



McMaster Divinity
College



Old Testament Spirituality

OT 3XH3

This course begins online on January 7

Class meets in person: Friday Feb 22: 9:30am-4:30pm; Saturday Feb 23 9:30am-1:30pm

Course continues online until conclusion on April 10

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Course Description:

This course examines the Old Testament as a key source for Christian spirituality and resource for how Christians may live a faithful life in contemporary society. Emphasis is first placed upon historical dimension of the text with ancient Israelite faith and spiritual practice examined under the rubrics of Creation, Covenant, Cult, Community and Commission. Knowledge of Old Testament spirituality will enable one to put true Christian spirituality in perspective. This course will demonstrate the indebtedness of Christian spirituality to the Old Testament and underscore its significance for contemporary spiritual practice and faith. The course will also reflect upon ways in which contemporary Christian spirituality can be informed, sustained, and nourished by the Old Testament. Furthermore, a foundation of OT spirituality will aid in discernment of truth from error with problematic modern spiritualities.

Specializations: Biblical Studies and Pastoral Studies

Course Objectives:

Knowing

1. To know the place of spirituality in OT theology
2. To know the content of OT Creational theology and the significance of the 'goodness of creation' and the image of God for Christian spirituality
3. To know the OT covenant texts and their foundational role for a spirituality of interconnectedness and relationship with and dependence upon God
4. To understand the OT theological emphasis on community as opposed to modern individualism and the call toward the community of the faith
5. To understand the cult of ancient Israel and the significance of its worship and sacrificial system as a means of restoring God's people and allowing a close relationship with God
6. To understand the commissioning of Israel to be a kingdom of priests, with a mission of mercy and ministry to the larger world.

Being

7. To embrace the contemporary relevance of the Old Testament for Christian spirituality today
8. To grow closer to God through study of Old Testament spirituality

Doing

9. To be able to discuss the relation of OT spirituality with modern discussions of spiritual life and Christian practice
10. To be able to interpret relevant OT texts in their original contexts
11. To be able to apply OT spirituality to contemporary audiences
12. To be able to apply OT spirituality to our own lives

Required Texts:

1. Deryck Sherrifs. *The Friendship of the Lord: An Old Testament Spirituality*. (Eugene, OR; Wipf and Stock, 2007).
2. Brueggemann, Walter and Walter Brueggemann. *Spirituality of the Psalms*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2002.
3. Lombaard, Christo, *The Old Testament and Christian Spirituality: Theoretical and Practical Essays from a South African Perspective*. Society of Biblical Literature, 2012. Available free online. <https://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/pubs/IVBS-lombaard2012.pdf>

Textbook Purchase:

All required textbooks for this class are available from the College's book service, READ On Bookstore, Room 145, McMaster Divinity College. Texts may be purchased on the first day of class. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstores, 5 International Blvd, Etobicoke, ON M9W 6H3: phone 416-620-2934; fax 416-622-2308; e-mail books@readon.ca. Other book services may also carry the texts.

Course Assignments and Schedule

1. 10% - Readings: Students are required to read the textbooks and other assigned readings in full and report on them via an email to the professor by Apr 10, 2019

2. Pre-class Component (Jan – Feb 21): Online

A. Online Discussion

Due to this being a hybrid course, much of the class discussion will occur online on the Avenue to Learn course website. Students must actively participate in the online discussion and post minimum **one** discussion topic at the beginning of a week (Sun-Tues). Student posts must be in regard to the posted lectures / assigned readings that week. As well, to further the online discussion all students must respond to minimum **two posts** every week. Since initial posts will be online in the first part of the week, there will be adequate time for all students to respond to posts in a timely manner. Instructions on how to participate in the online classroom will be sent to each student via email before the course begins.

Participation in online discussion is an assumed foundation for this course (like class attendance) if a student fails to participate every week their final mark will be reduced by one full letter grade (so A becomes B, A- becomes B-).

B. 15% - Review Assignment #1

During the pre-class modules students will write a critical book review on Brueggemann's *Spirituality of the Psalms*. The paper must be **no more** than **8 pages** double-spaced. The paper should clearly summarize the contents of the book in your own words and include your own critical interaction, evaluation, and reflections on the chapter. The written review is due **Feb 1, 2019**—No Extensions. See "Critical Book Review Guidelines" below

3. In-Class Component (Feb 22–23): At McMaster Divinity College

The on-campus Modules will consist of some in-class lectures, Q&A, presentations, and student presentations. Attendance is mandatory.

A. 25% - Student Led seminar discussion:

As part of the on-campus modules, each student will lead the class in a 30-minute discussion of assigned topic. In preparation for the discussion the student will conduct independent research including the textbooks and other sources. A 2–3 page report showing your research and discussion notes will be handed in following the seminar.

4. Post-Class Component (Feb 24–Apr 10): Online

A. Online Discussion

In the post-class component students must continue to actively participate in the online discussion but now only need to post **one** discussion topic at the beginning of a week (Sun-Tues) and respond to **one other post** each week.

Participation in online discussion is an assumed foundation for this course (like class attendance) if a student fails to participate every week their final mark will be reduced by one full letter grade (so A becomes B, A- becomes B-).

