

Course Description

A literary investigation of these ninth century prophets based upon the **Hebrew** text of I Kings 17 - 19, II Kings 2 - 6. Special attention will be given to the use of these narratives in preaching.

Required Texts

1. A Study Bible such as: *The New Interpreter's Study Bible (NRSV)*, *The HarperCollins Study Bible (NRSV)*, *The New Oxford Annotated Bible (NRSV)*, *The Catholic Study Bible (NAB)*, or *The NIV Study Bible (NIV)*
2. G. von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, vol. II, or, idem. *The Message of the Prophets*
3. Elliger, et al. *BHS*, or, Kohlenberger, *Interlinear NIV Hebrew-English OT*

Recommended Texts

1. R. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax: An Outline*, third edition
2. Armstrong, Busby and Carr, *A Reader's Hebrew-English Lexicon of the Old Testament*

Objectives

1. To provide a framework for the contemporary study of the prophetic literature in general, and
2. To pursue that study with reference to Israel's prophets of the 9th century: Elijah and Elisha.
3. To equip you to read Hebrew narrative with some degree of speed and ease, and
4. To explore the possibilities that emerge from a *literary* reading of these texts

Evaluation

1. **20% Tuesday, February 24: Test**, covering prophecy in general (see questions on page 3)
2. **20% Thursday, March 19: 700-800 word essay** in which you reflect upon the Deuteronomistic History in light of your reading of the following (all on e-reserve):
 1. **The DtrHistory: Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings in NRSV, NIV, NASB, or JB**
 2. J. Maxwell Miller, "Introduction to the History of Ancient Israel," in *The New Interpreter's Bible*, volume 1 (Nashville: Abingdon) pp. 244-271.
 3. Peter Ackroyd, "The Historians and Theologians of the Exilic Age, the Deuteronomic History," in *Exile and Restoration: A Study of Hebrew Thought of the Sixth Century B.C.* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1968) pp. 62-83.
 4. H.W. Wolff, "The Kerygma of the Deuteronomic Historical Work," in *The Vitality of Old Testament Traditions*, edited by W. Brueggemann (Atlanta: John Knox, 1982) pp. 83-100.
 5. Steven L. McKenzie, "Deuteronomistic History," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (NY: Doubleday, 1992) vol. 2, pp. 160-68.

Be sure to address the following questions: What did DtrH seek to do? Was it successful? Why or why not? In what way(s) does it continue to speak to us, today?

3. **20% Class participation:** M.Div and MA students in Bible are expected to **translate** and be able to discuss the Hebrew texts assigned with regard to William's *Hebrew Syntax*. Students without Hebrew are expected to be able to discuss the texts assigned on the basis of a comparison of the NRSV, the NIV **and** one other translation and to be aware of the differences in these versions.

Your work will be collected on a random basis

4. **40% Friday, May 15, high noon: 1000 word "application"** of one of the Elijah or Elisha texts appointed in the *RCL* (see below) together with a **500 word exegetical rationale** in which you justify your application with regard to the situation you are addressing. The "application" can take the form of a sermon, bible study, youth group presentation, stewardship talk, counseling verbatim or another vehicle whereby you share the biblical word with someone who needs to hear it.

Revised Common Lectionary Pericopes in the Elijah/Elisha Cycles of the Books of Kings:

I Kings 17:8-16 (17-24)	Proper 5 C	II Kings 2:1-12	Transfiguration B
I Kings 18:20-21 (22-29) 30-39	Proper 4 C	II Kings 2: 1-2, 6-14	Proper 8 C
I Kings 19:1-4 (5-7) 8-15a	Proper 7 C	II Kings 5:1-14	6 th Sunday in Ordinary
I Kings 2:11-10 (11-14) 15-21a	Proper 6 C		Time B; Proper 9 C

Course Outline and Reading Assignments

Date	Topic	Readings	
UNIT ONE: PROPHECY AND HISTORY			
February	09	Introduction	
	10	What Prophecy Was NOT	von Rad: chapters 1-9 (pp. 9-101)
	12	What Prophecy Was NOT (Continued)	
	16	What Prophecy WAS	Remember Your DtrH Essay!
	17	Prophetic Speech	
	19	Prophecy: De-mythologized and Re-theologized	
	23	Was Jesus a Prophet?	
	24	TEST ON PROPHECY AND HISTORY	Remember Your DtrH Essay!
UNIT TWO: ELIJAH			
March	26	I Kings 17:1-4	
	02	I Kings 17:7-11	
	03	I Kings 17:12-16	
	05	I Kings 17:17-24	
	09	I Kings 17 “Elijah and the Widow”	
	10	I Kings 18:1-6	
	12	I Kings 18:7-11	
	16	I Kings 18:12-16	
	17	I Kings 18:17-24	
	19	I Kings 18:25-29	DtrH Essay due!
April	23	I Kings 18:30-35	
	24	I Kings 18:36-40	
	26	I Kings 18:41-46	
	30	I Kings 18 “Mount Carmel”	
	31	I Kings 19:1-7	
	02	I Kings 19:8-14	
	06	I Kings 19:15-21	
	07	I Kings 19 “Mount Horeb”	
	09	EASTER BREAK	
	13	EASTER BREAK	
May	14	EASTER BREAK	
	16	I Kings 17-19 "Structure in the Elijah Narrative"	
	UNIT THREE: ELISHA		
	20	II Kings 2:1-8	
	21	II Kings 2:9-16	
	23	II Kings 2:17-24	
	27	II Kings 2 “Elijah? or Elisha?”	
	28	II Kings 5:1-9	
	30	II Kings 5:10-18	
	04	II Kings 5:19-27	
05	II Kings 5 “Three Aspects of Grace: Naaman Elisha Gehazi		
07	II Kings 4:1-7		
08	II Kings 4:38-44		
11	II Kings 6:1-7		
12	II Kings 4:1-7; 38-44; 6:1-7 “Miracles”		
14	NO CLASS		
15	High Noon! Applications Due		

Elijah/Elisha Exam

**THE DREIDEL WILL BE SPUN TWO TIMES
YOU MUST ANSWER ONE OF THE QUESTIONS INDICATED "FROM ON HIGH"
IF THE DREIDEL LANDS ON THE SAME LETTER TWICE OR FALLS OFF THE TABLE
YOU CHOOSE WHICH QUESTION TO ANSWER!**

’ 1. Von Rad claims the prophets' concern "was to deliver a specific message from Yahweh to particular men and women who, without themselves being aware of it, stood in a special situation before God." (OTT Vol. II) On the basis of your reading (von Rad and others) as well as class lectures and discussion, respond to von Rad's characterization of the prophets as "Messengers." Is this an apt description of their function? What evidence can be marshaled from the surrounding culture to bolster your position? From Form-Critical studies?

⌘ 2. Discuss the significance of the Israelites' experience of "Exile" for their theological conceptions and growth.

⌚ 3. Marshall McLuhan has made famous the statement, "The medium is the message." In what way(s) do(es) this statement relate to von Rad's discussion of "The Prophet's Freedom," (Chapter E/Chapter 4)?

⌘ 4. Discuss von Rad's understanding of "The Word" (Chapter F/Chapter 5). Did the pre-exilic prophets see God's judgment of Israel as inevitable? If so, how does one explain their occasional references to repentance?