

1-1-2012

## BS 502 Pentateuch

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### Recommended Citation

Traina, Robert Angelo, "BS 502 Pentateuch" (2012). *Syllabi*. Book 2.  
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ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
Department of English Bible

EB 502. PENTATEUCH. Three hours. Traina.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. In the area of Method-- The primary emphasis in methodology is on the extensive study of biblical books, that is, on the study of books and major units of books as wholes, in contrast to the intensive study of brief portions. As a result, the student should develop in his ability to do the following.
  - a. Survey (pre-view) books as wholes, including:
    - 1) Identifying the general materials of a book (biographical, historical, ideological, etc.), and the specific materials by giving each chapter a brief title by which its contents can be recalled by association (MBS, pp. 55-50,77,W);
    - 2) Locating the main units and sub-units of a book, and observing the major laws of relationship operative within and between these units (MBS, pp. 49-55);
    - 3) Asking a few key questions concerning each major law of relationship observed, designed to discover the interpretive significance of the presence of each law (MBS, pp. 95-111);
    - 4) Identifying strategic areas or key verses which provide insight into a book as a whole;
    - 5) Noting evidence, if any, bearing on such higher critical matters as the identity of the writer and recipients, and the occasion, date, and place of writing;
    - 6) Observing other major features in the book as a whole, including literary characteristics not previously noted.
  - b. Interpret individual parts of a book in light of their relations to other parts and to the book as a whole, and in the process answer some of the questions raised during the survey.
  - c. Synthesize the findings made in a book in order to arrive at the major emphases in the whole, involving the use of such techniques as charts, thematic summaries, brief essay statements, topical summaries, or lists of truths, and in the process answer some of the questions raised in the survey.
  - d. Interrelate books which are interdependent, as is true of the Pentateuch.
2. In the area of CONTENT--- The student should be able to set forth and discuss the following in relation to the Pentateuch:
  - a. The distinctive literary arrangement of each book, including its major units identified by chapter and theme, the main relationships operative between these units, and the specific materials involved in these relationships;
  - b. The major motifs which are communicated through the literary arrangement of each book and through the Pentateuch as a whole, including the theology presented by portraying God as Creator and Covenant-Maker and Covenant-Keeper, the concept of historical revelation, the significance of the Exodus, the meaning and role of Law, and the significance of the Levitical Cultus, with specific illustrations and substantiations located by chapter.

3. In the area of BIBLICAL THEOLOGY--The student shall evidence an awareness of the implications of pentateuchal motifs for understanding other parts of the Old Covenant and essential components of the New Covenant, especially with regard to Covenant-Redemption, Law and Grace, the Atonement, and Election.
4. In the area of ATTITUDE-- The student should:
  - a. Grow in his appreciation of the value of studying the Bible by books and of approaching books as wholes;
  - b. Desire to continue developing in the skills involved in studying books as wholes;
  - c. Prize the importance of the Pentateuch for biblical understanding and for Christian proclamation and teaching;
  - d. Intend to delve more deeply into the Pentateuch.

## COURSE TEXTS--

1. Revised Standard Version
2. METHODICAL BIBLE STUDY--R. Traina
3. PRINCETON BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR BIBLE STUDY

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS---

1. Punctual class attendance. You will be asked to report absences, if any, at the close of the semester. Punctuality and absences will be considered in evaluating the work of the course.
2. The preparation of the following lessons in writing, unless otherwise indicated. The lessons will be due at the beginning of the class hour on the day specified by the professor. Late lessons will not be accepted unless permission is granted on the basis of an emergency.
3. A final examination based on course objectives.

## LESSON I -- Fall Narrative. Genesis 2:4-3:24.

- A. Read METHODICAL BIBLE STUDY, pages 36-49 and 49-62. Keep these materials in mind as you do the succeeding studies.
- B. FALL NARRATIVE -- Genesis 2:4-3:24.
  1. Read 1:1-2:25 rapidly to determine how 1:1-2:3 provides significant background material for interpreting 2:4-25.
  2. Indicate the main emphases of 2:4-25.
  3. Read chapter 3 against the background of 2:4-25. How does a recognition of the relationship between these two units illuminate the emphases of chapter 3?
  4. What are the main movements in the narrative of chapter 3? How many different facts would you know about temptation and sin if this were the only chapter on the subject in the Bible? In summary, what was the essence of Eve's and Adam's sin?

## LESSON II - Abraham Narrative. Genesis 11:27-25:18. 2/32

- A. Read the remainder of the Adam Narrative, the Flood Narrative, and the Babel Narrative. What major emphases are found in chapters 4-11 and how do these emphases relate to what precedes and follows?
- B. ABRAHAM NARRATIVE -- Genesis 11:27-25:18
  1. Name the chapters of this narrative and look for inter-relations between them. State in a paragraph the main human-historical emphases found in these materials as a whole.
  2. Trace the promise-covenant motif in these materials. List your main findings on the subject, especially as to the meaning of the covenant.

