

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND REQUIREMENTS

Old Testament I (Genesis – Esther)

Course Description: A survey of Genesis through Esther, preparing the student for Old Testament Studies II which will take him/her through the rest of the Old Testament. The focus is on understanding the major contents of each book, with attention to literary structure, historical backgrounds, geographical settings, and parallel passages. The study is aimed at enhancing comprehension and application to issues and concerns of life today in the will of God.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course the student should be able:

- To articulate the purpose and major emphasis of Genesis – Esther and show its relationship to other parts of the Scripture.
- To describe the structure of each book in Genesis – Esther.
- To fit the unfolding drama of God's revealed plan into its canonical and historical setting.
- To navigate through the major geographical regions of Israel.
- To describe the historical flow of Genesis – Esther.
- To recognize the theme and purposes of Genesis – Esther.
- To summarize the major problem passages in Genesis – Esther..

Required Textbooks

The MacArthur Study Bible (ESV, NAS or NKJV acceptable).

Recommended Textbooks

An Historical Survey of the Old Testament, by Eugene Merrill. ISBN: 0801062837. Retail \$27.99, Amazon \$19.00.

A Survey of the Old Testament, 2nd Ed. by Andrew E. Hill and John H. Walton. ISBN: 0310229030. Retail \$34.99, Amazon \$23.09.

Assignments

- Read Genesis – Esther once.
- Read the introductions to each of the books in Genesis – Esther in *The MacArthur Bible* according to the reading schedule below. Required reading is only the highlighted item.
- Write down the main **purpose** of each book in one sentence and identify 5-10 main **themes** for each book in Genesis – Esther.
- Write 3 papers, 500 words each to turn in on May 8 by email to mzhakevich@gracechurch.org.

Class Schedule

Date	Topic	Assignment
Week 1 1/13	Introduction to the Course; Introduction to Ancient Literature Introduction to the Pentateuch	
Week 2 1/20	Genesis	Read <i>MSB</i> Introduction & Intro. to Pentateuch & Intro. to Genesis Read <i>Cracking OT Codes</i> , Intro & ch 1 Read <i>Kingdom of Priests</i> , Intro & ch 1
Week 3 1/27	Exodus	Read <i>MSB</i> Introduction Read <i>Cracking OT Codes</i> , ch 2 Read <i>Kingdom of Priests</i> , ch 2
Week 4 2/3	Leviticus	Read <i>MSB</i> Introduction Read <i>Cracking OT Codes</i> , ch 3 Read <i>Kingdom of Priests</i> , ch 3
Week 5 2/10	Numbers	Read <i>MSB</i> Introduction Read <i>Cracking OT Codes</i> , ch 4 Read <i>Kingdom of Priests</i> , ch 4
Week 6 2/17	Deuteronomy	Read <i>MSB</i> Introduction Read <i>Cracking OT Codes</i> , ch 5 Read <i>Kingdom of Priests</i> , ch 5
Week 7 2/24	Deuteronomy (continued)	<i>Cracking OT Codes</i> , ch 6 <i>Kingdom of Priests</i> , ch 6
Week 8 3/3	Shepherds Conference NO MEETING	
Week 9 3/10	Introduction to the Former Prophets; Joshua	Read <i>MSB</i> Introduction Read <i>Kingdom of Priests</i> , ch 7
Week 10 3/17	Judges	Read <i>MSB</i> Introduction Read <i>Kingdom of Priests</i> , ch 8
Week 11 3/24	Samuel	Read <i>MSB</i> Introductions Read <i>Kingdom of Priests</i> , ch 9
Week 12 3/31	Kings	Read <i>MSB</i> Introductions Read <i>Kingdom of Priests</i> , ch 10-11
Week 13 4/7	Spring Break NO MEETING	
Week 14 4/14	Introduction to the Writings; Ruth; Esther	Read <i>MSB</i> Introduction Read <i>Kingdom of Priests</i> , ch 12
Week 15 4/21	Ezra / Nehemiah	Read <i>MSB</i> Introductions Read <i>Kingdom of Priests</i> , ch 13
Week 16 4/28	Chronicles	Read <i>MSB</i> Introductions Read <i>Kingdom of Priests</i> , ch 14
Week 17 5/8	FINALS WEEK	Synopsis Papers Due

Synopsis Papers Questions (choose 3)

