

Genesis — BOT 131
Course Syllabus

Course Objectives:

- A. To identify and respond to the message of *Genesis*.
- B. To cultivate a general knowledge of the historical, cultural, and biblical contexts of the text.
- C. To familiarize students with the general outline of the book and its major divisions.
- D. To draw practical spiritual applications from the Genesis record.
- E. To nurture independent learning about Genesis through research and projects on topics of interest to the student.
- F. To stimulate worship of the Creator and gratitude for his desire to fellowship with us.
- G. To inspire confidence in the Genesis record that is not dependent on the science of any particular age.

Texts:

The Bible

Arnold, Bill T. *Encountering the Book of Genesis*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998.

Requirements:

- A. Examinations – 20% each
 1. Midterm - January 20
 2. Final - February 9
- B. Assignments – 25%
 1. Complete, independently, before class on the assigned day, the worksheets provided, or online quizzes assigned.
 2. Turn in the written assignments at the beginning of class on the due dates printed on them.
- C. Individual Project (Choose One) – 20%. Completed projects are due Thursday, **February 2**.
 1. Write a research paper
 - a. Select a topic of interest from Genesis and submit the topic for approval by the instructor on or before Friday, **January 13**.
 - b. The paper should be about 1200 words in length, being approximately four printed or typed pages following the format described in the RBC research paper guidelines.
 - c. Consult a variety of sources, at least four in addition to the biblical text. The instructor and/or the librarian may be able to assist if difficulties arise.
 2. Prepare a Bible lesson from Genesis
 - a. Select a unit of text and submit for approval by the instructor on or before Friday, **January 13**.
 - b. Identify the age of the target students—adult, youth, or elementary (1-8) grade level.
 - c. Compose the lesson in accordance with the *Guidelines* provided.

3. Create a chart or map or model based in Genesis
 - a. Identify the data to be charted, the region and style of map to be drawn, or the artifact to be copied on or before Friday, **January 13**.
 - b. The visuals should be on poster-quality stock and at least 14" x 18". The artful use of color, topographical symbols and other appropriate images add much appeal to a chart or map. Sidebars for comment or interpretation are also attractive.
 - c. Accuracy, attention to detail, and overall effectiveness will be important in evaluating these projects.

4. Memorize Selected Passages (Memorize all passages from the NIV, ESV, or KJV).
 - a. Genesis 1:1 – 2:3
 - b. Genesis 2:15 – 24
 - c. Genesis 12:1 – 3.
 - d. Genesis 15:1 – 6.
 - e. Fill in blanks for all passages in one supervised sitting.

- D. Group Project (Choose One). Due dates will be set by arrangement. Students may indicate their group project preference by e-mailing the professor. Groups will be assigned based on each student's choice, as far as possible. If too many sign up for drama groups, preference will be given in the order that messages are received. Making trades between groups, by *mutual consent*, is permissible within in the first two weeks. Project topics should be selected and reported by Wednesday, **January 11**. The completed projects should require between ten and fifteen minutes to present to the class. - 10%
 1. Debate (at least four groups)
 - a. Divide the group into two teams which will research opposing positions on some issue arising from the study of Genesis.
 - b. Each side will present its position in turn and then defend it from the [well-mannered, but direct] challenges and questions of the opposing team and the class.
 - c. A set of debate *Guidelines* is provided.

 2. Dramatization (up to four groups)
 - a. Choose a theme, a person, an event from Genesis which fires your imagination and create a simple drama to express what you think is important about your subject.
 - b. *Simple* costuming and *basic* props are encouraged.
 - c. Enact the drama for the class.

- E. Required Reading - 5%
 1. Read Genesis in its entirety from two different versions, preferably one more literal translation and one paraphrase or translation seeking dynamic equivalence. The first reading is **due at mid-term**; the second at the **final exam**.
 - a. Literal or moderately dynamic translations: KJV, NKJV, NASB, RSV, NIV, ESV
 - b. More dynamic translations/paraphrases: New Jerusalem Bible, NEB, CEV, TEV, Living Bible, NLT, The Message, Schocken Bible.

