



Peter Paul Rubens: *Samson and Delilah*

Judges OT 3J03/6J06

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Winter Semester 2012
Tuesday 7-9 pm
Compass Point Bible Church
Burlington, ON

Course Description

A study of the Old Testament book of Judges focusing on its historical background, compositional development, literary structure, narrative meaning, theological message, and present significance.

Course Purposes

Knowing: That the students have a firm intellectual grasp of the content, literary form, historical context and theological teaching of the book of Judges in its historical, canonical and contemporary contexts.

Doing: That the students acquire competency in interpreting Old Testament narrative historiography with attention to ancient context and contemporary significance.

Being: That the students gain an appreciation for Hebrew narrative historiography and its expression of theology. That the students be moved by this biblical book to love God, humanity and creation in greater ways.

Course Overview

This course is an exegetical study of the book of Judges. Orientation to the historical and literary dimensions of this historiographic narrative book will be our focus, but there will also be attention to the biblical-theological and contemporary relevance of these ancient texts for faith communities and societies today.



Textbooks

Narcisse Diaz de la Pena: *Lament of Jephthah's Daughter*

Block, Daniel I. *Judges, Ruth*. NAC 6. Nashville, Tenn.: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999.

Butler, Trent C. *Judges*. WBC. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2009.

All required textbooks for this class and others at the Divinity College are available from R.E.A.D. On Books, and should be purchased as early as possible, and at least by the beginning of the term when R.E.A.D. On Books has its books available for sale in the Bookstore at the College. They can be contacted at: 195 The West Mall, Suite 414, Etobicoke, ON M9C 5K1; phone 416-622-0655 ext. 4; fax 416-622-2308; e-mail books@readon.ca; or www.readon.ca.

Course Schedule

January

3 Orientation, Reading Judges
10 Judges 1:1-3:6
17 Judges 3:7-16:31; 3:7-31
24 Judges 4-5
31 Judges 6-8

February

7 Judges 6-8
14 Judges 9
21 Reading Week
28 Judges 10-12

March

6 Judges 13-16
13 Judges 13-16
20 Judges 17-18
27 Judges 19-21

April

3 Judges: Reflection

Learning Opportunities

Classroom Experiences

We will be gathering each Tuesday evening throughout the semester to encounter the book of Judges through exegetical study. These will provide orientation for your reading of the book of Judges, showcase interpretation for your research paper, and offer material for your thematic paper.

Preparatory Reading

In order to prepare for each week of class, you need to read the biblical passage and the appropriate section in one of the two class commentaries. As you read watch for connections to your theme for your thematic paper below as well as questions to ask in class.

- ✓ Grade Value: 10%
- ✓ Format: email professor with percentage of reading completed each week
- ✓ Due Date: 3 April 2012

Research Paper

By the beginning of March you will complete a major research paper (minimum 15 pages double spaced) on a narrative in Judges 3-9. In this paper you will provide a three dimensional reading which sets this passage in its historical, literary and contemporary contexts. A guide to narrative analysis will be provided on the internet. For the format of this paper see the Format section below. Your research on this passage should draw on a minimum of 10 secondary sources beyond the textbooks for the class. These secondary sources must include *both books and articles* (for articles use the ATLA database through Mills Library), must reflect recent research (after 1990, best after 2000), and must be elongated treatments of your biblical text, period, or book. This requirement does not include ancient sources used (Josephus, Qumran) or Bibles, Versions, Study Bibles, Bible Dictionaries (or other reference works). Use of at least 3 of the commentaries with asterisks in the bibliography below must be among these sources. Do not use internet resources (besides ATLA and other Library Database systems) without permission of the professors. It is expected that all materials used will be peer and/or publisher reviewed.



Francesco Solimena: *Deborah and Barak*

All material which is submitted should be double spaced with 1" margins utilizing a readable font (12 point). It must have a title page and bibliography which is not included in the length required. It should be written in excellent modern literary English with proper grammar, spelling, punctuation and rhetoric (including an introduction, conclusion and logical flow of argument). Please use an outline for the paper. Secondary and Primary sources should be used, cited and footnoted appropriately.

After all your good research on your passage you will need to present in a way that is accessible and gets to the heart of the passage. Use this guide below (the percentages are the amount of your paper which should be devoted to each point):

Introduction (2.5%)

