronomy-Book; Corporate Personality; Monotheism; Ethics; Daughter; Father; Mother; Mother's House; Heart; Sabbath; Sabbatical Year; Jubilee; Ten Commandments; Commandment; Covet; Murder.
- Worship; Feasts-Festivals; (1) Passover/Unleavened Bread Feast; (2) Pentecost/Weeks-Feast; Tabernacles-Feast (a.k.a. Booths, Sukkot)/Trumpets-Feast.
- Canaanites; Ammonites; Amorites; Phoenicians; Philistines; Moab; Moabite Stone; Edom; Ugarit (long on Canaanite culture); Idol; Idolatry; Asherah; Ashtoreth; Ashtaroth; Harlot; Chemosh; Milcom; Molech; Terephim.

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