3. What are the main characteristics of Abraham emphasized in the narrative? How do they reflect his relation to God?
4. Compare and contrast the emphases in the Abraham narrative to those in previous chapters. How does the Abraham narrative illuminate the covenant solution to the problem of sin and judgment as set forth in Genesis 1-11?

LESSON III -- Jacob Narrative - Genesis 25:19-36:43. *6-7 hrs. Mar. 1*

- A. Name the chapters of this narrative. Into what natural groupings do the chapters fall, and what major relations exist within and between these groupings? What are the main human-historical emphases of the narrative?
- B. Note that Jacob's name was changed in the wrestling incident of chapter 32. Reflect on the specific ways in which the events in the preceding chapters contribute to an understanding of the wrestling incident. How do the events of the succeeding chapters flow from it? In view of the answers to these questions, what was the meaning of the wrestling match between Jacob and the angel, and why was Jacob's name changed to Israel following this incident?
- C. Standard question:  
Study the references made to the promises and the covenant. Indicate the main emphases found and their relation to what precedes.

LESSON IV -- Joseph Narrative - Genesis 37-50. *Mar. 4*

- A. Name the chapters of the Joseph Narrative, indicate relations between them, and state the main human-historical theme of the narrative.
- B. Locate and list all references to God. Select a few of the most significant references, and in each case do the following: 1) enter recreatively into each situation before God affects it, attempting to describe the thoughts, emotions, and reactions you would have if you were in Joseph's place; 2) note the different facts affirmed or assumed about God; and 3) contrast what might have happened to what did happen as a result of the activity of God. Summarize your findings in a paragraph.
- C. Standard question: see above.

LESSON V -- Creation Narrative. Genesis 1:1-2:3. *Mar. 8*

- A. Study this segment in terms of the separate days of Creation. What is created on each day, and how are the various days related to each other? What is the connection between verses 1-2 and the days of creation?
- B. Analyze the segment to discover its most significant literary features. On the basis of your findings, what do you infer regarding the author's main purpose?
- C. Note the times God is mentioned and the verbs of action used. Indicate as thoroughly as possible the different aspects of God's being implied by each verb. What main theological concepts emerge from this study?
- D. In view of your study, state in a paragraph or two the primary purpose of this segment and its chief contributions to Genesis as a whole.
- E. State briefly in essay form the problem of sin set in Genesis, and the solution provided for it.

LESSON VI--Read the book rapidly at least once at one sitting if possible. Follow the steps outlined under COURSE OBJECTIVES, 1, *3-15* *Exodus*: Survey of books as wholes.

*Spend most time on the last 4.  
do 5 and 6 in a minor way*

LESSON VII -- Exodus 1:1-6:9.

- A. What is the setting of Exodus according to chapter 1? What reasons are given for this setting, and how do the contents of Genesis help to illuminate them?
- B. Read the narrative of chapter 2 to discover its major purposes.
- C. What is the significance of the burning bush experience at the beginning of chapter 3? Analyze and paraphrase Moses' objections to God's call according to chapters 3 and 4, and God's answer to each objection. What ideas recur in God's replies? Why did Moses finally agree to go to Egypt?
- D. What questions are raised in 5:1-6:9, by whom and why? Study the verbs in God's answer to Moses in 6:2-9 to discover their significance. State the essence of God's answer in a paragraph and relate it to the previous events.

LESSON VIII-- Exodus 7-18. 3-24

- A. Read rapidly chapters 7-12, noting the references where "know" is found. Study the use of the verb "know." What is the subject and object in each case? Put your findings in your own words where possible. How does this study illuminate the purpose of the plagues? What other features of the plagues substantiate your analysis? In the light of your study, relate the plagues to 6:1-8.
- B. Contrast the reactions of the Israelites in 6:9 and 14:31-15:1. What made the difference, and how is your conclusion supported by the characteristics of God stressed in the Song of Moses (Exodus 15)?
- C. Note that "know" is also found in 18:11. What is the subject and object there? Relate this incident to the movement of the book thus far. Summarize the purpose of the deliverance in light of your findings.

LESSON IX -- Exodus 19-24. 4-5

- A. Read chapters 19-24 to note their structure. *of the unit as a whole.*
- B. Recreate imaginatively the sights and sounds of chapter 19. How did the Israelites react to them? How would you have reacted had you been at Mount Sinai? In view of your study attempt to determine the general and specific functions of these sights and sounds.
- C. What motives for keeping the law are suggested in chapters 19 and 20? How does an awareness of these motives help to explain the reason for placing the commandments concerning worship first?
- D. State the meaning and significance of each commandment in your own words. In what sense are the commandments the logical outgrowth of what precedes, especially in chapters 19 & 20? (of the 10 commandments)
- E. Why is the Decalogue found in chapter 20 rather than in an earlier chapter? In other words, what is the significance of the historical and psychological context of the Ten Commandments?

