

“The mission of Tyndale Seminary is to provide Christ-centred graduate theological education for leaders in the church and society whose lives are marked by intellectual maturity, spiritual vigour and moral integrity, and whose witness will faithfully engage culture with the Gospel.”

Semester, Year	FALL, 2025
Course Title	THE PENTATEUCH
Course Code	OLDT 0515 1S
Date	From September 10, 2025 to December 3, 2025 Every Wednesday
Time	From 8:15 AM to 11:05 AM
Delivery Format	SYNCHRONOUS ONLINE
Class information	The classes will be LIVESTREAMED on Wednesdays from 8:15 to 11:05 am.
Instructor	DR. GORDON OESTE, PH.D Email: goeste@tyndale.ca
Office Hours	By appointment via email.
Course Materials	Access course material at classes.tyndale.ca or other services at Tyndale One . Course emails will be sent to your @MyTyndale.ca e-mail account only.

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

A survey of the first five books of the Bible with reference to their cultural background, historical context and the history of interpretation. Emphasis is placed on the theme of each book and the Pentateuch's significance of the collection for Old Testament interpretation in general.

Prerequisite: BIBL 0501. Recommended: OLDT 0511.

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Formulate their own applications of topics from the Pentateuch to the life of the church.
2. Evaluate key historical and exegetical issues related to the study of the Pentateuch and articulated their relevance to Christian ministry in the 21st century.

3. Evaluated the historical and compositional relationship between ancient Near Eastern texts and contexts and the Bible.
4. Assess the major theological themes of the books of the Pentateuch and have articulated their relevance to the life of the church.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. REQUIRED READING

Wenham, Gordon. [*Exploring the Old Testament: A Guide to the Pentateuch*](#). Vol. 1. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2016.

Morales, L. Michael. [*Who Shall Ascend the Mountain of the Lord? A Biblical Theology of the Book of Leviticus*](#). NSBT 37. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2015.

B. SUPPLEMENTARY / RECOMMENDED READING AND TOOLS

The following resources are helpful, but not necessary to complete the assignments of this course:

Alexander, T. Desmond. [*From Paradise to the Promised Land: An Introduction to the Pentateuch*](#). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker: 2012.

Alexander, T. Desmond and David W. Baker, eds. [*Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*](#). Downers Grove, IL.: InterVarsity Press, 2003.

Walton, John. [*The Lost World of Genesis 1: Ancient Cosmology and the Origins Debate*](#). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009.

Tyndale recommends [STEPBible](#) – a free and reputable online resource developed by Tyndale House (Cambridge, England) – for word searches of original-language texts, as well as for topical searches, interlinear texts, dictionaries, etc. Refer to the library for other [online resources for Biblical Studies](#).

C. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

1. Bible and Textbook Reading (15 %). DUE: December 3, 2025.

This assignment addresses Outcomes # 1 and 4

Students will read the assigned Bible passages and Wenham, as well as other assigned readings as per the course schedule. After completing each week's readings, students will indicate the following for *each week's* reading:

- 1) The date of completion,
- 2) The percentage of assigned Bible reading completed,
- 3) Whether the text was read (choose one):
 - a. very carefully and thoughtfully,
 - b. carefully,
 - c. focusing on the main ideas,
 - d. skimming the text or
 - e. the pages turning in the fan (really not at all)
- 4) A brief 100-word reflection (please remember to keep your reflections short and close to the 100 word-guideline) on the relevance or applicability of a topic of their choosing from that reading to issues of life and ministry in the 21st century. Students will submit the completed journal at the end of the semester.

2. OT and ANE Comparison (15 %). DUE: September 24, 2025

This assignment addresses Outcomes # 2 and 3

For September 24th students will write a 2–3-page (double spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins) comparison of the similarities and differences between Tablet 11 of the Gilgamesh Epic and the biblical flood account. The first part of the evaluation will include key similarities and differences between the Gilgamesh Epic and the biblical flood narrative. Students may use a (single spaced) chart to illustrate his/her comparison of the two accounts.

In the second part of the comparison students will reflect upon the significance of these similarities and differences, answering the question: Given that there are at least some similarities between the Gilgamesh Epic and Genesis 6-8, and that the Gilgamesh Epic stems from a period earlier than the story recorded in the biblical text,¹ how might this impact our understanding of the inspiration of Scripture? Effective assessments will give evidence of an understanding of the historical and compositional contexts of these two passages.

