

COURSE SYLLABUS

OT511: Old Testament Theology I: Pentateuch and Former Prophets

Course Lecturer: Richard E. Averbeck, PhD

Course Description

Welcome to *Old Testament Theology I: Pentateuch and Former Prophets*, an online graduate-level course designed to expand your understanding of foundational theological concepts introduced in the Old Testament, which will inform interpretation of all of Scripture.

In this course, Dr. Richard E. Averbeck introduces the content and theology of Genesis through Kings, identifying the foundational themes that emerge and tracing them through the rest of the Bible. The goal of the course is to work through the books section by section focusing on major passages and their theological connections through all of Scripture. Special attention is given throughout the course to the significance of these passages for the church and the Christian life so that you will be keenly aware of the need to go beyond a simplistic and mechanistic reading of the text into a deeply implicational reading, expecting to be both informed and impacted by its message.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course, you should be able to do the following:

- Identify various genres of literature in Genesis through Kings and learn to interpret them with credibility.
- Articulate the significance of Genesis 1-11 as the primeval historical and theological foundation for understanding our human experience in the world.
- Understand how the Pentateuch (Genesis-Deuteronomy) lays the historical and especially the theological foundation for the Former Prophets (Joshua-Kings) and for the rest of the Bible.
- Understand how the Pentateuch and the Former Prophets fit together within the canon, and how they contribute to our understanding of faith experience in ancient Israel.
- Value the ways in which Ancient Near Eastern literature can inform our reading of Scripture.
- Become familiar with the history recorded in Genesis through Kings and its relationship to the history of the surrounding Ancient Near Eastern world.
- Trace the overall historical progression of God's covenantal redemptive program from Genesis through Revelation.
- Value all of the above goals as crucial to an ongoing study of the whole canon of Scripture as well as foundational to the way we live our Christian lives and pursue our ministries.

Accessibility

If you have particular accessibility needs, please contact the CUGN Registrar at the beginning of the course. This will allow us to work directly with you to make efforts to accommodate your situation and ensure as full as possible accessibility to the course.

Course Lecturer



Richard E. Averbek, PhD

Education:

- Annenberg Research Institute at the University of Pennsylvania, PhD
- Grace Theological Seminary, MDiv and MA
- Calvary Bible College, BA

Teaching Career:

- Professor of Old Testament and Semitic Languages, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School
- Dallas Theological Seminary (1990-1994)
- Chairman of the Old Testament Department, Grace Theological Seminary (1980-1990)
- Visiting lecturer at the Lutheran School of Theology in Copenhagen and Århus, Denmark
- Preached and taught in China, across Germany, and West Africa
- Expertise in Old Testament Law, Near Eastern Studies, and Semitic languages

Other Career Highlights:

- Member of the Evangelical Theological Society, the Institute for Biblical Research, the American Oriental Society, and the Society of Biblical Literature
- Director of the Spiritual Formation Forum
- Licensed therapist in Wisconsin, having studied under his friend and colleague, the world renowned counselor and Christian psychologist, Dr. Larry Crabb

Publications:

- Numerous articles for *The Future of Biblical Archaeology*, *The Journal of the American Oriental Society*, *The Journal of Spiritual Formation and Soul Care*, and *The Journal of Psychology and Christianity*
- Extensive contributions to *The New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis* and *The Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*
- Entries for *The Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology; Faith Tradition, and History*; and *Cracking Old Testament Codes*
- Chief editor and major contributor to the *Life and Culture in Ancient Near East*

Online Professor

Within two weeks of your registration for the course, CUGN will assign one of its faculty members as the online professor. Once your online professor has been assigned, (s)he will be introduced and will guide you through the 8-week study. Your online professor will be available to you by email and can, at set times, be available by video chat or other real-time technology.

The following will be done by the online professor in order to stimulate student involvement and to facilitate effective learning:

- Evaluate and assign grades to all coursework.
- Answer questions that may arise.
- Issue your final grade.

For additional help as you work through this course, please read *Succeeding in Your Online Course*, which is provided at the end of this syllabus.

Course Texts

Required:

Dyrness, William. *Themes in Old Testament Theology*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1979.

Sandy, D. Brent & Ronald L. Giese, Jr., eds., *Cracking Old Testament Codes: A Guide to Interpreting the Literary Genres of the Old Testament*. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995.

Walton, John H. *Chronological and Background Charts of the Old Testament*. Revised and Expanded. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994.

You will also need a copy of the Bible as you will be required to read the Old Testament books of Genesis through Kings, as well as several additional biblical texts. See *Weekly Topics and Assignments* for further details. You should use a modern translation (not a paraphrase), e.g., RSV, NASB, NKJV, NIV, NRSV, etc.

