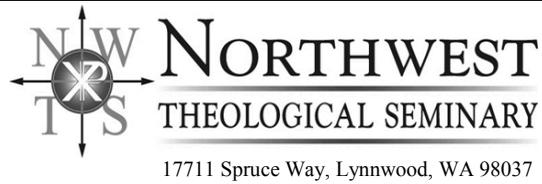


\*\*\*See website for an updated class schedule

## FALL CLASS SCHEDULE

Classes begin Tuesday Sept. 4

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	SATURDAY
12:30-1:30pm Patristics I		12:30-1:30pm Patristics I		
1:45-2:45 West- minster Confession	1:00-3:00pm Homiletics	1:45-2:45 West- minster Confession		1:00-2:30pm Greek 1A
3:00-4:00 Vos Readings also Pentateuch		3:00-4:00 Vos Readings also Pentateuch		
6:00-7:30 Old Testament In- tro		6:00-7:30 Old Testament In- tro	5:45-7:15pm Greek 1A	
7:30-9:00 Systematics: God and Man	6:30-8:30 Medieval Church History	7:30-9:00 Systematics: God and Man	7:30-9:00 Jeremiah Bible Study	



Volume 13, Issue 3  
September 2012

NORTHWEST THEOLOGICAL  
SEMINARY NEWSLETTER



His story is...

# Our Story

## The Prophet and His Nation

Jeremiah is known as “the weeping prophet” (“my eyes flow down with tears,” 14:17) because of his tearfully poignant and plangent response to the collapse of his nation (Judah), its queen city (Jerusalem) and its culture (syncretistic paganism). In his deep grief (see his *Lamentations*), he bemoans the sinful addictions of his age: idolatry which deifies self in an inversion of the creature and the Creator (the creature manufactures his ‘god’, then bows to worship the work of his hands—essentially a works-merit paradigm in religion); political corruption and arrogance (nearly costing Jeremiah’s life, 26:11, 24); judicial activism which suborns the law to those in legal power at the expense of the weak and vulnerable (7:5-6); moral degeneration in the broad population (2:20; 3:1-2; 13:27)—even the horrors of infanticide on the altars of Baal (“a thing which I never commanded . . . nor did it ever enter my mind,” says the Lord—19:5; 32:35). The prophet’s society is bent on personal pleasure and self-satisfaction in defiance of the moral will of God. God exercises judgment upon this social and cultural defiance in the person of Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and his armies (586 BC). Jerusalem goes up in smoke and thousands of Judeans go into exile.

The book of Jeremiah is a litany of this destruction—prophesied and realized. It reads like a dreary inventory of sin—sin which manifests itself in every age of human history. The inherent evil dispositions of the sinful heart are no different in the 21<sup>st</sup> century AD as they were in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC (“the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; who can understand it?”—17:9). That disposition or sinful nature freely chooses the evil by which it selects its own destruction (“you . . . are accustomed to do evil,” 13:23; cf. 4:22). The smoke arising from Solomon’s Temple is a witness that the wages of sin is death (proximately/temporally and eventually/eschatologically).

This message/reality is no different under the New Testament. The fruit of selfish idolatry, indulgence of personal pleasure in perverse ways, corruption in all levels of the culture (religious, political, social, economic, judicial) is eventual death and collapse. If we too weep for our own generation, it is no less than Jesus did. He wept over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41), his tears testifying to his emotional sorrow. But they also revealed his “passion” as a “man of sorrows”. What would it cost to break the bondage of sin, its enslaving evil disposition, the curse of death, the destruction of a nation? It would take the Son of God, incarnate under sin and death and destruction, embodying the lamentable curse in the place of those who justly deserved it. This marvelous love (a faith-grace paradigm in religion) is as transforming as it is vicarious. A nation of believers in the sinless life of the Son of God—an elect nation—an ecumenical people from every tribe and tongue under heaven, who are delivered from death, destruction and the curse by the free, underserved grace of Jesus Christ (the eschatological Jeremiah). For this “holy nation”, no political, judi-

(Continued on page 2)

cial, cultural, social, religious or economic perversity, duplicity or tyranny can separate them from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:39). “I have loved you with an everlasting love,” says the Lord. “Therefore I have drawn you with loving-kindness” (Jer. 31:3).

—James T. Dennison, Jr

## ***ANNOUNCEMENTS***

### **Jeremiah Series Resumes**

On Thursday evening, September 6, the series on the life of the prophet Jeremiah will take up where it left off last spring. We will examine Jeremiah’s famous “Temple Sermon” as recorded in Jeremiah 7. This weekly series will gather at 7:30 each Thursday evening in the Lynnwood OPC. The public is invited to join us for these studies in the Word of God. Audio recordings of all future and previous studies are available at [nwts.edu](http://nwts.edu) (click “Audio Resources”).

### **New Student**

The Faculty of NWTS is pleased to announce the admission of Mr. Benjamin Davenport to the M.Div. program beginning with the Fall semester of the academic year 2012-2013. Ben has also been awarded the one-year tuition-free scholarship on his application for the stipend and the vote of the Faculty. We welcome Ben to our student body and pray God’s grace and guidance upon him in his studies. Ben and his wife, Angela, are residents of Shoreline.

