



Course Syllabus

WYB3031H Encountering the Lord in the Pentateuch

Wycliffe College
Toronto School of Theology

Winter 2025

Instructor Information

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Course Identification

Course Number: WYB3031H
Course Format: *In-person, limited remote*
Course Name: Encountering the Lord in the Pentateuch
Course Location: Wycliffe College, Room TBA
Class Times: TBA
Prerequisites: OT I and OT II

Course Description

The Books of Moses—the Pentateuch—record many stories involving dramatic and life-changing encounters with God. They are each unique, but they share a common pattern: in these meetings the Lord reveals who he is in his divine nature, a genuine relationship is established through that knowledge, and human history is set on a new and unexpected path. The Pentateuch is the story of this divine self-revealing—with all its blessings and mystery—and of God's care for his creatures through the revealing of that self-disclosure. This course will entail close readings of a number of these encounter stories in Genesis to Numbers and will explore how they each contribute to the larger pentateuchal account and provide its unifying thread. Attention will be paid to literary features and narrative strategies found in the Pentateuch that help guide the biblical reader to a deeper understanding of the text. Class participation, workbook/discussion board comments, 1-2 page mid-term report, 10-15 page research paper.

Course Resources

Students are encouraged to find suitable commentaries on the books of the Pentateuch. The following commentaries are recommended but not required.

- **Recommended Commentaries:**

Bill T. Arnold, *Genesis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009)

Thomas B. Dozeman, *Commentary on Exodus* (Grand Rapids, MI, Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans, 2009)

Gordon J. Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus* (NICOT, Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1979)

Jacob Milgrom, *The JPS Torah Commentary on Numbers* (Philadelphia, NY: Jewish Publication Society, 1989)

Africa Bible Commentary: A One-Volume Commentary Written by 70 African Scholars. Edited by Tokunboh Adeyemo (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010) Available online.

Women's Bible commentary, 3rd Edition, revised and updated (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press; 2012)

- **Additional Bibliography:**

Gary A. Anderson, *That I May Dwell Among Them: Incarnation and Atonement in the Tabernacle Narrative* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2023)

Mary Douglas, *Leviticus as Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999)

Mark Elliott, *Engaging Leviticus: Reading Leviticus Theologically with its Part Interpreters* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2012)

Carmen Joy Imes, *Bearing God's Name: Why Sinai Still Matters* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2019)

Nobuyoshi Kiuchi, *The Purification Offering in the Priestly Literature: Its Meaning and Function*. JSOTSup 56 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1987)

Won W. Lee, "The Concept of the Wilderness in the Pentateuch." Pages 1–16 in *Israel in the Wilderness: Interpretations of the Biblical Narratives in Jewish and Christian Traditions*. Edited by Kenneth E. Pomykala (Leiden: Brill, 2008)

Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16* (Anchor Bible, New York, Toronto: Doubleday, 1991)

Course Website(s)

- Quercus: <https://q.utoronto.ca/>

This course uses Quercus for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT Quercus login page at <https://q.utoronto.ca/> and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to Quercus using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you'll find the link to the website for all your Quercus-based courses. (Your course registration with ACORN gives you access to the course website in Quercus.) Information for students about using Quercus can be found at: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701> . Students who have trouble accessing Quercus should contact the registrar's office for further help.

- Personal Website <http://individual.utoronto.ca/name>

Course Learning Objectives/Outcomes

BD Level

Students successfully completing this course will be able to demonstrate the following learning outcomes.

(A) IN RESPECT OF GENERAL ACADEMIC SKILLS: **students will have acquired knowledge in depth of a broad number of selected texts in the Pentateuch and will be able to relate these literary units to the larger literary composition of the Pentateuch; they will have gained familiarity with secondary literature relating to this material, and in particular, will have learned how to work in and assess pertinent commentaries; they will have learned a variety of exegetical skills relating to literary readings of the biblical text; they will have written on, and be able to discuss, aspects of “revelation” in its literary presentation in the Pentateuch and the theological implications of that for the reading of the Bible in general.**

(B) IN RESPECT OF THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONTENT OF ONE OR MORE THEOLOGICAL DISCIPLINES: **students will have spent time thinking about the relation of revelation as presented in Scripture and the theological and hermeneutical implications for the reading of Scripture, that is, how this theme relates to the doctrine of inspiration, and students will have begun to integrate their thinking on this theme with the reading of the wider biblical canon.**

