



**Guidelines & Expectations
For Students
2011-2012**

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Guidelines & Expectations for Students

Introduction

When a student embarks upon ministerial training, he needs to know where he's going, how to get there, and what's expected of him. Therefore, we've provided these "Guidelines & Expectations for Students." They should provide you with the basic information you need to know to get started and to successfully complete the seminary program. For more information about the seminary, see the seminary website and academic catalog.

Working with the Local Church

As a "church-based ministerial academy," RBS is committed to help pastors and churches train men who aspire after and show potential for the pastoral ministry, as well as laypeople, church leaders, and men whose aspirations to full-time ministry may still be tentative (Eph. 4:11-12; 2 Tim. 2:2). For this reason an applicant must be a member in good standing of an evangelical church whose pastor(s) is supportive of his pursuit of theological training. If an applicant is already a pastor, it is assumed that the local church has already recognized the applicant's gifts and graces and is supportive of his pursuit of more training.

RBS expects that the applicant will work together with his pastor(s) and home church throughout the course of his training. Practically, this means that the applicant can humbly receive the initial and ongoing assessment of his pastor(s) and church regarding his qualifications if he is pursuing the pastoral ministry. The applicant will also select one of his pastors to serve as his mentor-proctor to provide guidance and input on coursework, writing projects, preaching, and practical ministry. The mentor will also be responsible to proctor the student's quizzes and exams. By working together with his pastor(s) and home church, the applicant will not only be following the biblical pattern for ministerial training (Eph. 4:11-12; 2 Tim. 2:2), but will be more effectively commending himself to the church (1 Tim. 3:1-7; 4:15), the world (1 Tim. 3:7), the Lord (1 Pet. 5:5), and his own conscience (Acts 24:16; Heb. 13:18).

Application & Enrollment

RBS has a non-discriminatory admissions policy as to race, sex or handicap for all degree programs not related to the ordained offices of the church. The seminary is convinced that the Bible prohibits women from teaching or exercising authority over men in the church. Therefore, only men will be admitted to the seminary as candidates in programs such as the Master of Divinity (M.Div.) or Bachelor of Divinity (B.Div.) degrees that prepare the student for the office of teaching elder or church planter (whether domestic or foreign, i.e., missionary).

Nevertheless, the Scriptures do encourage women to grow in their knowledge of biblical truth (Acts 2:41-42; 1 Tim. 2:11), and the New Testament provides examples of women receiving instruction from the Lord Jesus and from his apostles (Luke 10:38-42; John 4; Acts 2:41-42). Moreover, while the Bible prohibits women from teaching or exercising authority over men in the church, it does not prohibit them from sharing the faith (Luke 2:36-38; John 4:28-29, 39; Matt. 28:1-10; Mark 16:1-11; Luke 24:1-11; John 20:1-2; Heb. 5:12), instructing children or fellow women (Acts 16:1; 2 Tim. 1:5; 3:15; Titus 2:3-4), or even sharing biblical truth with men in a non-formal, auxiliary, and subordinate fashion (Acts 18:26). Accordingly, women, as well as men, may be admitted to the seminary in programs such as the Master of Theological Studies (M.T.S.) or Diploma of Theological Studies (D.T.S.) that are not specifically designed to train men for the office of teaching elder or church planter.

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Normally, only men or women who are eighteen years of age, who are members in good standing of an evangelical church, and who have the commendation of their pastor(s) shall be eligible to enroll into the Marrow of Theology Program. RBS usually advises the student to complete the Marrow program first. Once that program is completed, the credits can be transferred into the Divinity program. Only men who are at least twenty-one years of age, hold a Bachelor's Degree, are members in good standing in an evangelical church, and are recognized ministerial aspirants¹ or already engaged in Christian ministry shall be eligible to enroll in the Divinity program. RBS reserves the right to waive any or all of these requirements if doing so is deemed appropriate. Each applicant will be considered and assessed on an individual basis. The student can find more information on admissions on the seminary's website and in the academic catalog.

One you're ready to apply, fill out the online application form on the seminary website and pay the one-time application fee of \$25. You should also ask your personal references to fill out the online personal reference forms on the seminary's website. Once the seminary has received your application and reference forms, the dean will contact you by email to set up a time for a phone interview. During the interview, the dean will ask you questions about your application and give you opportunity to ask questions about the seminary and programs. You'll also need to tell the dean who will be serving as your mentor-proctor so that he can contact the mentor-proctor to confirm his willingness to serve in that role. You will be notified within a short time after the interview whether you've been accepted for enrollment. At that time, you can pay your enrollment fee and begin your studies.

Student Conduct

All students of Reformed Baptist Seminary are expected to conduct themselves at all times as mature Christians. The Seminary reserves the right to turn down or to dismiss students whose conduct fails to conform to the ethical norms and principles set forth in Holy Scripture.

Creating a Study Plan

Once you have been officially enrolled in the seminary, you should develop a "study plan." This plan should include a tentative *timeframe* and *sequence* for completing your coursework.

Timeframe for Coursework

Begin by determining the average amount of time per week you can devote towards your studies. (Of course, this may be adjusted along the way as your circumstances providentially change.) Once you have determined the average amount of time you have available for your studies, you will be able to project the amount of time it will take to complete your program. We recommend that you plan to spend

¹ If you aspire to the ministry and desire admission into the seminary, you should schedule an interview with your pastor(s). If your pastor(s) deems your aspirations to be legitimate and appropriate, then you may apply for admission to the seminary. By deeming your aspirations as legitimate and appropriate, your pastor(s) are not necessarily declaring you to be fully qualified for the pastoral office. They are simply declaring that your aspirations do not appear to be misguided. If your aspirations to the ministry are tentative either in your own mind or the mind of your pastors, you may be allowed to enroll in the program for a probationary period to allow time for your aspirations, graces and gifts to be assessed. No man should be engaged in studies for the pastoral ministry when there are glaring immaturities in Christian grace or insurmountable deficiencies in ministerial gift. *For this reason, RBS and your pastor(s) reserve the right to withdraw their support of your theological training should either party determine there are significant deficiencies in Christian character or ministerial gift.*

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a minimum of 40 hours of study-time per credit on each course. This would include listening to the lectures, completing the assigned reading and projects, and taking the exams. The amount of hours will vary for each course and for each student, but these figures should provide you with a ballpark figure. We've also provided you with an "Assessing My Priorities" worksheet in Appendix A in order to help you budget your time and ascertain how much of your time you'll be able to devote to your seminary studies without neglecting other God-given stewardships.

Once you've done the math, you will need to provide your pastor(s) and the dean of RBS with (1) an estimated amount of time per week you are able to devote to your studies and (2) an estimated timeframe for the completion of your studies. Let's say, for example, you can devote an average of 15 hours per week towards your studies. In a 44-week academic year, that gives you 660 hours for study. Within that timeframe, you should be able to complete about 16 credits per year. At that rate, you could complete the Marrow program in two years and the Divinity program in roughly six years. Thus, under "timeframe for coursework" you would include the following: *18 hours per week; 6 years to complete the program*. If you need to make significant adjustments to your schedule because of providential circumstances, inform your pastors and the dean in your *semester progress report* (see below).

Sequence of Coursework

After you have determined a general timeframe for your coursework, you should create a list of the courses in the sequence you plan to take them. Below are examples of possible program sequences for the Marrow program and for the Divinity program.

Possible Schedules for Completion for Marrow Program

Major in Systematic Theology

Two-Year Schedule*

YEAR ONE	Credits	YEAR TWO	Credits
ST 501 Apologetics	2	ST 711 Christian Life	3
ST 502 The Word	2	ST 801 The Church	3
ST 601 God & Decree	3	ST 811 Last Things	2
ST 602 Man & Sin	3	ST 821 Ethics	3
ST 701 Christ	3	Elective from ET, HT, ST, or PT	3
Elective from ET, HT, ST, or PT	3	Elective from ET, HT, ST, or PT	2
	Total 16		Total 16

* The student should plan to devote a minimum of 15 hours per week every year (44 weeks) based on a 40 hours per credit average requirement.

