

**ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**  
**Continuing Education Course**  
**Springfield, MO**  
**October 15-19, 2001**

**BTHM 530 OLD TESTAMENT THEOLOGY**

**Roger D. Cotton, Th.D.**

**FALL 2001**

**COURSE SYLLABUS**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

A study of the message of the Old Testament in the writers' own terms, highlighting key theological concepts and important themes, with attention to the relation to the New Testament and Christians 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.

**TEXTBOOKS**

**Required:**

Cotton, Roger. Old Testament Handouts (Available in AGTS Bookstore)

House, Paul R. *Old Testament Theology*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1998.

Kaiser, Walter C. *Toward an Old Testament Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978.

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### **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, 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, wholistic theology of the struggles and hope of the righteous and the concept of biblical wisdom.
9. Prophecy and the rest of the Old Testament.

### **METHODOLOGY**

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

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

#### **A. Pre-Session**

Read through Roger Cotton's Old Testament Handouts.

Turn in, on the first day of class, a 4-6 page essay on what it means to do Old Testament theology based on the following readings:

1. Read House on the history and method of Old Testament theology, Preface, Chapter 1, and Appendix pp. 548-559.
2. Read Martens' essay #9, "The Flowering and Floundering of Old Testament Theology," by Elmer Martens in NIDOTTE pp. 172-84. (copy provided).
3. Kaiser, Preface through p. 69.
4. Essay #3, "Old Testament History: A Theological Perspective, A. The Nature OT: Theology, Not History," by Eugene Merrill in NIDOTTE pp. 68-75. (copy provided)

Begin with a definition of Old Testament theology as a sub field of biblical theology in contrast with (but not in conflict with) systematic theology. Then, summarize briefly and insightfully, in your own words, the major issues (three or so) or questions that must be dealt with in the field. Next, summarize, in a few broad categories, the major approaches scholars have taken to the

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subject--the basic kinds of ways they have organized the material and written Old Testament theology books (do not just list Hasel's ten but boil them down further considering Kaiser's and Martens's too). Make a brief comment on what you think about Kaiser's approach and what he does in his book with his view of promise. Finally, give your suggestion for how one should deal with the issues and organize an Old Testament theology (not a systematic theology). How might an Old Testament theology book best be written? Be sure to point out how your approach relates to the spectrum of approaches in the field? This is not intended to go into great detail but be your tentative broad conclusions from thinking about these readings and how to teach the OT to the church.

The point is to give you a basic understanding of this subject as a field of graduate study so that you have some sense of what the scholars are doing in the literature. I also want you to think about the challenge of presenting the messages of the Old Testament books in a unified way to our people. You need not labor over the detailed points and facts in the readings. Read for the main concepts and broad outline of the history of the field. Note the key principles that must be grasped.

This essay must be typed, double spaced, one inch margins, right margin NOT justified, proofread, and should demonstrate good formal writing style (see Strunk and White). Do a title page with the following: the name of our seminary, the assignment, the course title and number, my name, your name, and the date. Do NOT put your name on any other pages. Do not use footnotes but simply put page numbers in parentheses (and the author's last name if necessary). Do not use a cover but simply staple it. The length is flexible within a few pages but the paper must be ready at the beginning of the assigned class or the grade begins to drop (see the syllabus).

**DUE: All Pre-Session work must be submitted at the beginning of the first class, Monday, October 15, 2001.**

### **B. Session**

1. Punctual attendance at all sessions is expected.
2. Participation in class discussion is important to clarify for each student the theological concepts being covered.

### **C. Post-Session**

1. Finish reading the textbooks by Kaiser (all of it), and House: chapters 2-4, 6, 11, 14, 15, 17, 25, 26; and for the other chapters in House read the introduction, outline headings, and conclusion of each. Also read all handouts given in class and sign an accountability sheet.

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2. Write two take home essay questions which synthesize and discuss major themes, from the lectures and reading. This will be explained in a handout provided at the last class period. This is not intended to require extra research.
3. Write an 8-12 page paper on a topic in the Old Testament Theology not covered in depth in the lectures and approved by the professor. This must include an outline for teaching it in an adult Bible class or Wednesday evening service. A list of recommended topics is provided.

