

REGENT COLLEGE
Distance Education

BIBL 615: BOOK STUDY: JUDGES / RUTH

Professor Emeritus Bruce K. Waltke
Grader: Alvin Ung, de-bibl615@regent-college.edu
2 or 3 Graduate Credit Hours
Main source for guidelines, resources, extra handouts;
www.regent-college.edu/classesonline

Your due date: _____

(See the last page of your Student Handbook for setting your due date)

Recommended: BIBL 501 Old Testament Foundations; BIBL 503 Biblical Exegesis and Interpretation; and LANG 500 Perspectives on Biblical Languages or equivalent.

600 level courses are usually more advanced and focused than 500 level courses and generally assume the completion of some theological studies.

A course may be dropped within two weeks of the course start date for a 100% refund (less a \$25 drop fee). A course may be dropped between two and four weeks of the course start date for a 75% refund (less a \$25 drop fee). A course may be dropped between four and eight weeks of the course start date for no refund; after this time the student is committed to receiving a grade for the course. All course materials must be returned in original condition before a drop or refund will be approved.

Course Description

In this course the lecturer exposit the books of Judges and Ruth with the aim of showing their meaning to Israel and their relevance to the Church today. These books cover the time when judges ruled the kingdom of God and the kingdom fell into anarchy. Amazingly, the writer of Hebrews celebrates these flawed heroes from Israel's Dark Ages as exemplary heroes of the faith. The books' narrator, through brilliant literary techniques, presents this history and through entralling biographies shapes the people of God. This course aims to analyse their techniques to let their message be inscribed on the student's heart.

Course Objectives:

- to know God personally through the books of Judges and Ruth
- to know self through remembering salvation history from the time of the judges
- to know the contents of the books of Judges and Ruth
- to inscribe the messages of these books on the student's heart
- to make the student more proficient in reading biblical narrative and doing biblical theology

Course Outline

1. Introduction to course; Deuteronomic history (read *An old Testament Theology*, pp. 55-58)
2. Hermeneutics and narrative theology (read *An old Testament Theology*, pp. 78-125)
3. Introduction to Judges (read Judges 1-2)
4. Othniel, Ehud and Deborah (read Judges 3-5)
5. Gideon (read Judges 6-9)
6. “Minor Judges” and Jephthah (read Judges 10-12)
7. Sampson (read Judges 13-16)
8. Priests (read Judges 17-21)
9. Ruth (read Ruth 1-4)
10. Ruth

Academic Requirements and Time Investment

	<u>2 cr hrs</u>	<u>3 cr hrs</u>
Lectures	25 hrs	25 hrs
Reading & Exam Preparation	23 hrs	43 hrs
Critical Review of section of <i>A Biblical History of Israel</i> (1000 words)	-----	25 hrs
Journal Keeping	9 hrs	9 hrs
Exam	3 hrs	3 hrs
Commentary Review (2500 words)	<u>30 hrs</u>	<u>30 hrs</u>
TOTAL	90 hrs	135 hrs

Assignments

1. Readings

Prior to listening to each lecture, students are to read the assigned pages in *An Old Testament Theology* or scripture passage to be covered that lecture.

Additionally, students enrolled for 3 credit hours are to read pages 36-104 from Iain Provan, V. Philips Long, Tremper Longman III, *A Biblical History of Israel* (Louisville, London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003).

2. Critical Review. See appendix 3 (3cr, only)

Students will write a critical review of pages 36-104 of *A Biblical History*. The review should devote about 300 words to presenting their view of historiography and 300 words each on its strengths and weaknesses (total length: 900-1000 words).