[Text for the Gilgamesh Epic \(Tablet XI\)](#)

¹ Note that the Gilgamesh Epic stems from the 17th century BC in Mesopotamia while even the earliest date for the writing of the book of Genesis would place its composition around the mid- to late-15th century BC.

3. Leviticus Book Review (30%). Due Date – October 29, 2025

This assignment addresses outcomes # 1, 2, and 4

Students will write a 1200-word review of L. Michael Morales' book *Who Shall Ascend the Mountain of the Lord?* where approximately half of the review outlines the major ideas found in the book, while the other half evaluates his main ideas. Where do you agree or disagree with the author? Why? (1000 words, typed, double spaced). The final 200 words should be dedicated to explaining how the ideas expressed in the book can be expressed in the life of your home church. (See the class handout for more information on writing reviews).

4. Exegetical Bible Study Preparation (40%).

Part 1 – Exegetical Bible Study – Due Date – November 19, 2025

Part 2 – Peer Feedback – Due Date – November 26, 2025

This assignment addresses Outcomes # 1, 2, and 4.

Students will prepare a 4-week Bible study series on a series of 4 passages from the Pentateuch (4-pages each, totally 16 pages). Each week's Bible study will include the following:

- a) A 1-2-sentence explanation the context of the entire 4-week series Bible study (the target age group and social setting – e.g., small groups study; women's retreat; men's group; youth group study. NOTE: this explanation only needs to be added at the beginning of the first study)
- b) A 300-word exegetical summary of the focus-passages, explaining key issues of context and meaning that affect the meaning of the passage under consideration (e.g. literary and/or historical context; theological issues in the passage; the meaning of important words or cultural contexts). Students must show evidence of the use of 3 exegetical commentaries in this section.
- c) A one-sentence statement outlining the central idea of the passage
- d) A 2-paragraph summary of the relevance of the passage, applying the passage to life and ministry in the 21st century.
- e) A series of inductive bible study questions that include:
 - a. An opening "hook" question
 - b. A series inductive questions that help the audience engage with the passage (followed by the student's own answers to the questions)
 - c. A series of 2-3 questions which help the audience to apply the main idea of the passage.
- f) The final 10% of student's grade will be based upon their peer evaluation of two classmates' Bible studies. For the two assigned Bible studies to grade, students will:
 - a. Provide a percentage grade for the assignment
 - b. Articulate two things the student did well
 - c. Supply one suggestion for enhancing the study

GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

1. General Characteristics

In general, your work should exhibit the following characteristics:

Clarity – your work should be well organized and should make sense

Accuracy – your work should follow the instructions given and accurately represent the works consulted

Thoughtfulness – your work should reflect the mature fruit of your critical reflection upon the assigned topics/issues

Thoroughness – your work should reflect proper grammar, spelling and style

Conciseness – your work should be presented in a clear and succinct manner, following the guidelines given for the length of the assignment

2. E-Mail Submissions and Late Policy

Assignments should be submitted no later than 11:59 PM on the due date. Paper should be submitted as a **doc (or docx) file** (please do not submit your assignment as a PDF file).

The assumption is, of course, that all written work will be submitted on or before the corresponding due dates. An assignment will be considered late if it has not been received by the professor by 11:59 PM on the due date. Should this fail to occur, the following policy will govern the evaluation of your work:

For each day late (or part thereof), the assignment grade will be reduced by 2 %.

Extensions are not readily available. Requests must be submitted and arranged beforehand with the instructor (at least **72 hours in advance**). Please note that extensions will only be granted for situations out of the student's control, and which could not knowingly be planned for in advance. As a result, extensions will NOT be granted for things like: church ministry responsibilities, mission trips, heavy workload, computer or server problems. Extensions will only be granted for exceptional circumstances (e.g. a family death, hospitalization, etc.). Thus, it is best to have your work completed and ready to submit 24 hours before it is due.

3. Marking Standards: General Principles

Marking standards follow the stated Tyndale academic policies. Generally speaking, assignments which satisfactorily meet the professor's expectations will receive a B/75% (i.e. a B is a good grade – students have completed the assigned work well).