This research is to be based primarily on your own study in the Scriptures using concordance work as a foundation. Find all the occurrences of your key Hebrew terms in The New Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance (keyed to Strong's Concordance). You must also read the essays on these words in NIDOTTE, edited by Van Gemeren (see Bibliography). Also recommended is Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, edited by Harris, Archer, and Waltke. Your topic should cover passages from the Pentateuch, history books, poetry books, and the prophets. Be sure to carefully analyze the meaning of each pertinent passage in its context verbally, culturally, historically, literarily, and theologically. Let each Bible writer give his unique contribution to the topic. Watch for progressive relation as God builds the truth through the Old Testament. Do not force your ideas or categories on the data, but seek those of the Bible writers. Do your own analysis and meditation first to arrive at your own tentative conclusions. Then research what other scholars have observed on this topic. Be aware of those with presuppositions opposed to inspiration and inerrancy who rewrite the Old Testament history in humanistic evolutionary terms which deny the supernatural and find contradictions. It may be helpful to begin with Bible encyclopedia articles. Use the best exegetical and theological commentaries on your key passages such as NICOT, Tyndale, Word, Expositor's edited by Gaebelien, OT Library, and Hermeneia. Check your topic in OT theologies including Payne, Von Rad, Eichrodt, and Davidson. Finally, you must look for books and journal articles on your topic. Write an outline of your topic, as a summary of what the Bible teaches, which could be presented to adult believers in a local church. This need not be the exact outline of your paper. Make sure it is full of specific points of content and gives the major Scripture references.

The paper should follow Turabian 6th edition with your choice of citation method: footnotes, end notes, or parenthetical references (see chapter 8). There must be a bibliography (or reference list) with all the sources you consulted in

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your research, though not necessarily cited. Do not use a cover; just staple it. Be sure to write a brief but clear introduction describing what your topic is and how you have approached it. In your conclusion give some implications and applications for Christians today. Think in terms of principles, and in terms of biblical theology, not systematic, yet without contradicting basic orthodoxy.

4. Sign an accountability sheet that you have read an Old Testament book of your choice in one sitting in order to grasp its major theological message and main themes and that you read the sections of the following books that relate to this:

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

TURN IN a page or two of summary of the theological message and major themes of the book with a view toward preaching the book.

**DUE: All Post-Session work must be postmarked no later than January 15, 2002.**

Submit Assignments to:

Professor Roger Cotton  
Assemblies of God Theological Seminary  
1435 N. Glenstone Ave.  
Springfield, MO 65802

**GRADING PROCEDURE**

Reading assignments and class participation	7%
Paper on House, Kaiser and Martens	18%
Take Home Essays	28%
Paper and Outline of a topic in OT Theology	40%
Reading and summarizing the themes of an OT book	7%

Late Work may be penalized one grade per week late according to the postmark. Please call if you cannot make the due date.

**NOTE: The participant will be charged a \$15 change-of-grade fee if work is turned in after the due date stipulated on the syllabus, even if permission has been granted by the instructor.**

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**SPECIFIC DATA**

Syllabus prepared by Roger D. Cotton, Th.D., March, 2001.

**SUGGESTED TOPIC LIST  
BTHE 530 OLD TESTAMENT THEOLOGY**

1. the Angel of the LORD
2. kinsman-redeemer
3. relationship of humans to nature/the rest of creation
4. Sabbath, rest
5. the land, inheritance
6. eating as spiritual activity or symbol
7. the sea or rivers as theological symbol
8. holy war, and/or imprecation
9. David and the greater David to come
10. shepherd or other pervasive messianic imagery
11. Jerusalem, Zion
12. leadership of God's people
13. women in leadership among God's people
14. prophetic ministry
15. wisdom
16. righteousness in human relationships
17. the fear of the LORD
18. discipline, chastening
19. suffering of the righteous
20. our inner makeup
21. our bodies and emotions
22. life after death, resurrection hope
23. healing
24. peace
25. concern for the needy
26. sins against others
27. servanthood
28. God's attitude toward the Gentiles
29. the Day of the Lord
30. the judgement, wrath, vengeance, and/or jealousy of God
31. repentance and restoration
32. the remnant
33. God's sovereignty in history
34. the view of time
35. Satan and evil angels
36. the work of the Holy Spirit
37. revival of true worship and seeking the LORD
38. the glory of God, the manifest presence of God
39. renewal of creation

**REMINDER:** The purpose is to study one of these topics through the perspective of God's revelation in the Old Testament and understand the truth that God intended.