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| Course ID: | Course Title: | Fall 2022 |
| BT 501 | Introduction to the Bible | Prerequisite: None |
| | | Credits: 3 |

| Class Information | | Instructor Information | | Important Dates | |
|----------------------|--------------|---|--|---|--------|
| Delivery: | Hybrid | Instructor: | Jonathan W. Lo, PhD | First Day of Classes: | Sep 13 |
| Days: | Tuesday | Email: | Jonathan.Lo@ambrose.edu | Last Day to Add/Drop: | Sep 20 |
| Time: | 6:15-9:15 PM | Phone: | (403) 410-2000 ext. 6940 | Last Day to Withdraw: | Nov 21 |
| Room: | A2212 | Office: | L2064 | | |
| Lab/Tutorial: | None | Office Hours: | By Appointment | Last Day to Apply for Extension: | Nov 23 |
| Final Exam: | None | Zoom Link: Click here Meeting ID: 415 275 1948 Passcode: 31415 | | Course TA: Alex Polito APolito@my.ambrose.edu | |

Important Dates and Information

For a list of all important dates and information regarding participating in classes at Ambrose University, please refer to the Academic Calendar at <https://ambrose.edu/academic-calendar>.

Course Description

A survey of the history and literature of the Bible in light of its unifying themes and theological trajectories, with particular attention given to the variety of ideas and genres found in the Bible. Consideration will be given to its cultural significance and its impact upon individuals and communities who receive it as sacred and authoritative scripture.

Expected Learning Outcomes

Upon the successful completion of the course, students will be able to complete the following tasks:

- 1) Recall in general terms the corpus and contents of the Bible that is the bedrock of the Protestant Christian faith.
- 2) Identify literary genres within the Bible and observe how they communicate in different ways the Story of God's engagement with people, as well as their experiences of God.
- 3) Relate the contents of the Bible to their linguistic, historical, and cultural contexts.
- 4) Discuss the primary themes of the Bible and explain how they interweave to illustrate God's continuing redemptive activity in the world.

- 5) Describe the history of the composition and canonization of the Bible and the role of translation and interpretation within biblical studies.
- 6) Evaluate the argument for a biblical authority that undergirds Christian faith and life.
- 7) Outline the principles for using the Bible to address modern questions and concerns: cultural, ethical, and ecclesial.

Required Textbooks and Readings

Barton, John. *The Bible: The Basics*. 2nd ed. New York, NY: Routledge, 2019.

Fee, Gordon D., and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*. 4th ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014.

An approved modern translation of the Holy Bible (e.g. ESV, NRSV, NASB, NIV, NLT, AMP).

*Additional required readings will be circulated during the semester through Moodle.

Course Schedule

| Date | Topic | Reading | Assignment |
|--------|---|--|----------------------------|
| Sep 13 | What is the Bible? Definitions: History, Literature, Scripture | Barton, "The Bible in the Modern World"; Fee & Stuart, "Introduction" | |
| Sep 20 | Where did the Bible come from? Beyond "Authorship": From Writings, to Collections, Scriptures, and Canons | Barton, "The Nature of the Bible"; Excerpts from Barton, <i>How the Bible Came to Be</i> | |
| Sep 27 | What is "Biblical Criticism?" Textual Criticism, Translation, Hermeneutics, and Interpretation; Resources for Biblical Research | Barton, "Biblical Interpretation" Today"; Fee & Stuart, "The Basic Tool"; Brown, "The Language of the Bible" in <i>Scripture as Communication</i> (Moodle) | Contents of the Bible Quiz |
| Oct 4 | Biblical When and Where? History and Geography within the Bible | Barton, "The Bible and history" & "The Social World of the Bible" | |
| Oct 11 | What kinds of writings are in the Bible? Introducing Literary Genres and Non-biblical Jewish Texts | Barton, "Major genres"; Brown, "Genre and Communication" in <i>Scripture as Communication</i> (Moodle) | |
| Oct 18 | Biblical Themes: Monotheism and Christology | Barton, "Religious Themes"; "The Gospels," | Map/Timeline Quiz |