Three-Year Schedule*

YEAR ONE	Credits	YEAR TWO	Credits
ST 501 Apologetics	2	ST 502 The Word	2
ST 601 God & Decree	3	ST 701 Christ	3
ST 602 Man & Sin	3	ST 711 Christian Life	3
Elective from ET, HT, ST, or PT		Elective from ET, HT, ST, or PT	3
	Total 11		Total 11

YEAR THREE

ST 801 The Church	3
ST 811 Last Things	2
ST 821 Ethics	3
Elective from ET, HT, ST, or PT	2
	Total 10

* The student should plan to devote a minimum of 10 hours per week every year (44 weeks) based on a 40 hours per credit average requirement.

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Four-Year Schedule*

YEAR ONE	Credits	YEAR TWO	Credits
ST 501 Apologetics	2	ST 501 The Word	2
ST 601 God & Decree	3	ST 701 Christ	3
ST 602 Man & Sin	3	ST 711 Christian Life	3
Total	8	Total	8
YEAR THREE		YEAR FOUR	
ST 801 Church	3	ST 821 Ethics	3
ST 811 Last Things	2	Elective from ET, HT, ST, or PT	3
Elective from ET, HT, ST, or PT	3	Elective from ET, HT, ST, or PT	2
Total	8	Total	8

* The student should plan to devote a minimum of 7-8 hours per week every year (44 weeks) based on a 40 hours per credit average requirement.

Possible Schedules for Completion for Divinity Program

Four-Year Schedule*

YEAR ONE	Credits	YEAR TWO	Credits
ET 501 Elementary Greek I	3	ET 611 Intermediate Greek	3
ET 502 Elementary Greek II	3	ET 512 NT Introduction	2
ET 621 Hermeneutics	2	ET 511 OT Introduction	2
HT 511 Early Church	2	HT 512 Medieval Church	2
ST 501 Apologetics	2	ST 602 Man & Sin	3
ST 502 The Word	2	ST 701 Christ	3
ST 601 God & Decree	3	ST 711 Christian Life	3
PT 501 Calling & Cultivation	2	PT 621 Pastoral Theology	2
PT 611 Preaching & Teaching	2	PT 911 Preaching Practicum	2
Total	21	Total	22
YEAR THREE		YEAR FOUR	
ET 601 Elementary Hebrew I	3	Elective	2
ET 602 Elementary Hebrew II	3	HT 522 Modern Church	3
ET 701 OT Theology	4	ST 801 The Church	3
ET 801 NT Theology	2	ST 811 Last Things	2
HT 521 Reformation Church	3	ST 821 Ethics	2
ST 721 Holy Spirit	2	PT 901 Writing Practicum	4
PT 701 Church Ministry	2	PT 801 Evangelism & Missions	2
PT 702 Biblical Counseling	2	PT 921 Ministerial Practicum	3
Total	21	Total	21

* The student should plan to devote a minimum of 20 hours per week every year (44 weeks) based on a 40 hours per credit average requirement.

Six-Year Schedule*

YEAR ONE	Credits	YEAR TWO	Credits
ET 501 Elementary Greek I	3	ET 611 Intermediate Greek	3
ET 502 Elementary Greek II	3	ET 512 NT Introduction	2
ET 621 Hermeneutics	2	HT 512 Medieval Church	2
HT 511 Early Church	2	ST 502 The Word	2
ST 501 Apologetics	2	ST 601 God & Decree	3
PT 501 Calling & Cultivation	2	PT 702 Biblical Counseling	2
Total	14	Total	14
YEAR THREE		YEAR FOUR	
ET 601 Elementary Hebrew I	3	Elective	2
ET 602 Elementary Hebrew II	3	ET 511 OT Introduction	2
HT 521 Reformation Church	3	HT 522 Modern Church	3
ST 602 Man & Sin	3	ST 701 Christ	3
PT 611 Preaching & Teaching	2	PT 621 Pastoral Theology	2
Total	14	PT 911 Preaching Practicum	2
		Total	14

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YEAR FIVE	Credits	YEAR SIX	Credits
ET 701 OT Theology	4	ST 801 The Church	3
ET 801 NT Theology	2	ST 811 Last Things	2
ST 711 Christian Life	3	ST 821 Ethics	2
ST 721 Holy Spirit	2	PT 901 Writing Practicum	4
PT 701 Church Ministry	2	PT 921 Ministerial Practicum	3
PT 801 Evangelism & Missions	2		
		Total	14
	Total		
	15		

* The student should plan to devote a minimum of 14 hours per week every year (44 weeks) based on a 40 hours per credit average requirement.

Eight-Year Schedule*

YEAR ONE	Credits	YEAR TWO	Credits
ET 501 Elementary Greek I	3	ET 512 NT Introduction	2
ET 502 Elementary Greek II	3	ET 611 Intermediate Greek	3
ET 621 Hermeneutics	2	ST 501 Apologetics	2
PT 501 Calling & Cultivation	2	ST 502 The Word	2
		PT 611 Preaching & Teaching	2
	Total		
	10	Total	11
YEAR THREE		YEAR FOUR	
ET 601 Elementary Hebrew I	3	Elective	2
ET 602 Elementary Hebrew II	3	ET 701 OT Theology	4
ET 511 OT Introduction	2	ET 801 NT Theology	2
ST 601 God & Decree	3	ST 601 Man & Sin	3
	Total	Total	11
	11		
YEAR FIVE		YEAR SIX	
HT 511 Early Church	2	HT 512 Medieval Church	2
ST 701 Christ	3	HT 521 Reformation Church	3
ST 711 Christian Life	3	ST 721 Holy Spirit	2
ST 801 The Church	3	PT 621 Pastoral Theology	2
		PT 911 Preaching Practicum	2
	Total		
	11	Total	11
YEAR SEVEN		YEAR EIGHT	
HT 522 Modern Church	3	PT 701 Church Ministry	2
ST 811 Last Things	2	PT 901 Writing Practicum	4
ST 821 Ethics	2	PT 921 Ministerial Practicum	3
PT 702 Biblical Counseling	2		
PT 801 Evangelism & Missions	2		
	Total	Total	9
	11		

* The student should plan to devote a minimum of 10 hours per week every year (44 weeks) based on a 40 hours per credit average requirement.

Once you've developed a tentative sequence and timeframe for completing your coursework, present it to your pastor and the seminary dean for approval. When they approve of your study plan, you're ready to begin your coursework.

Completing Coursework

The procedures for completing your coursework will differ according to the format and nature of the courses.

Distance coursework

When you pay your enrollment fee and tuition, send the dean an email, indicating you've paid your fees and identifying the course(s) for which you've paid tuition. The dean will contact the "Virtual Campus" (VC) administrator who will assign and forward you a username and (temporary) password.

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VC is a website where the student can access course information, syllabi, lecture manuscripts, audio lectures, quizzes/exams, etc. There are tutorial videos on the VC homepage that show the student how to login, navigate to the course, download media and audio MP3s, and take quizzes or exams online. The audio lectures and lecture manuscripts for a few courses are not yet uploaded to VC and may be purchased on a CD through our online store.

You can download course syllabi from VC and the seminary website. The syllabus will provide a course description, identify the instructor, and specify the textbook(s) and reading requirements, as well as other course requirements, such as book reviews, lecture outlines, quizzes and exams, etc. If you have any questions about the particular course or requirements, please contact the dean. If necessary, the dean may contact the instructor and ask him to clarify any question related to the course content or requirements.

Once you've identified the textbooks, you should acquire them and begin reading. You should also acquire the lecture notes and commence listening to the lectures. Some instructors may provide full manuscripts of their lectures, which will reduce the need for note taking. However, other instructors may not provide a full manuscript of the lectures. Therefore, you will need to take careful notes as you listen to the lectures. You may write the book reviews or outlines as you complete the assigned reading. When you have finished the lectures and assigned reading, please send the dean an email or letter indicating so. Required projects such as book reviews, lecture or sermon outlines, and papers should also be sent to the dean who will review them and forward them to the instructor. Once they have been graded, they will be sent to the dean who will record the grade and return them to you.

