COURSE DESCRIPTION

An introduction to the Latter Prophets which focuses on the books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel and the hermeneutical skills necessary to interpret and apply this ancient text in contemporary ministry settings in light of its influence on New Testament writers. Note: This course may be taken more than once as the focus of this course varies from year to year.

COURSE INTEGRATION

The prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel proclaimed to the Southern Kingdom of Judah the divine perspective as to how God was working in the context of the historical events of the end of the 7th and the beginning of the 6th centuries B.C. The two prophets gave God's messages both leading up to and following the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. Prior to 586 B.C. the two prophets declared the divine reasons for that impending judgment, but did so from two different vantage points: Ezekiel in exile in Babylonia and Jeremiah residing in Jerusalem. Subsequent to 586 B.C., the tenor of the messages of the two prophets changed, as they proclaimed a complete renewal of the covenant with God, the return of God's people to the land, the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the Temple, and the restoration of the Davidic ruler.

This course will focus on the various messages (both pronouncements of judgment and restoration) of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, with respect to their theological contents and literary structures. We will also explore the contemporary significances of those prophetic messages for the church today.
COURSE TEXTS
Textbooks:
These texts are available in store and online at the Briercrest Bookstore:
http://briercrest.ca/bookstore.

Brueggemann, Walter

Wright, Christopher
2001 The Message of Ezekiel (The Bible Speaks Today). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. (pp. 17-368) (352 pp.)

Articles:
[Unless otherwise noted, the following are all available through the library, EbscoHost, ATLA database.]

Block, Daniel

Day, John

Fox, Michael V.

Friebel, Kelvin

House, Paul R.

Lemke, Werner

Luc, Alex
1983 “A Theology of Ezekiel: God’s Name and Israel’s History”. Journal of Evangelical Theological Society 26, # 2:137-143. (7 pp.)
Manahan, Ronald

Scalise, Pamela

Wendland, Ernst R.

Total Assigned Readings: 801 pp.

Recommended:
Fee, Godon & Stuart, Douglas

COURSE OUTCOMES
This course seeks to help the student:

1) place the messages of Jeremiah and Ezekiel in their original contexts of the social, political, economic, and religious life of Judah around 625-575 B.C.

2) summarize the key theological teachings of the two prophetic books;

3) analyze the biblical text from a literary and theological perspective, while reading each book in its final form and within the broader context of the canon of Christian scripture;

4) be familiar with some of the critical issues in interpreting those prophetic books, such as issues of dating and composition;

5) understand the ministry of the two prophets in relationship to God, and in relationship to God's people (including the civil leadership, the religious leadership of other prophets and priests, and the general populace), and in relationship to the foreign nations;

6) make application of the content of the prophets’ messages to our personal lives, to the contemporary church, and to the world;

7) appreciate how the prophets addressed their own times with respect to their communication techniques, so as to enable us to know how to prophetically address our contemporary culture and church.
## COURSE OUTLINE AND CONTENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Scripture References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday, 26 Sept</td>
<td>9:00-9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9:30 – 10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Intro to OT Prophecy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10:00-10:20 a.m.</td>
<td>Seminary Coffee Break</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10:30 a.m. – noon</td>
<td>Historical Background 7th &amp; 6th Centuries B.C.</td>
<td>2 Kings chs. 21-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:15-3:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Prophetic Call &amp; Role of Prophet</td>
<td>Jer ch. 1; Ezek chs. 1-3; 33:1-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3:00-4:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Judgment Speeches in Jer &amp; Ezek</td>
<td>Jer 4:5-6:30; 11:1-17; 12:7-17; 13:15-14:10; 15:1-9; 16:10-13; 17:1-13, 19-27; ch. 24; Ezek chs. 6-11; 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, 27 Sept</td>
<td>8:30 a.m. – noon</td>
<td>Proclamation Styles in Jer &amp; Ezek</td>
<td>Jer ch. 2; 8:4-10:25; 13:1-14; 18:1-17; ch. 29; ch. 25; ch. 35; Ezek chs. 4-5; 12:1-20; chs. 15-17; chs 20-21; chs. 23-24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:15- 4:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Individual Responsibility (Ezekiel)</td>
<td>Ezek ch. 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 28 Sept</td>
<td>8:30 – 9:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Calls to Repentance (Jeremiah)</td>
<td>Jer 3:1-4:4; 7:1-8:3; 14:17-22; ch. 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9:50 – 10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>President’s Chapel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10:30 a.m. – noon</td>
<td>Oracles Against Foreign Nations</td>
<td>Jer chs. 46-51; Ezek chs. 25-32; ch. 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:15-3:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Conflict with “False” Prophets</td>
<td>Jer 14:11-16; 23:9-40; chs. 27-29; Ezek 12:21-13:23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3:00-4:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Conflict with Leadership</td>
<td>Jer 21:1 -23:8; ch. 34; chs. 36-38; Ezek ch. 19; ch. 22; ch. 34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, 29 Sept</td>
<td>8:30-10:15 a.m.</td>
<td>Jeremiah’s Laments</td>
<td>Jer 11:18-12:6; 15:10-16:9; 17:14-18; 18:18-23; ch. 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10:15-11:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Fall of Jerusalem</td>
<td>Jer chs. 39-45; ch. 52; Ezek 33:21-33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11:45- 1:15</td>
<td>Seminary Spotlight &amp; Lunch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:15-4:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Themes of Restoration</td>
<td>Jer 16:14-21; chs. 30-33; Ezek chs. 36-48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, 30 Sept</td>
<td>8:30 a.m. – noon</td>
<td>Structure of Jer &amp; Ezek</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ASSIGNMENTS

