

4OT510: JUDGES - ESTHER

Course Syllabus

Reformed Theological Seminary, Atlanta
 Fall 2008, Sept. 19 & 20, Oct. 10 & 11, Nov. 07 & 08
 Fridays, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.; Saturdays 8:30-4:30 p.m.

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RTS Catalog Description:

This overview of the literature, history, and themes of Judges through Esther gives particular attention to the relevance of these books for the church and world today. 2 credit hours.

I. PURPOSE OF THE COURSE

To gain an adequate comprehension of the Historical Books of the Old Testament from Judges through Esther- including their background, content, interpretation, and criticism- in order to effectively communicate the revealed truths of the Old Testament as it relates to Jesus Christ and His Gospel.

This course shall attempt to accomplish the following goals:

- 1) present an expository approach to the development of redemptive history from the early history of Israel to the post-exilic period;
- 2) examine major theological themes including covenant (e.g., Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic), election, the sovereignty of God, the wars of Yahweh, etc;
- 3) acquaint the student with the historical events of the Historical Books as well as pertinent literary and legal parallels found in ancient Near Eastern history;
- 4) acquaint the student to the geography and topography of Palestine;
- 5) introduce and evaluate the salient features of several interpretive methodologies to the Old Testament, including: Source Criticism, Redaction Criticism, Form Criticism, Tradition Criticism, Comparative Religions, Canonical Criticism, and New Literary Criticism;
- 6) evaluate current scholarship on critical matters such as the authorship, dating and unity of the Historical Books pertaining to the critical theory surrounding the so-called "Deuteronomistic History";
- 7) aid the student in preparation for the preaching of the texts highlighting Christological approaches such as typology, promise/fulfillment, and redemptive-historical.

II. BOOK LIST

Required Textbooks-

- Hill, Andrew E. & John H. Walton. *Old Testament Today*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999.
- Longman III, Tremper & Raymond B. Dillard. *An Introduction to the Old Testament*. Second Edition. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994, 2006.
- Provan, Ian, V. Philips Long, & Tremper Longman III. *A Biblical History of Israel*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003.

Recommended Textbooks-

[*- denotes *highly recommended*]

- Arnold, Bill T. & Bryan E. Beyer. *Encountering the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999.
- Clowney, Edmund. *Preaching Christ From All the Scriptures*. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2003.
- Currid, John D. *Doing Archaeology in the Land of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999.
- Dorsey, David A. *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament: A Commentary On Genesis-Malachi*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999.
- Goldsworthy, Graeme. *According to Plan: The Unfolding Revelation of the God In the Bible*. Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP, 2002.
- _____. *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.
- Greidanus, Sidney. *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.
- Hamilton, Victor P. *Handbook on the Historical Books*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001.
- Howard, David. M., Jr. *An Introduction to the Old Testament Historical Books*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1993.
- *Kaiser, Walter C., Jr. *A History of Israel: From the Bronze Age through the Jewish Wars*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1998.
- _____. *The Old Testament Documents: Are They Reliable & Relevant?* Downers Grove: IVP, 2001.
- *Kline, Meredith G. *Kingdom Prologue*. South Hamilton, MA: M.G. Kline, 1993; reprinted by Two Age Press, 2000.
- *_____. *The Structure of Biblical Authority*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975; reprinted by Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1997.
- Mathewson, Steven D. *The Art of Preaching Old Testament Narrative*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002.
- *Merrill, Eugene H. *Kingdom of Priests: A History of Old Testament Israel*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987.
- Pratt, Richard L., Jr. *He Gave Us Stories: The Bible Student's Guide to Interpreting Old Testament Narrative*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1990.
- Strom, Mark. *The Symphony of Scripture*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1990.
- Thiele, Edwin R. *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965.
- VanGemeren, Willem. *The Progress of Redemption*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988.
- Vos, Geerhardus. *Biblical Theology: Old and New Testaments*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948.
- *Wright, Paul. *Holman QuickSource Bible Atlas*. Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 2000.