When you are ready to take a quiz or exam, contact the seminary dean. If the quiz or exam is available on VC, the dean will send the password(s) to your proctor. Your proctor, in turn, will have to log you into the particular quiz or exam. Quizzes or exams taken on VC are graded either automatically (in the case of matching, multiple-choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank type exams) or manually (in the case of essay type exams). In either case, the dean and the course instructor should receive an email notification whenever a quiz or exam is completed on VC. If you have any questions about taking quizzes and exams on VC, please watch the student tutorial video.

If the quiz or exam is not available on VC or if you're not able to access the Internet, the dean will send the quiz or exam to your proctor as a PDF file. Your proctor, then, will print the quiz or exam, meet you at a designated place and time, and administer the quiz or exam.

If you handwrite your answers to the exam, be sure they are legible. If you type your answers on a computer, you may not access your class notes or use Bible software unless authorized by the teacher. If you have any questions about what materials may be used in taking a particular quiz or exam, please contact the instructor or seminary dean first. *Cheating on an exam will result in an automatic failure in the course and may result in expulsion from the seminary.*

After you have completed the exam, give it to your pastor and have him make a copy; then mail the original to the dean. The dean will forward the exam to the instructor who will grade the exam and return it to the dean. After the dean has recorded your grade, he will return the exam to you.

If you have any questions about the grading of your assignments or exam, you should contact the dean. If the dean cannot resolve your question, then he may, at his discretion, ask you to contact the instructor to discuss your question with him.

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Live modules

RBS encourages students to take as much live instruction as is possible and feasible. Presently, we try to offer two or three live modules per year at one of our three regional branches or at other locations in the continental United States. A tentative schedule of upcoming modules will be provided on our seminary website and may also be requested by emailing the dean. The seminary will also endeavor to notify students of upcoming modules at least three months before the event so that travel plans can be made in advance. If you plan to attend a live module, please notify the seminary dean. He can provide you with more details if needed.

Once you decide to attend the module, you will be asked to pre-register through the seminary dean or the contact person at the site location. Keep in mind that live modules involve other expenses in addition to tuition. Usually, you will be charged a module fee (to cover the instructor's travel and honorarium, as well as food and lodging expenses). The amount of these fees will be posted on the website or provided in the module brochure that will be sent to you. As soon as you make travel arrangements, you will need to notify the dean and/or contact person at the site location.

Generally, the procedure for completing the modular coursework is as follows: once you pre-register for a course, the dean will forward to you a course syllabus with reading requirements. You may secure the textbooks and begin the assigned reading at once. Ideally, it's preferable to have the reading finished before you attend the lectures. As in the case of the distance coursework, some instructors provide full manuscripts of their lectures while others do not. Therefore, you should be prepared to take careful notes of the lectures if necessary. Many students bring laptops to the modules for note taking.

Try to complete the course requirements and take the final exam as soon as possible after returning home from the module, while the material is still fresh in your mind. To prepare for the exam, carefully review your notes and any other materials that will be on the exam. Once you are ready to take the exam, notify the seminary dean, and he will forward the password(s) or PDF exam(s) to your pastor. Once again, *cheating on an exam will result in an automatic failure in the course and may result in expulsion from the seminary.* Also be sure to indicate whether you have finished the assigned reading.

Minimum Semester Course Requirements

Students must complete a minimum of *one course (2 to 4 credits) per semester* to remain enrolled in the seminary. The Marrow program must be completed within six years. The Divinity program must be completed within eight years. An extension may be granted at the discretion of the seminary overseers.

Writing Practicum

RBS requires the student to write *four* major term papers through the course of his program, each dealing with a different area of theology: historical, exegetical, systematic, and pastoral. It is recommended that you begin your first paper sometime after you have finished a *third* of your coursework and before you have finished *half* of your coursework. We do not recommend that you begin writing your exegetical paper until you have finished the biblical introduction, hermeneutics, and language courses. Generally, we recommend that you take church history courses earlier in your program and write your first paper on historical theology. By that time, you should have had time to acquire a basic knowledge of the biblical languages to write your exegetical paper. Finally, we recommend that you complete your writing practicum with a paper focusing on the area of systematic theology and another on pastoral theology. In place of these four term papers, the student may opt to write a single Master's thesis. This is especially recommended for students who plan to pursue an advanced degree.

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You should begin by choosing a topic. If you choose to write four separate term papers, you may address four unrelated topics. Or you may write each of your four papers on the same topic since each paper will address the topic from a different perspective. You should discuss the topic or topics with your mentoring pastor and the dean and secure their approval before you begin. The same is true for a Master's thesis. In order to have a topic or area of study approved, you will need to provide your pastor and the dean with a brief prospectus and bibliography. The prospectus should include a brief description of the topic you will be addressing, the thesis or proposition you will be defending, and the outline and method of procedure you will be following. The bibliography should include the initial sources you intend to use for your paper. After your pastor and the dean review the prospectus and bibliography, they may suggest modifications to your prospectus and additional sources for your bibliography. Once your prospectus and bibliography are approved, you may begin writing the paper.

Before you begin researching and writing the papers or thesis, we recommend that you read Appendix B, which featured an helpful article by Professor John Frame entitled, "How to Write a Theological Paper." Additionally, the following seven steps are provided to guide you in the research and writing of your papers or thesis: *First*, do some initial research on the topic. *Second*, organize your research material. *Third*, do more specific research according to the organization of your material. *Fourth*, write the paper on the basis of your research. *Fifth*, do more detailed research for your footnote entries. *Sixth*, incorporate your footnote research into the paper and finish your bibliography. *Seventh*, proofread and edit the final draft. Before submitting the final draft for grading, you should send an electronic copy (MS Word or PDF format) to the dean who will skim the paper to make sure no major corrections have to be made before final submission.

As a general rule, each term paper should be a minimum of 20 pages and a maximum of 30 pages (not including the bibliography). The paper should be formatted according to the guidelines for academic papers that are outlined in Kate Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 6th edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996). Some of the basic guidelines for the format of the paper include the following:

- (1) *Paper*: Use 8.5 x 11 inch white paper.
- (2) *Margins*: The left margin should be 1.5 inches. All other margins should be 1 inch (except the first page which should have a top margin of 2 inches). Do not use justified right-hand margins.
- (3) *Indentation*: Indent each paragraph, footnote, and bibliographical note one-half inch. Lengthy quotations (more than three lines) should be formatted as block quotations and indented one-half inch. You should further indent the first line of a block quotation another half inch when the quotation itself began a paragraph in the source from which it was taken.
- (4) *Page numbers*: Place the page number for the first page at the center one inch from the bottom of the page and a double space below the last line of type. Succeeding pages should have page numbers in the upper right-hand corner, one inch from the top and the side. Double space down to the first line of text.
- (5) *Type*: For the title page, table of contents, main body text, and bibliography use a 12-point printer font. "Book" fonts are preferable (i.e., Book Antiqua, Bookman Old Style, Century Schoolbook), but Times Roman is also acceptable. For the block quotes and footnotes, use an 11-point font.
- (6) *Spacing*: Regular text should be double-spaced. Block quotations, footnotes, and bibliographical entries should be single-spaced.

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- (7) *Hyphenation*: Avoid hyphenation when possible. Never hyphenate between pages, and do not use one or two-letter divisions.
- (8) *Paragraph divisions*: A portion of a paragraph division should have at least two lines on any one page.
- (9) *Footnotes and bibliography*: The first line of footnotes should be indented one-half inch and in 11-point font. The first page of your bibliography should begin with a heading, have a 2-inch margin from the top, and a page number centered at the bottom. Each bibliographical entry should be single-spaced with one blank line between entries. The first line is flush left, and runover lines are indented one-half inch. Sample footnote entries and bibliography entries are given in Appendix C (for more examples see Turabian).

