

Logsdon guest lecturer presents prophecy as art and art as prophecy

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ABILENE—Timeless poetry, prophecy and art intersect in the visions of the Old Testament prophet Jeremiah, guest lecturer [Ellen Davis](#) of Duke University Divinity School told students at Hardin-Simmons University's [Logsdon School of Theology](#).

"Jeremiah is one of the greatest Hebrew poets of all time," said Davis, featured speaker during the George Knight Lecture Series at Hardin-Simmons University. Her presentation focused on "art as prophecy and prophecy as art."

Ellen Davis of Duke University Divinity School.

"Prophecy is about seeing our current situation in divine perspective," she noted, comparing what she calls the prophetic poetry of Jeremiah to modern-day laments. "I believe Jeremiah is a prophet whose time has come again."

Jeremiah ministered during and following the last decades of the kingdom of Judah. He prophesied the fall of Jerusalem and witnessed the destruction of the First Temple and the city about 586 B.C.

Davis used artwork to illustrate the abiding relevance of Jeremiah's prophecy, particularly focusing on the "dance of death" motif in the work of artists such as Fritz Eichenberg.

Showing a slide of Eichenberg's 20th-century wood carving, "The

Lamentations of Jeremiah" she asked, "Is this Jerusalem, or is this Germany during World War II?"

Jeremiah's poems of condemnation and lament speak to God as no one else in the Bible dared, Davis said, explaining that the book blends condemnation and grief and both divine and human voices.

"There have been prophetic thinkers in every generation," she said. "And surely no other generation needs this more than our own."

Davis is the Amos Ragan Kearns distinguished professor of Bible and practical theology at Duke University Divinity School in Durham, N.C. She is the author of eight books and many articles.