### **Kerux: The Journal of Northwest Theological Seminary**

The online, digital version of our seminary journal will be published in September at [Kerux.com](http://Kerux.com). It will contain an article, drawn from the writings of a member of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, describing a rejection of the theory that the Sinaitic or Mosaic covenant is a republication of the covenant of works. It therefore casts significant light on the attitude of the Assembly to this deviation which regards the Sinaitic covenant as a works-merit republication of the covenant of works in the Garden of Eden. Such a theory essentially negates the gracious aspect of the Mosaic covenant (“I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage,” Ex. 20:1). Also in the September issue will be Professor Sanborn’s second installment in response to the republication article of David VanDrunen. Mr. Sanborn will also add reviews of several Hebrew grammar and instruction texts, as well as a review of an influential book by Bart Ehrman on human suffering. Finally, Professor Dennison will offer the first English translation of the confession of the Italian Reformed Church in Locarno, Switzerland, dated July 9, 1554. The “Italian Evangelical Diaspora”, which fled the dread Roman Catholic Inquisition in the 1540s, sent Italian expatriates to the Reformation centers of Europe—including Geneva, Basle, Zurich, Locarno and even London. This fertile movement gave the Reformed church such notables as Peter Martyr Vermigli, Jerome Zanchius, Celso Martinengo, Lattanzio Ragnoni, the Turretin family and her most famous son, Francis (descended from Italian Calvinistic refugees who settled in John Calvin’s 16<sup>th</sup> century Geneva)

### **NWTS Board Meeting**

The Board of Directors of NWTS met via conference call on July 28. President, Larry Semel, and Secretary-Treasurer, Scott Hunter, were re-elected to 3-year terms (expire 2015). A proposed budget of \$138,693 was approved on discussion. A report was received of outreach to pastors in Africa through the Free Reformed Church of South Africa web-library. NWTS material at [nwts.edu](http://nwts.edu) and [Kerux.com](http://Kerux.com) will be freely available online to these indigenous pastors and laypersons. The Board commended the Faculty for its labors and unity. Board members Dan Knox and Larry Semel gave encouraging reports on their health, for which we praise our Triune God.

## **Summer Faculty Service and Projects**

In June, Pete Vosteen, Professor of Practical Theology, resigned as Pastor of the Lynnwood OPC where he had been co-pastor with Benji Swinburnson for several years (Pete had served the congregation since 1989). Benji is now sole pastor of the congregation, but Pete helps with preaching there as needed. He has also been busy filling local pulpits during the summer: Lynden Fellowship Reformed Church; Westminster OPC, Monroe.

Academic Dean, Jim Dennison has been correcting copy edit pages for the third volume of his series *Reformed Confessions of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries in English Translation*. Lord willing, this volume which will contain confessions from 1567 to 1599 should be in print by the end of the year. It will provide the first English translation of the Polish “Consensus of Sendomir” (1570), a fascinating Calvinistic document. In addition, it will contain translations of German “Second Reformation” confessions—namely, the “Nassau Confession of the Dillenberger Synod” (1578) and the “Bremen Consensus” (1595). Stemming from the “Second Reformation” in Germany, these documents attest the shift from Lutheranism to Calvinism in parts of Germany during the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

Mr. Dennison has also finished his editorial work on the fourth and final volume of the above series. This last volume will contain confessions dating from 1603 to 1693. Included will be the well-known Canons of Dort (along with the infamous Remonstrance of 1610 and the Counter Remonstrance of 1611) and the Westminster Standards. Less well known inclusions will be the “Geneva Theses” (1649) and the “Helvetic Consensus” (1675) which figured significantly in Reformed opposition to Arminianism and Amyraldianism.

Mr. Dennison also contributed an article entitled “Geerhardus Vos, the Father of Reformed Biblical Theology” to the online magazine Credo for August 2012 (cf. pp. 16-18 at <http://www.credomag.com/the-magazine/august-2012/>).

### **Student Summer Service**

In June, Stephen Lauer (NWTS student) was guest supply preacher at Grace Community Church (Evangelical Free), Mammoth Lakes, California. He also preached for the Lynden Fellowship Reformed Church in July.

### **Our 12<sup>th</sup> Academic Year**

Please join us in thanking the Lord for the opening of our 12<sup>th</sup> year of service to his Word and Kingdom. We have been sustained by his wonderful undeserved grace and providence since 2001. Our joy is teaching, preaching and writing about the unsearchable riches of Christ Jesus. What a delight to mine the Scriptures in fidelity to the historic Reformed confessions of faith so as to magnify God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. “We thank God for every remembrance of you . . . pray for us.”

**Finances:** We have had to dip into our reserves during the summer and ask for your prayerful consideration of our financial needs. We continue to welcome all gifts including an increasing number of those who wish to donate via monthly credit card transactions—convenient for us and for you. For instructions or questions about ways to donate, please contact our book keeper, Anita Hoogerhyde, at the seminary number: 425-787-5144 .