3. Journal See appendix 4

Journal –keeping can serve as a tool for honest reflection about everyday issues, cultivating the discipline of prayer and attentiveness to Christ, and gaining deeper integration of Christian faith and daily life by engaging with questions that are included in your course manual. You are encouraged to view your journal entries as prayers – written with constant awareness of God’s presence as you write. Guidelines for journal-keeping:

- Respond to a reflection question before each lecture session, and to to an integrative question after each lecture session. You should take no longer than 30 minutes to respond to both questions.
- We encourage you to keep a journal in whatever form that is helpful for your reflection i.e. type in computer, write by hand on paper, jot things down in point form, generate mental maps, or written prayers etc. There's no word limit.
- Select a few journal entries and submit photocopies (minimum 3 pages).
- Confidential to the grader only.

4. Exam. See appendices 1 and 2

Students must restrict themselves to three hours in writing the exam and may use an unmarked Bible, but not the *An Old Testament Theology*. After writing the exam within the prescribed time, students may type up (but not edit) their answers. Potential exam questions are:

1. What is the relationship between illumination and scientific exegesis (Your discussion should include a consideration of the nature of the Bible and of the tools employed in the exegetical task). How will these reflections impact your devotional use of the Bible.
2. How does the lecturer's resolution of the tensions between the nature and scope of Israel's conquest of the land under Joshua's leadership and under the judges impact your life. (Your discussion should include among other things an analysis of the tension, an explanation why Joshua did not annihilate the nations in the Promised Land, and the function of the theology of the land within biblical theology.)
3. How does the lecturer's explanation of the function of Judges function within the Deuteronomic history impact your relationship to Jesus Christ and his Church? (Your answer should include a discussion of the evidence that Judges is a part of a putative Deuteronomic history, of the Deuteronomist's evaluative point of view toward the best form of government in Israel, of the narratees and implied audience of this composition, and an exegesis of Judges 8:23.)
4. Discuss how the Deuteronomist's biographies of Gideon, **or** Jephthah, **or** Samson impact your life in relationship to Jesus Christ and his Church. (Your discussion should include an analysis of the narrator's literary techniques to show the evaluative viewpoints of their lives and a comparison of his viewpoint with that of the writer of Hebrews [11:32].)
5. How does Ruth's role in salvation history instruct you in your role in establishing the kingdom of God? (Using the techniques of literary criticism, your discussion should include among other things the role of Providence, the development of Ruth's character in the unfolding of the plot, and her contribution to salvation history.)

Please refer to your student handbook for specific information on ordering your exam.

<http://www.regent-college.edu/academics/cstudies/documents/StudentHandbook.pdf>

5. Critical Review of a Commentary on Judges. See appendix 3

Students are to choose a commentary on Judges/Ruth from the following. Your critical appraisal should be about 2500 words (approx. 10 pages), divided equally into three parts: an analysis of the book's content and an appraisal of the book's strengths and weaknesses.

*Block, Daniel. *Judges and Ruth* (NAC; Broadman & Holman, 1999).

Good balance of technical exegesis with exposition.

*Younger, Lawson. *Judges and Ruth* (NIVAC; Zondervan, 2002)

Evaluation

	<u>2 cr hr</u>	<u>3 cr hrs</u>
Critical Review, <i>A Biblical History</i>	---	15 %
Journal (Pass/Fail)	10 %	10 %
Final Examination	60 %	45 %
Critical Review of a Commentary on Judges	30 %	30 %

NB: The Course Evaluation Form is to be returned by your due date

Late Policy and Extensions (please read carefully!)

For every week that your course requirements are submitted late, there will be a deduction of a third of a letter grade per assignment accordingly. Only under circumstances that are both unavoidable and unforeseeable are extensions considered (please refer to your student handbook for specific details <http://www.regent-college.edu/academics/cstudies/documents/StudentHandbook.pdf>)

Weddings and births do not count as unavoidable and unforeseeable. If you need to go beyond the six-month time limit, you must contact the Coordinator first for an extension. Contact information is provided in your Student Handbook. Please note that extensions are not automatically granted, and must be applied for before your original due date.

