

Reading the Genesis Creation Stories Again for the First Time

Michael Peterson, PhD

Thursdays, September 28 – November 2, 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm, Todd Building, UM

Course Description: This course presents the Genesis creation accounts reinterpreted in light of recent discoveries in archaeology, linguistics, and cultural anthropology. Specifically, scholars now view the first creation story to be a soaring, allegorical polemic pitting ethical monotheism against paganism rather than a scientific account of creation. Similarly, the second creation story is viewed as an extended metaphysical essay about free will and moral accountability. This understanding arises from a narrative in which the vapid, benign utopia of Eden is rejected in exchange for sexual procreativity and the trials and tribulations of mortal life. This is not your pastor's Sunday School Genesis.

About the Instructor: Michael Peterson holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in microbiology and tumor immunology. In 2003, he began translating biblical Hebrew using recent peer-reviewed scholarship in order to recover the original meanings of the biblical texts. One of his special interests is rationalizing the so-called conflicts between science and religion that invariably arise from a literal reading of the Bible's English translations.