Students are expected to refer Briercrest Seminary’s Format and Style Guides and Guide for Writing Research Papers, available as PDF documents here: http://briercrest.ca/current/seminary/academics/important-documents/.

Students are responsible for course materials and communication on Canvas (https://briercrest.instructure.com; cf. http://briercrest.ca/online/canvas) and their myBriercrest.ca email account.

► The assignments should be submitted electronically on Canvas.

Pre-Course Assignments:

1) Reading of Jeremiah & Ezekiel (1% of Final Grade)
   ► Read through Jeremiah & Ezekiel In their entirety in one of following translations:
     NASB, ESV, NKJV, NRSV, WEB (World English Bible)
     (All of these versions are available on Biblegateway.com)
     ● Due Date: The reading will be reported on the “Reading Report Form” (posted on Canvas) by the first class session (Monday, 26 Sept).

   NOTE: Prior to reading through the two biblical books, you may want to look over the Post-Course Assignment, # 3 (the Essay), and actually select the topic that you will be working on, so that as you are reading through the books, you can be noting the relevant biblical passages that deal with that topic.

2) Study of a Passage:
   ► Choose one of the following passages from Jeremiah & Ezekiel and do a study on it so as to understand both the manner in which it is expressed (literary features & structure) as well as the point being made (message content).

   Jer 1:1-19 --Jeremiah’s call to the prophetic ministry
   Jer 7:1-34 – Jeremiah’s “Temple sermon”
   Jer 10:1-22—Jeremiah’s message against Idolatry
   Jer 18:1-17 –Objection Lesson of the Potter
   Jer 23:1-40—Jeremiah’s Indictment of the Leadership
   Jer 32:1-44 -Jeremiah’s Sign-Action of Buying Land
   Ezek 3:16-21 & 33:1-20 –Prophet as Watchman
   Ezek 6:1-14 – Ezekiel’s indictment of people
   Ezek 13:1-23 – Ezekiel’s indictment of False Prophets
   Ezek 18:1-32 – Ezekiel on Individual Responsibility for Sin
   Ezek 34:1-30 –Ezekiel’s message to the “Shepherds”

   ♦ Due Date for the 4 related assignments: last day of Class, Friday, 30 Sept
The handed-in portion of the study will include the following 4 items:

(1) **Rhetorical study:** (11 % of Final Grade)
   - A short statement (1-2 pages single-spaced; 400-800 words) of both:
     (a) the rhetorical situation being addressed,
     and (b) the persuasive purpose the prophetic message is trying to achieve (e.g., remorse and repentance for sin, an acknowledgement of having sinned, a renewed sense of hope, etc.)
   - To understand the concept of “rhetorical situation” & “rhetorical criticism”, you should read the required course readings of the assigned pages in Friebel (1999) & the article by Fox (1980).

(2) **Structural Outline:** (11 % of Final Grade)
   - Outline the passage according to its literary & content divisions,
   - In addition to just an outline, briefly describe (1 page single-spaced; 400 words) the structural flow of the passage from its beginning to its end, noting the structural links that tie the passage together.

(3) **Main Point:** (11 % of Final Grade)
   - Summarize (1 page single-spaced; 400 words) the main point that the passage is making.