ACADEMIC HONOUR Regent College upholds the highest standards of academic responsibility as part of our commitment to Christ in all of life. Students are required to familiarize themselves especially with the discussion of “Academic Integrity” in the College Catalogue.

Bibliography

Required Reading:

All students are to read –

- 1) the Biblical text: the books of Judges and Ruth
- 2) Bruce Waltke with Charles Yu, *An Old Testament Theology* (Zondervan, 2007), pp. 55-58, 78-125
- 3) Iain Provan, V. Philips Long & Tremper Longman III. *A Biblical History of Israel* (Louisville, London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), pp.36-104

Students enrolled for 2 credit hours are also to read one of the commentaries on Judges, selected from the listed options (see page 3 of syllabus, point 5)

Recommended Reading:

Narrative Criticism (see also individual Judges and Ruth below)

- Alter, Robert. *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York, Basic Books, Inc., 1981)
- Alter, Robert and Kermode, Frank, eds. *The Literary Guide to the Bible* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1987)
- Bar-Efrat, Shimon. *Narrative Art in the Bible*, JSOT Supplements Series 70; Bible and Literature Series, No. 17 (Sheffield, England: The Almond Press, 1989)
- Berlin, Adele. *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative*. Bible and Literature Series, No. 9 (Sheffield, England: The Almond Press, 1983)
- Bonchek, Avigdor. *Studying the Torah: A Guide to In-Depth Interpretation* (Northvale, New Jersey; London: Jason Aronson, Inc., 1996)
- Buber, Martin. "Leitwort style in Pentateuch Narrative," in Buber and Rosenzweig, *Scripture and Translation* (Indiana University Press, 1994) p. 114-128
- Dorsey, David A. *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament: A Commentary on Genesis-Malachi* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2000)
- Longman, Tremper, III. *Literary Approaches to Biblical Interpretation, Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation*, Vol. 3 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1987)
- Pratt, Richard L., Jr. *He Gave Us Stories* (Brentwood, TN: Wolegmuth & Hyatt, Publishers, Inc., 1990)
- Powell, Mark Allan. *What is Narrative Criticism?* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990)
- Ska, Jean Louis. "Our Fathers Have Told Us": *Introduction to the Analysis of Hebrew Narratives* (Roma: Editrice Pontificio Instituto Biblico, 1990)
- Sternberg, Meir. *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading*, The Indiana Literary Biblical Series (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University, 1985)

Judges

- Alonso-Shokel, Luis. "Narrative Art in the Book of Judges." in *Hermeneutica de la Palabra. II*. Interpretacion Literaria de Textos Biblicos. Academia Christiana 38. (Madrid: Ediciones Cristiandad, 1987)
- Auld, Graeme. *Joshua, Judges, and Ruth* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984)
- Brensinger, Terry. *Judges* (BCBC; Herald, 1999)
- Blenkinsopp, J. "Structure and Style in Judges 13-16." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 82 (1963), pp.65-76
- Block, Daniel. *The Foundations of National Identity: A Study in Ancient Northwest Semitic Perspectives* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Microfilms, 1983), pp.1-83
- _____. "The Period of the Judges: Religious Disintegration Under Tribal Rule" in *Israel's Apostasy and Restoration*. Edited by Avraham Gileadi. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988)
- _____. *Judges and Ruth* (NAC; Broadman & Holman, 1999)
- Bluedorn, Wolfgang. *Yahweh versus Baalism* (Sheffield Academic Press, 2001)
- Craigie, P. C. "A Reconsideration of Shamgar Ben Anath (Judg 3:31 and 5:6)," *JBL* 91 (1972), pp.239-40
- Cundall, Arthur. *Judges and Ruth* (TOTC; IVP, 1968)
- _____. "Judges—An Apology for the Monarchy?" *Exp Tim* 81 (1970), pp.178-81
- DeWitt, Dale Sumner. "The Jephthah Traditions: A Rhetorical and Literary Study in the Deuteronomistic History." Ph.D. dissertation, Andrews University, 1987
- Dumbrell, William J. "'In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did what was right in his own eyes.' The Purpose of the Book of Judges Reconsidered," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 25 (1983), pp.23-33
- Exum, J. Cheryl. "Aspects of Symmetry and Balance in the Samson Saga." *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*. 19 (1981), pp.3-29