Textbooks can be ordered through our online store at CUGN.org, through your local bookstore, or through your preferred eReader when available.

Academic Honesty

At CUGN, we believe all we do is “as unto the Lord” and we thus hold to a high academic standard of honesty; we do not tolerate plagiarism and cheating. Students found guilty of any form of academic dishonesty face consequences ranging from interaction with the Academic Dean to expulsion from CUGN.

Quizzes and Exams: Any student found guilty of cheating on a quiz or exam will automatically receive a score of zero for that quiz or exam. A second offense will result in automatic course failure and possible disciplinary action and/or expulsion from CUGN. Please view the [CUGN Academic Catalog](#) for a full definition and examples of cheating.

Plagiarism: If a student’s work is found to be plagiarized, consequences will vary depending on the nature of the plagiarism.

If an offense is deemed unintentional, the student will have an opportunity to resubmit the work. A second offense will result in an automatic score of zero for that assignment, which may also result in failure of that course.

More serious plagiarism offenses could result in automatic course failure, disciplinary action, or expulsion from CUGN. Please view the [CUGN Academic Catalog](#) for a full definition and examples of plagiarism. If you have questions about plagiarism, or would like to request resources for learning how to avoid plagiarism, please contact our Registrar's Office at registrar@cugn.org or toll free at (888) 487-5376 ext. 3.

Course Methods

Throughout this course, a number of methods will be used to engage you in learning and processing information, and applying the learning to your life. These methods include the following:

Media/Materials

The course will include media presentations of lectures and supplementary materials to be viewed, listened to and/or read throughout the lessons of the course.

- **Audio-based teaching**
The primary course content will be delivered via audio lectures, including the full transcript of each lecture.
- **Multisensory learning**
Because the primary teaching information is provided in audio and PDF text documents, students can choose the medium (or combination of media) that most closely aligns with their individual learning styles.
- **Readings and other media**
Reading from the required textbooks will be assigned to students each week.

Interaction

Whether sitting in a traditional classroom or studying from a distance, students benefit from interaction and collaboration with other students. In order to meet this need in distance theological education, CUGN offers structures and resources to encourage effective community interaction in this course.

Discussion Forum

Students are required to respond to questions posted in the course and are encouraged to read and respond to the posts of other students.

Reflection

Through blogging, CUGN provides many opportunities for students to reflect on what they have learned, what they believe, and where they are challenged. The goal of these reflections is personal spiritual growth and transformation.

Course Requirements

This course consists of a mentor relationship, readings, audio lectures, videos, discussion forums, a creative research project, quizzes, and blogging. The information regarding these course components and expectations is as follows:

MENTOR

This course requires that you seek out a mentor in your community with whom you can communicate by e-mail and/or telephone and with whom you can meet face-to-face at least twice during the course. The purpose of this mentoring relationship is to enable you to assimilate the teaching in this course into your life and ministry. Further definition of the mentor's role in this course can be found in the "Mentor Requirements" information available in the Week 1 Assignments section of the course.

READING

Study assignments covered in this course should be read in the context of the lesson in which they are assigned. In addition to the required textbooks, you may be asked to read supplementary materials. The required reading is as follows:

1. Read the books of Genesis through Kings and several additional biblical texts as assigned in each lesson. You should use a modern translation (not a paraphrase), e.g., RSV, NASB, NKJV, NIV, NRSV, etc.
2. Read William Dyrness' *Themes in Old Testament Theology* in its entirety.
3. Read Brent Sandy and Ronald Giese's text, *Cracking Old Testament Codes*, in its entirety. This text is a compilation by several scholars (including Dr. Aeverbeck) and provides background and perspective on the various genres of the Old Testament, which are crucial for proper interpretation.
4. Read 500 additional pages from the readings referenced in the lecture outlines or the course bibliography. This is your opportunity to pursue topics of interest. Readings completed for your creative research project may count toward this reading requirement. List all completed readings in a reading log as part of your blog.

AUDIO LECTURES

Each of the lessons in this course features an audio lecture of approximately 45 minutes in length delivered by Dr. Richard E. Aeverbeck. These instructional lectures are required and can be listened to as many times as needed. The written text of the lecture as well as a guided outline to assist in note taking are made available in PDF format. There are 24 lectures in this course; therefore, three lectures will be presented and discussed each week.

DISCUSSION FORUMS

Discussion questions related to each week's lectures are integrated into the weekly course requirements. You are required to post your own original response to each question in the Discussion Forum. Each response should consist of two to three well-developed paragraphs. In addition, your online professor may comment on your posts, and you should be prepared to respond to those comments.