In addition to the above guidelines, Appendix C provides examples of a title page, table of contents, main body of the paper (with body text, block quote, and footnotes, pagination, etc.), and a bibliography. Once you complete the paper, send two copies to the seminary dean. The dean will forward one of the copies to a member of the academic committee to be graded. While there is always a degree of subjectivity involved with grading academic papers, the dean has provided each academic committee member with some guidelines to assist in “objectifying” his assessment of your work and competency. The following guidelines will focus upon the quality of the paper’s content, reasoning, and writing:

Content (40% of grade)

- *Content addresses topic and/or passage(s) with sufficient detail and scope consistent with stated aim.*
- *Content evidences that student possesses sufficient knowledge of primary and secondary material under discussion.*
- *Content exhibits critical awareness of current issues, problems, and insights related to the topic and/or passage(s) under discussion.*

Reasoning (40% of grade)

- *Student exhibits ability to discriminate between relevant data and extraneous material.*
- *Student presents a logical analysis that demonstrates a clear understanding of the relevant issues.*
- *Student exhibits the ability to evaluate arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts, and to frame appropriate questions.*
- *Student exhibits an ability to apply his conclusions in a way that is biblically sound and balanced.*

Writing (20% of grade)

- *There is a clear thesis statement.*
- *Spelling, punctuation, grammar, and style correct and consistent with writing guidelines for Practicum Papers (see “RBS Guidelines & Expectations for Students” and Turabian’s Manual for Writers, 6th edition).*
- *Paragraphs are well organized and coherent.*
- *Quotes, Scripture references, and summaries are used and cited appropriately.*
- *Integrates a good variety of outside sources (primary and secondary) that clearly support main arguments.*

The dean has encouraged the graders to provide you with positive feedback as well as constructive criticism. If your paper is below satisfactory quality (“satisfactory”= 81% or higher [B-]), the grader will identify the deficiencies and return the paper for revision. All writing or formatting deficiencies in the Master’s thesis must be corrected before a final grade can be given.

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Preaching Practicum

As stated in our seminary catalog, “RBS exists primarily for the purpose of preparing men for the gospel ministry.” Since the pastoral office requires a basic level of teaching and preaching ability (1 Tim. 3:2) and since this ability, though a gift from God, may be cultivated (1 Tim. 4:15), RBS wants you to have the training and opportunities by which your ability may be properly developed and assessed (2 Tim. 2:2). Thus, in addition to a course on preaching and teaching, RBS requires you to preach and/or teach at least *four times* through the course of your program *in a context where your gifts may be assessed by your pastors*.

Each sermon or lecture must be at least 30 minutes long. Ideally, you should work together with your pastor in the process of preparing the sermon. Ask your pastor to recommend helpful resources and to review your outline or manuscript before you teach or preach. You may preach or teach before the gathered church in the context of an adult Sunday School class or worship service. You may also teach or preach in a more private and less formal context. *RBS requires that at least one of your pastors listen to your message and provide you with constructive input and evaluation.* As you complete each of these four lectures or sermons, you should inform the seminary dean. Your pastor should also send the dean a brief note indicating the date, the passage or theme expounded, and a summary assessment. A “Sermon Evaluation Form” is provided on the seminary website and Virtual Campus.

RBS recognizes that your eldership has the prerogative to decide the appropriate context for you to teach or preach. Your pastor(s) must take into account your current level of ability and the edification of the church. If you have never publicly taught or preached in the context of your local church, your pastor(s) may first ask you to teach or preach on a more informal level, such as a children’s Sunday School class, or a home Bible Study, or a Nursing Home ministry. This will provide your pastor(s) with an opportunity for an initial assessment of your gift. Your pastor(s) may also require that you first take the RBS courses on sermon preparation and delivery. Eventually, when your pastor(s) believes you are ready, he will provide you with the context to fulfill your Preaching Practicum requirement. On your part, you must always remember that an opportunity to minister God’s Word in the context of a local church ministry is a privilege not a right. Therefore, be humble and submissive towards your pastor(s) as he decides the best timing and context for you to fulfill this requirement. If your pastor(s) decides that you do not have the gifts requisite to fulfill this requirement, then it may be time for you to pursue another calling in life.

Ministerial Practicum

RBS recognizes that the gospel ministry entails more than the public ministry of the Word. Therefore, we require that students also be engaged in various kinds and levels of other ministries that are associated with the pastoral office. To earn credit for PT 921 Ministerial Practicum, the student must complete a total of 150 hours of work in the following areas:

- (1) Preaching and/or teaching (including preparation and delivery)
- (2) Preparing and/or leading worship
- (3) Preparing and/or administering the ordinances
- (4) Visitation of members, the sick, visitors, etc.
- (5) Counseling and/or observing pastoral counseling (with permission of counselee)
- (6) Evangelistic outreach
- (7) Meetings with elders and/or deacons
- (8) Organizing and presiding over special church functions and events
- (9) Involvement in auxiliary ministries, such as weddings or funerals

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The PT 921 Syllabus & Confirmation Form, which is available on the seminary website and Virtual Campus, will provide more detailed information about each category and about the expected minimum and maximum amount of time for each category above that may be applied toward the 150 required hours. Your pastors will have to decide which of these ministries are appropriate to your current level of gift and the present needs of the church during the course of your studies. You should keep a detailed log of the various ministries you engage in as well as the amount of time you devote to each ministry. When you've completed the minimum amount of time for each category and for the course as a whole, you should fill out the confirmation form and include both yours and your mentor-proctor's signature.

Providing Semester Progress Reports

In order to facilitate the working relationship between you, your pastor(s), and the seminary, RBS requires that you provide your pastor(s) and your dean with a semester progress report. This report form is available on the seminary's website. The dean will remind students at the end of every semester to fill out the form and submit it electronically to the seminary. In addition to your name and contact info, you'll be asked to identify what courses you've completed during the semester and what courses (if any) are still in progress. You should also provide this information to your mentor-proctor to keep him apprised of your progress in your training.

Paying Student Fees

In addition to the one-time application fee, RBS also charges fees for enrollment and tuition. You may also be charged additional fees for distance course media, live modules (food and lodging), and special transcript requests.

Semester Enrollment Fees

Most traditional seminaries charge students semester fees in addition to tuition. RBS charges a regular semester enrollment fee that gives the student access to the dean, instructors, and Virtual Campus. Currently, that fee is \$425 per semester. To compensate for the larger semester fee, RBS charges a relatively small tuition fee (see below) when compared to the tuition fees of most traditional seminaries, which usually range from \$200 to \$600.

Tuition Fees

As noted above, RBS charges a nominal tuition per credit hour. Currently, the tuition rate is \$60 per credit, which translates to \$120 for a two-credit course, \$180 for a three-credit course, and \$240 for a four-credit course. There are no tuition charges for Preaching Practicum or Ministerial Practicum. All tuition should be paid in full at the time you begin the course, whether it is a live module or a distance-learning course. Students of churches that pledge and donate \$2,000 or more per year are exempt from any tuition payments. However, such students are still responsible to pay the semester enrollment fee (unless their church decides to cover that fee for them).

Important note: No assignments or exams will be graded until the tuition is paid in full. No degree will be conferred when there remains an outstanding balance on the student's account for tuition.

Distance Course Material Fees

You are also responsible to order and purchase the course materials, including textbooks, course manuscripts, and lecture audio or video media. Many of the course audios and lectures notes are

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provided in electronic form on Virtual Campus. The course manuscripts and media may also be ordered through the seminary's online store.

Live Module Fees

If you plan to attend a live module, you will be charged a module fee to cover the instructor's travel expenses and honorarium, and you may be charged a fee to cover food and lodging expenses. The total amount of the module fees will be included with the communication advertising each upcoming module. Students are usually expected to pay less than auditors. You will be responsible to pay the entire amount of the module fees when you arrive at the module. In some cases, you may be asked to pay a pre-registration fee, which will be applied towards the total amount of your module fee.

