

**Reformed Theological Seminary
Summer 2021**

COURSE: Poets 090T5300R
Wednesdays 6:00 - 9:00 PM: Zoom
May 12 - July 7, 6:00 - 9:00 PM

PROFESSOR: Cleotha Robertson, Ph.D., D.Min.
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TEXTS: Required

1. Estes, Daniel J. *Handbook on the Wisdom Books and Psalms*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2005.
2. Kidner, Derek. *The Wisdom of Proverbs, Job and Ecclesiastes: An Introduction to Wisdom Literature*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press 1985.
3. Longman, Tremper III. *How to Read the Proverbs*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press 2002.
4. Lucas, Ernest C. *Exploring the Old Testament: Volume 3: A Guide to the Psalms and Wisdom Literature*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press 2003.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed to be an exegetical study of the books and themes of the Psalms and Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament. The student will be exposed to the basic exegetical skills, issues of interpretation, current issues of Old Testament interpretation and broader biblical world with its influence on the study of Wisdom Literature.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Comprehension:

- a. To increase your knowledge of the English Bible of the books Job-Song of Songs.
- b. To increase your understanding of the message(s) of the books Job-Song of Songs, both separately and together.
- c. To introduce the basic trends in scholarly research regarding these books.

Competence:

- a. To sharpen your ability to understand and interpret Hebrew Poetry.
- b. To sharpen your ability to interpret the books Job-Song of Songs in their historical, theological, and literary contexts.
- c. To sharpen your ability to teach and preach the books Job-Song of Songs in the context of the local church.
- d. To prepare those called to pastoral ministry for licensure and ordination exams at their local church assemblies and examination boards.

Character:

- a. To sharpen your application of the themes of the books Job-Song of Songs in your personal spiritual life.
- b. To be a person of growing faith, hope, and love based on the work of God as revealed in these books.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Class Preparation and participation constitutes 10% of your final grade. Pre-class preparation includes review of class of material and completion of assigned readings (according to the class schedule). Class attendance is an important component of this class and the seminary experience. Learning occurs in the context of classroom instruction and small group exercises. If this time is lost, it cannot be reduplicated. Therefore, absence will negatively impact the goals of this class. Each student will submit a reading log that will include all the required reading assignments for the course.
2. Each class is 3 hours in length. The middle portion of the class will be devoted to work in small groups. Small group discussions will be based on assigned readings and exercises given by the instructor. Students are expected to have completed the small group assigned readings before coming to class.
3. A Midterm Examination will be distributed on Session 4. This examination will cover topics covered in the assigned reading, classroom discussions and lectures. The format of the examination will include the identification of terms and essay questions. The examination will constitute 30% of your final grade. The Final Examination will be on Session 9, July 7. The format will be identical to that of the Midterm Examination.

4. Exegetical Paper. A 15-20 page paper will be due on Session 9. Students who have taken Hebrew are required to write an exegetical paper for this class. Students who have not taken Hebrew may instead write a theological paper. Paper should be double-spaced and should interact both with the material discussed in class sessions and demonstrated both in the paper itself and in its bibliography.

* Exegetical Paper: Students may submit an exegetical paper on one of the following passages: Psalm 1, Proverbs 8:22-36, or Job 2:1-10.

* Theological Paper: Students should email the instructor by February 28 with a one-page paper proposal for approval.

* This paper will be due July 9, 2021 at Midnight by submission on Canvas. The paper should be submitted as a .pdf file. Please include your name as part of the file name.

CLASS POLICIES:

1. Attendance: Attendance is mandatory. All assignments are due on the date designated.
2. Late assignment: No late assignments accepted without prior arrangements and discussion with the professor. Late assignments will be assessed a grade penalty for lateness.
3. Style Guide for written work: Your paper must be submitted electronically in pdf. Fonts must be 12 point and double-spaced. The style for citations must be in Turabian format. All papers must contain either footnotes or endnotes for your resources. All papers using footnotes and endnotes must have a bibliography.
4. Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: In a Christian institution academic integrity is particularly important. Any student caught cheating or plagiarizing (the unacknowledged use of other people's words or ideas as though they were your own) will be subject to the penalties as described in the plagiarism policy in the college catalog and student handbook.
5. Academic Quality: Remember that grades for assignments are based not only on the completion of the assignment but the quality of work produced. The higher the quality of skills and abilities demonstrated, in areas such as expression and depth of thought, organization, writing, research, reporting, and observation, the higher the grade given to the assignment. All written assignments will be completed using the Turabian style guide.

