REFORMED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
New York City

COURSE SYLLABUS
Joshua-Esther 09OT5250

Spring Semester, 2021
January 28-May 13, 7:30-9:30 (no class on Apr. 1)
AND January 29 6:00-9:00, January 30 9:00-4:00

CLASS FORMAT: Synchronous Zoom Sessions

INSTRUCTOR: Rev. Dr. William Fullilove
Contact Information:
bfullilove@rts.edu
770-952-8884

NOTE: Please do not email or text for questions on assignments or to request extensions. The following contacts should be via Canvas:

1) Extension requests must be made in the individual comment section where the student would submit that assignment on Canvas.
2) Questions about assignments should be made in the general comments section regarding that assignment (visible to all).
3) More general class questions should be made in the Professor/Student discussion forum in Canvas.

If the issue is not covered by these three categories, then please email me. You are welcome to have my cell phone, but please only text me for emergencies. The three categories above are not emergencies.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: A Biblical-theological study and analysis of the message and times of the Biblical books from Joshua-Esther, emphasizing major themes found within this portion of the Holy Scriptures with a goal of how to understand, exegete, preach, and teach this portion of the Scriptures.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Comprehension:

1. To increase your knowledge of the English Bible of the books Joshua-Esther.
2. To increase your understanding of the message(s) of the books Joshua-Esther, both separately and together.
3. To increase your knowledge of the development of redemptive history through the periods covered in these books.
4. To introduce the basic trends in scholarly research regarding these books.

Competence:

1. To sharpen your ability to interpret the books Joshua-Esther in their historical, theological, and literary contexts.
2. To sharpen your ability to teach and preach the books Joshua-Esther in the context of the local church.

3. To prepare those called to pastoral ministry for licensure and ordination exams at their local church assemblies and examination boards.

Character:

1. To sharpen your application of the themes of the books Joshua-Esther in your personal spiritual life.
2. To be a person of growing faith, hope, and love based on the work of God as revealed in these books.

REQUIRED READINGS/LISTENING.

- Biblical books of Joshua-Esther in two English translations of the student's choice.
- Sidney Greidanus. Preaching Christ from the Old Testament. Eerdmans, 1999. (GR)
- K.A. Kitchen. *On the Reliability of the Old Testament.* Eerdmans, 2006. (KI)
- Richard Pratt, *He Gave Us Stories* (RP)
- Iain W. Provan, V. Phillips Long, and Tremper Longman. *A Biblical History of Israel* (PLL)
- M. VanPelt (ed.), *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the Old Testament: The Gospel Promised* (BTIOT)
- A. Hurvitz. "Can Biblical Texts be Dated Linguistically? Chronological Perspectives in the Historical Study of Biblical Hebrew." Pgs. 143-160 in *Congress Volume, Oslo, 1998.* Ed. A. Lemaire and M. Saebo. Supplement to Vetus Testamentum 80. Leiden: Brill, 2000. (Note: This reading will be provided to students in .pdf format.)

REQUIREMENTS:

Attendance: Students are required to attend class lectures and discussions. If you know you cannot make it to a class session, notify the instructor in advance. Missing a significant number of classes (defined at the instructor's discretion!) will impact a student's grade in the class.

Reading: Students are required to complete all readings according to the course schedule below.

Quizzes: At the **beginning** of class each week, students will be quizzed covering the reading of the Biblical books as indicated on the course schedule. (Students should not expect to arrive late and be able to take the quiz.) The lowest quiz grade will be dropped.

Professor-Student Interaction Assignments: Students will be assigned passages each week to which to apply the skills taught up to that point in this class. Students should come to class the next week prepared to discuss the passage and their analysis of it, including presentation to the class of their findings. Students should produce a SHORT (max. 2 pages) written outline that summarizes their work. This outline should be submitted as a **.pdf** file **before** the start of class each week **via Canvas**. More details will be given weekly in class regarding the content of this assignment, as it will shift over the course of the semester.

Student-to-Student Interactions: Students must post at least five substantial posts in the student-to-student discussion forum on Canvas.