- _____. "Literary Patterns in the Samson Saga. An Investigation of Rhetorical Style in Biblical Prose." Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1976
- _____. "Promise and Fulfillment: Narrative Art in Judges 13." *Journal of Biblical Literature*. 99:1 (1980), pp.43-59
- Gerleman, Gerlis. "The Song of Deborah in the Light of Stylistics." *Vetus Testamentum I.* (1951), pp.168-80
- Gooding, D.W. "The Composition of the Book of Judges," *Eretz Israel* 16 (1982), pp.70-79
- Greenspahn, Frederick E. "The Theology of the Framework of Judges." *Vetus Testamentum* 36:4 (1986), pp.385-96
- Gunn, David M. "Joshua and Judges" in *The Literary Guide to the Bible*, pp.102-121. Edited by R. Alter and F. Kermode. (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1987)
- _____. "Narrative Patterns and Oral Tradition in Judges and Samuel." *Vetus Testamentum* 24. (1974), pp.286-317
- Harrison, R. K. Introduction to the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. Eerdmans, 1969), pp.680-94
- Kitchen, K. A. "The Old Testament in Its Context 3: From Joshua to Solomon," *TSFB* 61 (1971), pp.5-14
- _____. "The Old Testament in Its Context 6: *TSFB* 64 (1972), pp.2-10
- Klein, Lillian R. *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*. Sheffield, England: forthcoming.
- Lilley, J. P. U. "A Literary Appreciation of the Book of Judges," *Tyndale Bulletin* 18 (1967), pp.93-94.
- Lindars, B. "The Israelite Tribes in Judges," in *Studies in the Historical Books of the Old Testament*, ed. J. A. Emerton, VTSup 30 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1979), pp.95-111
- _____. "Jothan's Fable: A New Form Critical Analysis," *Journal of Theological Studies*, New Series 24 (1973), pp.355-66
- _____. *Judges 1-5* (T & T Clark, 1995)
- Malamat, A. "The Period of the Judges," in *Judges*, ed. B. Mazar, in *World History of the Jewish People* (Givatayim, Israel: Jewish History Publications, 1971), pp.3-131
- _____. "Charismatic Leadership in the Book of Judges," in *Magnalia Dei: The Mighty Acts of God*, ed. F. M. Cross et al. (Garden City: Doubleday, 1976), pp.163-64
- Mayes, A. D. H. "The Period of the Judges and the Rise of the Monarchy," in *Israelite and Judean History*, ed. J. H. Hayes and J. M. Miller, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977), pp.286-93
- Mullen, E. Theodore, Jr. "The 'Minor Judges': Some Literary and Historical Consideration." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 44 (ap. 1982), pp.185-201
- Murray, D. F. "Narrative Structure and Technique in the Deborah-Barak Story (Judges IV: 4-22)." *Vetus Testamentum Supplement*. 30 (1979), pp.155-89
- O'Connell, Robert. *The Rhetoric of the Book of Judges* (Brill, 1996).
- Olson, Dennis, *Judges*. Vol. 2 (NIB; Abingdon, 1998)
- Porter, J. R. "Some Considerations on the Structure of the Book of Judges" in *Proceedings of the Oxford Society of Historical Theology*, 1950-1951
- Radday, Yehuda T. et al. *An Analytical Linguistic Key-Word-In-Context Concordance to the Book of Judges*. The Computer Bible Vol. XI. Edited by J. Arthur Baird and David Noel Freedman. Biblical Research Associates, 1977
- Scheider, Tammi, *Judges* (Berit Olam; Liturgical, 2000)
- Stek, John H. "The Bee and the Mountain Goat: A Literary Reading of Judges 4." in *A Tribute to Gleason Archer*, edited by Walter C. Kaiser, Hr. and Ronald F. Youngblood. (Moody Press, 1986), pp.53-86
- Tanner, James Paul. "Structural Devices in the Ehud Narrative of Judges: Their Presence in the Text and Their Consequences." Paper submitted for the course English 393 M., Texts and Consequences, The University of Texas at Austin, May 12, 1989
- _____. "Textual Patterning in Biblical Hebrew Narrative: A Case Study in Judges 6-8." (Ph.D. Dissertation; University of Texas at Austin, 1990)
- Taubler, E. *Biblische Studien: Die Epoche der Richter* (Tuebinger: J. C. B. Mohr, 1958)
- Thompson, T. L. "The Historicity of the Patriarchal Narratives: The Quest for the Historical Abraham." *BZAW* 133 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1974), pp.324-26

