

Ryle Theological College  
Fall 2019  
Land, Leadership and Israel's Shalom: A Study of the Historical Books

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**Introduction:**

This course is a study of the historical books of the Old Testament, including Judges, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, and 1 & 2 Chronicles. These books continue the story of God's fulfillment of his promises to Israel through their forefather Abraham regarding land and seed. To be the people of God, as was promised in the covenant, Israel had to both become a great multitude of people and to be established or settled in the place of God's appointment for them. While the stories of the Pentateuch show Israel becoming a great nation, it is the historical books that show Israel settling into the land. The theme of land is therefore very important in these books.

But what is the meaning of land? How can Israel get into it? What does life in that land entail? How should the nation be organized for life in the land and who will guide them in their life there? And how can they lose it? These are some of the questions that will occupy our attention as we spend time with the biblical text. Do these same questions have relevance for the church today? If so how? Answering those questions requires one to realize that "In biblical theology, the ideal land is the place where I AM chooses to be uniquely present to provide for and protect his people" (Waltke, *An Old Testament Theology*, Zondervan, 535).

The answer to these kinds of questions can be found only by going beyond simply familiarizing the student with this section of scripture. As scripture, it too is authoritative for the life of the church today. But how do we understand its application for us? To make sense of the events recorded for us in the historical books and to see why they are recorded in holy writ for our instruction, it is necessary that the student be familiar with the discipline of biblical theology. It is the discipline which:<sup>1</sup>

1. enables us to relate any Bible story to the whole message of the Bible and therefore to ourselves.
2. shows the relationship of all parts of the Old Testament to the person and work of Christ and, therefore, to the Christian.
3. enables us to map out the unity of the Bible by looking at its message as a whole.
4. provides the basis for the interpretation of any part of the Bible as God's word to us.

Therefore, we will become familiar with this discipline so that we can determine the theological message of this section of Scripture.

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<sup>1</sup>For detailed explanation of these uses, see Goldsworthy, Graeme. *According to Plan* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1991), 24-29.

**Objectives:**

By the end of the semester, the student

- a. will have acquired a basic knowledge of Israel's history from the time of the Judges through to the exile.
- b. will develop a basic understanding of Biblical Theology as a discipline and how it works in the process of studying scripture.
- c. will demonstrate an ability to exegete the historical narrative materials and relate them to the themes of this section of Scripture
- d. will be able to bridge between what God expects leadership in Israel to be and how it is important to Israel's welfare for life in the land and what leadership entails in Christ's church today for living the Christian life fully.

**Requirements:**

- a. the student will read through the historical books (Joshua—2 Kgs) twice in different translations and fill in the timeline of the key events and people of these books. The timeline should fill one page (landscape--run two lines on sheet ) and cover the period from 1100 BC to 538 BC (Samuel to Exile), marking on the lines such important people as Samuel, Saul, David, Solomon, building of the temple, the division of the kingdom, key dynasties, etc. 10% (due Oct 9, 2019)
- b. the student will successfully pass an in class examination (maps, multiple choice, T or F, short answer) on the course content, especially relating to the geography and history discussed in the readings and in class (25%) (due Nov 20, 2019)
- c. the student will answer the questions based on the first two sections of Goldsworthy in order to gain a clear understanding of what Biblical Theology is as a discipline of biblical studies and how it is to be used (15%; due Oct 2, 2019)
- d. the student will
  - i. exegete an assigned text from the historical books, developing its meaning and showing how it contributes to the development of kingship in these books 35% (due Dec 4, 2019)

OR

  - ii. do a character sketch of a key historical person, noting how he/she is developed in the historical books and how he/she contributes to the growing understanding of leadership. 35% (due Dec 4, 2019)
- e. the student will memorize the following passages of Scripture and write them in class as per schedule. ( 1 Sam 17:45-47; 2 Sam 7:11b-16; 1 Kgs 8:56-61) (15%)

**Texts:**

1. Graeme Goldsworthy, *According to Plan*, Downers Grove: IVP, 2002.
2. Howard, David M. *An Introduction to the Old Testament Historical Books*, Chicago: Moody Press, 1993.
3. Dempster, Stephen G. *Dominion and Dynasty: A Theology of the Hebrew Bible*, Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2003.

Recommended:

4. Merrill, Eugene. *Kingdom of Priests: A History of Old Testament Israel*, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987) (or revised edition)

**Schedule:** Class meets on Wednesdays from 10:00 AM – 1 PM beginning Sept 11 (no class Oct 16 ).

## Bibliography

1. Bright, John. A History of Israel, Phila: Westminster Press,
2. Childs, Brevard. Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments, Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992
3. DeGraff S.G. Promise and Deliverance (Vol 1-4) tr. H. Evan Runner, St Catherines: Paideia Press, 1977.
4. Dumbrell, William. Covenant and Creation, Nashville: Nelson, 1984.
5. Eichrodt, Walther. Theology of the Old Testament, Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961.
6. Fee, Gordon D. and Douglas Stuart. How to Read the Bible for All It Is Worth, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982.
7. House, Paul. Old Testament Theology, Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1993.
8. Martens, Elmer. God's Design, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981.
9. McConville, J. Gordon. Grace in the End, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993.
10. Merrill, Eugene. Kingdom of Priests, Grand Rapids: Baker. 1987.
11. Van Gemeren, Willem. The Progress of Redemption, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988.
12. Vos, Gerhardus. Biblical Theology, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948.
13. Waltke, Bruce with Charles Yu, An Old Testament Theology: An exegetical, canonical, and theological Approach, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007.
14. Zuck, Roy B. (ed) A Biblical Theology of the Old Testament, Chicago: Moody Press, 1991.

