

Genesis - Deuteronomy
OT5200/Fall 2026
Thursdays 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM

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Course Description

This course covers the first five books of the Bible through literary, historical, and theological analysis. Major themes are traced through the Pentateuch as each biblical book is examined. Important theological issues, such as creation, fall, covenant, and law, are examined in the context of the ANE and Israel's own historical setting. Such analysis is foundational for understanding the rest of Scripture and for how this section of Scripture has meaning for God's people today.

Course Objectives

- a) To acquire a general knowledge of the content of the first five books of the Bible.
- b) To look at the big picture and to see how the different parts of this section of the canon relate to each other.
- c) To understand the foundational importance of the Pentateuch for the rest of Scripture by looking at key theological issues.
- d) To examine this section of Scripture considering the culture and history of the ANE.

Required Reading: only a few of the following works are read in their entirety

Textbooks

- 1) Miles Van Pelt, ed. *A Biblio-Theological Introduction to the Old Testament* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2016), hereinafter *BTIOT* (Introduction; Chapters 1-5)
- 2) Richard P. Belcher, Jr., *Prophet, Priest, and King: The Roles of Christ in the Bible and Our Roles Today* (P&R, 2016), **read all**; hereinafter *PPK*
- 3) R. Belcher, *The Fulfillment of God's Promises: Understanding Covenant Theology* (Christian Focus, 2020), chapters 1-8, 14 and 2 Appendices

If you have already read the sections of this book that are assigned, then read 146 pages from any of the following books or combination of books

- a) read the rest of *The Fulfillment of the Promises of God*

- b) *Christ Fulfills All: Introducing the Biblical Covenants*, R. Belcher
 - c) *Covenants Made Simple*, Jonty Rhodes
 - d) *Sign, Sealed and Delivered: An Introduction to Covenant Theology*, John Fesko
 - e) If you desire to go deeper, then read from *Covenant Theology*, eds. Waters, Muether, Reid
- 4) John D. Currid, *Against the Gods* (Crossway, 2013), Prologue, Chaps 1-4, 9
 - 5) Mary Ellen Buck, *The Canaanites* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2019); Chaps. 1-3, 5.
 - 6) V. Poythress, *The Shadow of Christ in the Law of Moses* (P & R Publishing, 1991), chapters 1-11, 15-17, Appendices B, C.
 - 7) Wayne Grudem, ed., *A Biblical Case Against Theistic Evolution* (Crossway, 2022); Chaps 1-4, 6; hereinafter *BCATE*
 - 8) John N. Oswalt, "Continuity: the Basis of Mythical Thinking," in *The Bible Among the Myths* (Zondervan, 2009), 47-62. Made available to students on Canvas
 - 9) Richard Belcher, *Why does the God of the Old Testament seem so Violent and Hateful?* (Christian Focus, 2023); hereinafter *GOT*
 - 10) The Trinity Psalter (buy in the RTS bookstore)

Recommended Books

- 1) *Theistic Evolution: A Scientific, Philosophical, and Theological Critique*, eds. J. P. Moreland, Stephen C. Meyer, et al (Crossway, 2017)
- 2) *ESV Bible Atlas*, eds. John D. Currid and David P. Barrett (Crossway, 2010)
- 3) John D. Currid, *The Case for Biblical Archaeology* (P&R, 2020)
- 4) Richard P. Belcher, Jr., *Genesis: The Beginning of God's Plan of Salvation* (Christian Focus, 2012)

Assignments

- 1) The books from Genesis to Deuteronomy must each be read.
- 2) The Required Reading (see the list above and the schedule below): report percentage out of 100% on Canvas, due December 2, 11:59 PM

3) There will be a quiz each week in class covering memory verses and outlines (see the Quiz Schedule). The lowest quiz grade will be dropped. Please be on time. The first time you are late for no good reason there is grace. The second time will be your drop. Subsequent times will mean a deduction in grade.

4) There will be two exams (a midterm and a final) taken with the Lock Down Browser

5) A research paper on a law passage (Exodus 21 through Deuteronomy). See the handout on the guidelines for the paper.