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| Oct 25 | Biblical Themes: Creation and Redemption | Fee & Stuart, "The Old Testament Narratives" | |
| Nov 1 | Biblical Themes: Covenant/Election and Ecclesiology | Fee & Stuart, "The Law(s) 1+2" "The Prophets" | |
| Nov 8 | <i>NO CLASS: Reading Week</i> | | |
| Nov 15 | Biblical Themes: Eschatology and Soteriology | Fee & Stuart, "Acts," "Revelation" | Genre Essay Due |
| Nov 22 | Biblical Themes: Ethics | Fee & Stuart, "The Epistles," "The Parables," "The Psalms," "Wisdom" | |
| Nov 29 | The Bible Today: How can the Bible be the Word of God? The Language of Inspiration: Theology, Canon, and the Question of Authority | Provan, "The Authority of Scripture," and "The Canonical Reading of Scripture," in <i>The Reformation and the Right Reading of Scripture</i> (Moodle) | |
| Dec 6 | The Bible Today: How should we read the Bible today? The Bible in Contemporary Faith and Culture: Reading Communities, Contextualization, and Applications | Brown, "Conceptualizing Contextualization," "Contextualization," and "An Invitation to Active Engagement" in <i>Scripture as Communication</i> (Moodle) | |
| Dec 12 | | | Biblical Themes Essay Due |

Course Requirements and Evaluation:

1. Participation (10%) – Throughout the semester

To encourage students' participation in the online discussion forums, 1% will be awarded for every substantial post (showing evidence of effort and thought, containing at least 100 words) that engages with the course material (e.g. lectures, text-book and biblical readings) for that week, whether it is a question, a comment, a reflection, a reply to the instructor or a fellow student, or an attempt to bridge the course material to other theological disciplines, such as pastoral theology, systematic theology, church history, spirituality, or missiology, etc. Students may also choose to relate the course material to ministry, or even a contemporary issue or current event. Only one post per week will be counted for credit, and the post must be germane to the course topic for the week *and* demonstrate evidence of the student's effort.

2. Contents of the Bible Quiz (10%) – Sep 27 in class

Students will be tested on their ability to identify the different books of the Bible based on their contents. A study guide with the biblical books in question along with brief descriptions of their contents will be circulated in class and a simple “fill-in-the-blanks” quiz will be used to test each student’s knowledge.

3. Biblical Map + Timeline Quiz (10%) – Oct 18 in class

Students also will be required to demonstrate their knowledge of basic dates and places pertaining to the contents of both the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament. A map of biblical sites and a timeline with important dates will be distributed in class and students will need to fill in the appropriate information in the spaces provided.

4. Biblical Genres Assignment (35%) – 3000 words, Due at 5pm on Nov 15th, submitted via Moodle in PDF format

This assignment is a research paper that allows students to study a literary genre of the bible within a biblical book of their choosing. Each student will 1) select and read a biblical book in its entirety, 2) research the literary genre to which that biblical book belongs, and 3) write an essay that describes the genre, provides examples of how the biblical book fits the genre, and discuss how genre analysis enhances one’s understanding of the chosen biblical book. The essay is to be 3000 words in length and contain references to at least 6 different relevant works (assigned course textbooks may be included in that number).

The essay is due at 5pm on Nov 15th and only electronic submissions (PDF) via Moodle are accepted. Please include the name of the Course Code, the Student’s Name, and the Assignment *in the name of the PDF document*:

e.g. BT501_PeterLaraque_BiblicalGenres.pdf

If there are any questions about how to do this, the IT department is ready to provide assistance (helpdesk@ambrose.edu). A 5% penalty will be deducted for each working day the assignment is late unless an extension has been arranged and granted prior to the due date.

5. Biblical Themes Assignment (35%) – 3000 words, due at 5pm on Dec 12th, submitted via Moodle in PDF format

This assignment is an integrative paper that enables students to reflect on a particular biblical theme and its connection to a contemporary topic related to their own interests. Contemporary topics may include Art/Media, Gender/Sexuality, Ethnicity/Culture, History, Politics/Current Events, Ethics, Vocation, Missions, Theology, Spirituality, Ministry, or any other topic approved by the instructor. The student will 1) choose a biblical theme and provide an overview of the theme with examples from various Scriptures and 2) discuss how this theme intersects with and illuminates/is illuminated by the chosen contemporary topic. The essay will be evaluated based on the student’s grasp of the particular biblical theme and the depth of engagement with the chosen topic. The essay is to be 3000 words in length and contain references to at least 6 different relevant works (assigned course textbooks may be included in that number).

