



PROVIDENCE
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THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

OT5300 Introduction to the Old Testament

Martin Culy, PhD
Winter 2020 – January 6-10 module
at Horizon College and Seminary, Saskatoon

mmculy@gmail.com

3 credit hours

About the Instructor

Marty Culy is the Director of Cypress Hills Ministries and has served as a Bible translator, college and seminary professor, pastor, and church planter over the past 30 years. He is the founding editor of the Baylor Handbook on the Greek New Testament commentary series and has authored many articles and nine books, including *The Book of Revelation: The Rest of the Story* (2017) and *Quoting Corinthians: Identifying Slogans and Quotations in 1 Corinthians* (2019). Marty graduated from California State University Fresno (BA), University of North Dakota (MA), Grace Theological Seminary (MDiv), and Baylor University (PhD).

Course Description

An introduction to the study of Old Testament with particular attention to its theological, historical, and literary environment. The study aims to provide an outline for understanding how the theology of the Old Testament can and should shape the identity and mission of the contemporary church.

Course Objectives

- Students will gain a basic understanding of the historical, social, literary, and religious contexts of the Old Testament.
- Students will further their ability to interpret the various genres of the Old Testament carefully and appropriately.
- Students will gain an understanding of the overall message and key themes of the Old Testament.
- Students will appreciate and be able to articulate the significance of the major Old Testament covenants.
- Students will consider how the Old Testament impacts ministry in the Church.

Required Textbooks

Boda, Mark J. *The Heartbeat of Old Testament Theology: Three Creedal Expressions*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017.

Richter, Sandra L. *The Epic of Eden: A Christian Entry into the Old Testament*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2008.

Wright, Christopher J. H. *How to Preach & Teach the Old Testament for All Its Worth*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016.

Recommended

DeRouchie, Jason S., ed. *What the Old Testament Authors Really Cared About: A Survey of Their Writings*. Second edition. Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2013.

Course Requirements

PRE-MODULAR WEEK ASSIGNMENTS

****Students are encouraged to read broadly in the Old Testament in preparation for class.*

1. **Reading and Summary of *The Epic of Eden* (15%).** Read *The Epic of Eden* and write a brief summary (4 pages maximum) of the overall argument and key points of this book. Attempt to answer this question: In what ways does Richter's book help you to understand the message of the Old Testament more clearly? The focus of this assignment is not on critically evaluating Richter's argument(s), but rather on gleaning useful information from the broad argument of a scholarly source. You do not need to focus on fine details in your summary, though you should get in the habit of making notes of specific details that will help you in your personal study of the Old Testament in the future. Whenever you make claims about the argument of the book, be sure to cite specific pages or quote the author. *Please include a footnote on the first page of your essay confirming that you read the book in its entirety.*
Due: January 6, 2020.
2. **Reading and Response Essay to *How to Preach & Teach the Old Testament* (20%).** Read *How to Preach & Teach the Old Testament*. Write a response essay (6 pages maximum) in which you describe how what you learned in this book will help you to read and teach/preach the Old Testament more responsibly and more fruitfully. Like the previous assignment, the focus of this assignment is on gleaning whatever helpful information you can from a scholarly source. In this essay, however, your focus should be on specific details in the book that will have practical payoff for ministry or personal spiritual growth. *Please include a footnote on the first page of your essay confirming that you read the book in its entirety.* **Before you begin this assignment, see assignment #3.**
Due: January 6, 2020.

MODULAR WEEK ASSIGNMENTS

3. **Class Presentation on *How to Preach & Teach the Old Testament* (10%).** Choose one of the following topics and prepare a 15-minute class presentation that summarizes the key points from the relevant chapter(s) of *How to Preach & Teach the Old Testament*. Focus on practical lessons that preachers, Sunday school teachers, small group leaders, etc., can learn from this book. One of your goals should be to demonstrate to your audience why this book is valuable for students of the Old Testament.
 - a. Preaching and Teaching from Old Testament Law (Chapters 9 and 10)
 - b. Preaching and Teaching from the Prophets (Chapters 11 and 12)
 - c. Preaching and Teaching from the Psalms (Chapters 13 and 14)
 - d. Preaching and Teaching from Wisdom Literature (Chapter 15)

Due: January 7-9, 2020 (depending on topic).