 2. The assigned portions of the Arnold text are also included in the reading requirement.

Grading Summary:

- 40% Examinations
- 25% Assignments
- 20% Individual Project
- 10% Group Project
- 5% Required Reading

Due Dates:

Learning to submit projects on time is an integral part of a good education. Extensions of due dates are discouraged by RBC policy and will only be granted in unusual cases. Work submitted late will be marked down one letter grade for every calendar day it is tardy.

Attendance:

Absences should be cleared in advance with the academic office or the nurse if they are to be excused. The student is responsible to present the instructor with signed excuse notes. Unexcused absences may result in two-point reductions in the final grade. Habitual tardiness may also be assessed as an unexcused absence.

Office Hours:

I am generally available for conversation or consultation any time my door is open. No appointment is necessary, though making one can help both parties with time management. Specifically, my formal office hours for student consultation are Monday and Wednesday afternoons, 1:00 - 3:00.

Research Topic Suggestions (Not Limiters)

Theological/Historical Themes (In Genesis Context)

Predestination and Grace in Genesis
The Curse and its Effects
The Image of God in Man
Origin of Sin
God's Covenants in Genesis (e.g. Noahic, Abrahamic)
Why God Rejected Cain's Sacrifice
The Flood (e.g. Local or Universal?)
Tower of Babel
Genealogies and Biblical Chronology
The Social World of the Patriarchs

Hermeneutical Themes

Typology in Genesis
The Gap Theory
The "Sons of God" in Genesis 6
The Days of Creation
Curse of Canaan
Understanding Genealogies

Biographical Themes

A biographical paper should include the basic contours of the subject's life, but should move beyond a mere recounting of the narrative. The concentration should be on describing and evaluating the character of the subject or his/her unique contribution to the history of salvation or of Israel.

Noah
Abraham
Jacob
Esau
Rebekah
Isaac
Joseph

. . . and many more.

Course Schedule

The Primeval History

Week One	<u>The Contexts of Creation</u>	
January 3	— Syllabus, Introduction to Genesis	
January 4	— Structure of Chapter 1, cosmology, days, etc	
January 5	— The Intended Message of Genesis 1	
January 6	— Conclusions to Chapter 1	
Week Two	<u>The Story of Man in Three Short Chapters</u>	
January 9	— Ch 2 Creation of man. Marriage.	
January 10	— Ch 2 Image of God, Cultural Mandate	
January 11	— <i>Ch 3 Guest Lecture</i>	
January 12	— <i>Ch 3 Guest Lecture</i>	
January 13	— Ch 4 Cain and Abel	Group Proj. Appr'vd
Week Three	<u>Judgement and a New Beginning</u>	Individual Project Plan Approved
January 16	— Ch 5 Genealogies in general, Descendants of Seth	
January 17	— Ch 6-9 Flood	
January 18	— Ch 6-9 Flood	
January 19	— Ch 10-11 Urbanization and the Tower of Babel	
January 20	— Midterm Exam	

The Patriarchal History

Week Four	<u>The Progenitor: Abraham</u>	
January 23	— Ch 12-14 Journeys of Abraham, Call, relationship to Lot	
January 24	— Ch 15-17 Covenant with Abraham	
January 25	— Ch 15-17	
January 26	— Ch 18-19 Sodom: intercession, wickedness	
January 27	— Ch 20-23 Birth of Isaac. Abraham tested.	
Week Five	<u>The Pilgrim: Isaac</u>	
January 30	— Ch 24-27 Rebekah, Abimilech, Jacob and Esau	
January 31	— Ch 24-27 Rebekah, Abimilech, Jacob and Esau	
	<u>The Propagator: Jacob</u>	
February 1	— Ch 28 Jacob wrestles with God	
February 2	— Ch 29-31 Rachel, Leah, Laban	Individual Projects
February 3	— Ch 32-36 Laban and Esau	
Week Six	<u>The Provider: Joseph</u>	
February 6	— Ch 37-42 From Pit to Palace	
February 7	— Ch 37-42 From Pit to Palace	
February 8	— Ch 43-50 Conclusions	
February 9	— Final Exam	