VIDEO PRESENTATIONS

There are four video presentations related to this course that are required viewing. You will note them in the assignment section in the weeks where they are relevant.

CREATIVE RESEARCH PROJECT

You will develop a creative research project on a topic of interest related to the subject matter of this course. Upon completion of the project, you will submit a paper describing the project along with any related documentation. More guidance concerning the project will be provided by your online professor during the first week of the course, and you may also find topic ideas and further instructions in the Creative Research Project Instructions document available in the Before You Begin section of the course. The topic for your research project must be submitted to your professor for preapproval prior to beginning your research. Projects may be posted online to be read and commented on by other students. Your Creative Research Project and related writing are due at the end of Week 5. Remember, each week begins on a Monday and ends the following Sunday; therefore, the Creative Research Project is due on the Sunday of Week 5 at 11:59 p.m. EST.

QUIZZES

You will take a 10-question, multiple choice and/or true/false quiz at the end of each lecture. There is a “remediation” feature built into all quiz questions that allows you to review questions you missed. Once you have reviewed the question again, you can attempt to answer a second time. If you are correct, you will receive half of the normal credit for that question. If you do not attempt to answer the second time, you will not receive credit for that question. You will be given only one attempt to take each quiz. All quizzes are timed (20 minutes) and will be graded automatically.

REFLECTION

You will be required to keep a blog during the 8 weeks of this course, posting *at least once per lesson*. Your blog entries will consist of your response to the Personal Reflection Question found in each lesson’s Class Time. Blog entries can be viewed only by you and CUGN faculty, unless you wish to make them available to anyone else taking the class. The purpose of the blog is to help you reflect on what you are learning, what you believe, and where you may be challenged in your thinking and your life by what is studied in this course. The goal of these reflections is personal spiritual growth.

DUE DATES

Each week of the course begins on Monday at 12:01 a.m. EST and ends on Sunday at 11:59 p.m. EST. Unless noted otherwise, all assignments are due at 11:59 p.m. EST on the Sunday of the week in which the assignment is due. For example, if an assignment is due during Week 2, you must complete and submit it by 11:59 p.m. EST on Sunday, the last day of Week 2. It is at your online professor’s discretion to penalize late work.

Course Grading

All coursework must be completed and turned in to your online professor within five days of the end of Week 8. Please note that it is at your online professor’s discretion to penalize late work.

Your grade for the course will be determined as follows:

Online Participation	30% of Course Grade
Creative Research Project	30% of Course Grade

Lesson Quizzes	25% of Course Grade
Reading	10% of Course Grade
Mentor Meetings	5% of Course Grade

Grades will be issued within two weeks of the end of the course.

Weekly Topics and Assignments

Week 1:

- Take the Moodle tutorial for online instruction.
- Listen to the following lectures:
 - #1: God, People, and the Bible*
 - #2: Introduction to the Book of Genesis*
 - #3: Creation and Structure of the Cosmos: Genesis 1*
- Read the following:
 - Genesis 1:1–37:1
 - Dyrness: Introduction and Chapter 1
 - Sandy/Giese: Introduction and Chapters 1 and 2
- Participate in the Discussion Forum.
- Complete your blog entries.
- Complete quizzes 1, 2, and 3.
- Identify and contact your mentor.
- Submit topic for Creative Research Project.

Week 2:

- Listen to the following lectures:
 - #4: The World of Mankind: Genesis 2*
 - #5: The Fall and Fallenness: Genesis 3:1-13*
 - #6: The Curses: Genesis 3:14-24*
- Read the following:
 - Genesis 37–Exodus 34 and Matthew 18:1-5
 - Dyrness: Chapters 2 and 3
 - Sandy/Giese: Chapters 3 and 4
- Participate in the Discussion Forum.
- Complete your blog entries.
- Complete quizzes 4, 5, and 6.
- Have first meeting with your mentor.

Week 3:

- Listen to the following lectures:
 - #7: *The Effects of the Fall: Genesis 3–4*
 - #8: *The World of the Flood: Genesis 5:1–6:8*
 - #9: *The Flood, Noah, and Abram: Genesis 6–12*
- View the video *Hebron: The City of Promise*.
- Read the following:
 - Exodus 35–Numbers 14
 - Dyrness: Chapters 4 and 5
 - Sandy/Giese: Chapters 5 and 6
- Participate in the Discussion Forum.
- Complete your blog entries.
- Complete quizzes 7, 8, and 9.