(C) IN RESPECT OF PERSONAL AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION: **students will have not only become familiar with many important biblical texts on the presence of God and the self-disclosure of God, they will have begun to see the way biblical themes and literary structures encourage a canonical and unified reading of scripture. They will have developed skill and care in thoughtful biblical reading, and will have reflected more deeply the interrelation of worship and ethics.**

(D) IN RESPECT OF MINISTERIAL AND PUBLIC LEADERSHIP: **students will have developed a good familiarity with Scriptural texts foundational to much of the biblical witness and to Christian proclamation and will have acquired tools for reading Scripture as they do exegetical work foundational to teaching, proclamation, and pastoral conversation.**

GRADUATE “DEGREE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS”	CORRESPONDING COURSE GOALS AND OUTCOMES	CORRESPONDING COURSE ELEMENTS / ASSIGNMENTS
EXPECTATIONS: <i>In this course students are expected to demonstrate the following:</i>		
1. Depth and Breadth of Knowledge is defined as a set of increasing levels of understanding within a student’s area of specialization, methodologies,	<i>(e.g. Students in this course will learn, study, discuss, etc. [a,b,c] ... so that they can demonstrate, illustrate, assess, compare, etc.. [x,y,z]).</i>	<i>(e.g. lectures, readings, seminars, papers, shorter papers, essays).</i>

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primary & secondary sources, historical developments and inter-disciplinarity.		
<p>2. Research and Scholarship is defined as the ability to identify a new or unresolved question, to locate that question within a corpus of scholarly research & assess critically the relevant literature, to adopt a methodology(-ies), and to then formulate a thesis and reasoned argument(s) on the basis of the evidence.</p>		
<p>3. Level of Application of Knowledge is defined as the ability to engage in self-directed or assisted research, and the ability to produce innovative or original analysis within the context of graduate seminars and courses. In some cases this includes the application of a research language.</p>		
<p>4. Professional Capacity or Autonomy is defined as the ability to translate the knowledge gained in other research or professional settings, e.g., to undertake further studies in their area of concentration; or to enter or return to other professional vocations for which an advanced understanding of Theological Studies is necessary or beneficial.</p>		
<p>5. Level of Communication Skills is defined as clear and effective communication in both oral and written forms; the construction of logical arguments; the making</p>		

GRADUATE “DEGREE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS”	CORRESPONDING COURSE GOALS AND OUTCOMES	CORRESPONDING COURSE ELEMENTS / ASSIGNMENTS
of informed judgments on complex issues; and facility with standard conventions of style for scholarly writing. Cohort formation is a component of all graduate programs.		
6. Awareness of the Limits of Knowledge is defined as the recognition that Theological Studies is a complex discipline, comprising: a broad array of subject areas; methods and sources; various ecclesiastical traditions and social contexts; and, insights from other disciplines.		

Evaluation

Requirements

The final grade for the course will be based on evaluations in four areas:

Basic Degree Students:

- (1) Participation (10%) – Students are expected to come with prepared questions on the primary readings for discussion in class.
- (2) Workbook (25%) – Students are expected to prepare over the duration of the course a personal “commentary” on the assigned biblical texts
- (3) Mid-term Report (15%) – Students are expected to submit a 1-2 page paper outlining their intended final paper, including a proposed bibliography.
- (4) Final paper (50%) – A 10-15 page research paper based on mid-term topic.

Grading System - Basic Degree Students

1000, 2000 and 3000 level courses use the following numerical grading scale (see section 11.2 of the BD Handbook):

90-100 (A+)	Exceptional
85-89 (A)	Outstanding
80-84 (A-)	Excellent
77-79 (B+)	Very Good
73-76 (B)	Good
70-72 (B-)	Acceptable
0-69 (FZ)	Failure

Please see the appropriate handbook for more details about the grading scale and non-numerical grades (e.g. SDF, INC, etc).

Late work (BD). Basic Degree students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. Under exceptional circumstances a student may request a short extension to be negotiated with the instructor. Instructors are not obliged to accept assignments that are late. If the instructor chooses to accept an assignment, where an extension has not been requested and approved before the due date, then **one percentage point per day will be deducted**. The absolute deadline for the submission of assignments is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of exam week for the semester in which the course is taught, whichever is sooner.