Transcript Request Fees

If you request RBS to mail official grade transcripts to a church or to another educational institution, you should make a formal written request, including your name and address, and the name and address of the individual to whom the transcript is to be sent. The first transcript will be free, but a \$5 fee will be charged for all subsequent transcripts. No transcript will be issued for anyone who has failed to meet his financial obligations to the seminary.

Completing Your Program

You should notify the dean when you believe you are within the final semester of completely finishing your coursework. This will provide the dean and instructors the time they need to complete any final grading of your assignments, to prepare your transcripts, and to have your degree printed. When you successfully complete all the requirements for your program and have settled any outstanding financial obligations to the seminary, RBS will send you your course transcripts and diploma after they have been printed.

Further Questions?

If you have any further questions about issues not addressed in these "Guidelines & Expectations," please feel free to contact the seminary dean or secretary. We are eager to improve our program and to provide you with the best ministerial training possible. We pray that your experience with RBS will be positive and rewarding.

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Appendix A: “Assessing My Priorities” Inventory Worksheet

The “Assessing My Priorities” (AMP) inventory worksheet was developed by James Petty to help Christians apply Paul’s teaching in Ephesians 5:15-6:18. Paul is speaking to the issues of godly priorities and time use when he says: “Be very careful, then, how you live – not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity because the days are evil.” For more information about the AMP inventory worksheet, the reader should consult the appendix in Dr. Petty’s *Step By Step: Divine Guidance for Ordinary Christians* (Phillipsburg: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1999).¹

RBS has received permission from the publisher to provide the worksheet to our students as they seek to discern how much time they can reasonably and responsibly devote to their theological education. Along with the inventory worksheet (next page), we’ve included some basic instructions for using the worksheet (below), which we’ve drawn from the resource referenced above.

Using the Worksheet

1. Using the blank inventory (next page), list every activity you believe you should be doing to please the Lord in every area of your life.

2. Beside each activity indicate the relative priority of that activity. (Four options are given in the worksheet.)

3. For each activity indicate in the time column how much time you think should be devoted to that activity in a four-week period. (28 days or 672 hours)

4. The category “Miscellaneous” has been added to account for unanticipated providences that will occur during the week. A minimum of 32 hours (8 hours per week) has already been assigned to this category.

4. Add up the total hours you have listed for all the activities. What is the difference between the number of hours you have listed and the 672 hours available in four weeks?

5. If your total is over 672 hours, go through the list of activities and cut out the ones you listed as “clearly optional.” If you are still over 672 hours, cut out activities listed as “good when possible.” You are trying to see which activities are the essential ones.

6. The far right column of the worksheet is for notes about changes that need to be made for any activity.

Using this worksheet can help you grow in discernment as you explore which activities are most important in each of the relationships you sustain. Pray for discernment between the non-negotiable from the important, the good, and the optional.

¹ What Petty includes as an appendix of *Step By Step*, he’s also published through P&R as a booklet entitled *Priorities: Mastering Time Management* (2001). The instructions and worksheet have been taken from the appendix on pages 263-276 of *Step by Step* (ISBN 978-0-87552-603-4), P&R Publishing Co., P.O. Box 817, Phillipsburg N.J. 08865; www.prpbooks.com.

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Appendix B: “How To Write A Theological Paper” By John Frame¹

What follows is my method of theological research and writing. There are, of course, many others, and I would not dream of imposing my approach on anyone else. Still, you have to start somewhere, with some sort of model in your head; and after some years of work in the field, I still think the following plan has some merit.

Every theological paper, even those wholly devoted to the author’s original ideas, will involve some research. (This is the case even for papers and other presentations that are not written in a traditional academic style.) At the very least, it will involve exegetical research and intelligent interaction with biblical texts. Otherwise, the theological work can hardly make any claim to scripturality; and if it is not scriptural, it is simply worthless. Additionally, there should usually be some interaction with other orthodox theologians to guard against individualistic aberration. There may also be interaction with nonorthodox theology, secular science, politics, economics, philosophy, cultural trends, and the like, by way of contrast, critique, and “point of contact.”

Furthermore, every paper should contain something of the theologian himself. It is rarely sufficient simply to tell the reader what someone else says (an “expository paper,” as I call it). Nor, in seminary level papers, is it adequate to write down a series of “standard” arguments on an issue—arguments that have been used time and time again. I describe papers of that sort as “party lines.” Party lines are often useful; it is good to have at your fingertips the standard arguments for infant baptism,² for example, I myself use this kind of argument frequently in talking with inquirers. But generally, party-line arguments do not belong in theological papers. Expositions, summaries, surveys, party lines—all of these are essentially regurgitations of ideas obtained from other sources. They involve little analytical or critical thinking. But such thinking is precisely what is needed, if the paper is to represent an *advance* in the church’s knowledge.

Integration between research and one’s own creative thought, then, is the goal—or rather an important means to the ultimate goal of edification. To achieve this purpose, I work according to the following steps (more or less).

1. Choose a topic with care, one that will be helpful to people, one that you can handle adequately in the time available to you and in the length of document you intend to write (or size of nonwritten presentation).

2. Understand your sources. Scripture texts ought to be fully exegeted. With other sources, I generally write out complete outlines of the ones that are most important. If I am reviewing a book (at some length, at least) I usually outline the entire volume, seeking to understand precisely the structure of the arguments, what is being said and how it is being said. Those sources which are less important, that is, those which will be referred to only in passing or of which only small portions are of interest, can be treated with proportionately less intensity; but the theologian is responsible to make *correct* use even of incidental sources.

¹ These guidelines are found on pages 371-374 of John Frame’s *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God* (Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1987) and are cited here with the permission of both the author and the publisher.

² Or believer baptism ☺ (editor).

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3. Write down what you find interesting. After I outline my sources, I usually go back and read them again (it goes faster the second time, for the outline helps) to discover things that interest me. I write down (with page references) anything that seems to be especially useful, anything especially bad, anything confusing or perplexing, any tidbit that might add spice to my writing. This is the beginning of real theological creativity (though creativity of a sort is not entirely missing even from stages 1-2).

4. Ask questions about your sources. What is the author's purpose? What questions is he trying to answer, and how does he answer them? Try to paraphrase his position as best as you can. Is his position clear? Analyze any ambiguities. What is he saying on the best possible interpretation? On the worst? On the most likely? If you come across anything especially interesting, add it to the notes mentioned in step 3.

5. Formulate a critical perspective on your sources. How do you evaluate them?... There must be some evaluation, positive or negative; if you don't know what is good or bad about the source, you cannot make any responsible use of it. With a scriptural text as a source, of course, the evaluation should always be positive. With other texts, there will generally be some element of negative evaluation.

6. Organize your notes according to topics of interest. I generally go through my notes and write down everything that bears on a particular topic. A computer can be of assistance here.

7. Ask, then, What do I want to tell my audience on the basis of my research? Determine one or more points that you think your readers, hearers, viewers (etc.) ought to know. The structure of your presentation should be fully determined by that purpose. Omit anything extraneous. You do not need to tell your audience *everything* you have learned. Here are some things you might choose to do at this point. (a) *Ask questions*. Sometimes a well-formulated question can be edifying, even if the theologian has no answer. It is good for us to learn what is mysterious, what is beyond our comprehension. (b) *Analyze a theological text or group of them*. Analysis is not "exposition" (above) but "explanation." It describes *why* the text is organized or phrased in a certain way—its historical background, its relations to other texts, and so forth. (c) *Compare or contrast* two or more positions. Show their similarities and differences. (d) *Develop implications and applications* of the texts. (e) *Supplement the texts in some way*. Add something to their teaching that you think is important. (f) *Offer criticism*—positive or negative evaluation. (g) *Present some combination of the above*. The point, of course, is to be clear on just what you are doing.

