SYLLABUS FOR B.A.R. DEGREE
OT421--Old Testament Interpretation: Judges and Ruth
B.M.A. Theological Seminary  Spring Semester  2010
Professor--Dr. Greg W. Parsons

I. Course Description
This is an historical and interpretative study of Judges and Ruth. Emphasis is placed on the literary structure (outline), suggested purpose and the historical context to interpret individual passages.

II. Objectives
1) To identify the literary context of Judges and Ruth—including structure (natural basic outline) of each book and possible purpose statements. This has a two-fold intent:
   a) to acquire an over-all view of Judges and Ruth
   b) to begin to master the subject matter of each chapter or natural division
2) To help the student to understand the meaning of the text of Judges and Ruth in light of the historical/cultural background.
3) To seek to derive timeless principles from the Books of Judges and Ruth which are true to the original context and yet relevant to our modern society.
   a) to learn from the characters in Judges and Ruth concerning how to live godly lives in the midst of a generation doing "what's right in its own eyes."
   b) to strive to communicate and instill these timeless principles and concepts into the hearts, minds, and lives of others.

III. Requirements
A. Reading
Three textbooks are required: Daniel I. Block, Judges, Ruth (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1999); Gary Inrig, Hearts of Iron, Feet of Clay (Chicago: Moody Press, 1979 or rev. ed. Discovery House, 2005); and K. Lawson Younger, Jr., Judges, Ruth, NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002). Each B.A.R. student will read at least one-half (i.e. 350 pages) of Block and all of Inrig and Younger (plus occasional additional reading according to the class schedule below). Two other books are also recommended: Arthur Cundall and Leon Morris, Judges-Ruth, Tyndale O.T. Commentary (Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter-Varsity, 1968) and J. Vernon McGee, Ruth: The Romance of Redemption (reprint of In a Barley Field). The latter book is out of print. Both recommended books will be placed on reserve in the library (including one copy of each title by McGee). Reading reports on special reading slips obtainable from the seminary office will be turned in weekly to document reading.

B. Term paper and report
Each B.A.R. student is responsible for a 8 to 12 page double-spaced paper consisting of an exegetical summary of some passage in Judges or Ruth followed by an expository sermon or lesson. Utilizing the textbooks and at least two or three other commentaries, (1) the student must summarize the passage and trace the argument (i.e., the flow of thought) in light of the whole Book of Judges (or Ruth) and its historical/cultural context. This should include an exegetical outline (summarizing in complete sentences the exact thought of the Bible text) with a


2 See Allen P. Ross, Creation and Blessing: A Guide to the Study and Exposition of Genesis (Grand Rapids: Baker
brief commentary on each verse which expresses your research into the text. (2) Then the sermonic portion of the paper should bring out the biblical teaching and timeless principles which find valid application for today. In this last part of the paper, be sure to discuss how the doctrine (or theology) of the text impacts our modern society. For instance one may want to do a character study of an individual bringing out positive characteristics to emulate and negative ones to avoid.

Notes: Be sure to observe the following rules: (a) To follow the suggested guidelines for interpreting Old Testament narrative and any specific application to Judges or Ruth. (b) Be sure to document your research by author's last name and the page number placed within parentheses in the text (or by footnotes if you prefer) with a bibliography at the end. (c) The paper should exhibit a proper balance between doctrine (being true to the historical/cultural background and the literary contexts of Judges/Ruth and previous OT writings) and practical exhortation (being validated in light of the rest of the Old Testament and of the New Testament). (d) A detailed outline of the paper should be distributed to each class member (and to the professor) at the time of the oral presentation (approximately 25 to 30 minutes). Also a complete copy of the entire paper must also be given to the professor at the same time (namely, before the oral report).

C. Exams
Two exams will be given during the semester as recorded on the class schedule below. The nature of these tests will be explained later.

D. Grading guidelines for B.A.R. students
First exam 25%; final exam 25 to 30%; term paper--30%; daily grade 15% (with 12% for documented weekly reading and 3% divided equally [1% each] between the oral report on term paper, class participation, and attendance). Possible "pop" quizzes over daily reading (perhaps 5%).

IV. Class Schedule (for 2010)

Jan. 26 Review of syllabus. Introduction to Judges. Possibly brief guidelines for interpreting O.T. narrative. Assignment: read all of Judges--preferably at one sitting (or chaps. 1-16, then 17-21) in a modern translation such as the NIV, NASB, or NKJV. Read Block, 21-44, 50-72; Inrig, 5-7, 9-13 [rev. 7-15]; Younger, 21-49.


Book House, 1988), especially 42-44 for the concept and examples of an exegetical outline.

Also see Ross, ibid., especially 46-48 for the concept of an expository outline and timeless principles.

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tr>
<td>March 16</td>
<td>Study of Judges chap. 16. <strong>Assignment:</strong> read the specific passage of Judges. Read Block, 449-472; Inrig, 242-265 [rev.265-289]; Younger, 312-330. <strong>Brief review for exam.</strong></td>
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<td>March 23</td>
<td>MID-TERM EXAM</td>
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<td>April 6</td>
<td>Study of Judges chaps. 19-21. <strong>Assignment:</strong> read the specific passage of Judges. Read Block, 516-586; Inrig, 281-298 [rev.306-324]; Younger, 349-387,</td>
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<td>April 13</td>
<td>Introduction to Ruth. Study of Ruth chap. 1. <strong>Assignment:</strong> read all of Ruth at least 3 times in modern translations. Read Block, 587-589, 599-621; 623-648; Younger, 389-405; 411-436. For extra credit, read J. Vernon McGee, <em>Ruth: The Romance of Redemption</em> (or <em>In a Barley Field</em>), chapters 1-6.</td>
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<td>April 20</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK-- NO CLASS. BMA OF AMERICA MEETING.</td>
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<td>April 27</td>
<td>Study of Ruth chaps. 2 and 3. <strong>Assignment:</strong> read the specific passage of Ruth. Read Block, 649-701; Younger, 437-470. For extra credit, read J. Vernon McGee, <em>Ruth: The Romance of Redemption</em> (or <em>In a Barley Field</em>), chapters 7-8.</td>
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<td>May 4</td>
<td>Study of Ruth chap. 4. <strong>Brief review for exam.</strong> <strong>Assignment:</strong> read Ruth chap. 4. Read Block, 703-737; Younger, 471-491. For extra credit, read J. Vernon McGee, <em>Ruth: The Romance of Redemption</em> (or <em>In a Barley Field</em>), chapter 9.</td>
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<td>May 11</td>
<td>FINAL EXAM [Semi-comprehensive]</td>
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V. Selected Bibliography
(for Judges and Ruth)


Helpful for extra-biblical background studies but quite critical in nature.


Helpful for extra-biblical background studies but somewhat critical in nature.


On microfiche in Kellar Library (BMATS).