POST- MODULAR WEEK ASSIGNMENTS

4. **Reading and Critical Assessment Essay to *The Heartbeat of Old Testament Theology* (25%).** Read *The Heartbeat of Old Testament Theology* and write a critical assessment essay (6-8 pages) that (1) summarizes in detail the main argument(s) of the book; and (2) evaluates the book's argument(s) both in light of the Old Testament and in light of what you learned in class. Does Boda's book complement or contradict what you learned in class? What are its strengths and weaknesses? *One third to one half of your essay must focus on critical assessment.* Although this book contains a significant amount of Hebrew, you should be able to follow the argument without knowledge of Hebrew. *Please include a footnote on the first page of your essay confirming that you read the book in its entirety.*

Due: February 10, 2020

5. **Old Testament Covenants Research Paper (30%).** Write a research paper (12-15 pages) that describes, compares, and contrasts the various Old Testament covenants and then discusses how these covenants shed light on the nature of the new covenant and can be used in proclaiming the gospel. This research paper has four components that you are required to integrate into a coherent essay: (1) Describe the major covenants of the Old Testament (Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, and Davidic), highlighting the similarities and differences between them. Be sure to address the question of what the Old Testament covenants teach us about the nature of biblical covenants in general. (2) Briefly describe how the Old Testament covenants compare or contrast with other Ancient Near Eastern covenants. (3) Describe how a proper understanding of the major Old Testament covenants helps us to better understand the nature of the New Covenant, which is mentioned in Jeremiah 31 and fleshed out in the New Testament. Be sure to give a clear description of the New Covenant. How is the New Covenant the same or different from the earlier covenants? (4) Show how your description of the covenants can be used to share the gospel with someone. Your entire paper may optionally be formatted as a presentation of the gospel message that integrates (1), (2), and (3) into that message. Alternatively, you can cover (1), (2), and (3) in a typical research paper format and then have a final section that uses a summary of your analysis of (1), (2), and (3) in a presentation of the gospel. You may refer to New Testament passages in this paper, but they should only be used to show how they support or flesh out Old Testament passages. Your research paper should draw on a minimum of 10 scholarly sources (academic books, journal articles, dictionary entries, etc.), which may include

your textbooks and some of the following:

- “Covenant, In the Old Testament.” International Standard Bible Encyclopedia.
<https://www.biblestudytools.com/encyclopedias/isbe/covenant-in-the-old-testament.html>
- D. A. Carson, “A Little Introduction to the Covenants.”
<https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/a-little-introduction-to-covenants>
- Boda, Mark J., and J. Gordon McConville. *Dictionary of the Old Testament Prophets*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2012.
- Dumbrell, William J. *Covenant and Creation: An Old Testament Covenant Theology*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1984.
- Freedman, David Noel, ed. *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*. 6 volumes. New York: Doubleday, 1992.
- Gentry, Peter J., and Stephen J. Wellum. *God’s Kingdom through God’s Covenant: A Concise Biblical-Theology*. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 2015.
- Gentry, Peter J., and Stephen J. Wellum. *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants*. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 2012.
- Jeon, Jeong Koo. *Biblical Theology: Covenants and the Kingdom of God in Redemptive History*. Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2017.
- McKenzie, Steven L. *Covenant*. Understanding Biblical Themes. St Louis: Chalice, 2000.
- Meadors, Edward P. *Creation, Sin, Covenant, and Salvation: A Primer for Biblical Theology*. Eugene, Ore.: Cascade, 2011.
- Niehaus, Jeffrey J. *Biblical Theology: The Common Grace Covenants*. Wooster, Ohio: Weaver, 2014.
- Niehaus, Jeffrey J. *Biblical Theology. Volume 2: The Special Grace Covenants*. Wooster, Ohio: Weaver, 2017.
- Robertson, O. Palmer. *The Christ of the Covenants*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980.
- Schreiner, Thomas R. *Covenant and God’s Purpose for the World*. Short Studies in Biblical Theology. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 2017.
- Waltke, Bruce. *An Old Testament Theology: An Exegetical, Canonical, and Thematic Approach*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007.

Due: April 10, 2020

Course Schedule

Date	Topics	Presentations
Monday, January 6	Course Introduction Intro to the Old Testament Genesis – Deuteronomy	
Tuesday, January 7	Joshua – 2 Kings	Preaching/Teaching the Law
Wednesday, January 8	1 Chronicles – Proverbs	Preaching/Teaching the Psalms Preaching/Teaching Wisdom Lit.
Thursday, January 9	Ecclesiastes – Lamentations	Preaching/Teaching the Prophets
Friday, January 10	Ezekiel – Malachi	