Students with documented medical or compassionate difficulties or exceptional reasons (e.g., a death in the family or a serious illness) who are unable to submit their work by the end of the term are requested to consult with their instructor and request an SDF. The form is available on our website at this link <https://www.wycliffecollege.ca/sites/default/files/Basic%20Degree%20Request%20For%20Extension.pdf> or can be collected from the registrar's office. An SDF request must be submitted, with instructor approval and with an agreed deadline, to the registrar's office no later than the last day of the exam week or the last day of class in which the course is taken. The SDF, when approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond one year. If a student has not completed work and has not been granted an SDF, a final mark will be calculated that reckons a grade of zero for that component of work that was not submitted.

Course grades. Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor's college before being posted to ACORN. Grades are not official until they are posted to ACORN. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy found at <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/grading-practices-policy-university-assessment-and-january-26-2012>, policies found in the TST conjoint program handbooks, or college grading policy.

Policies

Accessibility. Students with a disability or health consideration, whether temporary or permanent, are entitled to accommodation. Students in conjoint degree programs must register at the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as>. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

Plagiarism. Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* and the Graduate program Handbooks linked from <http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks> and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code->

[behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019](https://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/library/research/theology/avoiding-plagiarism-in-theological-writing/). A student who plagiarizes in this course will be assumed to have read the document “Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing” published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges:
<https://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/library/research/theology/avoiding-plagiarism-in-theological-writing/>

Use of AI. Students are not to submit work generated by AI chatbots such as ChatGPT. If students are found to have done so, they will receive a mark of ‘zero’ for the assignment concerned.

Recording Policy. Students may not create audio or video recordings of classes with the exception of those students requiring an accommodation for a disability (as identified by the Accessibility Services). These students should speak to the instructor in advance of the class.

If a course is to be recorded (either by a student or the instructor), the following guidelines apply:

- Students must be given notice that lectures or a lecture will be recorded, preferably well before the recorded class. Consent forms are available from the Registrar’s office.
- Students must be given the option to opt out of recorded classes without penalty. Students who wish to remain anonymous in a recorded lecture will not be penalized for this choice – if, for example, participation is a required component of the course, students will be given another option to earn participation credit that will not be recorded.

Students creating unauthorized audio and/or video recording of lectures violate an instructor’s intellectual property rights and the Canadian Copyright Act. Students violating this agreement will be subject to disciplinary actions under the Code of Student Conduct.

Other academic offences. TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019>.

Back-up copies. Please make back-up copies of essays before handing them in.

Obligation to check email. At times, the course instructor may decide to send out important course information by email. To that end, all students in conjoint programs are required to have a valid utoronto email address. Students must have set up their utoronto email address which is entered in the ACORN system. Information is available at www.utorid.utoronto.ca. The course instructor will not be able to help you with this. 416-978-HELP and the Help Desk at the Information Commons can answer questions you may have about your UTORid and password. Students should check utoronto email regularly for messages about the course. **Forwarding** your utoronto.ca email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that emails from your course instructor may end up in your spam or junk mail folder. Students in non-conjoint programs should contact the Registrar of their college of registration.

Email communication with the course instructor. The instructor aims to respond to email communications from students in a timely manner. *All email communications from students in conjoint programs must be sent from a utoronto email address.* Email communications from other email addresses are not secure, and also the instructor cannot readily identify them as being legitimate emails from

students. The instructor is not obliged to respond to email from non-utoronto addresses for students in conjoint programs. Students in non-conjoint programs should only use the email address they have provided to their college of registration.

Course Schedule (Draft Only)

<u>Week 1</u>	Introduction
<u>Week 2</u>	Encounter in the Garden – Adam & Eve Gen 1-3
<u>Week 3</u>	Encounter in the Wilderness I - Hagar Gen 16 & 21
<u>Week 4</u>	Encounter at the River - Jacob Gen 28-33
<u>Week 5</u>	Encounter at the Mountain I – Moses Exod 3-6
<u>Week 6</u>	Encounter at the Sea – Israel & Pharaoh Exod 14
<u>Week 7</u>	READING WEEK
<u>Week 8</u>	Mid-Term Reports Encounter at the Mountain II – Israel at Sinai Exod 19- 24
<u>Week 9</u>	Encounter in the Cloud - Moses Exod 25-34
<u>Week 10</u>	Encounter at the Tabernacle I - Moses Exod 35-40
<u>Week 11</u>	Encounter at the Tabernacle II - Aaron Lev 1-17
<u>Week 12</u>	Encounter in the Wilderness II - Korach Num 1-10, 16
<u>Week 13</u>	Encounter in the Unclean Land - Babylon Lev 26, Deut 26, 31