GRADING SCALE:

Grades for this class are calculated on a total point's basis for each category of grading. Each category is assigned a percentage of the total grade. All grades are calculated based on the following scale of Letter Grade\Percentile Equivalents:

A	=	100% - 97%	4.00	C	=	82% - 80%	2.00
A-	=	96% - 94%	3.66	C-	=	79% - 78%	1.66
B+	=	93% - 91%	3.33	D+	=	77% - 75%	1.33
B	=	90% - 88%	3.00	D	=	74% - 72%	1.00
B-	=	87% - 86%	2.66	D-	=	71% - 70%	0.66
C+	=	85% - 83%	2.33	F	=	(below 70)	0.00

* I (incomplete) - see note below

* W (withdraw) - see note below

S (satisfactory)

P (passing) - see note below

* The grade "I" indicates that the work required for the course was not completed. It is given only when special, extenuating circumstances (such as illness) prevent the student from completing the work or taking the examination. A written request for an extension must be submitted prior to the due date of the work concerned. If the request is granted, it remains the responsibility of the student to complete all work for the course as soon as possible. In any case, an "I" grade must be removed within the extension time granted; otherwise it will be changed to "F."

* The grade "W" indicates that a student has withdrawn from a course after the drop deadline. This grade is granted by the academic dean only in extenuating circumstances.

* The grade "P" is only used as a Pass/Fail option and is limited to the Field Education course.

TOTAL GRADE: The final grade for the course will be determined as follows:

Midterm and Final Examinations: 50% ; Paper 50%

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.

COURSE OUTLINE AND CALENDAR:

Session	Date	Session Content and Assignments
Session 1	May 12	Introduction to the Course and Course Requirements; The Book of Proverbs: Overall Structure and Major Themes Reading: Lucas, 79-89; Kidner 18-36; Longman chs. 1-3; Estes 213-269
Session 2	May 19	The Book of Proverbs: Examination of Language and Theology Reading: Lucas 91-114; Kidner 37-55; Longman chs. 4,5.

Session	Date	Session Content and Assignments
Session 3	May 26	Job: The Structure of the Book of Job and Issues of Historicity Reading: Lucas 117-129; Kidner 56-74; Longman chs. 6,7; Estes 11-79
Session 4	June 2	The Book of Job Continued: Reading: Lucas 130- 143; Kidner 75-89; Longman Chs. 8,9; Estes 80-139; Midterm Examination distributed.
Session 5	June 9	The Book of Ecclesiastes: Overall Structure and Themes Reading: Lucas 145-156; Kidner 90-104, Longman chs.10,11; Estes 271-333; The Book of Ecclesiastes: Authorship and Date Reading: Lucas 157-171; Kidner 105-124;125-157; Estes 334-392; Midterm Examination Due
Session 6	June 16	Song of Solomon: Structure and Examination of Content Reading: Lucas 175-188, Longman chs. Longman chs.12; Estes 393-438
Session 7	June 23	Song of Solomon: Continued Reading: Lucas 189-199, Longman 155-163; Psalms: Wisdom Themes in the Psalter; Jesus and the Psalms Reading: Lucas 28-64; Estes 141-177: Final Examination Distributed
Session 8	June 30	The Use, Importance and Characteristics of Biblical Poetry Reading: Lucas 1-27; 65-78; Estes 178-199.
Session 9	July 7	Recorded: Conclusion and Old Testament Reflections; Final Examination Due

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1) Introduction to Wisdom Literature and the Psalms

Berry, Donald K. *An Introduction to Wisdom and Poetry of the Old Testament* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 1999).

Brown, William P. *The Psalms* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2010).

Bullock, C. Hassell. *Encountering the Psalms: A Literary and Theological Introduction*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001.

Estes, Daniel J. *Handbook on the Wisdom Books and Psalms* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010).

Brueggemann, Walter. *The Message of the Psalms* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1984).

Keel, Othmar. *The Symbolism of the Biblical World: Ancient Near Eastern Iconography and the Book of Psalms* (New York, NY: Seabury, 1978).