8. Be self-critical. Before and during your writing anticipate objections. If you are criticizing Barth, imagine Barth looking over your shoulder, reading your manuscript, giving his reactions. This point is crucial. A truly self-critical attitude can save you from unclarity and unsound arguments. It will also keep you from arrogance and unwarranted dogmatism—faults common to all theology (liberal as well as conservative). Don't hesitate to say "probably" or even "I don't know" when the circumstances warrant. Self-criticism will also make you more "profound." For often—perhaps usually—it is objections that force us to rethink our positions, to get beyond superficial ideas, to wrestle with really deep theological issues. As you anticipate objections to your replies to objections to your replies, and so forth, you will find yourself being pushed irresistibly into the realm of the "difficult questions," the theological profundities.

In self-criticism the creative use of the theological imagination is tremendously important. Keep asking such questions as these. (a) Can I take my source's idea in a more favorable sense? A less favorable one? (b) Does my idea provide the only escape from the difficulty, or are there others? (c) In trying to escape from one bad extreme, am I in danger of falling into a different evil on the other side? (d) Can I think of some counter-examples to my generalizations? (e) Must I clarify my concepts, lest

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they be misunderstood? (f) Will my conclusion be controversial and thus require more argument than I had planned?

9. Decide on an audience. Children of a certain age? Unbelievers? New Christians? Educated? Uneducated? Theologically trained? Professional scholars? Americans? Other nations? The audience chosen will have a great effect on the format and style of the presentation.

10. Decide on a format and style. Again, flexibility is important. Consider various possibilities: (a) academic research paper, (b) sermon, (c) dialogue form (valuable for many reasons, not least that it encourages you to be more self-critical), (d) drama, (e) poetry, (f) fantasy, (g) allegory, (h) mixed media, (i) popular article. There are many others.

11. Produce your formulation—on paper or use whatever medium you choose. Outlining beforehand is helpful, but I generally find myself changing the outline as I see where the text seems most naturally to be going. More helpful is *rewriting*. A word-processor can be immensely at this point. If you have problems with sentence structure, paragraph organization, and so forth, it is often helpful to read your work aloud, preferably to someone else.

The thrust should not be a summary of your research (that would be an “expository” paper) but your own creative response to your research. Do not spend ten pages in exposition and only one in evaluation or analysis. Include only enough exposition to explain and justify your own conclusions.

The whole work ought to be undergirded with prayer. We have seen the importance of God’s sovereign working to the success of theology and apologetics. Who else can bring about the knowledge of God but God himself!

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Appendix C: Sample Paper Following The Turabian Format

The subsequent pages will include the following:

1. A sample Title Page
2. A sample Table of Contents Page
3. A sample Abbreviations Page
4. A sample First Page
5. A sample Second Page
6. A sample Bibliography
7. Examples of forms for bibliography references
8. Examples of forms for footnote references



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THE HOPE OF LIFE AFTER DEATH IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

By

John R. Doe

A term paper

submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of Master of Divinity in

Reformed Baptist Seminary

March 6, 2008



2 inches

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ABBREVIATIONS

<i>BETS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>EBD</i>	<i>Eerdmans Bible Dictionary</i>
<i>ISBE</i>	<i>International Standard Bible Encyclopedia</i> . 3 rd edition.
<i>NIDOTTE</i>	<i>The New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis</i> . Edited by Willem VanGemeren. 5 volumes. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997.
<i>NT</i>	New Testament
<i>OT</i>	Old Testament
<i>PTR</i>	<i>The Princeton Theological Review</i>
<i>TOTC</i>	Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries
<i>WBC</i>	The Word Biblical Commentary
<i>ZPEB</i>	<i>The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible</i>

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INTRODUCTION

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For centuries, dying Christians have drawn comfort and hope from OT passages like David's Twenty-third Psalm. Many modern scholars, however, charge earlier generations with reading the teaching of the NT back into the OT. They concede that the NT has much to say about a resurrection, a final judgment, and eternal life. But these scholars argue that a correct reading of the OT provides little if any hope for a blissful life beyond the grave. The OT believer, argue these scholars, lived only for this world. For example, E. F. Sutcliffe, has averred,

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(exactly 12 pt)**

There has been a tendency to take it for granted that, like ourselves, Abraham, Moses, and David, and the other great men of God of the Old Testament looked forward to a judgment of their lives by God after death with a consequent apportionment of reward or punishment. But an attentive reading of the Old Testament shows that this is a mistaken notion and that for many centuries the religious life of the patriarchs and the people of Israel was based exclusively on God's government of the world during the course of men's pilgrimage on the earth.¹

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(exactly 24 pt)**

Similarly, Millar Burrows has dogmatically asserted, "Early Hebrew religion had no conception of judgment or salvation after death."² Burrows accounts for belief in resurrection among the Jews of Jesus' day by arguing that "contact with Zoroastrianism, the religion of the Persian empire ... supplied the pattern for the Jewish hope of resurrection and judgment after death."³ The Christian is compelled to reexamine the OT to determine whether this modern charge is true, being motivated by a desire to interpret God's word accurately (2Tim. 2:15).

¹ Cited in H. H. Rowley, *The Faith of Israel* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1956), 153, n. 5.

² *An Outline of Biblical Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1946), 192.

³ *Ibid.*, 203.

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Three Preliminary Considerations

To properly assess the OT teaching on the afterlife, one must begin his study with an awareness of Israel's ancient Near Eastern cultural milieu, an acknowledgment of Scripture's progressive revelation, and an appreciation for the NT interpretation of the OT.

The Preoccupation of Ancient Near Eastern Society

Recent studies in ancient Near Eastern culture and religion have revealed a prevalent fascination with the afterlife.⁴ This ancient preoccupation with the afterlife may partially account for the relative paucity of a detailed revelation of afterlife in the OT. God did not need to convince the Israelites of a reality they took for granted. Perhaps God did not desire to foster an unhealthy preoccupation upon the afterlife that might render the Israelites "no earthly good" (1 Thess. 4:11; 2 Thess. 3:7-12) and lead them into the superstitious practices of their pagan neighbors.⁵ The ancient prevalence of belief in the afterlife also suggests the likelihood of an innate sense of "eternalness" among human societies (Eccl. 3:11; Rom. 1:19-21), as well as a primeval revelation (e.g., Gen. 2:15-17; 3:22-24; 5:21-24), which depraved societies corrupted over time (Rom. 1:18-23).⁶

⁴ Recent studies include, Jean Bottero, *Religion in Ancient Mesopotamia*, trans. Teresa Fagan (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2001); Norman Cohn, *Cosmos, Chaos, and the World to Come: The Ancient Roots of Apocalyptic Faith* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993); S. H. Hooke, *Babylonian and Assyrian Religion* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1962); H. Frankfort, *Ancient Egyptian Religion: An Interpretation* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1948); Helmer Ringgren, *Religions of the Ancient Near East*, trans. John Sturdy (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1973).

⁵ The OT contains numerous prohibitions against such practices. For example, the Law forbids praying to the deceased (Exod. 22:18; Deut. 18:10-12). Certainly, the Israelites would not be tempted to pray to the dead if they, as many modern scholars contend, entertained no belief in life after death.

⁶ The Roman Catholic doctrine of Mary illustrates how men can take a previous revelation (Luke 1:27-30) and over time distort it into superstitious error.

The Reality of Progressive Revelation

As a general rule, redemptive truth becomes more detailed and clear as one approaches the NT era (Eph. 3:5; Tit. 1:1-3; Heb. 1:1, 2). This is especially true with respect to the doctrine of eternal life. In fact, it is not until one arrives at the NT that he finds a full and mature doctrine of the afterlife. Jesus Christ brought the truth of immortality out of the relative obscurity of OT revelation and into the brighter light of NT revelation (2Tim. 1:10). Therefore, as the Bible student searches for the resurrection and eternal life in the OT, he must resist the temptation to read a fully developed NT doctrine into an OT text where it does not belong.⁷

The Legitimacy of New Testament Input

On the other hand, Christians have the right and responsibility to take seriously the way in which NT writers interpret the Old.⁸ For example, the author of Hebrews portrays the faith and life of the OT saints as *future* oriented (11:1-39).⁹ Either he is guilty of reading the NT hope of eternal life into the OT, or

⁷ Walter Kaiser suggests that the analogy of Scripture be limited to *antecedent* revelation. *Toward an Old Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978), 5-19. This approach is appropriate for discerning the level of understanding possessed by OT believers. But one must not ignore the NT writers' exegesis of the OT and their descriptions of the OT believer's understanding of life after death.

