



**Course Syllabus**  
**Jeremiah: English Exegesis**  
**WYB2213HS**  
**Wycliffe College**  
**Toronto School of Theology**  
**Fall 2018**

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### **Course Identification**

Course Number : WYB 2213HS  
Course Format: In-Class  
Course Name: Jeremiah: English Exegesis  
Campus: St. George  
Time: Thursday 2:00-4:00

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### **Instructor Information**

Instructor: Marion Taylor  
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Office Hours: By appointment: Wycliffe College, Rm 227

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### **Course Prerequisites or Requisites**

Introduction to the Old Testament

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### **Course Description**

Seminar on the Book of Jeremiah involving detailed exegesis of selected passages with a view to using the text in the life of the Church. We will use a variety of tools to open up the text including the lens of trauma and disaster studies.

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### **Course Methodology**

The class will be organized in a seminar of discussion format. Participation, readings, an inductive study, short oral reports, and final paper/project are required.

## Course Outcomes

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COURSE OUTCOMES	COURSE ELEMENT	PROGRAM OUTCOMES
By the end of this course, students	This outcome will be achieved through these course elements:	This course outcome corresponds to these aspects of Wycliffe's statements of outcomes (MTS, MDiv)
• will be familiar with the content of the book of Jeremiah	reading the book of Jeremiah , the course readings and preparing an inductive study of Jeremiah and the final assignment	MTS: 1.1 MDiv: 1.1
• will be familiar with the various ways Jeremiah has been interpreted throughout history, including current issues in Old Testament scholarship;	reading and entering into critical conversations with other interpreters of Jeremiah	MTS: 1.2, 1.4, 1.5 MDiv: 1.2, 1.4, 1.5
• will be able to read and analyze Jeremiah and suggest ideas for its application for the church today;	Analyzing texts week by to using basic exegetical skills to interpret a passage in Jeremiah effectively and faithfully for today; preparing an inductive study on Jeremiah, preparing and participating in weekly discussions on how to apply the passage under review; final paper/project with its focus on contemporary application	MTS: 1.2, 1.3 MDiv: 1.2, 1.3
• will understand how knowledge of the biblical world influences one's reading of Old Testament.	reading O'Connor's book with its focus on the impact of the exile on Jeremiah and his intended audience ; reading background articles on ancient Judean and Jehudite culture, society, religion, theology and literature in the Babylonian and early Persian periods	MTS: 1.1 MDiv: 1.1

## Course Resources

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### Required Course Texts and Recommended Resources

- Several modern translations of the Bible to facilitate comparative studies of the text.
- Kathleen M. O'Connor, *Jeremiah: Pain and Promise*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011.
- You will also want to purchase several commentaries on Jeremiah for reference and study purposes. Of the many great commentaries I suggest Derek Kidner, *The Message of Jeremiah*, Tremper Longman III, *Jeremiah, Lamentations*, and Brueggemann, *Jeremiah*,

and J. Andrew Dearman, The New NIV Application Commentary as they are fine books and reasonable in terms of price. If you have a more generous book budget you might consider buying Fretheim or Holladay. Elizabeth Achtemeier's *Jeremiah* is also worthwhile.

- I encourage you to download the audio Bible app <http://www.bible.is/apps>. You can download chapters or whole books to listen to when you're not connected to Wi-Fi.
- <https://thebibleproject.com/> This is a fabulous crowd-funded project that has very helpful summaries of each biblical book as well as many other helpful topics. I recommend you watch the video of Jeremiah and Poetry.
- Check out this great resource [www.bibleodyssey.org](http://www.bibleodyssey.org). Also listen to Walter Brueggemann YouTube lectures, Jeremiah: Walking Into and Out of the Abyss

## Course Website

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- Quercus: <https://q.utoronto.ca/>

This course uses Quercus for its course website. To access it, go to the U of T Quercus login page at <https://q.utoronto.ca/> and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to Quercus using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you'll find the link to the website for all your Quercus-based courses. (Your course registration with ACORN gives you access to the course website in Quercus.) Information for students about using Quercus can be found at: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701>.

