

Erskine Theological Seminary

OT 739 C: THE ELIJAH/ELISHA NARRATIVES

Fall 2008

Charleston Site, Saturdays (9/13; 10/11; 11/8; 12/6), 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Professor: Max Rogland

*****SYLLABUS REVISED AUGUST 27, 2008*****

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OFFICE HOURS FOR FALL 2008:

I will typically be available in my office in Columbia between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday, though it is always advisable to call or email for an appointment first. Other times and locations may be available.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course examines the history, content, milieu, text, structure, and meaning of the Elijah/Elisha narratives in 1 – 2 Kings. Detailed attention is given to its historical setting (i.e. state-sanctioned Baal worship), and to how Jesus Christ is shown in the gospels as the fulfillment of the dominant motifs of the collection.

Prerequisite: In order to receive exegesis credit for this course, students must have successfully completed BI 502 Principles of Exegesis (and, where applicable, Hebrew I & II) prior to taking this class. Exegesis/elective. Three hours.

COURSE PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES:

The mission of Erskine Theological Seminary is to “educate persons for service in the Christian Church.” To achieve this mission, the ability to understand the Bible in various contexts must be taught. These contexts include the Bible’s ancient Near Eastern cultural setting, the immediate context of the literary unit in question, the context of the book of the Bible at issue or the OT as a whole, its canonical context admitting the light of the NT that points to Christ, and the context of the whole counsel of God that includes the implications of the Word today. This course will seek to raise the students’ awareness of how to read the OT in these various contexts. Specifically:

By the end of the course, the student should be able to:

1. Demonstrate a mastery of the content, structure and theology of the Elijah-Elisha narratives.
2. Identify polemics against Baal in light of the Baal cycle.
3. Articulate how the narratives both shape and are shaped by the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
4. Teach from the narratives.

5. Relate the message of the narratives to our own contemporary setting.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:

NOTE: Textbooks are available from the Erskine Theological Seminary Virtual Bookstore at www.ecampus.com/erskine.

Brodie, Thomas L. *The Crucial Bridge: the Elijah-Elisha Narrative as an Interpretive Synthesis of Genesis-Kings and a Literary Model for the Gospels* (Collegville: The Liturgical Press, 2000)

Dillard, Raymond. *Faith in the Face of Apostasy* (Philipsburg: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing, 1999)

Leithart, Peter. *1 & 2 Kings* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2006)

Recommended: I use the English Standard Version of the Bible for in-class work, and it is therefore recommended that you bring a copy of this to class (the text is available online at: www.gnpcb.org/esv/).

I am often asked to recommend a Study Bible. Currently, I would recommend Zondervan's *NIV Archaeological Study Bible* or, when it appears, Crossway's *ESV Study Bible* (slated to appear in October 2008). Neither of these are required texts for this class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:

Your final grade will be based upon the following factors:

A. One exam: 20%

On **November 8** there will be an in-class exam focusing on the content/outline of the Elijah-Elisha narratives and introductory issues.

B. Exegetical Paper(s): 30%

You have the option of choosing to write one major exegetical paper (12-15 pages in length), due on or before **December 6**, or three shorter ones (4-5 pages each), the first of which must be turned in on or before **November 8**, the second on or before **December 6**, and the third on or before **December 13**. Guidelines pertaining to the paper(s) will be provided at the first class session.

C. Worksheets and assignments: 40%

These will be provided in class.

D. Class Attendance and Participation: 10%

NOTE: In this class, as in many seminary-level classes, assignments will frequently involve a substantial writing component. To do well in this class, therefore, it is essential that you have strong writing skills. Students whose writing skills are weak are *strongly* encouraged to take PM 090 Writing for Ministry before taking this course. Students who have passed PM 090 or who are taking it concurrently with this course and who complete it successfully will receive 5% extra credit.