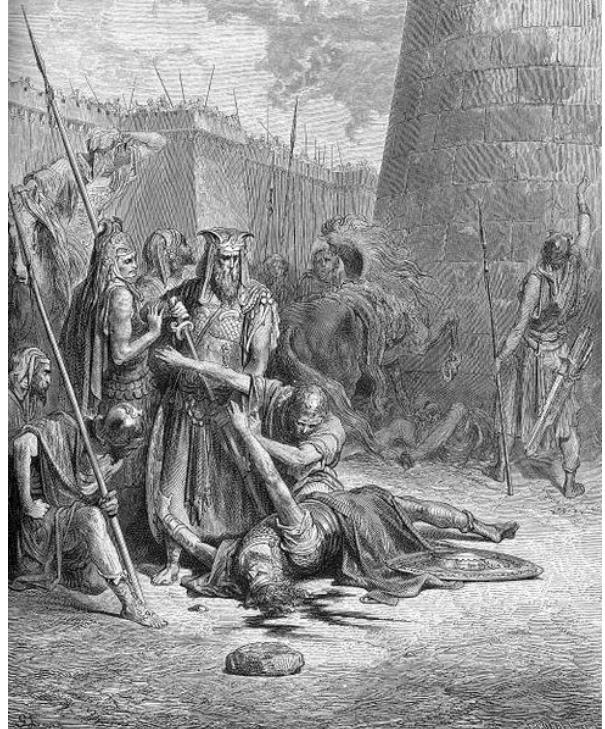
1. Basic theme and overall flow of the passage (10%)
 2. Basic historical background relevant to the passage and book (20%)
 3. How the narrative set within history and culture points to a basic theme (40%). Allow the structure of the narrative to structure your discussion which is an integrated piece.
 4. How this contributes to the book of Judges (10%)
 5. How this relates to the rest of the canon (10%)
 6. Application (5%)
- Conclusion (2.5%)

- ✓ Grade Value: 45%
- ✓ Format: 15 page research paper
- ✓ Due Date: 1 March 2012

Theme Paper

This 15 page paper requires students to integrate and synthesize the elements learned in our study sessions each week on Judges. During the class times together students will identify a key theme for the book of Judges and write a paper on how it is developed throughout the book. Sensitivity to the literary themes must be coupled with sensitivity to the historical context of the original reading community. Reference should be made at least to the class textbooks, although other resources may be used as well.

- ✓ Grade Value: 45%
- ✓ Format: 15 page research paper
- ✓ Due Date: 31 March 2012



Paul Gustave Doré: *Death of Abimelech*



Nicolas Poussin: *The Victory of Gideon over the Midianites*

Format and Evaluation

So I can properly evaluate your work and help you grow in your biblical and writing skills the following evaluation guide should be kept in mind as you write:

- **Presentation:** Is the spelling correct? Does the grammar/syntax reflect proper English? Is the paper laid out properly?
- **Argumentation:** Is there a good introduction and conclusion? Does the argument flow with ample support? Is the question answered?
- **Content:** Are all the points considered? Is there proper documentation of sources used?

So I can properly evaluate your work the following style guide is to be used for papers in this class.

- **Medium for Submission:** All material in this class is to be submitted in digital format to me via email. Please use .pdf format and ensure that what you send is what you want me to read. If you need a program for creating .pdfs go to <http://primopdf.com> for a free .pdf maker.
- **Layout:** All material which is submitted should be double spaced with 1" margins utilizing a readable font (10-12 pts). It must have a title page, footnoting where appropriate and bibliography, all of which are not included in the length required. It should be written in excellent modern literary English with proper grammar, spelling, punctuation and rhetoric (including an introduction, conclusion and logical flow of argument). If it helps an outline may accompany the paper but this is not included in the length of the paper. Secondary and Primary sources should be used, cited and footnoted appropriately and the paper should follow the "McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses" available at the College and course website.



- **Gender Inclusive Language:** McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all of its publications. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. The NRSV and TNIV are examples of the use of inclusive language for human beings. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.
- **Citations:** You must cite the source of your material very carefully using a consistent system, not only when quoting from a section, but also when drawing from it as resource. Quotations should be kept to a minimum as I favour integration of secondary literature (footnoted).
- **Statement on Academic Honesty:** Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College. Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. If you are a Divinity College student please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty ~ www.madciv.ca/regis/honesty.php.

Rule of the Timbits (הלכה התמבתיים)

To ensure a timely start to class we will be observing the Timbit Redemption Rule for this course. Because “tardies” raise the ire of the covenant community (bound by this covenantal syllabus document delivered here at the foot of the “Mountain”), those who are late for class must have a means by which to atone for such “accidental sins” (בִּשְׁגָגָה, *bishgāgāh*; if they are defiant sins, בְּיַד רָמָה, *b^eyad rāmāh*, then the offender will be “cut off” from the community, see Num 15:27-31).¹ which means anyone late for class will need to bring Timbits for the entire class (מִנְחָה, *minḥāh*) no later than the next class meeting plus a Tim Hortons coffee (נֶסֶךְ, *nēsēk*) for the professor (cream, no sugar). This מִנְחָה (*minḥah*) and נֶסֶךְ (*nēsēk*) will function simultaneously as both a sin offering (חַטָּאת, *ḥattāt*, Leviticus 4) atoning for the accidental sin of the offender and a peace offering (שְׁלָמִים, *sh^elāmîm*, Leviticus 3) enhancing the fellowship of the covenant community. See the high professor for further details and any torah-rulings (see Hag 2:10-14) regarding specific situations.

Disclaimer: This syllabus is for information only and remains the property of the respective professor. This syllabus is prepared with the best information available, but the professor reserves the right to change the content and format of the course

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¹ Of course, see the “definitive” work on this: Mark J. Boda, *A Severe Mercy: Sin and Its Remedy in the Old Testament* (Siphrut: Literature and Theology of the Hebrew Scriptures 1. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 53-54.