Week 4:

- Listen to the following lectures:
 - #10: *Covenant and Redemption in the Bible*
 - #11: *Covenant Commitment, Continuity*
 - #12: *In the Wilderness and at Sinai*
- View the video *The Unbreakable Promise: God’s Covenant with Abraham*.
- Read the following:
 - Numbers 15–Deuteronomy 11
 - Dyrness: Chapters 6 and 7
 - Sandy/Giese: Chapters 7 and 8
- Participate in the Discussion Forum.
- Complete your blog entries.
- Complete quizzes 10, 11, and 12.

Week 5:

- Listen to the following lectures:
 - #13: *Theophany and Law at Sinai: Exodus 19–20*
 - #14: *The Book of the Covenant and the Tabernacle*
 - #15: *Introduction to the Levitical Regulations*
- View the video *The Unbreakable Promise: God’s Covenant with Moses*.
- Read the following:
 - Deuteronomy 12–Joshua 24
 - Dyrness: Chapters 8 and 9

Sandy/Giese: Chapters 9 and 10

- Participate in the Discussion Forum.
- Complete your blog entries.
- Complete quizzes 13, 14, and 15.
- Submit Creative Research Project.

Week 6:

- Listen to the following lectures:
#16: Levitical Regulations, Purity and Holiness
#17: The Law, the Church, and the Christian Life I
#18: The Law, the Church, and the Christian Life II
- Read the following:
 Judges 1–I Samuel 20; Matthew 5:17-48; 22:34-40; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:22-27; II Corinthians 3:3-6
 Dyrness: Chapters 10 and 11
 Sandy/Giese: Chapters 11 and 12
- Participate in the Discussion Forum.
- Complete your blog entries.
- Complete quizzes 16, 17, and 18.

Week 7:

- Listen to the following lectures:
#19: The Law, the Church, and the Christian Life III
#20: History and Writing in Ancient Israel I
#21: History and Writing in Ancient Israel II
- Read the following:
 I Samuel 21-I Kings 11; Romans 6-8
 Dyrness: Chapters 12 and 13
 Sandy/Giese: Chapter 13
- Participate in the Discussion Forum.
- Complete your blog entries.
- Complete quizzes 19, 20, and 21.

Week 8:

- Listen to the following lectures:
#22: The Book of Joshua
#23: The Period of the Judges

#24: *The Institutions of Priest and Prophet*

- View the video *The Unbreakable Promise: God's Covenant with David*.
- Read the following from the course texts:
I Kings 12–II Kings 25
Dyrness: Chapter 14
Sandy/Giese: Chapter 14
- Participate in the Discussion Forum.
- Complete your blog entries.
- Complete quizzes 22, 23, and 24.
- Have final meeting with your mentor.

Week 8 Follow-Up:

- Complete and post all blog entries.
- Complete Discussion Participation, Reading Completion, and Mentor Meetings Validations.
- Complete and submit course evaluation form.

Course Contributors

CUGN utilizes the radio and television teams of Our Daily Bread Ministries to enhance the students' educational experience. This course uses four videos from the *Day of Discovery* television program. The expert contributors to these programs are listed as follows:

- Mart DeHaan, Litt.D. (Cornerstone University), Senior Advisor of Ministry Content at Our Daily Bread Ministries
- Jimmy DeYoung, Ph.D. (Louisiana Baptist University), Journalist and Conference Speaker
- Michael Rydelnik, D.Miss. (Trinity Evangelical Divinity School), Professor of Jewish Studies at the Moody Bible Institute
- David Wilder, B.A. (Case Western Reserve University), Spokesman for the Committee of the Jewish Community of Hebron

Notes Regarding This Syllabus

This syllabus is designed to provide learners with an overview of the course. CUGN will provide specific instructions related to assignments for each lesson, specific discussion question postings, and interactive involvement with all students.

Succeeding in Your Online Course

1. Remember that this is a full semester's study completed in eight weeks. Therefore, expect that there will be a significant time commitment needed in order to complete all the requirements.

2. If you have any questions about the Moodle learning environment, the course requirements, schedule, or assignments, please contact the online professor who is ready and willing to help you have a successful online learning experience.
3. Technological problems may occur. Be sure to have a back-up plan in case of computer failure or late arrival of textbooks.
4. Before you post a comment or a response to another student's comment, be sure you have read the material and listened to the lectures related to the topic under discussion.
5. Think about how you can promote additional discussion by the comments you post.
6. When you post, respond directly to the question under consideration and express your points clearly and concisely, making only one main point per post.
7. If you find sources related to the topic being discussed, please share them with the class.
8. Practice good "netiquette": Disagree respectfully, stay on point, and don't post anything that is derogatory or inflammatory.
9. Enjoy, learn, challenge, and be challenged!