



15800 Calvary Rd
Kansas Citv. MO 64147

Syllabus

Course: BI343D/ND Genesis (blended*)
Credit: 3 Semester Hours
Semester: Fall 2023 (Cycle 3)
Time: 1:00-2:20 p.m. Monday and Wednesday, October 23–December 11
Location: Calvary University, East Education 116 and Online Classroom
Instructor: Joel T. Williamson, Jr., Th.M.
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I. DESCRIPTION

A systematic study of the chronological progression of events in this foundational book. Practical emphasis is placed on the content and its relation to the geography, local setting, and historical significance to the early history of Israel. (Prerequisite: BI115)

** This course is offered in two formats: in-person and online. Students registered for in-person attend the classes in person, online students attend the classes via the online classroom. For both in-person and online students, assignments and interaction outside of the class period are done in the learning management system.*

II. OBJECTIVES

The basic goal of this course is not knowledge, but knowhow. “Knowledge is not knowhow until you understand the underlying principles at work and can fit them together into a structure larger than the sum of its parts. Knowhow is learning that enables you to *go do*.”¹ When you have knowhow, you are ready to explore the implications of the book of Genesis for yourself. Growth in knowhow is a lifelong process and thus beyond the scope of this course. You can, however, make progress toward it in all three skill areas.

A. *Knowledge of Basic Facts.* You can’t distinguish what’s relevant from what’s not unless you know the basic facts associated with the book. To help you achieve this awareness, you are expected to be able to specify all the following by the end of the semester: (PLO’s: 1, 2) (Assignments: Readings, Quizzes, Examinations, Argument Paper)

1. The basic facts about the book—its author, recipients, date, occasion, theme, purpose, and structure.
2. The basic facts within the book—the chapter from which selected basic statements come.

¹Peter C. Brown, Henry L. Roediger III, and Mark A. McDaniel, *Make It Stick: The Science of Successful Learning* (Cambridge, MA and London: Belknap Press, 2014), 158. (The italics belong to the text quoted.)

- B. *Solving of Knotty Problems.*** Only a reliable procedure can consistently provide reliable solutions when you confront an interpretive problem. Toward this end, you will demonstrate your ability to do all the following: (PLO's: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5) (Assignments: Readings, Quizzes, Examinations, Personal Studies, Argument Paper)
1. Explain why selected interpretive problems need to be solved.
 2. Evaluate the relative strength of the solutions proposed for these problems.
 3. Derive and justify your own tentative solutions to these problems.
- C. *Insight into the Argument.*** You don't really understand a book until you see how all its parts work together to make a point. (The whole really is greater than the sum of its parts.) To show that you have made progress toward this level of understanding, you should be able to do all the following: (PLO's: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5) (Assignments: Readings, Quizzes, Examinations, Argument Paper)
1. Discover the basic questions that the book addresses and the answers it provides.
 2. Discern the overall structure of the book's argument.
 3. Develop practical—and interpretively sound—applications of the basic message of the book.

III. TEXTBOOKS

- A. *Holy Bible.*** The Bible is a required textbook in every course at Calvary University. To facilitate academic level study, students are required to use for assignments and research an English translation or version of the Bible based on formal equivalence (meaning that the translation is generally word-for-word from the original languages), including any of the following: New American Standard (NASB, English Standard Version (ESV), New King James (NKJV), or King James (KJV). Other translations and versions based on dynamic equivalence (paraphrases and thought-for-thought translations like NLT and NIV) may be used as supplemental sources. Please ask me if you have questions about a particular translation or version.
- B. *Other Textbooks.***
- Kidner, Derek. *Genesis: An Introduction and Commentary*. Tyndale Old Testament. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1967. [ISBN: 978-0830842018, \$18.00]
- Whitcomb, John C. *The World that Perished: An Introduction to Biblical Catastrophism*. 3rd. Rev. ed. Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 2009. [ISBN: 978-0884692669, \$18.00]
- C. *Class Notes.*** I will make class notes and assignment helps available as needed during the semester.

