Who was a prophet in ancient Israel? What motivated her or him to speech and action? What role did prophecy play in Israelite society? How was prophecy transformed in light of Israel’s experience in the Babylonian Exile? What role do prophetic scriptures play in the Church? How can we identify prophetic voices in contemporary culture?

Finding answers to these questions will lead us through some of the main social, literary, and theological dimensions of prophecy in ancient Israel and its evolution in the exilic and post-exilic eras. The books of Amos, Isaiah, and Daniel are the chief means of illustrating this complex phenomenon and its evolution, though other prophetic literature will also be addressed in lectures. In examining literature from various points during the centuries in which it took shape, we will see its evolution from a largely oral and embodied medium to one that increasingly relies on interpretation of its own textual legacy. In addition to Israelite prophecy’s independent value as theological expression, this transformation in turn sheds light on the interpretation of prophetic writings in the New Testament for understanding the meaning of Jesus’ life, teaching, death, and resurrection.

Format: Lectures, discussion, and student presentations. We will have a one hour lunch break each Saturday from 1-2 p.m. as well as intermittent shorter breaks in the morning and afternoon sessions.

Prerequisite: Completion of first level MDiv/MA courses (except for those planning to take both EMB 2004 and EMB 2005); EMB 1003/ Old Testament I or its equivalent

Course texts:
1. A Bible which includes the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical writings and the New Testament, preferably the NRSV, RSV, or New Jerusalem translation. HarperCollins Study Bible or New Oxford Annotated NRSV are recommended. The Oxford Jewish Study Bible is another fine translation and edition, though it would need to be supplemented by a New Testament and Apocrypha.
2. Joseph Blenkinsopp, A History of Prophecy in Israel
4. For those choosing to write a book review in Option A below:
   Abraham Joshua Heschel, The Prophets OR
   Walter Brueggemann, The Prophetic Imagination
   Or other possibilities TBA

EMB 2005H 2016
Old Testament III: Prophecy
Saturdays, Jan 23, 30, Feb. 6, 27 (Mar 12 snow date)
10 a.m.-5 p.m.  Room 302
Instructor: Prof. Judith Newman
Emmanuel 110  Judith.newman@utoronto.ca
Office hours: Friday 12:30–2:00 p.m. and by appointment
There will also be assigned articles and book chapters posted on the electronic course site Blackboard and materials on reserve in Emmanuel College library. **Required course texts are available through Crux Books** at 5 Hoskin Ave (http://www.cruxbooks.com/).

**Course Goals (“Outcomes”):**
By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate familiarity with some classic and contemporary scholarship on Israelite prophecy.
2. In concert with a small group of peers, plan and lead an informed and engaging class presentation on a prophetic passage, relating its contents to a significant contemporary political or cultural issue.
3. Use writing to analyze and interpret prophetic texts in relation to their historical and cultural contexts. Students should be able to discriminate among interpretations, demonstrating awareness of the variety of interpretations possible and provide a rationale for their choice of one hermeneutic over another.

**Basis for evaluation:**
1. Class attendance, conscientious preparation, and active participation in the course through informed questions and discussion each class meeting. Students should demonstrate through their discussion (15%). On Jan 30, Feb. 6, students will serve as discussion facilitators in break-out groups. Details forthcoming.
2. Students may choose between:
   - **Option A** (two shorter written assignments; book review and commentary evaluation; due Feb. 8 and March 8) (30% X 2 = 60%)
   or
   - **Option B**: a longer research paper (proposal due Feb. 15; final paper due March 15) (60%)
3. As part of a small group, students will present contextual information and exegetical insights about a specific prophetic passage, and relate its contents to a significant contemporary political or cultural issue. Presentations will take place on the last class session on Feb. 23. Details forthcoming. (25%)

**Accessibility Policy:** All motivated students are welcome in this course. If you have a disability/health consideration that may require special accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the Accessibility Office as soon as possible. It takes time to put disability-related accommodations in place. The sooner you meet with a counselor at Accessibility Services, the quicker s/he can assist you for the purposes of this course.

**Petition for Extension** – Students are required to petition for an extension with their home college if they are unable to submit the final course work by the posted deadline.

*indicates the reading is posted on Blackboard
1. Jan. 23:

Introduction to Prophecy: Ancient Israelite Prophecy and its Evolution

The Acts of the Prophets in Narrative
Reading: 1 Kings 17-22; 2 Kings 2-8; the book of Jonah
Blenkinsopp, pp.1-64
McKenzie, “Introduction: Jonah and Genre” in How to Read the Bible, pp. 1-21 (available electronically through the U of T library)
Discussion: If you had to summarize the message of Jonah in one sentence, what would it be? Why?

The Prophet Called
Reading: Exodus 1-3, Isaiah 6, Jeremiah 1, Ezekiel 1-3
* J. Kugel, “Under Sentence of Death,” and “Who Shall I say is Calling?” In the Valley of the Shadow, pp. 55-87
Discussion: Call and response, identification of the “self”: How do we discern “prophetic calls” then and now? Who is calling whom?

2. Jan. 30 Amos and Isaiah

Amos the Oracular Prophet of Social Justice
Reading: the book of Amos
S. McKenzie, “Forthtelling, not foretelling” in How to Read the Bible, pp. 67-89
* W. Brueggemann, “Prophetic Ministry in the National Security State,” in Disruptive Grace, pp. 129-154
Discussion: Amos 8:1-12

Isaiah of Jerusalem and the Impending Assyrian Crisis
Reading: Isaiah 1-11, read more quickly Isaiah 12-39
Blenkinsopp, pp. 97-110
Supplementary reading: Coogan, (BIOT), pp.275-287 * Christl Maier, “The Feminization of Space: Daughter Zion in Isaiah 1-39 and Jeremiah 4-6,” in Daughter Zion, Mother Zion, pp. 60-93
Discussion: Isaiah 11:1-11

“Second Isaiah” The Return from Israel as a Re-Creation after Exile
Reading: Isaiah 40-48
Blenkinsopp, pp. 181-193
Supplementary: Coogan, *(BIOT)*, pp. 333-344; *R.E. Clements, “Beyond Tradition History: Deutero-Isaianic Development of First Isaiah’s Themes,” *JSOT* 31 (1985), pp. 95-113

**Discussion:** Isaiah 40:1-10

### 3. Feb. 6 Isaiah, Daniel and the turn to Apocalyptic

#### 2 Isaiah: The Love and Compassion of YHWH; Female Figuration in Prophecy

**Reading:** Isa 49-55; Hosea 1-3


**Discussion:** Isa 42:13-14; Isa 46:3-4; Isa 49:14-15; Isa 51:1-3

#### 2 Isaiah: The Suffering Servant/s of YHWH: Desperation and Hope

**Reading:** reread Isaiah 40-55; read Isaiah 24-27; 56-66

Blenkinsopp, pp. 213-222 Supplementary: Coogan, *(BIOT)*.

*W. Brueggemann, *Disruptive Grace* “Every City a Holy City: The City of Possibility” pp. 112-128.

**Discussion:** Isa 62

***OPTION A: Monday, Feb. 8: Book review due***

***OPTION B: Monday, Feb. 15: Paper proposal due***

### 4. Feb. 27 Daniel and Diaspora Life: Apocalypse and Empire

**Reading:** the book of Daniel (especially 7-12)


**Discussion:** Dan 7: 1-18

Student group presentations on prophecy and contemporary culture.

***OPTION A: Monday, March 7: Commentary evaluation due***

***OPTION B: Monday, March 14: Final papers due ***