

**ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**  
**BTH 530 Old Testament Theology**

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Spring 2010  
Tuesdays 2:00-4:45

**COURSE SYLLABUS**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

A study of the message, important themes, and key theological concepts of the Old Testament, understanding how they are developed and expressed in the ancient cultural and historical context, with attention to the relationship of the Old Testament to the New Testament and its relevance to believers today.

**OBJECTIVES**

Upon completion of this course the student should be able to:

1. Explain briefly the field of Old Testament theology.
2. Discuss key Old Testament teachings through the major divisions of the O.T.
3. Describe the continuity and unity of Old Testament theology.
4. Identify the underlying theological principles in any Old Testament passage and apply them to the Church today with proper understanding of their relation to New Testament theology, including being able to explain how to go about this.

**TEXTBOOKS**

**Required:**

Cotton, Roger D., ed. *BTH 530 OT Theology Handouts, 2010*, Springfield, MO: by AGTS.

Kaiser, Walter C. Jr. *The Promise-Plan of God: A Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008. ISBN: 0310275865 (hardcover) \$34.99, ISBN: 0310866677

Waltke, Bruce K. with Charles Yu. *An Old Testament Theology: A Canonical and Thematic Approach*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007. ISBN: 0310218977

**BASIC OUTLINE**

1. Introduction
2. Foundational theology of Genesis
3. The theme of the Promise and the central message of the Scriptures.
4. The field of Old Testament theology and doing it.
5. Major theological concepts as taught in the Pentateuch: especially covenant, presence, sovereignty and responsibility, law, and holiness.
6. The relationship of the Sinai Covenant to the Christian.
7. Joshua-Kings, theology of the land, leadership, and holy war.
8. Poetic and Wisdom literature, holistic theology of the struggles and hope of the righteous and the concept of biblical wisdom.
9. Prophecy and the rest of the Old Testament.

We will be attending chapel on January 26<sup>th</sup> from 2:00-3:15 and on March 16<sup>th</sup> from 2:00-3:15.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Lecture, discussion, reading, writing, and research assignments.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Class attendance is expected; maximum allowable absences is two class periods. Please talk to the professor about your absences.

1. Be prepared for each class to discuss the handouts and relevant sections of the textbooks (see instruction below on how much must be finished by the end of the course), and any other assigned readings according to the class schedule below. Any specified readings not in the book of handouts, along with other selected important sources, are on 2 hour reserve at the front desk of the library.  
Read the rest of the Kaiser textbook **Part 1** on the Old Testament by the end of the course. Read the professor's handouts for the course corresponding to the topic of the day and finishing by the end of the course.

The following is the **required reading in the Waltke textbook by the end of the course:**

Read the Preface and Chapters **1-17**. This is generally not to be skimmed but neither is it to be labored over for all the details. This is Waltke's richest material but still it often contains too much detailed exposition. Include a glance at his footnotes to see interesting discussions and important sources.

Read p. **560** on Land in the New Testament.

Read pp. **660-661** on the Davidic Covenant.

Overview the following chapters looking for Waltke's categories/topics, key concepts, definitions, propositions, and conclusions: **19, 24, 29, 30, 32, 33**.

Also, you must read what Waltke says about the individual OT book you pick for the assignment for week 3 on the theological message and themes of a book and anything related to your theme project for week 5.

Make note of important questions you have about what Waltke says and raise them in class or at least by e-mail.