## Schedule

Day	Subject	Scripture	Reading	Assignment
Precursors to Kingship Threats to Life in the Land				
Class #1	Intro to Historical Literature and Books; Israel as God's Community (God's People in God's Land)	Ex 19:1-6	Howard (1) K of P (Intro & 3) Golds 29-80	
Class#2	A Chaotic World And an Ordering Word	1 Sam 3-4	Howard (3) K of P 4 Golds 81-163	
Inauguration of Kingship Securing Life in the Land				
Class #3	Saul: Community's Choice for King	Dt 17; 1 Sam 15	K of P 5 Questions for Gold Howard (5)	
Class #4	Preparation of God's King	1 Sam 17	Golds (164-86)	MW 1 Sam 17:45-47
Class #5	David: True Kingship and Rest in the Land	2 Sam 5	K of P 6	Time Line
Class #6	Davidic Covenant: The Future of Kingship	2 Sam 7	K of P 7	
The Failure of Human Kingship Loss of Life in the Land				
Class #7	Solomon and the Glory of God's Community	1 Kgs 8:1-20	Howard (6) K of P 8	MW 2 Sam 7:11b-16
Class #8	The Decline of the Community: Division and Disloyalty	1 Kgs 12	How (7) K of P 9 & 10	Exegesis paper
Prospects for a Future King and People Renewed Hope for Life in the Land				
Class #9	The Prophet: Conviction & Consolation for Kings & Nation	Joel Isa 52:13-55:13	Golds (187-94) Golds (194-236)	MW 1 Kg 8:56-61 Golds (194-236)
Class #10	Learning from the Community's Past	1 Chron.	K of P 11 & 12; How (8)	Exam; Essay

## **Questions on *According to Plan* Parts 1 & 2**

**(To be answered for Class #2)**

1. Identify 4 things that Biblical Theology can help the student do.
2. Make a chart of the different ways one can do theology according to Goldsworthy, noting the questions each answers and the result for the student.  
e.g., headings of Theological Approach; Questions; Result
3. What is a “presupposition”? Why are they important for the study of biblical theology? What are the appropriate presuppositions for doing Biblical Theology?
4. Goldsworthy comments, “What went before Christ in the Old Testament as well as what comes after him, finds its meaning in him.” What does this mean and what are its implications for our study of the Old Testament?
5. Contrast a non-Christian versus a Christian approach to the OT.
6. Comment on the different views of revelation that Goldsworthy presents. Can you think of any others that he hasn’t mentioned?
7. Define the terms “literalism”, “allegory,” and “typology.” How do these terms affect our interpretative process?
8. Describe the process that Goldsworthy suggest one use to understand an OT text and its relevance for us today.

## Character Study Paper

When you do a study of a character and his/her leadership style and contribution, you should include the following considerations.

1. Sketch out the biography of the character as we have it in the scriptural account. Consider not only the information provided by the Pentateuch but also that found in other places in Scripture. If relevant, briefly consider and critique the arguments that critics make against the historicity of the character.
2. Identify and comment on the major contributions that the individual makes to Israel's life and future as a nation.
3. What qualities of character and leadership are evident in the person? How do these qualities anticipate those required of future leadership in Israel, and how are they evident in the Messiah?
4. How does the character's leadership help you as you consider leadership responsibilities that you might be called to take up?

## Exegetical Paper

The major assignment for this course reads: “exegete an assigned text from the historical books, developing its meaning and showing how it contributes to the development of kingship in these books”. The following explanation is intended to assist your research and writing of this paper.

1. Since the text you are working with is a narrative, begin your study by reading through the text that you have chosen several times. Make sure that the story unit is complete and that the account has a resolved ending. Try to get into the story as an observer would. Then divide the story up into its scenes.
2. Ask yourself what information is communicated in each scene. Who are the characters? What is the problem and what actions are noted to the resolution of the problem? What dialogue is there? It is important to note that key ideas are usually communicated in the dialogue that is provided. Using the scene divisions do a “descriptive” outline of the contents of the story.
3. Now move beyond that stage to ask “can I determine a key theological idea for the whole text?” How do the scenes contribute to this key idea? Now form a more theological outline of the text.
4. Then ask, “How does that key idea contribute to the drama of redemption that is being revealed through the scripture?” Is that idea repeated or emphasized elsewhere?
5. At this point, you will want to consult a number of articles and books that deal with the text and read what they say about it. How does their presentation compare with your own? Adjust your work in light of your research as you need to.
6. You are ready to write your paper. Your introduction should include a thesis statement identifying what you will be developing in your paper. Your first section should be an explanation of the literary development of the text (20%). The next section will show what that text meant for the hearers (15%). Be sure to point out the concerns that lay behind what is being said. Then show the continuing theological meaning of this passage for God’s people through the ages (25%). Finally apply the text and its intentions to the contemporary world (25%). Make sure that you proof read your work well and that you have properly formatted footnotes and bibliography (15%).