(4) **Bibliography of Collateral Reading** (1 % of Final Grade)
   - Read 50 pages of collateral readings specifically on the passage you study.
   - Weigh the readings more toward scholarly commentaries / articles, but you can also include commentaries designed for preaching, and things written as devotionals or sermons.
   - (I will post on Canvas a bibliography of recommended commentaries on Jeremiah & Ezekiel).
   - Turn in a Bibliography of what you read, citing the complete bibliographic material: author, title, date, etc. Also cite the specific pages that you read. (For example, for an article, do not cite the inclusive pages of the article, but rather the specific pages of the article that you read. Similarly with books.)
   - Also, after each cited item, place in parentheses the number (#) of pages actually read, with a total at the bottom of the bibliography of the number of total pages that you read (which should minimally total 50.)

**Mid-Course Assignments:**
- The only course work due during the week of classes is the pre-course assignments:
  - Monday, 26 Sept: Reading of the Biblical Text of Jeremiah & Ezekiel
  - Friday, 30 Sept: The 4 parts of the “Study of a Passage”
Post-Course Assignments:

1) Required Textbook Readings (10 % of Final Grade)
   ► Reading Reports are provided on Canvas, on which you will indicate the amount of these readings that you have done.
   ► Reading means “reading”, not skimming or flipping through the pages!
   ► The reporting of the reading that you do is based on the honor system and is a matter of personal integrity (and thus an issue of spirituality) that you are truthful in your declaring what you have actually read.

♦ Due Date for all of the Course Text Readings: 25th November, Friday

(2) Sermon (25 % of Final Grade)
   ► On the same passage from Jer or Ezek that you did the “Pre-Course Assignment” (# 1 under that heading above), you will write a sermon.
     ● If preached, the sermon must be about 30 minutes in length.
     ● The sermon must be written out in full manuscript form.
       --Although this may not be the format you would normally use in preaching, for the purpose of being able to grade the sermon, it must be a fully written out manuscript, not just a detailed outline.
       --As a fully written out sermon, it can be formatted either in paragraph (like an essay) or it can be formatted in point form, as long as everything is written in complete grammatical sentences.
       --It must include everything that you would say if actually preaching the sermon, including illustrations, etc.
       --If you use any audio-visuals in the sermon, they must also be submitted, in an appropriate format, along with the written manuscript.

♦ Due Date of the sermon: 28th October, Friday

(3) Essay (30 % of Final Grade)
   ► You will write an essay on one of the following topics from Jeremiah or Ezekiel.
     ● The essays should include two parts:
       (a) a brief description of how the issue is dealt with in the two prophetic books, and
       (b) the theological and spiritual implications of those prophetic messages for the contemporary church.

   ► In choosing one of the topics, do not choose one that overlaps with the passage that you did for the Pre-Course “Study of a Passage”. (For example if you studied Ezek 34 for the first assignment, then do not choose “(b) Leadership” as the essay topic.) The point of the assignment is for you to explore a completely different area than previously studied for the course.
(a) **Marriage Moif:**

In *Jeremiah* and *Ezekiel* (e.g., Jer 3; Ezek 16 & 23), the marriage relationship is a key metaphor for illustrating and talking about the various dynamics of the covenant relationship between God and His people. After briefly describing how the metaphor is used in the two prophetic books, discuss the implications of that metaphor for the church in its relationship with Christ in the New Covenant. Beyond just the metaphor being carried over as the “Bride of Christ”, discuss the various facets of how the metaphor applies with respect to the interaction involved, such as the wife’s (God’s people’s) response to her husband (God / Christ), how the husband responds after the wife has committed adultery, both in judging and in remarrying.

(b) **Leadership**

Jeremiah and Ezekiel indict both the political and spiritual leadership of not fulfilling their obligations in those leadership roles (e.g., Ezek 34). After briefly describing how the two prophetic messages deal with the leadership at that time, then discuss the implications and applications of that for contemporary ecclesiastical leadership within the church – both clergy leadership and lay leadership within specifically the local church. (The implications for contemporary, secular political leadership need not be addressed, just leadership roles within the church.)

(c) **False Prophets**

In their prophetic ministries, Jeremiah and Ezekiel encountered other prophets who were proclaiming different messages from them, and doing so in the name of Yahweh. The question is addressed by them both (e.g., Jer 23, 27-29; Ezek 12-13) of how does one determine whether a prophet is a “true” prophet and correctly proclaiming God’s word, or whether one is a “false” prophet and therefore should not be listened to. Describe briefly the ways that the two said that one can discern who a “false” prophet is, and then discuss the relevance of those criteria for helping us within the church discern “false” teachers and giving guidance for us as to who we should or should not listen to when it comes to getting truthful direction from God.

