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REFORMED  THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
DISTANCE EDUCATION

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JOSHUA - ESTHER  
DR. MARK D. FUTATO

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# Course Overview

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## Course Description:

0OT5250 Joshua - Esther, 3 hours  
Lecturing Professor and Professor of Record:  
Dr. Mark D. Futato

An analysis of each book in this section of the canon. The professor will cover introductory matters, structure, and key themes. Books are discussed according to the Hebrew canon with particular note to their relationship to the entire canonical structure.

## Course Objectives:

### Comprehension

- To increase your knowledge of introductory issues in each book from Judges to Esther.
- To increase your knowledge of the theology in each book from Judges to Esther.
- To increase your knowledge of the history of Israel from the period of the Judges to the post-exilic community.

### Competence

- To sharpen your ability to interpret Judges to Esther in their geographical, historical, theological, and literary contexts.
- To sharpen your ability to apply the teaching of Judges to Esther in your own life and in the life of the local church.

### Character

- To be a person of growing faith.
- To be a person of increasing hope.
- To be a person of deepening love.

## Required Textbooks:

Chisholm, Robert B. *Interpreting the Historical Books: An Exegetical Handbook*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2006.

Merrill, Eugene H. *Kingdom of Priests: A History of Old Testament Israel*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2008.

Van Pelt, Miles V. and J. Ligon Duncan, et. al. *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the Old Testament: The Gospel Promised*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016.

Walton, John H., and Andrew E. Hill. *Old Testament Today: A Journey from Original Meaning to Contemporary Significance*. 2nd edition. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2013.

[These books may also be available in ebook format through various retailers]

### *Online Student Handbook:*

The Online Student Handbook (can be [downloaded here](#)) has been designed to assist you in successfully navigating the Distance Education experience, whether you are taking a single course or pursuing a certificate or degree program. In it you will find valuable information, step-by-step instructions, study helps, and essential forms to guide you through every aspect of your distance education opportunity from registration to graduation. Please use this resource as your first-stop reference manual.

### *Summary of Requirements:*

1. Listen to all recorded [Lectures](#)
2. Complete all [Readings](#)
3. Participate in [Forum Discussions](#) (with other students and the professor)
4. Take the [Midterm and Final Exam](#)
5. Submit [Final Paper](#)
6. Submit [Workbook](#)
7. Submit [Reading Requirement](#)
8. Submit [Mentor Report/Course Application Paper](#)

# Meet the Professor

## *Lecturing Professor and Professor of Record:*



[Dr. Mark Futato](#) joined RTS Orlando in 1999 and serves as the Robert L. Maclellan Professor of Old Testament. He teaches core classes on Hebrew and Old Testament books. Dr. Futato served as Academic Dean of RTS Orlando from 2004 to 2012.

Dr. Futato's research interests include biblical Hebrew, the Book of Psalms and the role that elements of creation such as climate and geography play in scripture. Dr. Futato has published multiple books on the Psalms as well as an introduction to biblical Hebrew. He is currently finishing a commentary on Jonah. Dr. Futato served on the translation team for the Book of Psalms in the New Living Translation, contributed study notes for The ESV Study Bible and The Spirit of the Reformation Study Bible, and contributed to the New International Dictionary of

Old Testament Theology and Exegesis.

Prior to joining RTS, Dr. Futato served as a pastor for five years and taught for more than 10 years at Westminster Seminary California.

Students appreciate Dr. Futato's passionate emphasis on God's desire to bless all nations, his engaging communication style and his practical application of biblical texts to those who struggle, suffer and doubt. Dr. Futato and his wife, Adele, have four children: William, Evan, Mark Jr. and Annie. Follow Dr. Futato on Twitter: [@mfutato](#)

## *Publications by Dr. Futato:*

*Jonah: A Commentary* (Evangelical Press, forthcoming)

*Contributor, New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis* (Zondervan, 2012)

*Psalms: Cornerstone Biblical Commentary* (Tyndale House Publishers, 2009)

*Contributor, The ESV Study Bible* (Crossway Bibles, 2008)

*Interpreting the Psalms: An Exegetical Handbook* (Kregel Publishers, 2007)

*Translator, New Living Translation of the Bible* (Tyndale House Publishers, 2006)

*Joy Comes in the Morning: Psalms for All Seasons* (P&R Publishing, 2004)

*Beginning Biblical Hebrew* (Eisenbrauns, 2003)

*Contributor, The NIV Spirit of the Reformation Study Bible* (Zondervan, 2003)

*Transformed By Praise: The Purpose and Message of the Psalms* (P&R Publishing, 2002)

*Creation: A Witness to the Wonder of God* (P&R Publishing, 2000)

# Grades

## *Forum Discussions (15%):*

The student is required to interact in two (2) forums:

1. Student-Professor Posts (15 total posts)
  - A. Personal Introduction Forum: The student is required to post a brief personal introduction to the professor/class. Suggested details include your vocation, where you live, your church background, why you chose RTS, and what you hope to gain through the course (1 required post).
  - B. 5 Topical Discussion Q&A Forums: The student is required to answer each topical discussion question with one (1) response. The professor will acknowledge the student's answer and will follow up with a subsequent question to which the student must also answer with one (1) response. Each topical discussion question, therefore, requires two (2) total posts/responses from the student (Total of 5 forums x 2 posts = 10 total posts).
  - C. Student-Professor Forum: The student is required to post four (4) times in this forum. Posts in this forum should focus on course-related content such as research paper topics, lectures and reading assignments, or other academic issues related to the course.
2. Student-Student Forum (5 total posts)
  - A post may be either a new topic or a response to an already existing topic.

## *Examination (Midterm 20% - Final 20%):*

There are two exams, a midterm and a final. You may take each exam twice. Canvas will record your highest score. Both exams will be taken on Canvas. The midterm: Covers the lecture material through the book of Joshua. Books of the OT – English divisions and order (see below). The final: Covers the lecture material from the book of Judges through the book of Chronicles. Books of the OT – Hebrew divisions and order (see below). Preparation: Be prepared to answer questions based on the lectures. Questions will be based on lectures and relevant portions of the Historical Workbook.

The exam for this course will be taken online in the Learning Management System (LMS). Please note that you will need to have a proctor for your exams. Your proctor can be anyone except a relative or current RTS Student. After clicking on the exam link you will be given detailed instructions about the exam. Please read these instructions carefully before entering the exam. You may take each exam two times; Canvas will assign the higher of the two grades.

## *Final Paper (20%):*

As a final paper, the student will select one of the prompts below to respond to. The response must be between 1000-1500 words (not including footnotes). It must also incorporate 4-6 sources. Please make sure you follow correct formatting (see attached paper guidelines). With precision and concision, develop a brief argument pertaining to the prompt. This paper will be submitted at the End of Course Assignments.

- Analyze one or two ANE deities and their relationship to Yahweh as displayed in the

- historical books. This should incorporate exegesis of two to three passages of Scripture
- Investigate the origins of the Hebrew Canon and the change in the Christian Canon. Include analysis and conclusions of strengths of each.
  - Exegete parallel passages in Kings and Chronicles examining their similarities and differences.
  - Exegete a passage of 7-12 verses developing its context and content

### *Workbook (15%):*

During the length of this course, you will produce a workbook on the history of Israel by answering questions on chapters 5-15 in *Kingdom of Priests: A History of Old Testament Israel* by Eugene Merrill. The questions are found in the study guide below. You are encouraged to start early as the exams will cover information found in the reading and study guide. You will submit the Workbook at the end of the course in a single .pdf document.

### *Reading Report (5%):*

You will submit the total percentage of reading done for this course.

### *Mentor Report OR Course Application Paper (5%):*

If you are enrolled in an **RTS Global** degree or certificate program, you are required to submit a mentor report at the end of the course. Every portion of the form (goals, summaries, assessments, and signatures) should be filled out completely by both the student and the mentor to receive full credit. You can download the Mentor Report form in your Canvas classroom.

If you are receiving your degree through another **RTS campus** (Orlando, Jackson, Charlotte, et. al.), or are a certificate student, or special student (e.g. from another seminary), you are asked to write a 200-word summary of how you perceive what you have learned in this course will fit into the objectives you have for your ministry, your educational goals, or other objectives you wish to achieve in life. Course Application Papers (CAP) that fall well-short of 200 words will receive a grade deduction.

### *Assignments:*

Best practice for your time management is for you to submit all assignments at the end of the week in which they fall, using the upload links provided in the LMS. All work must be submitted by midnight of the course end date, per your course start letter. You are responsible for turning in all assignments on time; no late submissions are permitted. Any student who needs an extension must get approval from the Registrar prior to that time.

### *Contact Information:*

Reformed Theological Seminary, Distance Education  
2101 Carmel Road  
Charlotte, NC 28226  
(704) 900-1257  
1-855-854-6920  
FAX: (704) 366-9295  
E-mail: [dess@rts.edu](mailto:dess@rts.edu)  
Web site: [www.rts.edu/distance](http://www.rts.edu/distance)



# Lessons

## Lesson One

Introduction to the course  
The Land (Part 1): It's Theology

## Lesson Two

The Land (Part 2): It's Geography

## Lesson Three

The Land (Part 3): It's Inhabitants

## Lesson Four

The Hebrew Canon

## Lesson Five

Genesis - Kings An Overview

## Lesson Six

Joshua and Judges

## Lesson Seven

Samuel and Kings

## Lesson Eight

The Writings and Esther

## Lesson Nine

Ruth: From Emptiness to Fullness

## Lesson Ten

The Chronicler's History and Ezra -  
Nehemiah

## Lesson Eleven

The Book of Chronicles - Experiencing  
Restoration

# Research Paper Instructions

As a final paper, the student will select one of the prompts below to respond to. The response must be between 1000-1500 words (not including footnotes). It must also incorporate 4-6 sources. Please make sure you follow correct formatting (see attached paper guidelines). With precision and concision, develop a brief argument pertaining to the prompt. This paper will be submitted at the End of Course Assignments.