The essay is due at 5pm on Dec 12th and only electronic submissions (PDF) via Moodle are accepted. Please include the name of the Course Code, the Student’s Name, and the Assignment *in the name of the PDF document*:

e.g. BT501_PeterLaraque_BiblicalThemes.pdf

If there are any questions about how to do this, the IT department is ready to provide assistance (helpdesk@ambrose.edu). A 5% penalty will be deducted for each working day the assignment is late unless an extension has been arranged and granted prior to the due date.

Grade Summary

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|---|------|
| 1. Participation (In the Discussion Forums) | 10% |
| 2. Contents of the Bible Quiz | 10% |
| 3. Map + Timeline Quiz | 10% |
| 4. Biblical Genres Assignment | 35% |
| 5. Biblical Themes Assignment | 35% |
| <hr/> | |
| Total: | 100% |

Please format all submitted assignments using Chicago style. For help with writing and citations, students may contact Ambrose Writing Services (writingservices@ambrose.edu) or consult:

- <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/03/>
- http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-1.html

Attendance:

By the act of enrollment, the student is responsible for all coursework and expected to attend regularly and punctually all scheduled classes. Unexcused absences will be considered in calculating the student’s final grade.

Grade Summary:

| Grade | Point Equivalent | Interpretation | Grade Points |
|-------|------------------|--|-----------------|
| A+ | 100 | Mastery: Complete Understanding of Subject Matter | 4.00 |
| A | 96-99 | | 4.00 |
| A- | 91-95 | | 3.70 |
| B+ | 86-90 | Proficient: Well-Developed Understanding of Subject Matter | 3.30 |
| B | 81-85 | | 3.00 |
| B- | 76-80 | | 2.70 |
| C+ | 71-75 | Basic: Developing Understanding of Subject Matter | 2.30 |
| C | 66-70 | | 2.00 |
| C- | 61-65 | | 1.70 |
| D+ | 56-60 | Minimal Pass: Limited Understanding of Subject | 1.30 |
| D | 51-55 | | 1.0 |
| D- | 50 | | |
| F | Below 50 | Failure: Failure to Meet Course Requirements | 0.00 |
| P | | Pass | No Grade Points |

Because of the nature of the Alpha 4.00 system, there can be no uniform University-wide conversion scale. The relationship between raw scores (e.g. percentages) and the resultant letter grade will depend on the nature of the course and the instructor’s assessment

of the level of each class, compared to similar classes taught previously. Please note that final grades will be available on student registration system. Printed grade sheets are not mailed out.

Bibliography of Recommended Reading

Barr, James. *Escaping from Fundamentalism*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2018.

Barrett, Charles K. *New Testament Background: Selected Documents*. Revised and Expanded Edition. San Francisco, CA: HarperOne, 1995.

Barton, John. *A History of the Bible: The Story of the World's Most Influential Book*. New York, NY: Viking, 2019.

---. *How the Bible Came to Be*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1997.

Bauckham, Richard. *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2017.

---. *Jesus and the God of Israel: God Crucified and Other Studies on the New Testament's Christology of Divine Identity*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008.

Brown, Jeannine K. *Scripture as Communication: Introducing Biblical Hermeneutics*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007.

Bruce, F. F. *The Canon of Scripture*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2018.

Brueggemann, Walter. *The Prophetic Imagination*, 40th Anniversary ed. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2018.

---. *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1997.

Burridge, Richard A. *Four Gospels, One Jesus?* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994.

Charlesworth, James H., ed. *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. 2 vols. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Academic, 2010.

Collins, Adela Yarbro. *Cosmology and Eschatology in Jewish and Christian Apocalypticism*. Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2000.

DaSilva, David A. *An Introduction to the New Testament: Contexts, Methods & Ministry Formation*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2018.

Dunn, James D. G. *The Living Word*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1987.

Enns, Peter. *Inspiration and Incarnation: Evangelicals and the Old Testament*, 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005.

Evans, Craig A. *Ancient Texts for New Testament Studies*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012.

