

BRIERCREST

BLST 717 The Former Prophets: Joshua through Kings Winter 2020

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Course Dates: March 2-6, 2020

3 Credit Hours

COURSE DESCRIPTION

An introduction to the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings. This class focuses on the narrative art of these books as a window to their portrayal of the Lord's covenant relationship with his people, the success or failure of Israel's leaders, and the application of these books to the church.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To acquire a broad knowledge of the content and theology of the Former Prophets, and appreciate the unique contribution of this extended narrative to biblical literature as a whole.
2. To understand the range of characters and literary techniques used by Hebrew writers in this portion of the Scriptures, and recognize the theological value in attending to this facet of the biblical text.
3. To perform competent exegesis and interpretation of selected texts with sufficient literary discernment and theological depth.
4. To better appreciate the relationship between scholarly study of the Scriptures and application in ministry contexts, and recognize some of the various ways that the books of Joshua—2 Kings and the complexity of the narrative has been received and interpreted over the centuries.
5. To take preliminary steps toward disseminating the results of our study to various audiences in the academic world and the church.

COURSE TEXTS

Keith Bodner, *1 Samuel: A Narrative Commentary* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2008)
[paperback]. **Please note:** a hardcopy of this book will be available on reserve in the library.

Keith Bodner, *The Theology of the Book of Kings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019)
paperback.

All other course materials will be provided as handouts or electronically.

We should also bring a copy of the Bible – ideally two different reliable translations – for each lecture.

Students are expected to refer to Briercrest Seminary's Format and Style Guides and Guide for Writing Research Papers, available as PDF documents here: <https://www.mybriercrest.ca/seminary/documents/>.

These texts are available in store and online at the Briercrest Bookstore: <http://briercrest.ca/bookstore>.

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.

OUTLINE OF TOPICS

- Introduction to the subject and goals of our study
- The character of Joshua and his background in the Pentateuch
- Preparation for entrance into Canaan; the battle of Jericho and subsequent setbacks
- An absence of major leaders in the book of Judges
- Background and rise of kingship in emerging Israel; the profiles of Samuel and Saul
- David's rise and eventual establishment in Jerusalem
- Absalom and the bitter civil war in 2 Samuel
- The reign of Solomon and division of the kingdom into north and south
- Prophetic intervention in Omride political affairs, and the rise of Assyria
- Jerusalem's destruction, the passage to exile, and Jehoiachin's release at the end of the story

ASSIGNMENTS

Pre-Course Assignments:

1. Write a three-page single-spaced report on one of our course textbooks (*1 Samuel: A Narrative Commentary*) due prior to the start of our course on Monday morning (**March 2, 2020**). The report should summarize the content of the volume, and provide a summary of what the student has learned. Please email the report to the professor (kbodner@briercrest.ca) as a WORD attachment (10%).

Mid-Course Assignments:

2. End of course quiz: on Friday (**March 6, 2020**) there will be an "end of course quiz," providing an opportunity to respond to six questions from our class discussions (20%).

Post-Course Assignments:

3. Creative Responses: *The Workshop* (40%). Over the course of our week together we will work through a series of interactive questions (for example, "To whom is the book of Joshua (and the rest of the Former Prophets) presumably addressed? For what purposes? How does Deuteronomy feature in this equation?"). The student will provide a written response of approximately 300 words to each question, and the entire workshop should be emailed to the professor as a WORD file not later than **May 1, 2020**.

4. Research and Reflection essay: (30%). This is a standard 2000 word paper, single-spaced in Chicago format to be emailed to the professor as a WORD file no later than **May 1, 2020**. Since one of our textbooks is devoted to the theology of 1 & 2 Kings, the topic could include one particular

aspect of these books within the context of the Former Prophets. Ideally, the topic should be chosen during the week or in subsequent correspondence between the student and the professor.

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:

<https://www.briercrestseminary.ca/academics/calendar/>.

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend 100% of each modular for which they register. If this is impossible due to extenuating circumstances, arrangements must be made with the course professor before the first day of class. If extenuating circumstances prevent a student from attending class, a maximum of one full day of class can be foregone. If additional time is missed, the student will fail the course unless they first request to withdraw from the course or move the course to an audit.

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 24-25 in the [academic calendar](#) for more information.

Academic Accommodations

Any student with a disability, injury, or health condition who may need academic accommodations (permanent or temporary) should discuss them with the course instructor after contacting the Director of the Academic Resource Centre in person (L234 in the Library), by telephone (1-306-756-3230) or by email (academicresourcecentre@briercrest.ca). Documentation from a qualified practitioner will be required (i.e., medical doctor, psychologist, etc.).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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