



Course Syllabus

Course name and code in English:

PIO331 Jeremiah: Ministering Prophetically to our Contemporary World

in Estonian: PIO331

in Russian: PIO331 Иеремия: пророческое служение современному миру

Course value: 2 EAP

Content of the course:

In 586 B.C., the Southern Kingdom of Judah came to an end as Jerusalem was captured by the Babylonians. The city of Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed, and the people forcibly taken into exile. It was in that context that Jeremiah proclaimed God's prophetic messages of how God was working, and what God desired the people's responses to be. Through a study of the *Book of Jeremiah*, we will focus on the messages of judgment and restoration, with respect to their theological contents and literary structures. We will also focus on how Jeremiah functioned in his prophetic ministry, including how he proclaimed the messages, and his struggle with being rejected as a prophet.

Goals of the course:

Central to the course will be the contemporary application based on the question: "How can we minister prophetically to our contemporary world, without being a prophet?"

How can we:

- 1) hold God's people accountable for their sins?
- 2) confront political & religious leadership?
- 3) use persuasive techniques in presenting the messages?
- 4) deal with the difficulty of the ministry when no one listens?
- 5) present hope for the future after judgment?

Outcomes of the course:

This course seeks to help the student:

- 1) place the messages of Jeremiah in their original contexts of the social, political, economic, and religious life of Judah around 625-575 B.C.;
- 2) theologically understand Jeremiah's prophetic messages and thus, apply them within our personal lives and within the contemporary church;
- 3) appreciate the communication techniques that Jeremiah used, and thus explore the ways we can address our contemporary culture and church.

Evaluation method: Graded (A-F) or pass/fail

Pre-requisites: none

Class and semester: Spring semester, 2023

Teacher: Dr. Kelvin Friebe, kmfriebe@gmail.com

Teacher responsible for grading: Mark Nelson, mark.nelson@emkts.ee

Course Schedule:

Date: 06.05.2023. Hours: 6. Form of study: lecture, interactive lecture

Date: 16.05.2023. Hours: 3. Form of study: lecture, interactive lecture

Date: 17.05.2023. Hours: 3. Form of study: lecture, interactive lecture.

Session 1: 6 May 2023 (Saturday) 10:00 – 16.30	Introduction	Intro to OT Prophecy	
		Historical Background 7 th & 6 th centuries B.C.	2 Kings chs. 21-25
		Prophetic Call	Jer ch. 1
		Structure of <i>Jer</i>	
	1) Holding God's People Accountable for their Sins:	Judgment Speeches in <i>Jer</i>	Jer 4:5-6:30 Jer 11:1-17 Jer 12:7-17 Jer 13:15-14:10 Jer 15:1-9 Jer 16:10-13 Jer 17:1-13 Jer 17:19-27 Jer 24
		Calls to Repentance	Jer 3:1-4:4 Jer 7:1-8:3 Jer 14:17-22 Jer 26
		Oracles Against Foreign Nations	Jer 46-51
	2) Confronting Political & Religious Leadership	Conflict with Leadership	Jer 21:1-23:8 Jer 34 Jer 36-38
		Conflict with "False" Prophets	Jer 14:11-16 Jer 23:9-40 Jer 27-29
Session 2: 16 May (Tuesday) 18:00 – 20:45	3) Using Persuasive Message Techniques	Proclamation Styles in <i>Jer</i> • <i>Sign-Actions</i> • <i>Use of Metaphors</i> • <i>Marriage Metaphor</i>	Jer 2 Jer 8:4-10:25 Jer 13:1-14 Jer 18:1-17 Jer 19 Jer 25 Jer 35
	4) Dealing with the Difficulty of Ministry When No One Listens	Opposition to Jeremiah's Ministry & Jeremiah's Laments	Jer 11:18-12:6 Jer 15:10-16:9 Jer 17:14-18 Jer 18:18-23 Jer 20
Session 3: 17 May (Wednesday) 18:00 – 20:45	5) Presenting Hope for the Future	Fall of Jerusalem	Jer 39-45 Jer 52
		Themes of Restoration	Jer 16:14-21 Jer 30-33

Assessment:

Requirements for receiving credit: Class participation at least 75% and completion of assignments according to the course syllabus.

Means of liquidating academic debts: Missing assignments must be submitted by the end of the semester (31. Aug). Replacement assignments as required by the teacher.

All written assignments may be sent through the *Original* plagiarism detection system. If plagiarism is detected, the student may be required to rewrite the assignment. Plagiarism to a larger extent, may require the retaking of the subject. The student has the right to dispute the teacher's decision by appealing to the Rector's Council.

Required reading:

1) Reading of *Jeremiah* & 2 Kings chs. 21-25

- ▶ Read through *Jeremiah* in its entirety.
 - Rather than reading the book through sequentially, it will be more helpful to do the reading topically as listed on the “Course Outline” & “Reading Report” (pp. 2 & 7 of syllabus)
- ▶ Read 2 Kings chs. 21-25, the biblical account of the historical context of Jeremiah’s ministry
- The readings will be reported on the “Reading Report” (download from Moodle)
 - ◆ “Reading” means reading, not skimming the text.
 - ◆ Reporting the reading is based on the honor system, and is thus a matter of personal and moral integrity that you are truthful in declaring what you actually read.
- **Percentage of final grade:** 10 %
- **Due Date:** The “Reading Report” is due the final class session (17 May, Wed).

2) Additional Required Readings:

- ▶ You must read 75 additional pages on *Jeremiah*.
 - This reading should be from commentaries and more scholarly articles or works (rather than sermons or devotional blogs).
 - Use at least 5 different sources for the readings.
 - Submit a bibliography of your “Additional Readings”.
 - ◆ The bibliography MUST include all of the bibliographic information:
e.g., author, book title, place of publication, publisher, date of publication, & list of pages read
e.g., author, article title, journal or website source; date of publication (or if website source, date accessed), & list of pages read
 - ◆ The bibliography MUST include the specific pages you read from each source, with the total number of pages you read given at the end of the bibliography.
- **Percentage of final grade:** 15 %
- **Due Date of Bibliography:** 31 May

Assignment: Essay

- **Description:** Regardless of whether a person has a spiritual gift of prophecy or not, all Christians are called to function “prophetically”, that is, to be a “prophetic voice” to the church and to the world. Based on the example of Jeremiah, we can reflect on how we might function “prophetically” in ministering to the Body of Christ.
 - ▶ With that application in mind, write an essay on one of the following topics:

(1) Indictments & Judgment for Sins

Large portions of *Jeremiah* focus on God being angered at the people’s sins. God would inflict judgment on the people if they continued in their unrepentant ways. In some contemporary theologies the “God of wrath”, who executes judgment for sin, is viewed as needing to be replaced with a model of Jesus’ love and acceptance.

- (a) Briefly describe the sins and judgments focused on by Jeremiah.

(b) Discuss the correlation of the people's sins back then with the "sins" within the church today. In light of contemporary sins, summarize whether the presentation of a "God of wrath" has any contemporary relevance for us as Christians.

(2) Leadership

Jeremiah indicts both the political and spiritual leadership of not fulfilling their obligations in those leadership roles.

(a) Briefly summarize the specific indictments of what the leadership was falling short, and how they were sinning.

(b) Discuss the implications and applications of that for contemporary church leadership—both clergy and lay leadership.

(3) False Prophets

Jeremiah encountered other prophets who were proclaiming, in the name of Yahweh, different messages from what he was receiving from Yahweh. The issue raised is how does one determine whether a prophet is a "true" prophet who is correctly proclaiming God's word, or whether they are a "false" prophet and therefore should not be listened to.

(a) Very briefly describe the ways in which Jeremiah said that one can discern between a "false" prophet and a "true" prophet.

(b) Discuss the relevance as to how those criteria might help us within the church today to discern "false" teachers and thus give guidance for us as to whom we should or should not listen to in getting truthful direction from God.

(4) Prophetic Sign-Actions

In proclaiming the prophetic messages, Jeremiah used enacted prophecies, that is, "sign-actions", in the attempt to persuade his hearers to heed the messages from God.

(a) Briefly describe Jeremiah's use of enacted prophecies ("sign-actions") as a preaching technique.

(b) Discuss how, today, the audio-visual preaching that Jeremiah did through the use of sign-actions might influence our use of audio-visual preaching or other techniques in communicating God's word.

(5) Jeremiah's Laments

When the people did not listen to Jeremiah's messages, and even reacted by doing physical violence to him, Jeremiah struggled with his prophetic ministry and voiced those struggles to God in his "Laments".

(a) Briefly describe the issues involved in Jeremiah's struggle with his prophetic ministry.

(b) Discuss how the example of Jeremiah might function for us today when we struggle within our ministry because people do not listen to us and even reject us.

- Include a bibliography of all sources consulted for the essay, other than those that were part of your "Additional Required Readings" (above).

- **Length:** 6 pages
- **Percentage of final grade:** 75%
- **Due Date of Essay:** 6 June

Evaluation criteria:

To receive an **A**, the student must submit a properly formatted paper that:

- covers both parts of the selected topic
- the first part (a) must display a comprehensive and excellent synthesis of the material from *Jeremiah*

- the second part (b) must display serious reflection on the issue that is synthesized and presented in a very clearly written manner

To receive a B, the student must submit a properly formatted paper that:

- covers both parts of the selected topic
- the first part (a) must display a comprehensive and very good synthesis of the material from *Jeremiah*
- the second part (b) must display very good reflection on the issue that is synthesized and presented in a clearly written manner

To receive a C, the student must submit a properly formatted paper that:

- covers both parts of the selected topic
- the first part (a) must provide a good presentation of the material from *Jeremiah*
- the second part (b) must display good reflection on the issue, that is presented in a clear manner

To receive a D, the student must submit a paper that:

- covers both parts of the selected topic
- the first part (a) must be an adequate presentation of the material from *Jeremiah*
- the second part (b) must display adequate reflection on the issue, that is presented in an adequate manner

Receiving an E means that the student submitted a paper that:

- covers both parts of the selected topic
- the first part (a) does not indicate that the basic issue has been adequately understood
- the second part (b) displays only a minimal synthesis and organized presentation of the issue

Receiving an F means that the student submitted a paper that has not met the minimum requirements for passing the assignment, as it:

- does not cover both parts of the topic,
- the first part (a), has not provided either an adequate synthesis or summary of the material from *Jeremiah*
- the second part (b) displays very little reflection and an unorganized presentation of the issue

Reading Report:

Name: _____

Due: 17 May (Wednesday)

- Indicate in the far right-hand column the amount of the Biblical Text that you actually read.
If you read ALL of the biblical passage, just indicate so with a check mark (✓).
Otherwise, LIST the specific chapter & verses that you actually read.

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			Jer 11:1-17	
			Jer 12:7-17	
			Jer 13:15-14:10	
			Jer 15:1-9	
			Jer 16:10-13	
			Jer 17:1-13	
			Jer 17:19-27	
			Jer ch. 24	
		Calls to Repentance	Jer 3:1-4:4	
			Jer 7:1-8:3	
			Jer 14:17-22	
			Jer ch. 26	
		Oracles Against Nations	Jer chs. 46-51	
	2) Confronting Political & Religious Leadership	Conflict with Leadership	Jer 21:1-23:8	
			Jer ch. 34	
			Jer chs. 36-38	
		Conflict with "False" Prophets	Jer 14:11-16	
			Jer 23:9-40	
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Session 2: 16 May (Tuesday)	3) Using Persuasive Message Techniques	Proclamation Styles in <i>Jer</i> • <i>Sign-Actions</i> • <i>Use of Metaphors</i> • <i>Marriage Metaphor</i>	Jer ch. 2	
			Jer 8:4-10:25	
			Jer 13:1-14	
			Jer 18:1-17	
			Jer ch. 19	
			Jer ch. 25	
			Jer ch. 35	
	4) Dealing with the Difficulty of Ministry When No One Listens	Opposition to Jeremiah's Ministry & Jeremiah's Laments	Jer 11:18-12:6	
			Jer 15:10-16:9	
			Jer 17:14-18	
Session 3: 17 May (Wednesday)	5) Presenting Hope for the Future	Fall of Jerusalem	Jer 18:18-23	
			Jer ch. 20	
		Themes of Restoration	Jer chs. 39-45	
			Jer ch. 52	
			Jer 16:14-21	
			Jer chs. 30-33	