III. COURSE SCHEDULE

September 19- *Syllabus Review and Course Requirements*
Prolegomena: An Introduction to the Deuteronomic Theology of the Historical Books

September 20- **What is Old Testament Historiography?**
 Assignment: Provan/Long/Longman: Chapters 1-5, pp. 3-104
 Longman/Dillard: Chapter 1

September 20- **The Book of Judges**
 Assignment: Longman/Dillard: Chapter 8
 Provan/Long/Longman: Chapter 7

September 20- **The Book of Ruth**
 Assignment: Longman/Dillard: Chapter 9

October 10- **The Book of 1 Samuel**
 Assignment: Longman/Dillard: Chapter 10
 Provan/Long/Longman: Chapter 8

October 11- **The Book of II Samuel**
 Assignment: Provan/Long/Longman: Chapter 8

----- *Content on Midterm Examination* -----

Midterm Examination Due: October 22, 2008 by 5:00 p.m.

October 11- **The Book of 1 Kings**
 Assignment: Longman/Dillard: Chapter 11
 Provan/Long/Longman: Chapter 9

November 07- **The Book of II Kings**
 Assignment: Provan/Long/Longman: Chapter 10

November 08- **The Book of I & II Chronicles**
 Assignment: Longman/Dillard: Chapter 12

November 08- **The Book of Ezra-Nehemiah**
 Assignment: Longman/Dillard: Chapter 13
 Provan/Long/Longman: Chapter 11

November 08- **The Book of Esther**
 Assignment: Longman/Dillard: Chapter 14

Reading Notes on Hill & Walton Due: December 03, 2008 by 5:00 p.m.

----- *Content on Final Examination* -----

Final Examination Due: December 10, 2008 by 5:00 p.m.
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Paper Assignment Due: December 17, 2009 by 5:00 p.m.

IV. ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments should be read, completed, and/turned in on or before the due dates scheduled. In fairness to students who do their work on time, late assignments will be reduced one letter grade per day. If more time is needed on any assignment, reasonable excuses will be accepted.

A. Reading Notes

Using the reading from Hill & Walton (“Fundamentals,” pp. 2-23 and “Chapter 3: Historical Literature,” pp. 132-227: approx. 116 pages), write a detailed outline of notations on the content of these two chapters. When you have completed your notations, answer the following questions. 1) How has Hill & Walton’s textbook illuminated the historical milieu of the Historical Books of the Bible? 2) Did Hill & Walton aid in your understanding of the plotline and purpose of each of the Historical Books? If so, how; if not, why not? 3) Would recommend the textbook? What are some of its strengths and its weaknesses? Note that these readings will be turned in and some of the information may be on the final examination. This assignment will be 10% of your grade.

B. Paper

Write a 10-12 page paper on a major Deuteronomic-theological theme found in one of the Historical Books. As an integral part of the paper, show and discuss how the Deuteronomic theme relates to the overall narrative plot as delineated in the book. At least eight sources must be used including two theological journals. The use of correct grammar, spelling, and academic formatting (following K. Turabian’s *A Manual for Writers* [Seventh Edition; Chicago: University of Chicago, 2007]) will also be required. The paper is worth 100 points and comprises 30% of the course grade.

C. English Bible Reading

Each student is required to read the books of Judges through Esther during the course of this semester. The final exam will ask whether or not the student has successfully fulfilled this requirement.

D. Examinations and Attendance

There will be a mid-term and a final exam. Each exam is worth 100 points and is equivalent to 60% of the course grade collectively. Although attendance will not be figured into the final course grade, your presence will be required in order to take the exams. Exams will not be “made up” without previous notification.

E. Disclaimer

This syllabus reflects the specific objectives and instructional format/content of 4OT:510: Judges to Esther. However, the instructor reserves the right to modify any portion of this syllabus for the good of the course as may appear necessary during the semester.

V. GRADING

A. Scale. The standard RTS grading scale will be used.

- A (97-100)
- A- (94-96)
- B+ (91-93)
- B (88-90)
- B- (86-87)
- C+ (83-85)
- C (80-82)
- C- (78-79)
- D+ (75-77)
- D (72-74)
- D- (70-71)
- F (below 70)

B. Basis for computation

Midterm Examination	30%
Final Examination	30%
Deuteronomic-theological Paper	30%
Reading Notes	10%