OVERALL GRADING SCALE:

100-95	A	85-84	C+	71-70	D-
94-93	A-	83-80	C		
92-91	B+	79-78	C-	69-0	F
90-88	B	77-76	D+		
87-86	B-	75-72	D		

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS and SEMINARY POLICIES:

Registration: Once a student has completed, signed, and submitted his/her registration to the Registrar for this class, it is a binding contract and billing will be based on this registration. If the student decides not to take this class, he/she must complete a “drop/add” form and secure the appropriate signatures prior to the drop/add deadline during the second week of the semester or term. If one wishes to withdraw from the course after the drop/add deadline, one must complete a withdrawal form, and tuition will be refunded on a pro rated basis. Failure to withdraw from the class properly will result in the student’s receiving a grade of “F” for the course and full tuition charges will apply. No exceptions will be made to this policy.

Official Seminary Class Attendance Policy: Class participation is considered an important part of the total educational experience at Erskine Seminary. Students are expected to attend classes on a regular basis and are responsible for the mastery of all materials required in the course. In general, students are allowed up to three hours of unexcused absence without penalty. Students taking a class that meets four times over a semester/term must attend the first meeting of the class. Students who cannot attend the first course meeting should not register for the course or, if already registered, should drop the course and complete the drop/add form. (If the drop/add form is not completed and turned in to the Registrar, the student will still be charged for the course and will receive an “F” grade.) If students have to be absent for part or all of another class meeting day, they are still responsible for all work missed and all work due. A student who misses as much as one full class day or its equivalent in late arrival or early departure should consult with the professor to see whether it is still possible to pass the course. NOTE: missing a session of an all-day course will result in an automatic 10 percentage point reduction in your overall grade. If you are aware of any conflicts that will prevent you from attending one of the class sessions, you should register for a different section or take the course at another time.

Late and/or Incomplete Work: Any work not submitted by the due date will be assessed a late penalty. Students should review the Seminary policy on “Incompletes” in the Seminary catalog. The grade of “I” or incomplete is given at the discretion of the professor. A grade of “I” is normally given when a student has substantially completed the requirements for a course but has been prevented by extraordinary circumstances from completing the remainder of the course requirements. A student who wishes to request an incomplete should normally complete an incomplete form prior to the end of the semester and ask the professor to grant the request. (Under unusual circumstances, the student may communicate with the professor by phone or email rather than in person, and the professor may then agree to fill out the form at the student's request. Under exceptional circumstances, the professor may initiate the process by filling out the form on the student's behalf.) If the professor grants the request, he/she will sign the incomplete form and turn it in with his/her final grade report. An “I” in any course must be removed by March 1 for the Fall Term, April 1 for the January Term, August 1 for the Spring

Term, and November 1 for the Summer Term. Only the Dean may grant extensions of incompletes beyond the established completion date. Otherwise, these grades automatically become “F.”

Plagiarism: Any student who commits plagiarism is in violation of Seminary policy and is liable for dismissal. See the academic section of the Catalog for complete information.

Language about God and Humanity: The Bible and the Church’s historic creeds and confessions use masculine language in reference to God. Thus, the Seminary encourages all students to retain this masculine usage when speaking and writing about God. Furthermore, the Seminary recognizes that all human beings, male and female, are created equally in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27), and believers of both sexes are fellow heirs of the grace of life (1 Pet. 3:7). Accordingly, whenever students are speaking and writing about males and females, they should use language that clearly includes both men and women (for example, by saying/writing "humanity" rather than "man" or "people" rather than "men").

Conduct in Theological Discussions: Erskine Seminary is committed to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, and it expects its students to show respect for all who identify with that one Church. In all written work, oral presentations, and discussions both inside and outside the classroom, the Seminary expects students to conduct discussions of controversial issues in a context of respect for those with whom one disagrees. Please see the Community Life Statement in the Catalog for more information.

Taping Class Lectures: To tape a lecture the student must complete an “Audio Recording Request” form, which can be downloaded from the Seminary website at:

http://www.erskineseminary.org/Academics_Files/PdfDownloads.html

IMPORTANT DATES AND READING SCHEDULE:

Note the following important deadlines:

- The entire text of 1 Kings 17-2 Kings 13 should be read *prior* to the first class session on **September 13**.
- In-class exam: **November 8**
- Papers:
 - Option #1 (one major paper): due on or before **December 6**.
 - Option #2 (three short papers): paper #1 due on or before **November 8**, paper #2 due on or before **December 6**, paper #3 due on or before **December 13**.

Reading schedule: TBA