2. Turn in on **Tuesday, Jan. 12**, 4-6 pages summarizing the principles of *what it means to do Old Testament theology* based on the Preface and Part 1 of the textbook by Waltke, along with the Preface and Introduction of Kaiser. Waltke's Preface is important for understanding his work. Then, in Part One, He writes many important things including great material on God's revelation in Scripture; however, this summary essay assignment will **not** get into all of that but is intended to focus on *what this field is about*, what the *issues* are, and *how one goes about doing OT Theology*. You are to put together your understanding of those things in order to understand what this course is about and what Waltke is doing in his book. Note that Waltke deals with most of the following points of the assignment in more than one place in these chapters. Therefore, *collect his points on each question* as you read through all the chapters.
  - A. Begin with your **definition** of Old Testament theology in your own words as a sub field of biblical theology in contrast with (but not in conflict with) systematic theology, in one sentence and then elaborate in another few sentences. You must be sure to tell how it differs from systematic theology. You should consider Waltke's statements on what he believes it is, the goal and task of OT theology (such as on pp. 20, 50, 55, 63, et. al.), as well as the professor's view. However, you are not expected to restate theirs but say it the way you understand it and will teach others.
  - B. List what Waltke brought out as the **major issues or broad questions** about the study of OT theology that must be dealt with when deciding how to derive theology from the Old Testament books. These are the foundational questions about the OT, which conservative Bible believers often answer differently from liberal scholars because they differ over the first big question of the divine origin and thus authority and trustworthiness of the Scriptures. That presupposition is the major divider between conservatives and liberals and affects everything else they think about the text and do with it. This assignment *assumes* basic agreement with Waltke on this and is **not** intended to discuss it. (The student is welcome to discuss any questions about the divine nature of the OT with the professor.) This assignment is to focus on the rest of the major questions that one must deal with concerning deriving theology from the 39 books of the Old Testament for Christians. This is **not** about specific questions of interpreting certain OT texts. One of the big issues, for example, which you must include is first summed up in Waltke's statement on page 12 that "A theology of the OT must account for both the . . . and the . . ." Another two issues are Waltke's first and fourth implications of one's belief in revelation/inspiration. Some others include the 3 important challenges in the field that Waltke explains in Chapter 2.
  - C. Next, list, in a few broad categories, the **major approaches** scholars have taken to

covering the subject—the *basic kinds of ways they have organized the coverage of the OT material* and written Old Testament theology books. Look at the table of contents of the OT theologies on reserve in the library to see how they are organized: Davidson, Eichrodt, Von Rad, Payne, Martens and House. Kaiser has some good discussion of this. Add a few brief comments on what you think about **Kaiser's approach** and what he does in his book with his view of promise. Briefly describe it and give your opinion on it. Also, briefly summarize **Waltke's approach**. Be sure you consider what he says in the Introduction section of Chapter 6.

- D. Finally, explain briefly **how one goes about** deriving theology from an OT passage or book. What are the major principles and categories of study that Waltke explains, especially in Chapters 3 (C), 4 and 5? Just summarize them; there is way too much detail in these chapters.
3. Do a major researched study of a theme/topic of your choice, approved by the professor by. This is to be an exegetical, Biblical-theological, study for teaching in the church, with strong application for God's people today. The theme should be one that the student has a strong interest in and will benefit their ministry. It must have at least one reference to the theme in each of the four groupings of Pentateuch, history books, poetry and wisdom, and prophets. (But note that the outline does not need to follow these groupings but may be organized topically.) This study must demonstrate good interpretive method including the following **to qualify for an A grade** (also see handouts about method and tools):
- A. Concordance work, mainly focusing on key Hebrew words, which uncovers all the major passages on the theme/topic in which the key Hebrew words used. Then, good word study analysis of the concepts expressed by them, including reading the articles on those words in the word books, especially NIDOTTE.
  - B. Quick but accurate exegetical analysis of the meaning of each important passage on the theme in the context of the message of that book, taking into account the ANE background, using the *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, biblical encyclopedia articles and other background sources, and the best, scholarly, exegetical, commentaries on each passage (usually about 3 or so on significant passages; see my list in the handouts). Do your own analysis first before reading the scholars' opinions.
  - C. Read at least one scholarly journal article related to your theme, and be sure to check any scholarly books specifically on your theme for helpful insights.
  - D. Check at least the following OT theologies for anything they have that relates to your theme: Davidson, Eichrodt, Von Rad, Payne, Martens, House, Dyrness, and Waltke (see Bibliography and library reserve books for these).
  - E. Draw conclusions on what God is teaching on your theme/topic through the various passages of the Scriptures in terms of principles which can be applied to the lives of Christians today.