- Analyze an ANE deity and their relationship to Yahweh as displayed in the historical books. This should incorporate exegesis of two to three passages of Scripture.
- Investigate the origins of the Hebrew Canon and the change in the Christian Canon. Include analysis and conclusions of strengths of each.
- Exegete parallel passages in Kings and Chronicles examining their similarities and differences.
- Exegete a passage of 7-12 verses developing its context and content

Note: If you use these questions as an outline or as a guide for content, be sure to use these considerations to strengthen and develop a single, coherent argument. Do not address these questions independent from the main argument of your paper.

The following are criteria that will be used to evaluate the paper:

## Cogency of argument:

- Is there a thesis statement?
- How well does the argument hang together?
- How well are pertinent and fundamental points brought out?

## The use of sources:

- This is a research paper so avoid study Bibles as a source
- At least one journal article must be cited.
- Use a variety of commentaries (older vs. modern, critical vs. conservative). Read as many commentaries as you can, including conservative commentaries, those from a critical perspective, and at least one older commentary, such as Calvin, Geneva series, etc.
- Research is important and can be included in footnotes. Think of at least 4 - 6 sources.
- Discussions of historical context, genre, and redemptive history (where these are appropriate but do not go overboard); just give the reader enough information to understand your paper. Some issues, like authorship, can be omitted or issues and bibliography related to authorship can be given in footnotes.

## Biblical Languages:

- You are expected to use as much Hebrew as you are able.
- Make a note on your paper regarding previous coursework in Greek and Hebrew.

## Format:

- Use the 8th edition of *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, by Kate L. Turabian.
- Do not make a Scripture reference as a footnote, but put it in parenthesis in the paper.

- The paper should be 1000 - 1500 words (not including footnotes), double-spaced, numbered, and with one inch margins on all sides, except the left margin should have a 1 1/4 inch margin.
- Do not leave extra space between paragraphs

Here are sample footnote references that you need to follow or you could lose points on your paper. These footnotes follow Turabian, 8<sup>th</sup>ed.. The following examples give sample first references for books, journal articles, and an article in a book, followed by second references to a work, which are shortened.

Please note: When citing various works (journals, commentary series, reference works, ancient documents, etc.), you must follow the given abbreviations found in section 8 of the SBL Handbook of Style, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. This resource is available in a digital format at [library.rts.edu](http://library.rts.edu)

<sup>1</sup>Robert D. Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*, NAC (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1996), 120-25.

<sup>2</sup>David M. Howard, Jr., “The Case for Kingship in the Old Testament Narrative Books and the Psalms,” *TrinJ* 9 (1988): 19-35.

<sup>3</sup>Gary N. Knoppers, “The Historical Study of the Monarchy: Developments and Detours,” in *The Face of Old Testament Studies*, ed. D. W. Baker and B. T. Arnold (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999), 207-35.

<sup>4</sup>Michael J. Glodo, “Judges,” in *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the Old Testament*, ed. Miles V. Van Pelt (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 177-202.

Second footnote references shortened:

<sup>5</sup>Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*, 122.

<sup>6</sup>Howard, “The Case for Kingship,” 34.

<sup>7</sup>Knoppers, “The Historical Study of the Monarchy,” 222-25.

<sup>8</sup>Glodo, “Judges,” 180.

**Course Objectives Related to Student Learning Outcomes**

Course: Joshua - Esther

Professor:

<b>Student Learning Outcomes</b>		<b>Rubric</b>	<b>Mini-Justification</b>
<i>In order to measure the success of the 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 outcomes.</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Strong</li> <li>➤ Moderate</li> <li>➤ Minimal</li> <li>➤ None</li> </ul>	
<b>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</b>	Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.	Strong	Students will write extensively on the History of Israel as well as a research paper to develop themes and exegesis.
<b>Scripture</b>	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	Teaches the skills to research further into the original meaning of Scripture, including historical, literary, and theological perspectives.
<b>Reformed Theology</b>	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Minimal	Reflects on the sovereignty of God over history.
<b>Sanctification</b>	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Moderate	Focuses on likeness to God as he is revealed in the corpus under study.
<b>Desire for Worldview</b>	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Minimal	Reflects on application of corpus to all of life.
<b>Winsomely Reformed</b>	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.)	Minimal	Discussion forums are moderated to ensure that students communicate winsomely
<b>Preach</b>	Ability to teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	None	
<b>Worship</b>	Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	None	
<b>MAR Specific SLO</b>	An ability to integrate such knowledge and understanding into one's own calling in society	None	