⁸ S. Lewis Johnson is correct when he argues, "The use of the OT in the New is the key to the solution of the problem of hermeneutics. Unfortunately that has been overlooked, but surely, if the apostles are reliable teachers of biblical doctrine, then they are reliable instructors in the science of hermeneutics." *The Old Testament in the New* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980), 23.

⁹ He does not merely claim Abraham and the other OT saints *went to* heaven. Rather, he teaches that they were *looking forward to* heaven! See especially vv. 13-16.

he is properly interpreting the OT texts under the Holy Spirit's guidance. One committed to the inspiration of the NT *must* assume the latter.¹⁰

Three Pillars of the Old Testament Believer's Hope

Most modern scholars concede that one or two passages in the OT may teach a future resurrection unto eternal life. But they usually date these passages after the exile and trace their teaching not to earlier OT revelation but to Persian influence.¹¹ Nevertheless, a careful examination of the Hebrew Scriptures reveals an indigenous source for these later eschatological texts. From the beginning of human history and on the earliest pages of OT Scripture, God began to reveal three great truths that served as the pillars of the OT believer's future hope.

God's Absolute Power over Life and Death

The book of Genesis portrays God as the creator and sustainer of human life (Gen. 1:26, 27; 2:7, 22). Many other OT passages acknowledge human life as a gift from God (Deut. 8:3; 30:20; Job 33:4; Eccl. 8:15). But man forfeited life by sinning against God and incurred God's curse of death (Gen. 2:15-17; 3:1-8; 3:19, 22; cf. Rom. 6:23). Being contrary to God's original intent and an expression of his wrath, death became a dreaded enemy to mankind.¹² The Israelite commonly

¹⁰ Since the Holy Spirit never bears false witness and since He is the author of the OT Scriptures, then He will always guide the NT writer to accurately discern His own authorial intent in the OT Scriptures.

¹¹ Brian Schmidt, "Afterlife, Afterdeath," *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. David N. Freedman (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 26-27; Burrows, 203-04.

¹² Not surprisingly, ancient societies developed very gloomy conceptions of a netherworld beyond the grave.

referred to this enemy as *Sheol* and longed to be delivered from it (Pss. 6:1-5; 88:1ff.; 141:7-10; Prov. 7:24-27; 15:24; 23:14; Isa. 38:2-4; 9-16).¹³

Man's only hope for deliverance resided in the God who exercises power and prerogative over both life and death (Deut. 32:39; 1Sam. 2:6; 2Kgs. 5:7). Since the day of his death was determined by God (Gen. 47:29; Num. 27:12-15; Deut. 34:5; Job 14:5; Eccl. 3:2; 5:18; 8:8, 15; Isa. 38:1), the Israelite felt warrant to pray for God's deliverance from the grave (Pss. 68:20; 118:18; 1Kgs. 22:32; Isa. 38:2-5). Moreover, God's absolute lordship over life and death suggested to the OT saint the real possibility of life after death – even a physical resurrection. The writer to the Hebrews calls attention to this fact when he tells us that Abraham was willing to sacrifice his son Isaac *because* “he considered that God *is able* [δυνατός]

¹³ The OT Scriptures *do not* present שְׁאוֹל as a gloomy netherworld to which *all* men, both wicked *and righteous*, must go after death. The Authorized Version translates the Hebrew word שְׁאוֹל as *hell* (31x), *grave* (31x), and *pit* (3x). With the exception of a few narrative passages, the word is used mainly in poetry. This fact is crucial for our understanding of the word because of the highly figurative nature of Hebrew poetry. The word שְׁאוֹל is associated with such abstract ideas as *death* and *destruction*. It provokes such emotions as sorrow, pain, and a longing for deliverance. It is also frequently found in antithetical verse where the righteous are being contrasted with the wicked. Keeping these ideas in mind, along with the poetical environment, one can establish a proper semantic value for שְׁאוֹל which, in turn, will aid in defining the OT doctrine of life after death. The word שְׁאוֹל has *three* meanings. They are as follows: first, שְׁאוֹל may refer to *the place of burial*, where a corpse is subject to decay (Ps. 49:14). Second, שְׁאוֹל can refer to *the state of being dead* or *separated from life* and is semantically parallel to מוֹת (Hos. 13:14 [note: 1Cor. 15:55 translates this passage, using θάνατε to translate שְׁאוֹל]). Third, שְׁאוֹל may refer to *the realm of the wicked dead*. It is immediately evident that the Hebrew word is much broader than the English glosses “hell” and “grave,” which tend to limit the word to a location. Thus, the English reader will most often think of senses *one* and *three*. However, when one remembers the poetical semotaxis, he will realize that the Hebrew frequently thought of שְׁאוֹל in the abstract. Therefore, whether it be the temporal location of the corpse or the immaterial realm, שְׁאוֹל is always associated with death, namely, that state of being separated from life. Thus it is not surprising that the OT writers always present שְׁאוֹל in a negative light. Death is always portrayed as *an enemy*. As John Davis notes, “There were men of keen spiritual vision who yet felt dismay at the approach of death... The pious Israelite might have believed that he would be with God and be the recipient of divine loving-kindness in the future life, and yet have dreaded sheol.” “The Future Life in Hebrew Thought During the Pre-Persian Period,” *PTR* 6 (April 1908), 267-68. For further study on the meaning of שְׁאוֹל, see R. Laird Harris, “The Meaning of the Word Sheol as Shown by Parallels in Poetic Texts,” *BETS* 4 (1956): 129-35; Eugene H. Merrill, “שְׁאוֹל (shə’ōl), Sheol, netherworld,” *NIDOTTE*, 4:6-7.

to raise people even from the dead [emphasis added]" (11:19, NKJ). Failure to appreciate this fundamental truth earned the Sadducees Jesus' famous rebuke: "You are mistaken, not understanding the Scriptures nor *the power* [τὴν δύναμιν] of God [emphasis added]" (Matt. 22:29, NKJ).¹⁴ Thus a belief in God's power over life and death formed one of the pillars for the Israelite hope in the afterlife.

God's Covenantal Purpose for Human Life

When God placed Adam in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2:8-17), the place of His special presence,¹⁵ He was teaching that the *summum bonum* of man's life would consist preeminently in a covenantal relationship with God. And the presence of "the tree of life" in the midst of the Garden (Gen. 2:9) indicated that this divine-human relationship would be eternal (Gen. 2:16-17; 3:22; cf. Rev. 2:7; 22:2, 14). Sadly, Adam's sin resulted in the forfeiture of this eternal communion (Gen. 3:22-24; cf. Isa. 59:2). But the central theme of the OT concerns the restoration of this broken relationship and is epitomized in the tripartite formula: "I will be your God; you shall be My people, and I will dwell in your midst" (Exod. 29:45-46; Lev. 11:45; 22:33; 25:38; *passim*).¹⁶ Thus, the very concept of covenant life with Jehovah gave the OT believer reason to hope that nothing – not even death

¹⁴ Some today find it just too hard to believe. But it should not be. If scientists today can clone an animal (and maybe someday a human) from the genetic material of a dead cell, should we find it hard to believe that the same God who formed Adam from the dust of the earth and breathed into him the breath of life could take our genetic material from the dust and refashion our bodies? Once we come to grips with God's omnipotence, it is no longer difficult to believe in a bodily resurrection.