Final Paper: Students must submit a full research paper formatted in accordance with RTS guidelines and including a full bibliography. Students are also encouraged to integrate material from other classes into this paper as appropriate.

- Exegetical Paper – Students who have taken Hebrew Exegesis should write an exegetical paper a passage of their choosing from the books covered in this class. The passage should be approved by the professor in advance. This paper should explain the meaning and significance of this section within the biblical book, within the Scriptures as a whole, and within the church today. This exegetical paper should include a Hebrew text with text critical notes, a translation with grammatical and lexical notes, and the paper itself.
- Topical Paper – Students should write a topical paper on date of authorship of Chronicles. Students should enunciate the arguments (and proposed dating) for both the early and late date of authorship and then choose and defend what they view as the most convincing argument. Students should close their paper by exploring the implications of their decision for the teaching and preaching of Chronicles – what does their dating imply about the original audience of the book, and how does that identification of the original audience impact how one should teach and preach the book?

Where appropriate, papers are encouraged to incorporate insights from other courses, especially language and theology courses.

Papers should be 15-20 pages, double spaced, with a clear thesis and supporting evidence. Papers should show significant extra research beyond the texts assigned for this course, including a full bibliography. Where appropriate, papers should incorporate relevant insights from other courses. (RTS NYC uses Turabian for its formatting guidelines.) Papers should be submitted as .pdf files via Canvas.

Students who wish to write on a different topic may do so, but the topic must be approved in advance by the instructor.

Note: Students who are interested in doing **additional graduate study** beyond their RTS degree **MUST** contact the instructor in advance, as these requirements may be adjusted to better prepare the student for his or her future course of study.

TOTAL GRADE: The final grade for the course will be the total of each of the required assignments listed above.

Quizzes (20%)
Final Paper (30%)
Professor Interaction Assignments (40%)
Student-to-Student Interactions (5%)
Attendance (5%)

Grades will be assigned according to the RTS grading system. The instructor reserves the right to adjust grades based on each student's attendance at class and participation in classroom discussion.

EXTENSION POLICY: All assignments and exams are to be completed by the deadlines announced in this syllabus or in class.

Extensions for assignments and exams due within the normal duration of the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. Extensions of two weeks or less beyond the date of the last deadline for the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. A grade penalty may be assessed.

Extensions of greater than two weeks but not more than six weeks beyond the last deadline for the course may be granted in extenuating circumstances (i.e. illness, family emergency). For an extension of more than two weeks the student must submit an Extension Request Form. The request must be approved by the Professor and the Academic Dean. A grade penalty may be assessed. (RTS Catalog p. 42)

Any incompletes not cleared six weeks after the last published due date for course work will be converted to a failing grade. Professors may have the failing grade changed to a passing grade by request. (RTS Catalog p. 42)

COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS:
The majority of this class will focus on an exegetical study of the books Joshua-Esther. Particularly important topics in academic or pastoral study of these books will also be covered. NOTE: Course schedule is ALWAYS subject to revision based on the needs of the class.

Jan. 28-30
- Bible Reading: Num 36, Joshua 2, 1 Sam 5-7, 2 Sam 6-7, 2 Kings 21, 2 Chron. 14-16, 33, Jonah, Luke 24, Acts 2-3, 7, 13, 17, 26, 1 Cor. 9:24-11:1
- Other Reading: RP 10-16, Greidanus
- Class Topics:
  - External Analysis
  - Getting to Christ from OT Narr.