LESSON X -- Exodus 25-40 4-12

- A. Scan these chapters quickly to discover their major units and how these units are related to each other.
- B. Contrast chapters 32-34 to what follows with a view to finding the purpose of this seeming digression.
- C. Study the construction of the Tabernacle in chapters 35-40 from the standpoint of the following questions: 1) who participated? 2) how were they motivated? 3) what did each contribute? 4) what specifications were followed? 5) with what purpose? 6) with what results?
- D. Summarize the various main facts stressed regarding "the way out" in the book-as-a-whole. In what sense does Exodus 40:16-38 serve as a climax of the book's development? Relate the main emphases in Exodus, especially in connection with the covenant, to Genesis.



LESSON XI -- Survey of Leviticus .

4-19

Follow the survey suggestions of Lesson VI.

LESSON XII -- Leviticus 1-7. (4 hours)

4-24 *See Thursday*

- A. What are the various offerings discussed in chapters 1-7? Trace the major steps of each offering. Put yourself in the place of the offerer and attempt to discover your own reaction to each of these steps. On the basis of such empathy indicate the seeming purpose of each step.
- B. How are the offerings similar and dissimilar? In this light what seems to be the distinctive idea of each offering? Looking at the offerings as a whole, what is their general purpose? How are they related to the remainder of Leviticus?
- C. What different facts do these offerings teach about God, man, sin, and redemption?

LESSON XIII -- Survey of Numbers.

4-29

Follow the suggestions of Lesson VI.

LESSON XIV - Survey of Deuteronomy.

5-6 *Friday*

Follow the suggestions of Lesson VI.

LESSON XV -- Deuteronomy 5-11.

5-12 *Thursday*

- A. Read these chapters rapidly to discover their major theme or themes.
- B. Study carefully the uses of "fear" and "love." What does each involve in view of its usage? How are they related to each other, and what is the bearing of this relation on the meaning of each?
  - ~ In view of your study, list the various reasons why true obedience to God's Law must include fear and love. In the process keep in mind Jesus' summary of the Law in Matthew 22:34-40 and its connection to this discourse.
- D. Give a title and text to this sermon. Outline the sermon in terms of two or three main points.

LESSON XVI -- Deuteronomy 12-26 and 27-30.

A. Deuteronomy 12-26.

1. Scan these chapters to discover the general nature of their regulations and the various areas of human experience covered by them.
2. How are chapters 12-26 related to chapters 5-11, and what is the significance of this relation in view of the contents of chapters 12-26?
3. Give a title and text for this sermon.

B. Deuteronomy 27-30.

5-13 *Friday - 2 hrs.*

1. Chapter 27 consists of instructions for a drama which was to be enacted when Israel reached Canaan (Joshua 8). Recreate as best you can the scene which was to take place. Locate Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim.
2. What reasons are given for the curses and blessings in chapters 27-28, and to what areas do the curses and blessings apply? What is the significance of your findings?
3. Make a general analysis of the contents of chapters 29-30. What is their function in relation to chapters 27 and 28?
4. Meditate on the instructions for the ceremony in chapters 27 and 28 and the aftermath in chapters 29-30. What is the central emphasis of these chapters and what different facts are stressed regarding it? How are these chapters related to the development of the book?
5. Give a title and text to this sermon. Outline the sermon in terms of two or three main points.

LESSON XVII -- Deuteronomy 31-33 and Synthesis.

A. Chapters 31-33.

1. Scan these chapters to discover their subject matter and structure.
2. Examine the song of Moses in chapter 32 with a view to listing the different characteristics of God mentioned and implied there.
3. Choose a title and key verse for chapter 32. Why is this chapter included in the book and why is it where it is?

B. Synthesis of Deuteronomy.

Write a summary of Deuteronomy on the basis of the subject Deuteronomy - A Study in Motivation. Include the following:

1. The problems Moses confronted;
2. His solutions, including his main motivations;
3. An analysis of the motivations to discover their grounds and their validity;
4. The relation of your findings to previous books, especially in regard to the covenant.

Avoid making a unit by unit summary or rewriting class notes. Let your approach be as fresh and as incisive as possible.