**Choose one of the following methods of presentation:**

- A. Present in class for up to 20 minutes on a day to be scheduled, the highlights of a 2-3 page outline of the theme study, turned in the morning of the day before, for the professor to get copied for the class.
- B. Make an appointment to present to the professor in his office a 20 minute summary of an outline of the theme study.
- C. Turn in a 9-12 page paper on **Tuesday, April 20**, on the theme.

**For all Three Choices:**

*Your topic must be turned in for approval by Tuesday, January 26.* All three choices require a list of all sources consulted (not just cited) and articles in books must follow 17.1.8 in Turabian 7<sup>th</sup> ed. This is to be based mainly on concordance work, including key word studies, with consultation of the following **to qualify for an A grade**: NIDOTTE, *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, monographs, the best commentaries on each of the key passages, key journal articles, and O. T. theologians including: Davidson, Eichrodt, Payne, Von Rad, Martens, Dyrness, Kaiser, and Waltke (see Bibliography and library reserve books, also Checklist of Resources). Do your own analysis first before reading the scholars' opinions. It should take into account any progressive revelation. Put your name, the course, and the date at the top of the first page of the outline; you do not need a title page unless it is over 4 pages. An outline need not be double spaced throughout, but do **NOT** justify the right margin for any work for this course. Provide a title page but no cover, just staple it. For a paper the style should conform to Turabian 7<sup>th</sup> ed. with your choice of citation method: footnotes, endnotes, or parenthetical references. For an outline, few citations are expected, though there should be the same depth of study and list of sources consulted as for a paper.

- 4. Sign an accountability sheet turned in with the summary below that you have read a book of the Old Testament, of your choice, in one sitting, in order to grasp its major theological message and main themes. Also, you are to read the sections of the following books on reserve that relate to the book of the OT you chose:

Child's Introduction to the Old Testament, Waltke's An Old Testament Theology, House's OT Theology, Hummel's The Word Becoming Flesh, the article on it in volume 4 of NIDOTTE, and the theology sections of the introductions of the *three best* exegetical commentaries on the book.

TURN IN, on **Tuesday, April 13**, a page or two of summary of the theological message and major themes of the book with a view toward preaching the book. Include a one sentence or phrase summary of the message of the whole book, and a very brief, basic outline of the major divisions of the flow of thought of the book. See my example for Numbers in the handouts but expound the message a little more.

It is recommended that the book relate to the theme project.

5. Write an essay final exam on, **Tuesday, April 20.**
6. Late work may be penalized 1 point per day late using a 12 point scale (12 = A, 1 = F).

### **WRITTEN WORK SUBMITTED TO ROGER COTTON**

All work for me must be typed, double spaced, with one-inch margins and the right margin NOT justified, and be proof-read. Your writing should demonstrate good, formal, clear, writing style (see handouts and Strunk and White or *Getting the Words Right*). The format should follow Turabian 7th edition. Signed articles in books such as word books, encyclopedias, word books, or other multi-author works, must follow 17.1.8. If you need to cite a source you may choose which one of the three citation methods in Turabian you prefer to use: foot notes, end notes, or parenthetical. For assignments with specific readings, no bibliography is needed unless you want the professor to know about additional reading you did. If you need to cite a source that was assigned, just put the last name in parentheses with the page number. The length may exceed the limit by a page or so. Assignments are due at the beginning of the class on the due date or the grade begins to drop (see above for late work). If you do not have an assignment finished when it is to be discussed in class you must leave the class during the discussion of the assignment. Put the following information at the top of the first page or on a title page: Name, assignment, course, my name, date. Do not put anything but the page numbers at the top of the other pages. No title page is needed for work under 4 pages. Do not use a cover, just staple it.

### **GRADING PROCEDURE**

Reading assignments and class participation	8%
Paper on doing OT Theology	14%
Final Exam	28%
Outline of a theme in the OT	40%
Reading and summarizing the themes of an OT book	10%

### **SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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## **SPECIFIC DATA**

Prepared by Roger D. Cotton, October 2009.