IV. ASSIGNMENTS

It is my conviction that most of the learning and the best learning for this class will come through the assignments you do. Though they will be used to calculate your course grade, the primary purpose of the assignments for this course is to help you develop knowhow, the ability

to extract truth from God's word and infuse it into your life. Knowhow doesn't just happen; you must cultivate it. So, take out your shovel and hoe; the process begins now.

- A. Reading (200 points).** Knowhow cannot develop without data. Therefore, your first responsibility is to fill your mind with the fundamental facts found in Genesis. Focused reading is the most efficient way for you to gain this information. Therefore, you will perform two types of reading this semester: the reading of the book of Genesis itself supplemented by the reading of the two other textbooks (Kidner, *Genesis* and Whitcomb, *The World that Perished*). You will submit reading reports the week before each of the four major examinations. You will receive no credit unless the reading is complete, but you may complete the reading late for half credit.

I will grade each reading according to the following scale: reading of Genesis through (10 points), the assigned project for it (30 points), reading of the assigned portions of the commentaries (3 points), and the assigned project for it (7 points)

- B. Quizzes (84 points).** Each Week, I will post a quiz in Canvas to help you retain what you have learned. These quizzes will be cumulative and may cover material from any previous class session. In general, however, each will focus on the material covered since the last quiz. Understanding, rather than rote memorization is the best guarantee of a good grade. You may not make up a missed quiz.

- C. Examinations (480 points).** During the semester, you will take four online examinations. In these, you will demonstrate your competency in all three categories of course objectives, but particularly in the last two. Each exam will consist of five to seven questions. The first question will always be the same: "State the theme and purpose of the book of Genesis and trace the two major stages in its development along with the chapters in each." The remainder of the exam will consist of essay questions that require you to explain or apply material covered in class.

Each exam will be cumulative, but the emphasis will always be on the material studied since the previous exam. Ordinarily, I will not allow you to take any exam late; however, if you know that you will miss an exam (for a valid reason), you may make arrangements with me beforehand.

- D. Personal Studies (150 points).** While knowhow does require a body of basic facts, facts alone are not enough. You also need skill in interpreting, correlating, and applying those facts. In short, you need to be able to see the big picture. An important part of this ability is skill in the solving of problems. The personal study assignments are designed to help you develop that skill. In fact, these assignments will provide much more than an opportunity to develop your interpretive skill; they will also help you understand the overall message of Genesis much better than you get from just sitting in class.

One of the most frustrating realities about Bible study is that godly men often disagree about what a passage means or how it should be applied. Sometimes, these disagreements can (and should) be ignored. More often, however, they cannot. In such cases, it is up to you to decide for yourself which explanation is correct. Five times this semester, you will confront such a disagreement. In responding to each, you will submit a two-page personal study. While the specific form will vary from study to study, each will require you

to identify why the problem matters and to propose and justify your own solution—no matter how tentative it may be.

Well before it is due, I will supply the problem to be solved and specify the procedure you should follow. Each paper will be graded based on your ability to identify which issues are important (10 points), make them clear (10 points), and suggest viable interpretations and/or applications of the passage (10 points). Personal studies may be submitted late, but late work receives only half credit.

- E. Argument of Genesis (86 points and pass/fail).** In the seventh week of class, you will submit a ten-page, double-spaced summary of the argument of Genesis using the non-research paper format. This paper should identify the core idea being developed in the book, Moses' purpose in writing it, and how each major section and subsection helps to accomplish that purpose. In this assignment, more than any other, you will demonstrate how much knowhow in Genesis you have achieved. Therefore, ***you must complete this project to pass the course.*** You may submit it late for half-credit, but you must have it in my hands by the Friday after the last week of classes—***or you will fail the course.***

This should prove to be one of the most difficult—and most profitable—assignments you have ever tackled. To do it properly, you must do more than rehash the events reported in the book. You must explain why the book reports the events it does, why it supplies the details about them it does, and why it arranges them in the order that it does. The process is relatively simple, but it takes time (almost the entire course cycle) as well as concentrated effort.