2/3 - lessons  
1/3 - examination

## INTERPRETIVE QUESTIONS BASED

### ON EACH MAJOR LAW OF STRUCTURE (STRUCTURAL QUESTIONS)

- I. COMPARISON -- What is the meaning of each of the elements compared? (Def.) What is the similarity(s) between them, and what is the meaning of this similarity(s)? (Def.) Why is the similarity(s) emphasized by the author? (Rat.) What are the full implications of the comparison? (Imp.)
- II. CONTRAST -- What is the meaning of each of the contrasting elements? What is the difference(s) between them, and what is the meaning of this difference(s)? Why is the difference(s) stressed? What does it imply?
- III. RECURRENCE (includes both Repetition and Continuity) -- What does the recurring element mean? Why does the author use it recurringly? What are the full implications of its recurring use?
- IV. CLIMAX -- What is the meaning of the high point of this unit? How do the preceding materials lead to this high point? Why does the author use this climactic movement? What are its full implications?
- V. CRUCIALITY -- What is the meaning of the crucial portion? How does it serve to change the direction of the book? How does what precedes lead to it, and how does what follows flow from it? Why does the author use this cruciality? What is implied by it?
- VI. INTERCHANGE (secondary law used to reinforce a primary relationship) -- What is meant by each of the alternating elements? Why does the author use interchange? What are its full implications?
- VII. PARTICULARIZATION or GENERALIZATION -- What is the meaning of the general statement and of the particular statement(s)? How does the general statement illuminate the particular statement(s), and how does the particular statement(s) illuminate the general statement? Why use such particularization/generalization? What does it imply?
- VIII. CAUSATION or SUBSTANTIATION -- What is meant by the cause(s) and by the effect(s)? How does the cause(s) result in the effect(s), or how does the cause(s) substantiate the effect(s)? Why use this causal/substantiative movement? What is implied by it?
- IX. INSTRUMENTATION -- What is meant by the end or purpose, and what is meant by the means? How do the means serve as an instrument(s) for realizing the end? Why does the author use this instrumental relationship? What are its full implications?
- X. PREPARATION/REALIZATION or INTRODUCTION -- What is meant by the preparatory material, and by the material for which preparation is made? How does the preparatory or introductory material make you ready for what follows? Why use this preparatory movement? What does it imply?
- XI. SUMMARIZATION -- What is the meaning of the summary statement? How does it summarize the materials involved? Why such summarization? What is implied by it?



XII. INTERROGATION -- What is the meaning of the question (problem) and of the answer (solution)? How does the answer (solution) resolve the question (problem)? Why use such interrogation? What are its full implications?

Note the following regarding the use of these questions.

1. Primary use is made of the three major types of questions: definitive, rational, and implicational. These are the questions which are the most meaningful in exploring structural observations. Sometimes, however, the auxiliary types of questions (who, when, where, and how) may be relevant, depending on the specific material involved in the relationship.
2. Structural questions should be asked about each primary law operative between major units. It is best to ask the questions when each law is observed rather than waiting until all of the laws are observed.
3. The questions should follow an orderly sequence: definition, reason, implications.
4. The questions above are expressed in general terms. They should be particularized as much as possible by including the specific materials involved in the use of the law. At the same time, unnecessary details should be avoided.
5. Questions should be asked in a variety of ways when possible. Note the use of "how" questions above for definition.
6. If all of the instances of the use of a law are not discovered, it is sometimes helpful to ask an observational question: What are the contrasts here? What are the recurring elements in the unit? Similar observational questions can be asked regarding the other laws.
7. A mechanical use of these questions should be avoided as much as possible. These examples are provided to increase your understanding as a basis for asking structural questions without reference to this list.

## APPENDIX I

### Suggestions for Lessons

#### Criteria for Excellence:

1. Induction -- base conclusions on the concrete evidence of the text
2. Accuracy -- draw valid inferences from the text
3. Originality -- take a fresh approach to the material, using your own words and finding new ways of expressing biblical truth
4. Depth -- probe beneath the surface of the text to find these truths which are not self-evident as well as those that are
5. Organization --- systematize your findings so as to correlate similar ones and so as to indicate logical progression
6. Relative Thoroughness -- be as complete as possible within the time limits
7. Clarity -- try to express your thoughts in an unambiguous way

#### Miscellaneous Suggestions:

1. Give specific chapter and verse references to indicate the textual bases for your findings. *very important*
2. Be structure-conscious and pinpoint relationships in terms of specific laws of structure.
3. Differentiate between primary and secondary relationships.
4. List ideas whenever possible rather than using essay statements.
5. Be analytical in your answers--*very important* identify components of statements, give them a proper label, and indicate the relations between them.
6. Cover the entire lesson within time limits. *very important*
7. Select an area of special importance in each lesson and probe it in greater depth than is done for the rest of the lesson.
8. Experiment with charts and diagrams as a visual means of recording your findings and indicating relationships.
9. Distinguish between those findings which are noteworthy and those which are not.
10. Ask about any procedural matters which are unclear or in relation to which you need help.
11. Be punctual in preparing your lessons, since only those lessons which are on time, excluding an emergency, will be accepted. In case of an emergency, please check with the professor.
12. Compare and contrast your outside work with class findings to discover areas of strength and of need.