- Fee, Gordon D. *New Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors*. 3rd ed. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2002.
- Ferguson, Everett. *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003.
- Fredriksen, Paula and Adele Reinhartz. *Jesus, Judaism & Christian Anti-Judaism: Reading the New Testament after the Holocaust*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002.
- Goldingay, John. *An Introduction to the Old Testament: Exploring Text, Approaches & Issues*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2015.
- Hays, Richard B. *The Moral Vision of the New Testament: A Contemporary Introduction to New Testament Ethic*. San Francisco, CA: HarperOne, 1996.
- Jeffers, James S. *The Greco-Roman World of the New Testament Era: Exploring the Background of Early Christianity*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1999.
- Jeffrey, David Lyle and Gregory Maillet. *Christianity and Literature: Philosophical Foundations and Critical Practice*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011.
- Levine, Amy-Jill. *Short Stories by Jesus: The Enigmatic Parables of a Controversial Rabbi*. San Francisco, CA: HarperOne, 2015.
- Lim, Timothy H. *The Formation of the Jewish Canon*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013.
- McKim, Donald K., ed. *Historical Handbook of Major Biblical Interpreters*. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2006.
- Metzger, Bruce and Bart D. Ehrman. *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*, 4th ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Neill, Stephen and Tom Wright. *The Interpretation of the New Testament: 1861-1986*, 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988.
- Nickle, Keith F. *The Synoptic Gospels: An Introduction*. Revised and expanded. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2001.
- Osborne, Grant R. *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, rev. ed. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2006.
- Provan, Iain. *The Reformation and the Right Reading of Scripture*. Waco, TX: Baylor University, 2017.
- . *Seriously Dangerous Religion: What the Old Testament Really Says and Why It Matters*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014.

- Provan, Iain, V. Philips Long, and Tremper Longman III. *A Biblical History of Israel*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003.
- Rhodes, Ron. *The Complete Guide to Bible Translations*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2009.
- Roetzel, Calvin. *The Letters of Paul*, 6th ed. Louisville, KY: WJK Books, 2015.
- Rowland, Christopher and Mark Corner. *Liberating Exegesis: The Challenge of Liberation Theology to Biblical Studies*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1989.
- Schaeffer, Francis A. *Art and the Bible*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2009.
- Schneiders, Sandra M. *The Revelatory Text: Interpreting the New Testament as Sacred Scripture*, 2nd ed. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1999.
- Soulen, Richard N. and R. Kendall Soulen. *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*, 3rd ed. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2001.
- Stovell, Beth M., ed. *Making Sense of Motherhood: Biblical and Theological Perspectives*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2016.
- Stuart, Douglas. *Old Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors*. 3rd ed. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2001.
- Taylor, Marion Ann and Agnes Choi. *Handbook of Women Biblical Interpreters*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2012.
- Trible, Phyllis. *Literary-Feminist Readings of Biblical Narratives*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1984.
- Theissen, Gerd and Annette Merz. *The Historical Jesus: A Comprehensive Guide*. London: SCM Press, 2011.
- VanderKam, James C. *An Introduction to Early Judaism*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000.
- Walton, John H. *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament: Introducing the Conceptual World of the Hebrew Bible*, 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018.
- Wright, N. T. *The Resurrection of the Son of God*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2003.
- . *Jesus and the Victory of God*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1997.
- . *The New Testament and the People of God*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992.

Ambrose University Important Policies & Procedures:

Communication

All students have received an Ambrose e-mail account upon registration. It is the student's responsibility to check this account regularly as the Ambrose email system will be the professor's instrument for notifying students of important matters (cancelled class sessions, extensions, requested appointments, etc.) between class sessions.

Exam Scheduling

Students who find a conflict in their exam schedule must submit a *Revised Final Exam Time Application* to the Office of the Registrar by the deadline noted in the Academic Calendar. Requests will be considered for the following reasons only: 1) the scheduled final examination slot conflicts with another exam; or 2) the scheduled final examination slot results in three consecutive examination periods. Travel is not considered a valid excuse for re-scheduling or missing a final exam.

Standards of Behaviour in the Classroom Setting

Learning is an active and interactive process, a joint venture between student and instructor and between student and student. Some topics covered within a class may lead to strong reactions and opinions. It is important that Students understand that they are entitled to hold contradictory beliefs and that they should be encouraged to engage with these topics in a critical manner. Committing to this type of "active learning" significantly increases the learning experience for both teacher and student, and reflects the Christian imperative to pursue truth, which lies at the heart of the Ambrose educational experience. However, active discussion of controversial topics will be undertaken with respect and empathy, which are the foundations of civil discourse in the Classroom Setting. Primary responsibility for managing the classroom rests with the instructor. The instructor may direct a student to leave the class if the student engages in any behaviour that disrupts the classroom setting. If necessary, Ambrose security will be contacted to escort the student from class. Please refer to your professor regarding their electronic etiquette expectations.