The grade for your project will be based on the following four criteria: accuracy (30 points), adequacy (25 points), clarity (20 points), and mechanics (11 points). In other words, to get the best possible grade, you will need to get your facts straight, have enough of them to justify your conclusions, express your thoughts clearly, and use proper spelling, grammar, and form.

Specific Assignments Due Each Week

Week 1 (0 points)

Week 2 (92 points)

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|-------------------|-----------|
| Quiz #1 | 12 points |
| Personal Study #1 | 30 points |
| Reading #1 | 50 points |

Week 3 (162 points)

| | |
|-------------------|------------|
| Quiz #2 | 12 points |
| Personal Study #2 | 30 points |
| Examination #1 | 120 points |

Week 4 (92 points)

| | |
|-------------------|-----------|
| Quiz #3 | 12 points |
| Personal Study #3 | 30 points |
| Reading #2 | 50 points |

Week 5 (162 points)

| | |
|-------------------|------------|
| Quiz #4 | 12 points |
| Personal Study #4 | 30 points |
| Examination #2 | 120 points |

Week 6 (92 points)

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|-------------------|-----------|
| Quiz #5 | 12 points |
| Personal Study #5 | 30 points |
| Reading #3 | 50 points |

Week 7 (218 points)

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|---------------------|------------|------------------------|
| Quiz #6 | 12 points | |
| Examination #3 | 120 points | |
| Argument of Genesis | 86 points | (pass-fail assignment) |

Week 8 (182 points)

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|-------------------|------------|
| Quiz #7 | 12 points |
| Reading #4 | 50 points |
| Final Examination | 120 points |

V. METHODS

A. Teaching

1. **Lecture.** I will devote much of each class period to lecturing (often flavored with “sermonizing”), so come to class prepared to take notes. (Studies have shown that students that take notes by hand learn more and get better grades.)
2. **Question and Answer.** Notes are no substitute for learning. If you do not understand something, ask me to clarify it.
3. **Discussion.** Several deep and controversial issues complicate the exposition of Genesis. I will allow a limited amount of class time for the inevitable disagreement and debate; however, I reserve the right to referee and terminate discussion. If you wish to continue the discussion (or to instruct the instructor!), you must make an out-of-class appointment.

B. Grading

1. Reading 200 points
2. Quizzes 84 points
3. Examinations 480 points
4. Personal Studies. 150 points
5. Argument of Genesis. 86 points (pass-fail assignment)
- Total. 1000 points

C. Calculating the Final Grade

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|-----------------|----|----------------|----|
| 930–1000 points | A | 730–769 points | C |
| 900–929 points | A- | 700–729 points | C- |
| 870–899 points | B+ | 670–699 points | D+ |
| 800–829 points | B- | 630–669 points | D |
| 770–799 points | C+ | 0–559 points | F |

D. Academic Issues and Support

1. **Plagiarism.** Plagiarism is defined as copying any content without identifying the source. This also includes taking another person's or AI entity's ideas or constructs and presenting them as your own. The use of AI generated content in student work is prohibited (even if cited) as it does not represent original work created by the student and is an unreliable aggregate of ideas from other sources. Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated.
2. **Style.** All class papers must follow the Turabian style according to *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 8th edition and the Calvary Style Guide, 2019 update.
3. **Assistance.** The Clark Academic Center (learning@calvary.edu), located in the library building, is dedicated to providing free academic assistance for all students. Student tutors aid with all facets of the writing process, tutor in various subject areas, prepare students for exams, and facilitate tests. Please take advantage of this service.
4. **Disabilities.** Students with disabilities have the responsibility of informing the Accommodations Support Coordinator (aso@calvary.edu) of any disabling condition that may require support.