- Trible, P. "A Meditation in Mourning: The Sacrifice of the Daughter of Jephthah," *USQR* 36 Supplement (1981), pp.59-60
- Webb, Barry G. *The Book of Judges. An Integrated Reading*. JSOT Supplement Series 46 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987)
- Whitley, Charles F. "Sources of the Gideon Stories." *Vetus Testamentum* 7:2 (1957), pp.157-64
- Wolf, H. *Judges* (EBC 3; Zondervan, 1992)
- Wood, Leon. *The Distressing Days of the Judges* (Zondervan, 1975; Wipf & Stock, 2000)
- Yee, Gal A. "Ideological Criticism: Judges 17-21 and the Dismembered Body" in idem., ed. *Judges and Method: New Approaches in Biblical Studies* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995)
- _____. *Judges and Method* (Fortress, 1995; Wipf & Stock, 1999)
- Zyl, A. H. van. "The Message Formula in the Book of Judges" *Die OT Werkgemeenskap in Suid-Afrika ... Poychefstroom*. (1959), pp.61-64

Ruth

- Bell, Bernard. "Ruth: a hesed story," (unpublished paper for BIBL 680, Biblical Theology, 680, April 1996)
- Biggar, Paul. "The Contribution of Rhetorical Criticism to the Study of Theology in the Book of Ruth" MTh thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1989
- Block, Daniel. *Judges and Ruth* (NAC; Broadman & Holman, 1999)
- Bush, Frederic. *Ruth, Esther* (Waco, TX: Word, 1996)
- Collins, John C. "Ambiguity and theology in Ruth, Ruth 1:21 and 2:20," *Presbyterion*, 19 (1993)
- Fish, Harold. "Ruth and The Structure of Covenant History," in *Vetus Testamentum*, 32 (1982)
- Gordis, R. "Personal Names in Ruth—A note on Biblical Etymologies," *Judaism* 35 (1986), pp.298-99
- Green, Barbara. "The Plot of the Biblical Story of Ruth," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*, 22 (1982), pp.55-68
- Hongisto, Leif. "Literary Structure and Theology in the Book of Ruth" *Andrews University Seminary Studies*, 23 (1985), pp.19-28
- Horst, Eugene M. "The Sovereignty of God in the Book of Ruth" (MTh thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1983)
- Hyman, Ronald T. "Questions and Changing Identity in the Book of Ruth," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review*, 39 (1984), pp.189-210
- Loader, J. A. "Job's Sister: Undermining an Unnatural Religiosity," in *Old Testament Essays*, Vol. 6 (1993), p.327
- Martens, E. A. *Plot and Purpose in the Old Testament* (Leicester, 1981)
- Merrill, Eugene H. "The Book of Ruth: Narration and Shared Themes," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 142 (1985), pp.130-41
- Ozick, C. "Ruth," in *Congregation: Contemporary Writers Read the Jewish Bible*, ed. D. Rosenberg (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1987)
- Rauber, D. F. "Literary Values in the Bible: the Book of Ruth," *JBL* 89 (1970), pp.27-37; reprinted as "The Book of Ruth," in *Literary Interpretations of Biblical Narratives*, ed. K. R. R. Gros Louis (Nashville: Abingdon, 1974)
- Rossow, Francis C. "Literary Artistry in the Book of Ruth and Its Theological Significance," *Concordia Journal* (January, 1991), pp.12-19
- Sasson, Jack M. "Divine Providence or Human Plan," *Interpretation*, 30 (1976), pp.415-419
- _____. *Ruth* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1979)
- Wubberhorst, Karla. "The Theology of Ruth" (term paper for Bruce Waltke, 1996)