(d) **Oracles against the Foreign Nations**

After briefly describing the theology in the Oracles against Foreign Nations in *Jeremiah* and *Ezekiel* (e.g. Jer 46-51; Ezek 25-32), discuss the implications of that theology as to how God deals today with contemporary, modern political entities of nations. For example, to what standards would God be holding the nation of Canada or the United States.

(e) **Individual responsibility & Repentance**

Briefly describe the theology of Ezek 18:1-32 & 33:1-20 as he talks about individual responsibility for sin and repentance, and then discuss what impact that theology has on how we should view our relationship with God as Christians, and the role that repentance (or lack thereof) plays within how God interacts with us as Christians. Do these passages in any way inform theologically about the position that once a person is in a relationship with God, that relationship can never be severed.
(f) **Prophetic Sign-Acts**
Briefly describe the use of enacted prophecies (“Sign-Actions”) by Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and then discuss how the audio-visual preaching that they did through the use of sign-actions should or might influence our use of audio-visual preaching today in communicating God’s word.

(g) **Speaking “Prophetically”**
Regardless of how one answers the question of whether there are prophets today who speak a divine word directly from God (like Jeremiah and Ezekiel were and did), we as Christians seem to be called to function “prophetically”, that is to be a “prophet voice”, both to our society outside of the church, as well as to the culture within the church. Discuss how the various ways in which Jeremiah and Ezekiel functioned as prophets can be instructive of how we can and should function as Christians in our relationship to the Body of Christ and to the world.

(h) **God of Wrath & Punishment**
Large portions of the books of *Jeremiah* and *Ezekiel* focus on God being angered at the people’s sins and the intended judgement, executed in wrath, which God would inflict on the people if they continued in their unrepentant ways. Yet in some contemporary theologies (e.g., Emergent Theology), Jesus’ actions and his love are emphasized as the paradigm for both how we should view God and how we as Christians should act. Often then the “God of wrath” in the Old Testament, who executes judgment for sin, is viewed as having been or needing to be replaced as a model for followers of Jesus. Discuss whether the presentation of “God of wrath” in *Jeremiah* and *Ezekiel* has any contemporary relevance for us as Christians, in both our creedal beliefs and in our discerning how God is working in the Church.

► If you have no interest in any of the topics above, and would like to work on another topic, please submit that request as a brief written description to the professor no later than Friday of the Class week (30th Sept), for approval.

► If you need further clarification as to what the essay should include or cover, please get in touch with the professor so as to clarify the issues.

- **Expected length:** minimally 8 pp. (single-spaced; 3000-3500 words)

- **Due Date** of Essay: 25th November, Friday
SEMINARY CALENDAR

Students are expected to be aware of the policies that govern course work at Briercrest Seminary, all of which are published in the current Seminary Calendar: http://briercr est.ca/current/seminary/academics/seminary-calendar/.

Attendance Policy
Students are expected to attend 100% of each modular they register for. If this is impossible, arrangements must be made with the course professor. A maximum of 1 full day of class can be foregone. Students should request to withdraw from the course or move the course to an audit if additional time is missed.

Course Schedules
Classes begin at 9:00 a.m. on Monday morning and run a minimum of 30 hours through the course of the week. The schedule is determined by the course professor. Students should check the syllabus for specifics. When the syllabus does not state class times, students are responsible to check with the professor prior to making travel plans.

Assignment Submission
All assignments must be submitted no later than eight weeks after the last day of class as stated in the syllabus. The correct due dates will be clearly noted in the syllabus and each faculty member will state in their syllabus how assignments should be submitted. Assignments submitted within a week after the due date will be accepted with a 10 per cent penalty. For additional information refer to the late assignment policy or the extension policy in the academic calendar.

Return of Graded Assignments
Professors are expected to return graded assignments within six weeks of the due date. If they fail to do so, students may submit an inquiry to the Seminary. If an extension is granted, the professor is no longer obligated to meet this deadline.

Academic Honesty
Students are accountable to perform each task according to principles of academic honesty. Please refer to pages 25-26 in the academic calendar for more information.

Academic Accommodations
Any student with a disability, injury, or illness who may need academic accommodations should discuss them with the course instructor after contacting the Student Success Centre in person (Room #215), by telephone (1-306-756-3230) or by email (studentsuccesscentre@briercrest.ca).