Excellence or deficiency in the following areas will increase or decrease the mark assigned:

- 1) Form and Presentation – thus, correct bibliographic form must be used
- 2) Number and quality of primary and secondary sources cited. A good general rule for a research paper is that the number of sources should at least equal the number of assigned pages for the paper (unless otherwise stated).

- 3) Thoroughness of historical, grammatical, syntactical, exegetical, and theological investigation. This could include, though not be limited to things like: doing your own word studies, research into background materials, examination of archaeological data, synthesizing your own research on a theological theme, etc.
- 4) Logical and methodological accuracy and consistency.
- 5) Use of foundational tools like: ANE texts and inscriptions; Hebrew grammar and syntax; specialized studies in ANE history, archaeology, culture, and sociology; specialized scholarly articles and monographs; interaction with major commentaries.
- 6) Quality and Clarity of written English.
- 7) Ability to carefully follow the assignment instructions.

D. SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Evaluation is based upon the completion of the following assignments:

Assignment	Due	%
1. Bible and Textbook Reading	Dec 3	15%
2. OT and ANE Comparison	Sep 24	15 %
3. Leviticus Book Review	Oct 29	30 %
4. Exegetical Bible Studies	Part 1: Nov 19 Part 2: Nov 26	40 %
Total Grade		100 %

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE, CONTENT AND REQUIRED READINGS

Week	Content	Bible Reading	Wenham	Assignments/ ANE Litt.
Week 1 Sept 10	Introduction Genesis 1	Gen 1-11	pp. 1-7	
Week 2 Sept 17	Genesis 1-3; History of Interpretation	Gen 12-23	pp. 9-34	
Week 3 Sept 24	Genesis 4-11	Gen 24-37		OT & ANE Comparison
Week 4 Oct 1	Abraham		pp. 35-56	
Week 5 Oct 8	Isaac, Jacob & Joseph	Gen 38-50		
Week 6 Oct 15	Moses & the Exodus	Exod 1-19	pp. 57-80	
Oct 22	Reading Week			

Week 7 Oct 29	Moses & the Sinai Covenant	Exod 20-40		Leviticus Book Review
Week 8 Nov 5	Law in the ANE	Lev 1-16	pp. 81-101	
Week 9 Nov 12	The Book of Leviticus	Lev 17-27		
Week 10 Nov 19	The Wanderings	Num 1-21	pp. 103-122	Exegetical Bible Studies
Week 11 Nov 26	Balaam & the Census	Num 22-36	pp. 145-158	Student Grades Exegetical Bible Studies
Week 12 Dec 3	Covenant & Deuteronomy	Deut 1-36	pp. 123-143, 187-195	Reading Journal

V. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alexander, T. Desmond. *From Paradise to the Promised Land: An Introduction to the Pentateuch*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2002.

Alter, Robert. *The Art of Hebrew Narrative*. New York: Orbis, 1981.

Benckhuysen, Amanda W. *The Gospel According to Eve: A History of Women's Interpretation*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2019.

Beale, G.K. "Eden, the Temple, and the Church's Mission in the New Creation." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 48 (2005): 5-33.

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Clifford, Richard J. *Creation Accounts in the Ancient Near East and in the Bible*. CBQMS 26. Washington, DC: The Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1994.

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King, Philip J. "Circumcision: Who Did It, Who Didn't, And Why." *Biblical Archaeology Review* 04 (2006): 48-55.

Kitchen, Kenneth. *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003.

Kikawada, Isaac M. and Arthur Quinn. *Before Abraham Was*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1985.

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- Wright, Christopher J.H. *Old Testament Ethics for the People of God*. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2004.

VI. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL COURSES

A. EQUITY OF ACCESS

Students with permanent or temporary disabilities who need academic accommodations must [contact](#) the [Accessibility Services](#) at the [Centre for Academic Excellence](#) to [register](#) and discuss their specific needs. *New students* must self-identify and register with the Accessibility Office at the beginning of the semester or as early as possible to access appropriate services. *Current students* must renew their plans as early as possible to have active accommodations in place.