Appendix 1: Rules Regarding Preparation for the Final Examination

To promote learning and reflection, students may verbally study, discuss, and debate together in preparation for examinations. There is no guarantee that other students are currently taking the course, but contact information will be made available to you if permission is given. No student, however, is permitted to share written answers or to consult written answers in any form (e.g., essays, outlines, etc.) or manner (e.g., by email or by sharing and/or consulting any notes) that have been prepared by other students (e.g., by former students or by classmates). Moreover, allocating the preparation of answers to different members of a group and/or didactic teaching by some and memorization by others is not permitted. Every student must sign an honor statement that these rules have been meticulously followed and that the answers are the student's own.

Appendix 2: Expectations for Answers on Final Examination

Simply put, your answers should be as detailed as possible. This means that you should include as much textual evidence as you possibly can. You are allowed an open unmarked Bible and you would be wise to make the most of it. The more textual evidence you give (i.e. Biblical examples, Scripture quotes, and Scriptural addresses), the better your answer will be and the more points you will earn. Also, include everything in the notes/lectures that pertains to the question.

Appendix 3: Instructions on Writing Critical Reviews

The **FIRST** part of your critical book review is a *statement of the contents*. Here you want to indicate both subject and theme. Subject: what the author is talking about. Theme: what the author says about the subject. What you are interested in doing here is informing your reader of what he will find when he picks up the book. Put another way, this section includes both a statement of the factual content and a discussion of the author's bias. Here you are simply giving the facts: the contents of the book and the author's point of view. Your own opinions are irrelevant. Your end is simply to inform the reader objectively.

The **SECOND** part of your review is a critical evaluation of the book's strengths. Here it is your opinions that matter and your reaction to the book. What did you like about the book? Which sections were especially strong? Why? Which themes or topics were addressed well? How did the author make his case? Was it convincing? What was especially valuable about the treatment?

The **THIRD** section of your review is a critical evaluation of the book's weaknesses. Were there any sections that were particularly bad? Did you find contradictions in what the author said in different parts? Does the work conflict with some other work that you have read? In a word, in the last two sections you give your reactions to the book. The first part of the book review is somewhat mechanical. The second and third parts are for your evaluation. Obviously, it is not enough simply to say, "I like the book; I didn't like the book." Statements must be concrete and backed up with citations. Approximately one-third of your paper should be devoted to each section.

Appendix 4: Journal Entries for Judges/Ruth

You are encouraged to view your journal entries as prayers – written with the constant awareness of God's presence as you write. Guidelines for journal-keeping:

Respond to a reflection question before each lecture session, and to an integrative question after each lecture session. You are not required to take longer than 30 minutes to respond to both questions. It's up to you to decide how much time you decide to spend on either question.

Reflection & Integration questions are provided in the course package

We encourage you to keep a journal in whatever form that's helpful for your reflection i.e. type in computer, write by hand on paper, jot things down in point form, generate mental maps, or written prayers, etc. There's no word limit.

Select excerpts of journal entries from three different lectures and submit photocopies. (minimum 3 pages).

Your journals are confidential to the grader only. (Grade is assigned as pass/fail.)