

Grace Communion Seminary

Course: The Pentateuch: The People of God

Instructor: Rev. Dr. John McKenna

Course Description:

We will study the formation of the People of God according to the confession of the Five Books of Moses, called 'The Pentateuch' in the Latin Canonical Tradition and 'The Torah' by the Massoretic Tradition in Judaism. We will seek to understand this formation in the History of Israel as the People of God in the light of the covenanted relationship posited by the Great I-AM the Lord God is as the Redeemer-Creator with His People in His Creation. Thus, a theological understanding of the texts will be sought whose foundations will serve the building up of Biblical Theology, in the prophetic Spirit of the Word, Lord and God, of the People of God.

Objectives:

- 1) We will develop a real grasp of the nature of the Biblical Covenant, seeking to overcome from the recent past in Biblical Theology the loss of ontological relations in the Biblical World.
- 2) We will develop a Doctrine of God according to the foundations laid down for us in the Five Books of Moses. This means we will seek to appreciate as best we can the reality of the Divine Freedom of the Creator and Redeemer His Creation and His People.
- 3) The Biblical Covenant Relationship (BCR) cannot be understood without some appreciation for the Ancient Near East (ANE) in the times of the History of Israel. We will study the relation between the BCR and ANE. We will argue for the uniqueness of the BCR among the nations.

Requirements:

- 1) Read the Five Books of Moses.
- 2) Prepare an analytical outline of the Five Books of Moses.
- 3) Research and write an exegetical-theological study of a selected passage from the Five Books of Moses.
- 4) Provide a report of your reading from the recommended list of books.

Recommended Reading:

The Bible, any modern translation
Bright, J., *The History of Israel*, Third Edition
Childs, B.S., *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments*
LaSor, W.S. et al, *A Survey of the Old Testament*, Second Edition
McKenna, J.E., *Course Syllabus* and articles on 'The Great I-AM.' in www.quodlibet.net.
Moberly, R.W.L., *The Old Testament of the Old Testament*
Olsen, L., *The Death of the Old & the Birth of the New*
Torrance, T.F., *The Trinitarian Faith or Doctrine of God: Three Persons, One Being*
Zimmerli, W., *Old Testament Theology in Outline*

Schedule:

The schedule is formed around ten possible sessions of work. This format may be adapted, however, to any time frame. We will remain flexible concerning this use of this framework.

- Unit I *Introduction to the Course:* In the Light of Redemption and the Redeemer the Knowledge of the Lord God as the Creator in the Biblical World.
- Unit II *The Exodus Tradition:* The Mosaic Witness to the Self-Revelation of the Great I-AM the Lord God is in His Covenant with His People in His Creation: Confession in the Light of the Divine Freedom of the Creator-Redeemer of the People of God.
- Unit III *The Sinai Tradition:* The Formation of the People of God under the Command of the Lord God who is who He is in His Divine Freedom with Israel as His People.
- Unit IV *The Levitical Tradition:* To maintain the BCR with His People, the Lord God provides in His freedom for the being in sanctity of Israel in His Presence. Covenanted renewal is always the purpose of this tradition.
- Unit V *The Wilderness Tradition:* The generation of the People of God who were eye-witnessed to the Exodus must pass away and a new generation of the People of God sought for the Promised Land.
- Unit VI *The Creation Tradition:* The Beginning---Creation and Election Traditions for the Generations of the People of God
- Unit VII *The Ancestral Traditions of the Covenanted Narrative:* Election
- Unit VIII *The Promise Tradition* with Abram of the People of God
- Unit IX *The Covenant Renewal Tradition* at Moab---Deuteronomy
- Unit X *The People of God* among the nations in the Old and New Testament in the Light of the Divine Freedom of the Great I-AM the Lord God is. The Great I-AM the Lord God is in the Pentateuch, He is also in the New Testament and the Orthodoxy of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ.