

## OT 230-3 Exegesis of Ezekiel

Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary

Fall 2019: Wednesdays 8:30-11:20AM

Instructor: Tyler Mayfield

[tmayfield@lpts.edu](mailto:tmayfield@lpts.edu)

(502) 992-9375

Twitter: OTProfLPTS

Office: Schlegel 315

Office Hours: gladly by appointment  
email with possible times

### Course Description:

This biblical elective course, taught in a seminar-style, provides an in-depth examination of the prophetic book of Ezekiel in English translation. This biblical book presents readers with an excellent opportunity to sharpen historical-critical interpretive skills, to develop better literary approaches to prophetic literature, and to deepen our theological imaginations regarding trauma, holiness, prophecy, and gender. Students will gain a toolbox of hermeneutical methods for contemporary ministry.

### Course Objectives:

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe various historical issues, literary features, and theological outlooks of the book of Ezekiel. [Assignments #1, 2, 3]
2. Engage in conversation with various types of biblical scholarship in order to cultivate a sense of their own identity as interpreters. [Assignments #2 and 3]
3. Respond appropriately and creatively with pastoral sensitivity, theological imagination, and ethical concern to a biblical text. [Assignment #3]

### Required Course Books:

- 1) Bowen, Nancy. *Ezekiel* (AOTC; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2010).
- 2) Blenkinsopp, Joseph. *Ezekiel* (Interpretation; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1990).

Additional readings are available on CAMS, Library Reserve, and through the ATLA database. See Course Schedule for notifications.

## Assignments & Evaluation:

### 1) **Attendance & Participation.** (40% of final grade)

Students should come to class each day **eagerly ready** to discuss the assigned readings. Active participation includes, but is not limited to, activities such as listening carefully to others' presentations and thoughts, taking notes, asking relevant questions, responding to others' comments, and inviting others into the conversation. It does not include dominating a group or class discussion by constant talking. Monitor and vary your forms of participation; introverts should force themselves to speak more than they think necessary; extroverts should force themselves to speak less than they think necessary.

Students will be expected to take notes (jot down questions, write up summaries, etc.), while reading the assigned texts outside of class so that they have resources in class to use to speak. I expect that students will need at least 5 hours each week to prepare for our approx. 3 hour class; you should not expect to prepare in one setting per week.

Here's a quick and sketchy grading rubric for attendance and participation:

0 – absent without an excuse	85 – present with some participation
70 – absent with an excuse	90 – present and participating readily
75 – present without participation	95 – present, alert, highly participatory
80 – present with limited participation	

### 2) **Weekly 2-page Papers.** (40% of final grade)

Students will write a 2-page paper in preparation for selected class sessions; 7 papers total. These papers will respond to a specific question or prompt given in this syllabus. A **hardcopy** of the paper is **due in class** each week. Students will often use the paper in class to contribute to class participation (in addition to their notes; see above) and will turn it in for grading at the end of each class.

### 3) **Seminar Leadership** (20% of final grade)

Once during the semester students will lead a class session on a given Ezekiel passage. Students should be ready to guide the class through the passage using multiple exegetical methods. Presenters should be prepared to lead for about 1 hour. Presenters may ask their classroom peers to discuss a topic as a class or in small groups (for a small portion of class time). Presenters should assume that the class has read the assigned required readings. Presenters should demonstrate knowledge of additional commentaries and secondary literature on the passage. Please provide a bibliography related to your assigned passage. Please provide a handout to aid in following the presentation.

## **Course Policies:**

### Use of Inclusive Language

In accordance with seminary policy, students are to use inclusive language in class discussions and in written and oral communication by using language representative of the whole human community in respect to gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, and physical and intellectual capacities. Direct quotations from theological texts and translations of the Bible do not have to be altered to conform to this policy. In your own writing, however, when referring to God, you are encouraged to use a variety of images and metaphors, reflecting the richness of the Bible's images for God. More discussion about inclusive language can be accessed from the Academic Support Center and from the section of the LPTS web site with information for current students.

### Academic Honesty

All work turned in to the instructors is expected to be the work of the student whose name appears on the assignment. Any borrowing of the ideas or the words of others must be acknowledged by quotation marks (where appropriate) and by citation of author and source. Use of another's language or ideas from online resources is included in this policy, and must be attributed to author and source of the work being cited. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism, and may result in failure of the course. Two occurrences of plagiarism may result in dismissal from the Seminary. Students unfamiliar with issues related to academic honesty can find help from the staff in the Academic Support Center. For more information, see the Policy for Academic Honesty in the Student Handbook.

### Special Accommodations

Students requiring accommodations for a documented physical or learning disability should be in contact with the Director of the Academic Support Center during the first two weeks of a semester (or before the semester begins) and should speak with the instructor as soon as possible to arrange appropriate adjustments. Students with environmental or other sensitivities that may affect their learning are also encouraged to speak with the instructor.

### Citation Policy

Citations in your papers should follow Seminary standards, which are based on these guides:

- Turabian, Kate L., Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*. 8th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013.
- *The Chicago Manual of Style*. 16th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010.

Copies of these guides are available at the library and in the Academic Support Center.

### Attendance Policy

According to the Seminary catalog, students are expected to attend class meetings regularly. In case of illness or emergency, students are asked to notify the instructor of their planned absence from class, either prior to the session or within 24 hours of the class session. Three or more absences (1/4 of the course) may result in a low or failing grade in the course.

### Policy on late work

All written assignments are due on the date given in the syllabus. Assignments submitted late will be penalized in the grading by one letter grade increment for every day (a B+ paper becomes a B if one day late, a B- if two days, a C+ if three days, etc.). Assignments submitted more than ten days after the due date will not be accepted.

### Use of electronic devices in class

This course is a seminar-style one based on deep engagement with the readings and colleagues. Do not send or read text messages during class. Cell phones should be silenced. In the event that you have a legitimate need to be accessible during class, you may ask me for an exception to this rule. Laptops should not be used if you cannot trust yourself to restrict your use to note-taking and CAMS reading. Any misuse of electronic devices during class time, including checking of email or social networking sites, will be grounds for dismissal from the session and will negatively affect the course grade.

## **Course Schedule:**

### Wednesday, September 11: Introductions

1. Introductions to Course, Classmates, Syllabus
2. Introduction to Content of Ezekiel

### *Recommended Readings:*

Pohlmann, Karl-Friedrich. "Ezekiel: New Directions and Current Debates," in *Ezekiel: Current Debates and Future Directions* (eds. Tooman and Barter; FAT 112; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 3-17. [Library Reserve]

Krüger, Thomas. "Ezekiel Studies: Present State and Future Outlook," in *Ezekiel: Current Debates and Future Directions* (eds. Tooman and Barter; FAT 112; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 18-27. [Library Reserve]

## Wednesday, September 18: Historical Issues

1. Authorship & Dating of Ezekiel
2. The Babylonian Exile
3. Ezekiel as Prophet and Priest

### *Required Readings:*

Lyons, Michael. *An Introduction to the Study of Ezekiel* (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015), 7-20. [CAMS and Library Reserve]

Blenkinsopp, *Ezekiel*, 9-13. [Textbook and Library Reserve]

Carr, David M. *Holy Resilience: The Bible's Traumatic Origins* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 67-90. [CAMS]

Mein, Andrew. "Ezekiel: Structure, Themes, and Contested Issues," in *The Oxford Handbook of The Prophets* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 190-196. [CAMS]

### *Recommended Readings:*

Kelle, Brad. "The Phenomenon of Israelite Prophecy in Contemporary Scholarship," *Currents in Biblical Research* 12.3 (2014): 275-320. [ATLA Database]

Victor H. Matthews. *The History of Bronze and Iron Age Israel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 157-164. [CAMS]

Sweeney, Marvin. "Ezekiel: Zadokite Priest and Visionary Prophet of the Exile," in *Form and Intertextuality in Prophetic and Apocalyptic Literature* (FAT 45; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 125-143. [CAMS]

*2-page paper topic:* Describe 3 major historical issues related to the book of Ezekiel.

Wednesday, September 25

1. Ezekiel 1: Ezekiel's first vision
2. Ezekiel 2-3 (and 33:1-9): Ezekiel's call

*Required Readings:*

Ezekiel 1-3

Blenkinsopp, 15-32

Bowen, 1-19

*Recommended Readings:*

Odell, Margaret. *Ezekiel* (Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary; Macon, Georgia: Smyth & Helwys, 2005), 13-38 [Library Reserve]

Roberts, J.J.M. "The Hand of Yahweh," *Vetus Testamentum* 21: 244-51. [ATLA Database]

Sweeney, *Reading Ezekiel* (Macon: Smyth & Helwys, 2013), 23-34. [Library Reserve]

Greenberg, Moshe. *Ezekiel 1-20* (Anchor Bible, 22; Garden City, Doubleday, 1983), 60-81. [Library Reserve]

*2-page paper topic:*

Compare and contrast Blenkinsopp and Bowen's interpretations of Ezekiel 1. How do their methodologies compare? What do they each find important in this first vision?

Wednesday, October 2:

1. Ezekiel's Sign-Acts: Ezekiel 4-5 [Possible Presentation Topic]
2. Ezekiel's Judgment Oracles: Ezek 6-7

*Required Readings:*

Ezekiel 4-7

Blenkinsopp, 33-51.

Bowen, 19-43.

*Recommended Readings:*

Odell, Margaret. *Ezekiel* (Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary; Macon, Georgia: Smyth & Helwys, 2005), 53-76. [Library Reserve]

Greenberg, Moshe. *Ezekiel 1-20* (Anchor Bible, 22; Garden City, Doubleday, 1983), 98-128. [Library Reserve]

*2-page paper topic:*

Select approximately 10 verses from Ezekiel 6-7 to focus on. Read at least 3 different translations (perhaps the Hebrew too!). Note the translational choices and reflect on some of the interpretive issues at play in your selection.

Wednesday, October 9

1. Ezekiel's 2<sup>nd</sup> Vision: Ezek 8-11

*Required Readings:*

Ezekiel 8-11

Blenkinsopp, 51-64.

Bowen, 43-59.

Odell, Margaret. *Ezekiel* (Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary; Macon, Georgia: Smyth & Helwys, 2005), 101-134. [Library Reserve]

*Recommended Readings:*

Greenberg, Moshe. *Ezekiel 1-20* (Anchor Bible, 22; Garden City, Doubleday, 1983), 164-206. [Library Reserve]

*No paper due this week*



Wednesday, October 23

1. Ezekiel 16 [Possible Presentation Topic]

2. Ezekiel 23

*Required Readings:*

Ezekiel 16 and 23

Holly Morse, “Judgement was Executed upon her, and she became a byword among women’ (Ezek. 23:10): Divine Revenge Porn, Slut-shaming, Ethnicity, and Exile in Ezekiel 16 and 23,” in *Women and Exilic Identity in the Hebrew Bible* (eds. Southwood and Halvorson-Taylor; LHOTS 631; London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2018), 129-154. [Library Reserve]

Yee, Gale A. *Poor Banished Children of Eve: Woman as Evil in the Hebrew Bible* (Mineapolis: Fortress, 2003), 111-134. [CAMS]

Bowen, 83-93, 139-145.

*Recommended Readings:*

Odell, Margaret. *Ezekiel* (Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary; Macon, Georgia: Smyth & Helwys, 2005), 179-204. [Library Reserve]

Patton, Corrine L. “Should Our Sister Be Treated Like a Whore?’ A Response to Feminist Critiques of Ezekiel 23,” in *The Book of Ezekiel: Theological and Anthropological Perspectives*, ed. Odell and Strong (SBLSS 9; Atlanta: SBL, 2000), 227-38. [CAMS and Library Reserve]

*2-page paper topic:*

The passages this week are difficult to read, to understand, and to view as Scripture. Your required reading for this week provides three feminist approaches to the text. Reflect on at least two of these interpretations and note how they deal with these difficulties.

Wednesday October 30

1. Ezekiel 18 [Possible Presentation Topic]

2. Ezekiel 20

*Required Readings:*

Ezekiel 18 and 20

Blenkinsopp, 81-84, 86-91.

Bowen, 100-107, 112-123.

Greenberg, Moshe. *Ezekiel 1-20* (Anchor Bible, 22; Garden City, Doubleday, 1983), 325-347, 360-388. [Library Reserve]

*Recommended Readings:*

Odell, Margaret. *Ezekiel* (Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary; Macon, Georgia: Smyth & Helwys, 2005), 217-231, 243-262. [Library Reserve]

Patton, Carrine. "‘I Myself Gave Them Laws that Were Not Good’: Ezekiel 20 and the Exodus Traditions," *JSOT* 69 (1996): 73-90. [ATLA Database]

Sweeney, *Reading Ezekiel* (Macon: Smyth & Helwys, 2013), 92-99. [Library Reserve]

*No paper due this week*

Wednesday, November 6

1. Ezekiel 24 [Possible Presentation Topic]

2. Ezekiel 33

*Required Readings:*

Ezekiel 24 and 33

Blenkinsopp, 102-105, 145-153.

Bowen, 145-151, 204-209.

*Recommended Readings:*

Mayfield, Tyler. *Literary Structure and Setting in Ezekiel* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 134-151. [CAMS]

Odell, Margaret. *Ezekiel* (Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary; Macon, Georgia: Smyth & Helwys, 2005), 311-322, 413-422. [Library Reserve]

*2-page paper topic:*

Select about 10 verses from Ezekiel 33 to focus on. Read at least 3 different translations (perhaps the Hebrew too!). Note the translational choices and reflect on some of the interpretive issues at play in your selection.

Wednesday, November 13

1. Restoration: Ezekiel 34 [Possible Presentation Topic]
2. Ezekiel 35-36

*Required Readings:*

Ezekiel 34-36

Blenkinsopp, 155-170.

Bowen, 209-226.

*Recommended Readings:*

Odell, Margaret. *Ezekiel* (Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary; Macon, Georgia: Smyth & Helwys, 2005), 423-447. [Library Reserve]

Greenberg, Moshe. *Ezekiel 21-37* (Anchor Bible, 22A; Garden City, Doubleday, 1997), 693-740. [Library Reserve]

*No paper due this week*

Wednesday, November 20

1. Ezekiel 37: Restoration and Valley of Dry Bones [Possible Presentation Topic]
2. Ezekiel 38 & 39: Gog of Magog

*Required Readings:*

Ezekiel 37-39

Smith-Christopher, Daniel. "Deconstructing Terror in Ezekiel: The 'Valley of Bones' Vision as Response to Trauma," in *Ezekiel: Current Debates and Future Directions* (eds. Tooman and Barter; FAT 112; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 391-413. [CAMS]

Blenkinsopp, 170-191.

Bowen, 226-238.

*Recommended Readings:*

Sweeney, *Reading Ezekiel* (Macon: Smyth & Helwys, 2013), 179-193. [Library Reserve]

*2-page paper topic:*

Compare and contrast Blenkinsopp and Bowen's interpretations of Ezekiel 37. How do their methodologies compare? What do they each find important in this vision?

Wednesday, December 4

1. Ezekiel's Temple Vision: Ezek 40-48
2. Conclusions

*Required Readings:*

Bowen, 238-240, 266-271.

Sharp, Carolyn J. *The Prophetic Literature* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2019), 127-159.  
[CAMS]

*2-page paper topic:* Write a reflection based on Sharp's introductory essay on Ezekiel. Now that you have studied the book for a semester, what aspects of her essay do you appreciate? What is missing in her chapter?

## Commentaries

- 2018 Cook, Stephen L. *Ezekiel 38-48: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018.
- 2013 Kelle, Brad E. *Ezekiel: A Commentary in the Wesleyan Tradition*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 2013.
- 2013 Sweeney, Marvin A. *Reading Ezekiel: A Literary and Theological Commentary*. Reading the Old Testament Series, 2013.
- 2010 Bowen, Nancy. *Ezekiel*. Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2010.
- 2007 Joyce, Paul. *Ezekiel: A Commentary*. Vol. 482. Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies. New York: T & T Clark, 2007.
- 2005 Odell, Margaret S. *Ezekiel*. Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary, 2005.
- 1997 Block, Daniel I. *The Book of Ezekiel: Chapters 1-24*. New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.
- . *The Book of Ezekiel: Chapters 25-48*. New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.
- 1997 Greenberg, Moshe. *Ezekiel 21-37: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Vol. 22A. Anchor Bible. New York: Doubleday, 1997.
- 1996 Clements, Ronald E. *Ezekiel*. 1st ed. Westminster Bible Companion. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1996.
- 1994 Allen, Leslie C. *Ezekiel 1-19*. Word Biblical Commentary 28. Waco, TX: Word Books; Thomas Nelson, 1994. (Reissued by Zondervan in 2015)
- 1990 ———. *Ezekiel 20-48*. Word Biblical Commentary 29. Dallas, TX: Word Books; Thomas Nelson, 1990. (Reissued by Zondervan in 2015)
- 1990 Blenkinsopp, Joseph. *Ezekiel*. Interpretation. Louisville: John Knox Press, 1990.
- 1989 Hals, Ronald M. *Ezekiel*. Vol. 19. Forms of the Old Testament Literature. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989.
- 1983 Greenberg, Moshe. *Ezekiel 1-20: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Vol. 22. Anchor Bible. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983.
- 1979 Zimmerli, Walther. *Ezekiel: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel*. 2 vols. Hermeneia. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979.
- 1970 Eichrodt, Walther. *Ezekiel: A Commentary*. Old Testament Library. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1970.