## Class Schedule

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### 1. September 13: Introduction

### 2. September 20: Review of Jeremiah Scholarship and O'Connor's approach

#### Assignment:

**Read** O'Connor, *Jeremiah, Pain and Promise*, 29-34.

**Read** Walter Brueggemann, "The Critical Access to the Book of Jeremiah" in *The Theology of the Book of Jeremiah*, Cambridge University Press, 2006, 1-41. Follow the posted link <http://go.utlib.ca/cat/11384044>

**Read** Richard Hess, "Introductory Overview of the Book of Jeremiah"

### 3. September 27: Jeremiah ch. 1

a) A Consideration of the Whole; b) The Call (1:4-10); c) Prophetic Visions (1:11-19).

#### Assignment:

Do the assigned readings. Prepare an outline of Jeremiah chapter. Using Brueggemann as a guide, be prepared to talk about the three approaches to the call narrative. Which do you find most helpful? What are the central ideas in the chapter? What ideas for teaching/preaching come out of your study? What new information does O'Connor add to the discussion?

#### Readings:

O'Connor, *Jeremiah: Pain and Promise*, 1-27.

W. Brueggemann, "The Word Through Jeremiah (1:1-19)," *Jeremiah 1-25, To Pluck Up, To Tear Down*, 20-30.

D. Kidner, "Prologue: Jeremiah 1," *The Message of Jeremiah*, 23-8.

#### **4. October 4: Chapters 2-4:4: The Family Comes Undone.**

##### **Inductive Study Due.**

##### **Assignment:**

**Read** Jeremiah 2:1-4:4 giving specific attention to images related to family breakdown. Note especially the sexual imagery.

**Read** O'Connor, *Jeremiah: Pain and Promise*, 35-45.

Volunteer to present on one of the following articles:

Athalya Brenner, "On Prophetic Propaganda and the Politics of 'Love': the Case of Jeremiah," In *Feminist Companion to the Latter Prophets*, 256-274.

K. O'Connor, "Jeremiah," *The Women's Bible Commentary*, C. Newsom and S. Ringe eds., (London: Westminster/Knox, 1992) 169-177.

C. Meyers, "Everyday Life: Women in the Period of the Hebrew Bible," *The Women's Bible Commentary*, 244-51.

#### **5. October 11: Chapters 4:5-6:30 Fragmented Memories of Trauma: the War Poems**

##### **Assignment:**

**Read** O'Connor, *Jeremiah: Pain and Promise*, 35-47.

J. Lundbom, "Jeremiah (prophet)," *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* Vol. 3, especially section D "Rhetoric and Preaching," 684-97.

Using Lundbom as a guide, find examples of Jeremiah's rhetoric and preaching in Jer 2-6 that would illustrate his style. (You might want to make a list of major themes and motifs and a list of examples of Jeremiah's rhetoric and preaching.) Using VanGemeren as a guide, find examples of prophetic speech. Read Brueggemann, "Terror on Every Side," in his commentary on Jeremiah and consider the question of the message and meaning of chapters 4:5-6:30 for today.

#### **6. October 18: Encoding catastrophe: The Sermons: Chapters 7:1 - 8:3, 11:1-14, 17:19-27**

##### **Assignment:**

Prepare an outline of Jeremiah 7:1-8:3. Assess the value of rhetorical criticism in the study of this section. What are the issues that you would have to investigate further if you were doing a full analysis on this text? What ideas for preaching come out of this passage?

Volunteer to present on:

**Read** T. Freitheim, Temple Sermon and one of the following commentaries on this section: (e.g. Brueggemann, Kidner, Craigie, Jones, Carroll, Holladay, McKane, Thompson, Bright).

#### **7. October 25: Survive by Praying: The Confessions of Jeremiah**

Chapters 11:18-12:6; 15:1-21; 17:14-18; 18:18-23; 20:7-18.

##### **Assignment:**

##### **a) An examination of the whole.**

**Read** Elizabeth Achtemier, Confessions. These passages have occasioned much debate in discussions about Jeremiah, the person and the book. First, read them separately, but in order, and try to ascertain what they are saying, to whom, and why. Do they appear to be private utterances, public oracles, poems, or cultic prayers or poems of lament? How are they related to the individual psalms of lament which make up about one third of the Psalms (i.e. Pss. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9-10, 17; 22; 25; 26). Note that Psalms of lament deal with essentially the same subject matter

and exhibit the following main components: introduction: 'invocation to the deity;' lament; petition; assurance of being heard; vow and often a thanksgiving. Do you find these parts in Jeremiah's laments? Re-read Jeremiah's laments within their immediate contexts (the prose framework in chs. 11-20). Does the larger setting change how you read the laments? How do these poems now function in their wider setting? What ideas come to mind for preaching and teaching in the context of the church?

**b) Read** O'Connor, *Jeremiah: Pain and Promise*. 81-92.

## **8. November 1: Reading Week**

### **9. November 8: The Weeping Poems: Jeremiah 8:22-9:11 and Biographical Stories Jeremiah 1, 16:1-9; 20:1-6; 26; 32; 37:11-38:13; 40-43.**

#### **Assignment:**

a) **Read** Jeremiah 8:22-9:11 and O'Connor, 59-68. How does O'Connor's approach open up the text for you?

Volunteer to present on highlights from another commentator on Jeremiah 8:22-9:11.

b) **Review** the biographical stories and **read** O'Connor, *Jeremiah: Pain and Promise* 69-80. Volunteer to present on highlights from another commentator on one of the biographical stories.

### **10. November 15: Jeremiah 36**

#### **Assignment:**

Outline chapter 36. How is it related to chapters 26 and 7? How would you preach from this chapter? Find a sermon online that you think is a good or bad example of preaching Jeremiah 36 (it does not have to be contemporary).

#### **Readings:**

W. Brueggemann, "Jeremiah's Scroll," *Jeremiah*.

D. Kidner, *The Message of Jeremiah*, 119-121.

T. Fretheim, *The Scrolls of Jeremiah*, 499-510

### **11. November 22: True Versus False Prophets**

Deuteronomy 13, 18 and Jeremiah 23, 27, and 28.

#### **Assignment:**

**Read** Deuteronomy 13, 18 and Jeremiah 23, 27, and 28.

Come to class prepared to discuss the hermeneutical issues surrounding the question of true and false prophecy. How would you preach/teach from Jeremiah 28? Is Elizabeth Achtemeier correct in her judgment that the most important message of Jer 27-8 is not related to the question of true and false prophecy but rather "their central word for us is their witness to the sovereignty of God over all nations." (See E. Achtemeier, *The prose chapters*).

#### **Readings:**

M. Buber, "False Prophets (Jeremiah 28)," *On the Bible*, 166-71.

B. S. Childs, *Old Testament Theology in a Canonical Context*, 133-44.

If you have time also read J. A. Sanders, "Hermeneutics in True and False Prophecy," *Canon and Authority*, 21-41. Childs is responding to Sanders' approach.

## **12. November 29: The Oracles of Promise: Chapters 30-33**

### **Assignment:**

Read these chapters and try to get a sense of the whole. Concentrate on 31:31-34. Use a concordance to explore the key phrases “new covenant,” and “I will put the law in their minds and write it on their hearts.” What is the New Covenant? Compare Brueggemann's position regarding the traditional Christian interpretation of the new covenant with that of Achtemeier and Kidner.

### **Readings:**

O'Connor: “Rekindling Hope: The Little Book of Consolation,” *Jeremiah: Pain and Promise* 103-113.

**And** Brueggemann and **either** Achtemeier or Kidner see below:

W. Brueggemann, Read his section on the new covenant in *Jeremiah* 26-52, 39-44, 69-73 or in his one volume commentary.

E. Achtemeier, “The Book of Comfort,” 86-94.

D. Kidner, “The Book of Hope,” 102-115.

## **13. December 6: Jeremiah 45, 50-51, 52 and a consideration of the whole**

### **Assignment:**

**Read** O'Connor, “Running out of Strength: Endings,” 115-123 and “Confusion as Meaning-Making,” 125-34 and “Epilogue,” 135-137.

Volunteer to present on one of the following:

Marion Taylor, “Jeremiah 45: The Problem of Placement,” *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 37 (1987): 79–98.

Or read a major commentary on Jeremiah 45, 50-52.

### **Evaluation**

The breakdown of the grades is as follows:

1) 30% of the grade will be based on class attendance, participation, and oral reports on a Jeremiah commentary and readings. Each student will present one very short book report and two short summary/discussion starters on assigned articles. Each student will be expected to prepare for each class by doing the assigned readings and by preparing answers to the given questions.