¹⁵ Bruce Waltke, *Genesis: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 85; Gordon Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, WBC, ed. David A. Hubbard (Nashville: Nelson, 1987), 61-62. For a discussion of the Garden of Eden's relationship to the tabernacle and temple as the place of God's special presence, see James Jordan, *Through New Eyes: Developing a Bible View of the World* (1988; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1999), 143-63.

¹⁶ Kaiser argues that this promise should be the central governing motif for OT theology (32-40).

itself – could separate him from His God. In the words of James Denney, “The experience of God’s love in life, a providential and redeeming love, of which man was as sure as he was of his life itself, is the primary and the ultimate factor in the faith of immortality.”¹⁷

To ensure men saw the connection between covenant life and eternal life, God did something very unusual early in redemptive history. God exempted from death Enoch, the seventh from Adam, on the basis that Enoch “walked with God” (Gen. 5:21-24; cf. Heb. 11:5). The record of Enoch’s unusual translation no doubt served to encourage a similar expectancy among subsequent generations of believers who, like Abraham, enjoyed covenant life with God (Gen. 12:1-3; 2 Chron. 20:7; James 2:23). The Lord Jesus certainly draws this conclusion when He infers the resurrection on the basis of God’s covenantal relationship to the patriarchs (cf. Exod. 6:3; Matt. 22:32).

David also highlights the connection between covenant life and eternal life in his sixteenth Psalm. Because David enjoyed a saving relationship with God (vv. 2-8), he could entertain the strongest confidence in life beyond the grave:

Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; my flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore (vv. 9-11, NKJ).¹⁸

The very fact that God’s “covenant love *endures forever* [לְעוֹלָם]” (Ps. 136) enabled the OT saint to overcome even the fear of death!¹⁹

¹⁷ *Factors of Faith in Immortality* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1903), 59.

¹⁸ As Peter and Paul indicate in the NT, David was not merely speaking of his triumph over the grave—he was looking forward to the resurrection of Christ (Acts 2:25-31; 13:36-37), which would insure His own resurrection from the grave.

¹⁹ This is precisely the same point Paul makes in Romans 8:35-39—“For I am persuaded that neither life nor death ... nor any other created thing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

God's Redemptive Promise of Victory over Sin and Death

God's curse upon the Serpent became for mankind a promise of life.²⁰ This promise would be fulfilled after a long struggle between two divisions of mankind, climaxing in a cosmic battle between Satan and the woman's Seed and resulting in Satan's destruction and God's victory over sin and death. And as the OT saint looked forward to this great redemptive victory, he anticipated two great events at the end of all history.

A Final Day of Judgment

God's dealings with Adam and Eve demonstrate that man must give an account for his sin. According to Jude, the descendants of Adam and Eve anticipated a final day of accounting (Jude 14, 15). According to Peter, the universal flood provided a foretaste of this final judgment (2Pet. 3:5-7). Not surprisingly, David alludes to this day in the Psalms (Pss. 9:17-20; 37:37-38; 49:12-15). King Solomon also spoke of this day (Eccl. 12:13, 14).²¹ Daniel described this great Day of Judgment in a vision:

I watched till thrones were put in place, and the Ancient of Days was seated; His garment *was* white as snow, and the hair of His head *was* like pure wool. His throne *was* a fiery flame, its wheels a burning fire; a fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, and the books were opened (Dan. 7:9, 10, NKJ).

²⁰ This is confirmed by Adam's response to the promise in verse 20: "And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living." Waltke appropriately refers to this verse as "the beginning of hope" (95).

²¹ Solomon cannot be referring to a merely temporal judgment since he has already concluded that a universal and complete judgment does not happen in this life (Eccl. 3:16; 8:14; 9:1-3).

A final resurrection of the dead.

God created man with a body to be His image, that is, God's visible replica and representative upon the earth. God must reclaim man's body from the grave if He would restore him to his original purpose.²² The patriarchs anticipated such a resurrection by securing a burial in the Promised Land (Gen. 23:16-18; 25:9-10; 35:27-29; 49:29-31; 50:13, 25-26; Exod. 13:19; Jos. 24:32). Isaiah assures God's persecuted people of a coming day when "[God] will swallow up death forever" (25:8, NKJ), and later declares, "Your dead shall live; *together with* my dead body they shall arise. Awake and sing, you who dwell in dust; for your dew *is like* the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead" (26:19, NKJ). Likewise, God revealed to Daniel that at the end of history "many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Dan. 12:2, NKJ). These prophecies of resurrection were not imported from Persia. They were based upon God's OT promise of final victory over sin and death.²³ Abraham believed this promise (Gen. 25:8-9; cf. Heb. 11:19). Job believed this promise (Job 14:14; 19:25, 26).²⁴ Moses believed this promise (Deut. 30:19-20; cf. Heb. 11:26). David believed this promise (Pss. 16:9-

²² Anthony Hoekema argues, "If the resurrection body were nonmaterial or nonphysical, the devil would have won a great victory It would seem that matter had become intrinsically evil so that it had to be banished But matter is not evil; it is part of God's good creation. Therefore the goal of redemption is the resurrection of the physical body, and the creation of a new earth on which his redeemed people can live and serve God forever with glorified bodies. Thus the universe will not be destroyed but renewed, and God will win the victory." *The Bible and the Future* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1979), 250.

²³ L. J. Greenspoon has refuted the Persian origin hypothesis and argued that the resurrection in Isaiah and Daniel was based upon the OT motif of Yahweh as "Divine Warrior." "The Origin of the Idea of the Resurrection," *Traditions in Transformation: Turning Points in Biblical Faith*, ed. B. Halpern and J. D. Levenson (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1981), 247-321.

²⁴ For a balanced defense of Job's belief in a resurrection, see Francis Anderson, *Job*, TOTC, ed. D. J. Wiseman (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity, 1976), 172-73, 193-94.

11; 17:15; cf. Ps. 49:15).²⁵ Solomon believed this promise (Prov. 14:32). Other OT prophets believed this promise (Hos. 6:1-2; 13:14-15; Ezek. 37:1-14).²⁶ Consequently, when Paul defends his doctrine of the resurrection before the Jews and Agrippa, he confidently asserts that he is preaching no novelty or foreign doctrine but exactly what the OT Scriptures foretold (Acts 23:6; 26:6-8, 22-23).²⁷

Conclusion

The OT doctrine of life after death is not as clear or detailed as the teaching of the NT. Nevertheless, we do find the acorn of gospel hope on the earliest pages of OT revelation. Although the OT saint could not describe all the details of what that acorn would become, he did know it would someday become a tree of *everlasting* life. Failure to exegete such a hope from the pages of OT Scripture may be an indication of weak faith (Luke 24:25-27) or no faith at all (Matt. 22:29). Perhaps some modern scholars cannot see the bodily resurrection and eternal life in the OT because they have never experienced the power of God's spiritual resurrection (Eph. 2:4-6) and blessing of His covenant communion (John 17:3).

²⁵ By comparing the language of the Psalms to the ancient Ugaritic literature, Michell Dahood has demonstrated that the Israelites clearly believed in immortality. *Psalms I: 1-50*, AB, ed. William Foxwell Albright and David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1965), pp. xxxv-xxxvii; *Psalms III: 101-150* (1970), xli-lii. See also Elmer Smick, "Ugaritic and the Theology of the Psalms," *New Perspectives on the Old Testament*, ed. J. Barton Payne (Waco: Word Books, 1970), 104-10.

²⁶ Granted, Hosea and Ezekiel may have a national restoration primarily in view. But it seems likely that the imagery of the nation's "resurrection" arose from the Israelite hope of a future personal resurrection.

²⁷ Bruce Milne observes, "While the fullest and clearest teachings about the afterlife do certainly come from the lips of Jesus and the apostles in the NT, every last one of them was nurtured on the OT. It was in effect the religious and spiritual womb within which their understanding of human destiny was conceived and nurtured." *The Message of Heaven and Hell* (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity, 2002), 25.

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