Feb. 4
- Bible Reading and Quiz: Ruth
- Other Reading: PLL, ch. 6; BTIOT ch. 17
- Class Topic: Ruth

Feb. 11
- Bible Reading and Quiz: Joshua
- Other Reading: PLL, ch. 7; BTIOT, ch. 6
- Class Topic: Joshua (Taking the Land); History, Archaeology, and Canaanite Religion

Feb. 18
- Sermon/Teaching Outline Due: Joshua 2
- Bible Reading and Quiz: Judges
- Other Reading: BTIOT ch.7
- Lecture Topic: Judges

Feb. 25
- Sermon/Teaching Outline Due: Judges 4:1-24
- Other Reading: Kitchen ch. 1, 5
- Lecture Topic: History of Israel/Historiography in the Ancient Near East

Mar. 4
- Sermon/Teaching Outline Due: Judges 11:29-40
- Bible Reading and Quiz: 1 Samuel 1-12
- Other Reading: PLL, ch. 8
- Lecture Topic: The Rise of the Kingship

Mar. 11
- Sermon/Teaching Outline Due: 1 Samuel 6
- Bible Reading and Quiz: 1 Samuel 13-2 Samuel 1
- Other Reading: none
- Class Topic: Saul and David

Mar. 18
- Sermon/Teaching Outline Due: 1 Samuel 17
- Bible Reading and Quiz: 2 Samuel 2-24

- Other Reading: Kitchen, ch. 4
- Class Topic: The Rise and Fall of David

Mar. 25
- Sermon/Teaching Outline Due: 2 Samuel 24:1-25
- Bible Reading and Quiz: 1 Kings 1-11
- Other Reading: PLL, ch. 9; BTIOT ch. 9
- Lecture Topic: Solomon Narratives

Apr. 1 - NO Class

Apr. 8
- Sermon/Teaching Outline Due: 1 Kings 11:1-13
- Bible Reading and Quiz: 1 Kings 12-2 Kings 25
- Other Reading: PLL, ch. 10; Kitchen, ch. 2
- Lecture Topic: Divided Kingdom

Apr. 15
- Sermon/Teaching Outline Due: 2 Kings 2:1-25
- Bible Reading and Quiz: None
- Other Reading: Hurvitz; Kitchen ch. 10
- Lecture Topic: Compositional History Issues

Apr. 22
- Sermon/Teaching Outline Due: 2 Kings 19:1-19
- Bible Reading and Quiz: 1 & 2 Chronicles
- Other Reading: PLL, ch. 11; BTIOT ch. 24
- Lecture Topic: 1 & 2 Chronicles

Apr. 29
- Sermon/Teaching Outline Due: 2 Chronicles 30:1-27
- Bible Reading and Quiz: Ezra/Nehemiah
- Other Reading: BTIOT ch. 23; Kitchen, ch. 3
- Lecture Topic: Ezra/Nehemiah

May 6
- Sermon/Teaching Outline Due: Nehemiah 5:1-19
- Bible Reading and Quiz: Esther
- Other reading: BTIOT ch. 21
- Lecture Topic: Esther

May 11
- **Paper due at the start of class**
- From Esther to Matthew (summary of post-OT history)

OFFICE HOURS:

Thursdays 3:00-4:00. I am always also available by appointment, including before or after class or by phone.

Appendix 1: Bibliography/Recommended Reading

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.

Hamilton, Victor P. Handbook on the Historical Books. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001.

Hill, Andrew E. & John H. Walton. Old Testament Today. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999.

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.

Appendix 2: Student Learning Outcomes

MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes *In order to measure the success of the MDiv curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MDiv outcomes.* **As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.*		**Rubric** ➢ Strong ➢ Moderate ➢ Minimal ➢ None	**Mini-Justification**
Articulation (oral & written)	Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.	Strong	Outlines, Critical Paper, Class Discussion
Scripture	Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.)	Strong	Exegetical Focus, Outlines of Texts, Sermon Application
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Minimal	Biblical-theological emphases of this portion of canon; engage theologically when appropriate
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Strong	Close study of the Word of God sanctifies; strong devotional components of Scripture
Desire for Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Moderate	Material is taught within and analyzed against redemptive-historical worldview
Winsomely Reformed	Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.)	Moderate	Discussion and evaluation of historiography, emphasizing common grace insights along with Biblical presuppositions
Preach	Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Strong	Exegetical work that forms the backbone of

			strong preaching; weekly sermon preparation assignments
Worship	Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.	None	
Shepherd	Ability to shepherd the local congregation: aiding in spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide.	Minimal	Discussion as applicable
Church/World	Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Minimal	Discussion as applicable