2) 30% of the grade will be based on an Inductive Study of Jeremiah (due September 20).

3) 40% of the grade will be based on a final assignment (an exegesis paper, a Bible study series, or a creative project based on the Book of Jeremiah). Please check out your topic with the professor (due December 13)

## ***Instructions on How to do an Inductive Study***

Use the following headings to organise your paper. Be sure that the amount of space devoted to each section reflects its value. That is, if you state the theme of the book in only two sentences, you will not receive the full 25 marks.

### **1. Table of contents with captions (10%) by chapter or clusters of chapters**

I am looking for appropriateness, conciseness and – to a lesser extent- creativity. (N.B. don't be constrained by the traditional chapter divisions; remember that they are a late addition to the text and may not always be helpful in outlining the structure of a biblical book).

### **2. Analysis of the book's structure (35%)**

Expand and justify your table of contents. How did you come up with your structure? What are the major sections of the book? How are these sections subdivided? Are the sections of a different literary style (poetry, biographical or sermonic material)? Be sure to defend your assessment of the book's structure.

### **3. Theme of the book (25%)**

What is the one central message or theme of the book? How is this theme developed? What sub-themes or motifs do you find?. Be sure to support your assessment of the theme with evidence from the text.

### **4. General observations and theological insights (20%)**

What are some of the more prominent theological emphases of the book? How are they developed? How do these emphases related to other books in the Bible?

### **5. Ideas for preaching or teaching: questions for further study (5%)**

How would you preach or teach this book? Provide a brief outline (be specific), and be sure to indicate your intended audience (adult congregation, Sunday school, etc). Also include a list of questions for further study that emerge from your paper.

## **Essentials to remember:**

1. Grammar, spelling and style will account for 5% of your grade. Be sure to proof-read your paper carefully before handing it in!
2. Do not use secondary resources (annotated Bible, commentaries etc.) You may use an Atlas or Dictionary for place names or puzzling terms, but make sure to cite them properly.
3. Papers should be typewritten and not more than 7 -10pages (not including the title page and bibliography), Papers should be double spaced with margins of no less than 1 inch; use a 12 pt font.

## Grading System

Letter Grade	Numerical Equivalents	Grade Point	Grasp of Subject Matter
A+	90–100%	4.0	Profound & Creative
A	85–89%	4.0	Outstanding
A-	80–84%	3.7	Excellent
B+	77–79%	3.3	Very Good
B	73–76%	3.0	Good
B-	70–72%	2.7	Satisfactory
FZ	0–69%	0	Failure

Grades without numerical equivalent:

CR	Designates credit; has no numerical equivalent or grade point value
NCR	Designates failure; has no numerical equivalent, but has a grade point value of 0 and is included in the GPA calculation
SDF	Standing deferred (a temporary extension)
INC	Permanent incomplete; has no numerical equivalent or grade point value
WDR	Withdrawal without academic penalty
AEG	May be given to a final year student who, because of illness, has completed at least 60% of the course, but not the whole course, and who would not otherwise be able to convocate; has no numerical equivalent and no grade point value

### ***Policy on Assignment Extensions***

Basic Degree students are expected to complete all course work by the end of the term in which they are registered. Under **exceptional circumstances**, with the written permission of the instructor, students may request an extension (SDF = “standing deferred”) beyond the term. An extension, when offered, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. An SDF must be requested no later than the last day of classes of the term in which the course is taken. The request form is available on the college website or from the Registrar’s office.

**One percentage point per day will be deducted on the course grade if an extension has not been requested by the stated deadline.**

**Course grades.** Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor’s college before being posted. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University grading policy

(<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/grading.pdf>) or college grading policy.

## **Policies**

**Accessibility.** Students with a disability or health consideration are entitled to accommodation. Students must register at the University of Toronto’s Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

**Plagiarism.** Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST



*Basic Degree Handbook* (linked from <http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks> and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>), a student who plagiarizes in this course. Students will be assumed to have read the document “Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing” published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges ([http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library\\_Archives/Theological\\_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm](http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm)).

**Other academic offences.** TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>).

**Writing Style.** The writing standard for the Toronto School of Theology is Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), which is available at Crux Books.

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