Academic Integrity

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to acknowledge to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

Academic Policies

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Academic Calendar. The academic calendar can be found at <https://ambrose.edu/academics/academic-calendar>

Privacy

Personal information (information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual) may be required as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.

Coursework Extensions

Should a request for a time extension on coursework exceed the end of the term, a *Coursework Extension Application* must be completed and submitted to the Office of the Registrar. The extension (if granted) will be recorded on the student record. Extensions are granted at the discretion of the instructor and registrar. Normally, Course Extension Applications will be considered only when all of the following conditions are met:

- the quality of prior course work has been satisfactory;
- circumstances beyond your control, such as an extended illness or death of a family member, make it impossible for you to complete the course work on time; and
- you submit *Coursework Extension Application* to the Office of the Registrar on or before the deadline specified in the Academic Schedule.

If granted, time extensions do not excuse you from a final examination where one has been scheduled for the course. A temporary grade of TX will be assigned until a final grade is submitted in accordance with the new deadline. A final grade of F will apply to:

- all course work submitted after the end of the semester unless a coursework extension has been granted; and all course work submitted after the revised due date provided by an approved extension to coursework.

Academic Success and Supports

Accessibility Services

Academic accommodation is provided to Ambrose students with disabilities in accordance with the Alberta Human Rights Act and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Provision of academic accommodation does not lower the academic standards of the university nor remove the need for evaluation and the need to meet essential learning outcomes. Reasonable accommodations are tailored to the individual student, are flexible, and are determined by considering the barriers within the unique environment of a postsecondary institution. It can take time to organize academic accommodations and funding for disability-related services. Students with a disability who wish to have an academic accommodation are encouraged to contact Accessibility Services as early as possible to ensure appropriate planning for any needs that

Note: Students are strongly advised to retain this syllabus for their records.

may include accommodations. Staff can then meet with students to determine areas to facilitate success, and if accommodations are required, ensure those accommodations are put in place by working with faculty.

Ambrose Writing Services

Ambrose Writing services provides academic support in the four foundational literacy skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It also assists students with critical thinking and the research process. Throughout the academic year, students can meet with a writing tutor for personalized support, or they can attend a variety of workshops offered by Academic Success. These services are free to students enrolled at Ambrose University. Academic Success serves all students in all disciplines and at all levels, from history to biology and from theatre to theology. To learn more, please visit <https://ambrose.edu/sas/writing-services>

Ambrose Tutoring Services

Ambrose Tutoring Services provides support in specific disciplinary knowledge, especially in high-demand areas such as chemistry, philosophy, math and statistics, and religious studies. These tutors also coach students in general study skills, including listening and note-taking. During the academic year, Ambrose Tutoring Services offers drop-in tutoring for courses with high demand; for other courses, students can book a one-to-one appointment with a tutor in their discipline. These services are free to students enrolled at Ambrose University. To learn more, please visit <https://ambrose.edu/tutoring>.

Mental Health Support

All of us need a support system. We encourage students to build mental health supports and to reach out when help is needed.

On Campus:

- Counselling Services: ambrose.edu/counselling
- Peer Supportive Listening: One-to-one support in Student Life office. Hours posted at ambrose.edu/wellness.
- For immediate crisis support, there are staff on campus who are trained in Suicide Intervention and Mental Health First Aid. See <https://ambrose.edu/student-life/crisissupport> for a list of staff members.

Off Campus:

- Distress Centre - 403-266-4357
- Sheldon Chumir Health Care Centre - 403-955-6200
- Emergency - 911

Sexual Violence Support

All staff, faculty, and Residence student leaders have received *Sexual Violence Response to Disclosure* training. We will support you and help you find the resources you need. There is a website with on and off campus supports – ambrose.edu/sexual-violence-response-and-awareness.

Off Campus:

- Clinic: Sheldon Chumir Health Centre - 403-955-6200
- Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse - 403-237-5888