Lucas, Ernest C. *Exploring the Old Testament: A Guide to the Psalms & Wisdom Literature* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004).

Murphy, Roland E. *The Tree of Life* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996).

2) Commentaries on the Psalms

Allen, Leslie C. *Psalms 101-150* (Vol. 21. 2 Revised. WBC. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2002).

Clifford, Richard J. *Psalms 1-72* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2002).

Clifford, Richard J. *Psalms 73-150* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2003).

Craigie, Peter C. *Psalms 1-50* (Vol. 19. 2nd ed. WBC. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2005).

Futato, Mark D. *Psalms* (Vol. 7. Cornerstone Biblical Commentary. Downers Grove, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2009).

Kidner, Derek. *Psalms: An Introduction and Commentary* (Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries. Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1973).

Perowne, J.J. Stewart Perowne. *The Book of Psalms. Two Volumes in One edition*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1976.

Ross, Allen. *A Commentary on the Psalms*. Volume 1 (1-41). Grand Rapids, MI; Kregel Publications, 2011.

Ross, Allen. *A Commentary on the Psalms*. Volume 2 (42-89). Grand Rapids, MI; Kregel Publications, 2013.

Ross, Allen. *A Commentary on the Psalms*. Volume 1 (90-150). Grand Rapids, MI; Kregel Publications, 2016.

Tate, Marvin E. *Psalms 51-100* (Vol. 20. WBC. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1991).

VanGemeren, Willem A. *Psalms* (EBC. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008).

Waltke, Bruce K., and James M. Houston. *The Psalms as Christian Worship: An Historical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010).

3) Commentaries on Proverbs

Bridges, Charles. *A Commentary on Proverbs* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1846).

Garrett, Duane A. *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (The New American Commentary, 14; Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1993).

Kitchen, John. *Proverbs: A Mentor Commentary*. Ross-shire, IV201TW, Great Britain: Christian Focus Publication, 2012.

Longman, Tremper III. *Proverbs* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2006).

Ortlund, Raymond C., Jr. *Proverbs: Wisdom That Works* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2012).

Waltke, Bruce K. *The Book of Proverbs: Chapters 1-15* (NICOT; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004).

Waltke, Bruce K. *The Book of Proverbs: Chapters 15-31* (NICOT; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005).

3) Commentaries on Job

Anderson, F. *Job* (Tyndale OT Commentaries 13; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1976).

Konkel, August H., and Tremper Longman III. *Job, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2006).

Hartley, J. *The Book of Job* (NICOT; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988).

Wilson, Lindsay. *Job*. Two Horizons Commentary. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2015.

3) Commentaries on Ecclesiastes

Bartholomew, Craig G. *Ecclesiastes* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009).

Enns, Peter. *Ecclesiastes* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011).

Garrett, Duane A. *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (The New American Commentary, 14; Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1993).

Konkel, August H., and Tremper Longman III. *Job, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2006).

Longman, Tremper III. *The Book of Ecclesiastes* (NICOT; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997).

Provan, Iain. *Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001).

4) Commentaries on the Song of Songs

Carr, G. Lloyd. *Song of Songs*. (Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries. Grand Rapids, MI: Intervarsity Press, 1984)

Garrett, Duane A. *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (The New American Commentary, 14; Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1993).

Hess, Richard S. *Song of Songs* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2005).

Konkel, August H., and Tremper Longman III. *Job, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2006).

Longman, Tremper III. *Song of Songs* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2005).

Provan, Iain. *Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001).

5) Commentaries on Lamentations

Dearman, J. Andrew. *Jeremiah, Lamentations* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002).

Garrett, Duane, and Paul House. *Song of Songs, Lamentations* (Word Biblical Commentary, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan) 2004.

Hillers, D. *Lamentations* (AB 7a; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1972).

Parry, Robin A. (Two Horizons Old Testament Commentary, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans) 2010.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes <i>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.</i> <i>*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.</i>		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	Exam, Paper
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, Significant Paper, Readings
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 contributions from other traditions in a respectful and honoring way
Preach	Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Moderate	Exegetical work that forms the backbone of
			strong preaching; frequent discussion of applications for preaching

Worship	Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian- worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.	Moderate	Psalter forms a basic component of many traditions' Christian worship
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.		