Grades

1) Exams	50%	3) Reading	15%
2) Research Paper	25%	4) Quizzes	10%

Extension Policy

In extenuating circumstances, a deadline extension of **up to one week** may be granted at the discretion of the professor (see below). Requests for extensions of **more than one week** must be submitted to the Registrar for consideration by the Academic Dean in consultation with the professor. Extensions are granted only for significant emergencies or unforeseen circumstances, and a grade penalty may be applied. *All extension requests must be made prior to the assignment deadline.* No retrospective extensions will be granted.

The professor will receive late papers without penalty if there is an unexpected, major event in life that occurs (remember Hurricane Helene). Otherwise, each day the assignment is late will drop the grade one-half a grade each day until day 7.

RTS Internet Policy during Class

RTS Charlotte recognizes how essential it is for students to have reliable, campus-wide access to the internet. For that reason, we have made Wi-Fi available for our student body, not only in the library and student lounges, but also in the classrooms. We know that students need to use the internet to download class materials, access files on the Cloud, and locate other important information. However, we also recognize that internet access in the classroom provides opportunity for abuse and misuse. Some students have unfortunately used their internet access to engage in many activities that distract them from the classroom lectures (e.g., surfing the web, checking sports scores, playing games). Not only does such activity hamper a student's own seminary education, but it distracts other students who can easily view the screens of nearby students. In addition, donors and classroom guests (who often sit in the back) can see this inappropriate internet usage, which reflects poorly on RTS. Classroom etiquette includes leaving cell phones turned off, refraining from surfing the Internet or playing computer games or other

distracting activities. In addition, students must respect standards set by individual professors regarding the use of technology during their class.

In order to address this issue, we must appeal to the integrity of the students as ones who are preparing for a lifetime of ministry to Christ and his church. We expect each student to take personal responsibility for proper classroom technology usage and to encourage others around them to do the same. All RTS-Charlotte students are accountable to the policies stated in the Student Handbook and Academic Catalog and are therefore expected to use technology in the classroom only for appropriate class-related activities. Student conduct is under the supervision of the Dean of Students.

RTS Charlotte

Student Instructions for Exams with LockDown Browser

1. Install the LockDown Browser application on the computer you intend to use for exams, prior to sitting for the exam, using this link:
<https://download.respondus.com/lockdown/download.php?id=998253613>
 1. This link is ONLY for RTS students and covers Mac and Windows applications.
 2. Be sure that you are able to log in to your Canvas account from the LockDown Browser before the day of the exam.
 3. If you use internet filtering software (for example, Covenant Eyes) you may need to disable it before beginning an exam with LockDown Browser. Some types of filtering software can block your computer's connection to Canvas. Also, please be sure to add an exception for our Canvas URL: <https://rts.instructure.com>
2. The exam proctor should not be a current RTS student (current = taken a class within the past year but not yet graduated) or a member of the library staff.
3. The proctor must observe the student taking the exam and ensure that there are no devices or resources available other than the computer being used for the exam.
4. Access the exam during the date window specified for that exam.
 - a. Sign in with the proctor.
 - b. Start the LockDown Browser application using a wired or known reliable Wi-Fi connection. We do not recommend using restaurant or coffee shop Wi-Fi to take exams.
 - c. Have your student ID number and proctor details available to input into the exam.
 - d. Log in to your Canvas account.
 - e. Navigate to the exam. You will not be able to access the exam with a standard web browser. For additional details on using LockDown Browser, review this [Student Quick Start Guide \(PDF\)](#).
 - f. The time clock will begin once you open the exam.
 - g. The exam must be completed in one sitting. You may not exit and return to the exam later.

- h. The exam will contain questions regarding an honor pledge, and certification that your proctor was present during the entire exam period.
 - i. Sign out with the proctor.
5. Proctors may be contacted to verify information regarding exam administration.
 6. In the rare case of a technical issue (for example, if power goes out during exam) the proctor will document the date and time when the issue was reported. Once you open the exam using the LockDown Browser, you will not be able to access other programs on your computer.