1. Genesis: Trace the development of the Abrahamic & Noahic Covenant in Genesis. (500 words)
2. Exodus: State what Exodus revealed concerning Israel's deliverance and Yahweh's purpose(s) for the sons of Israel. (500 words)
3. Leviticus: According to Leviticus, how did the Old Testament saint maintain his relationship with Yahweh? (500 words)
4. Numbers: What did Numbers teach concerning Israel's obedience and disobedience to Yahweh and Yahweh's response to Israel? (500 words)
5. Deuteronomy: What did Deuteronomy reveal about Yahweh and what did Yahweh require of Israel? (500 words)
6. Joshua: How did the book of Joshua relate to the Abrahamic Covenant and the land? (500 words)
7. Judges: Describe the cycle of Israel's sin and Yahweh's response according to the book of Judges. (500 words)
8. Samuel: Trace the development of the Davidic Covenant in the book of Samuel. (500 words)
9. Kings: What was the prophetic evaluation (prophets in the book and the prophetic author of the book) of Israel/Judah's monarchy according to the book of Kings? (500 words)
10. Ezra/Nehemiah: In what way did the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants impact Israel after the exile according to the book of Ezra/Nehemiah? (500 words)
11. Chronicles: How did the book of Chronicles trace the history of the Davidic Dynasty and the Temple? (500 words)
12. Ruth and Esther: Describe what each of these books taught concerning the providence of God. (250 words for each)

Sample Purpose and Themes Assignment

Purpose: To show God as creator of the world, covenant making God, and a God who chooses to bless a people of his choice and fulfills his promise in various ways, many time unimaginable for men.

Themes

- Creation
- Eden
- God's power
- Death as a result of sin
- Suffering as results of sin
- Genealogy
- God makes and keeps covenants
- God judges sin (Flood)
- Origin of Sin
- Patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob
- God's amazing deliverance
- Joseph
- Egypt
- Canaan
- Supernatural beings (Satan and angels)
- Election
- Establishment of a chosen nation

Sample Synopsis Paper: Trace the Abrahamic Covenant in Genesis.

The book of Genesis presents the origins of the nation of Israel. It introduces the reader to the patriarchs of Israel and the God they worshiped. A central part of the founding of Israel's nation is the covenant that God made with Abraham. The Abrahamic covenant is the crux not only for Judaism but also for Christianity. The Jew is a participant in the covenant itself, while the Christian is blessed through, and participates in the benefits of the Abrahamic covenant. The essential elements of the covenant are: 1) Abraham is personally blessed with a descendant (12:2), 2) the descendants of Abraham will become a great nation (18:18), 3) the promise of land that will be inherited by the descendants (13:14-18), 4) the Messiah will come from his lineage (17:4-6), 5) many nations will be blessed through this covenant (12:3).

The first 11 chapters of Genesis establish the need for this covenant, namely that people are great on this earth, the nations are numerous (ch 10-11) and these will be the benefactors of God's blessing. After Moses outlines the need for the covenant, he proceeds to introduce the main player in the covenant, Abraham. In order for Abraham to receive the blessings, he had to be set apart by God, he had to leave his past and by faith follow God's words to an unknown country. He had to leave his nation, his family and embark into a place where God would bless him (12:1-3). After he obeyed God, it is said that, "he believed in the LORD and He reckoned it to him as righteousness" (15:6). God chose Abraham as the vessel whom he declared righteous and through whom he would fulfill the plan of blessing all the nations. To solidify His promises, God sealed them through the normal covenant making procedure: God passed through the ram and goat which were cut in half while Abraham slept, thereby making the covenant with himself. God bound himself to keep His oath, it is a unilateral covenant, it is not dependent on Abraham, only on the faithfulness of God.

Although Abraham did not participate in the covenant making ceremony, that is, he did not pass through the halves of dead animals, he was required to carry the mark of the covenant, namely circumcision. It is amazing that God chose the organ that will produce the seed of promise to be the sign of the covenant. Additionally, once the promise became reality, that is, once Isaac was born, he was conveniently called Isaac (meaning "laughter") signifying Abraham's and Sarah's disbelief in God's ability to keep his promise. As Professor Essex made it clear in class lecture, they laughed at God's promise and every time they said "Isaac," they are reminded of their disbelief and laughter at God's promise. Although they were overwhelmed with the reality of God's promise, God chose to test Abraham, to prove his faith and asked for Isaac to be sacrificed. This was the climax in the Abrahamic covenant. Isaac was to be the door for the blessing of all the nations, and now he was to be sacrificed. Genesis 22 details Abraham's obedience to God's command and God's provision for a substitute in place of Isaac once it was evident that Abraham had solid faith in the promises of God. Once God showed Abraham that his faith is strong and his obedience is unwavering, he reconfirmed the promise of the blessings which will come through Isaac. In 22:17-18 He reaffirmed the promise of 1) numerous descendants, 2) success over the enemies of Isaac and his descendants, and 3) the international blessing that will come through Isaac. The reason given for these blessings is obedience of Abraham. This is a great picture of the maxim that God blesses obedience and punishes disobedience. When the Israelites were on their way to Canaan, Moses reiterated this promise on numerous occasions (Deut 28), and this is a perfect picture of this principle.

It is vital to note that God's promise was not only made to Abraham, but he reiterated it to Isaac (26:2-5) and Jacob (28:10-17). It must have been passed down by Jacob to Joseph since Genesis 50:24 makes it clear that Joseph believed God's promise as well. The Abrahamic covenant started with one man who was chosen by God to be the door for blessings that will come upon many nations. God chose him but he obeyed and trusted God. Abraham becomes an example of faith and obedience to God's words and promises.