B. REQUIREMENTS FOR LIVESTREAM INTERACTION (*SYNCHRONOUS ONLINE COURSE ONLY*)

- Livestream attendance for the entire duration of the class at announced times
- Headphones (preferred), built-in microphone, and web-camera
- Well-lit and quiet room
- Stable high-speed internet connection, preferably using an Ethernet cable over Wi-Fi
- Full name displayed on Zoom and Microsoft Teams for attendance purposes*
- A commitment to having the camera on to foster community building*

**exceptions with permission from professor*

C. GUIDELINES FOR INTERACTIONS

Tyndale University prides itself in being a trans-denominational community. We anticipate our students to have varied viewpoints which will enrich the discussions in our learning community. Therefore, we ask our students to be charitable and respectful in their interactions with each other, and to remain focused on the topic of discussion, out of respect to others who have committed to being a part of this learning community. Please refer to “Guidelines for Interactions” on your course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca.

D. GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

Grading Rubric

Please consult the rubric provided for each assignment on your course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca.

Academic Integrity

Integrity in academic work is required of all our students. Academic dishonesty is any breach of this integrity and includes such practices as cheating (the use of unauthorized material on tests and examinations), submitting the same work for different classes without permission of the

instructors; using false information (including false references to secondary sources) in an assignment; improper or unacknowledged collaboration with other students, and plagiarism (including improper use of artificial intelligence programs). Tyndale University takes seriously its responsibility to uphold academic integrity, and to penalize academic dishonesty. Please refer to the [Academic Integrity website](#) for further details.

For proper citation style, consult [Citation Guides](#) for different styles. Students are encouraged to consult [Writing Services](#).

Students should also consult the current [Academic Calendar](#) for academic policies on Academic Honesty, Gender Inclusive Language in Written Assignments, Late Papers and Extensions, Return of Assignments, and Grading System.

Turnitin Text-Matching Software

Tyndale has a subscription to Turnitin, a text-matching software that ensures the originality of academic writing and verifies the proper citation of all sources. The instructor for this course will use Turnitin for assignments submitted through your course resource page at [classes.tyndale.ca](#). Upon submission, you will receive a summary that includes your submitted files along with a similarity report generated by Turnitin. Please be aware that Turnitin can also detect AI-generated content from tools like Grammarly, so students should be mindful of when using such software. It's advisable to confirm with your instructor before using any AI tools into your assignments. Below are some useful resources:

- [Student](#) Guides for Turnitin via [classes.tyndale.ca](#) course resource page
- Interpreting Similarity ([Guide](#), [Video](#), [Spectrum](#))

Research Ethics

All course-based assignments involving human participants requires ethical review and may require approval by the [Tyndale Research Ethics Board \(REB\)](#). Check with the Seminary Dean's Office (seminaryoffice@tyndale.ca) before proceeding.

Late Papers and Extensions Policy

Faculty may not grant an extension beyond the last day of exams for the semester. Requests for extensions beyond this date must be addressed in writing to the Registrar by filling out the [Extension Request Form](#). The application will be considered only in cases such as a death in the family, medical emergency, hospitalization of oneself or immediate family member or prolonged illness requiring treatment by a physician. Factors such as assignments for other courses, holidays, and technology-related difficulties are insufficient grounds for requesting an extension.

A temporary grade of incomplete (“I”) may be granted by the Registrar. Once an extension is granted, it is the student’s responsibility to contact the instructor and make satisfactory arrangements to complete the outstanding work. A grade of “F” will be recorded for students who do not complete the outstanding work by the deadline.

E. COURSE EVALUATION

Tyndale Seminary values quality in the courses it offers its students. End-of-course evaluations provide valuable student feedback and are one of the ways that Tyndale Seminary works towards maintaining and improving the quality of courses and the student’s learning experience. Student involvement in this process is critical to enhance the general quality of teaching and learning.

Before the end of the course, students will receive a MyTyndale email with a link to the online course evaluation. The link can also be found in the left column on the course page. The evaluation period is 2 weeks; after the evaluation period has ended, it cannot be reopened.

Course Evaluation results will not be disclosed to the instructor before final grades in the course have been submitted and processed. Student names will be kept confidential, and the instructor will only see the aggregated results of the class.

F. LIBRARY RESOURCES

[Tyndale Library](#) supports courses with [e-journals, e-books](#), and the [mail delivery of books](#) and circulating materials. See the [Library FAQ page](#).

G. GRADING SYSTEM & SCALE

For each course’s grading rubric, please refer to your course syllabus or classes.tyndale.ca. For general grading guidelines, refer to Seminary [Grading System & Scale](#).