Schedule

<u>Day</u>	<u>Topics</u>	<u>Assigned Reading</u>
August 20	Introduction to the Course	BCATE Chap. 1
	Historical, Theological, and Literary: Critical Theories at a Crossroads	Currid Chaps. 1-2 Cov. Bk, App. 1
	Authorship of the Pentateuch	GOT Intro, Chap 1
August 27	Genesis: Structure and Views of Genesis One	<u>Genesis 1:1-2:3</u> Currid Chap. 3
	Genesis One: Regular Day View	Oswalt Art Myth GOT Chaps. 2-3
September 3	Genesis 2-3: The Origin of Our Problems	<u>Genesis 2:4-3:24</u> Cov Bk Chaps 1-3 PPK Chaps 1-3
	Genesis 1-3: An Ancient Text with Modern Implications	BCATE Chaps. 2-4
September 10	Genesis 4-11: The Outworking of Sin	<u>Genesis 4-11</u> Currid Chap. 4 Cov. Bk Chap. 4
September 17	The Patriarchs: God Will Fulfill His Promises	<u>Genesis 12-36</u> <i>BTIOT</i> Intro/Chap 1 Cov Bk Chap. 5

September 24	Joseph: God Rewards Faithfulness	<u>Genesis 37-50</u> Canaanites, Chaps 1-2 BCATE Chap. 6
	Historical Review: God at Work for the Sake of His People	Canaanites, Chaps 3, 5
	Midterm Exam given outside of Class	
October 1	Different Approaches to the Role of the Law	Poythress Append B-C, Chaps 1 & 17 Cov Bk Chap 6 & pp. 120-137
	Modern Application of the Law	Poythress 9-11 GOT Chaps. 4-5
October 8	Fall Break/Reading Week	
October 15	Israel in Egypt: We Cannot Save Ourselves	<u>Exodus 1-4</u> <i>BTIOT 2</i>
	The Plagues: God Fights for His People	<u>Exodus 5-11</u> Currid Chap. 9
	Passage for Paper Due	
October 22	Redemption: God Provides For His People	<u>Exodus 12-19</u> GOT Chaps 6-7
	The Mosaic Covenant: Law and Tabernacle	<u>Exodus 20-40</u> Poythress Chaps 2, 5
October 29	Sacrifices and Priesthood: Approaching a Holy God	<u>Leviticus 1-10</u> Poythress Chaps 3-4
	Leviticus 11-16: Cultic Purity	<u>Leviticus 11-16</u> <i>BTIOT 3</i> Poythress Chaps 7
November 5	Numbers: Israel the Army of God	<u>Numbers</u> <i>BTIOT 4</i> Poythress 6, 8

November 12	Deuteronomy: Covenant Renewal	<u>Deuteronomy</u> <i>BTIOT 5</i> PPK Chaps. 6-8 Cov Bk Chaps 7, 14 & pp. 115-119
November 19	No Class: listen to RTS Mobile App/Classroom/OT/ Genesis-Deuteronomy/The Holiness Code, Lesson 21, Lecture 1	
	Leviticus 17-27: The Holiness Code	<u>Leviticus 17-27</u> PPK Chaps. 4-5
November 26	No Class Thanksgiving	
Research Paper due Wednesday, December 2 Upload to Canvas		
December 3-8	Final Exam	



Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: Genesis through Deuteronomy

Professor: Richard P. Belcher, Jr.

Campus: RTS Charlotte

Date: May 6, 2025

MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes <i>In order to measure the success of the MDiv curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MDiv outcomes.</i> <i>*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.</i>		Rubric • Strong • Moderate • Minimal • None	Mini-Justification
Articulation (oral & written)	Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks. Also includes ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Strong	understanding through lectures and reading, articulation through essay exams and a research paper
Scripture	Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.)	Strong	focus in the class is on understanding the original meaning, with some emphasis on language and more on hermeneutics, with the goal of understanding modern meaning
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Moderate	the class has a good dose of Reformed distinctives, such as the emphasis on creation, fall, redemption, covenants, the role of the law
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Moderate	although everything in the class is geared toward better understanding who God is and a proper response to God
Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God. Includes ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Moderate	several issues in class deal directly with worldview, especially the material in Genesis 1-3
Winsomely Reformed	Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.)	Minimal	differing views of issues are set forth in an objective, fair, and winsome way
Pastoral Ministry	Ability to minister the Word of God to hearts and lives of both church and unchurched, to include preaching, teaching, leading in worship, leading and shepherding the local congregation, aiding in spiritual maturity, concern for non-Christians.	Very Minimal	this class will help a student understand the word so the student can minister the word of God