B. 10% - Statement and Annotated Bibliography.. Due March 23. In preparation for the major assignment students will write a one-paragraph statement of their Major Assignment, along with an annotated bibliography of at least 12 bibliographic items of secondary sources. These secondary sources do not include primary sources (the Bible, Josephus, Qumran). By way of **supplement** to these 12 sources, a student may use a **maximum of 2** Internet resources. Students are responsible for the quality of these Internet resources. Each source listed must be drawn on in the paper and evidenced in the footnotes etc.

D. 40% - Major Assignment. Due Apr 10.

All major assignment papers must follow the MDC Style Guide. Papers should be double-spaced, 12pt Times New Roman font (footnotes should be 10pt). The major assignment will be based upon the research represented in your annotated bibliography and draw on (and explicitly cite) all 12 sources within the paper. See "Paper Evaluation Guidelines" below

i. Major Assignment for Biblical Studies Specializations:

There are two (2) options for Biblical Studies: Choose only one (1) of the following:

a. Research paper: 12-15 pages double-spaced. This is especially recommended if you are planning to go on to a research degree or write a thesis (or if you have a particular topic in mind that you wish to write on). The topic of this research must be related to OT Spirituality and approved by the professor.

b. Paper on the Spirituality of a Psalm: 12-15 pages. In this option you will choose one passage from the Psalter that will:

1. Take into account the genre and the historical context of the chosen text and the underscore the spirituality in its original context
2. Provide a close reading of the text, noting key words, phrases, and literary features
3. Identify different interpretive options and consider the validity of each and argue for the chosen interpretation.
4. Elucidate the theological message and spirituality of the chosen text
5. Explain the applicability of the text for today for believers in regards to discussions of spiritual life and Christian practice

ii. Major Assignment for Pastoral Studies Specializations:

There are three (3) options for Pastoral Studies Specializations. Choose only one (1) of the following:

a. Paper on the Spirituality of a Psalm: 12-15 pages. This is the same paper as outlined above in assignments for biblical studies specializations.

b. Sermon on Spirituality from an OT text (oral presentation). 20-25 minute video-taped sermon submitted on CD/DVD/USB drive or uploaded to YouTube or Vimeo. Beginning with an OT text this sermon will expound on the spirituality contained therein, noting its original cultural and historical context, then applying it to the contemporary context and modern discussions of spiritual life and Christian practice. The sermon will be delivered orally but include a written manuscript with an outline. The manuscript may be a combination of sentence, bullets/point form, paragraphs (it need not be a complete essay of the words you preach). This manuscript should be grammatically correct and include appropriate citation of sources employed.

c. Sermon on Spirituality from an OT text (written). This assignment is the same as the previous assignment (oral presentation of a sermon) but instead of an oral presentation it will be written, but with an aim to oral delivery. The sermon must be written as it would be spoken and must not be in point form etc. but be a full written manuscript. It is expected it will conform to MDC style guide and be grammatically correct and acknowledge its sources appropriately with footnotes.

College Style for Submission of Written Work

All stylistic considerations (including but not limited to questions of formatting, footnotes, and bibliographic references) must conform to the McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses

<https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/sites/default/files/documents/mdcstyleguide.pdf>

Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

All papers to be submitted in electronic format only (a pdf file)—no hardcopies! Email to pevans@mcmaster.ca. Include your last name in the file name of your attachment (e.g., [evans.researchpaper.pdf](#)). To avoid late marks papers must be received before the end of the calendar day on which they are due (i.e., before midnight Eastern Standard Time).

Policy concerning late papers

Extensions for papers will not be given except in very exceptional circumstances. (serious illness, family crises, etc.). Busy-ness, holidays, computer problems etc. are not legitimate reasons to grant extensions. Late assignments will be docked at the rate of 2% per day for the first 7 days (including weekends) and 4% per day after that. All assignments must be received by **April 10** in order to avoid a failing grade in the class.

Academic Honesty.

Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College. Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty
~<http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/rules-regulations>

Gender Inclusive language:

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all its publications. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected, but you will need to use gender-inclusive language for humans, and you will need to quote from a gender-inclusive version such as the following: NRSV (1989), NCV (1991), TEV/GNB/GNT (1992), CEV (1995), NLT (1996), TNIV (2005), and the Common English Bible (CEB 2011).

Disclaimer

This syllabus is the property of the instructor and is prepared with currently available information. The instructor reserves the right to make changes and revisions up to and including the first day of class.

Students are advised to retain this syllabus for their records.

Critical Book Review Guidelines

I. The Book Review of Brueggemann's *Spirituality of the Psalms* should roughly follow this format:

Summary of Content: 2-4 Pages

Critique of Content 1-3 Pages

Personal Reflection 1-2 Pages

Total=*no more* than 8 pages! Pages 9ff *will not* be read

The following items are rated according to the following scale:

1 = poor/inadequate; 2 = adequate; 3 = good/more than adequate; 4 = very good;
5 = excellent/superior.

Summary of Content (noted key concepts etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
Quality of Critique (evidence of critical thought)	1	2	3	4	5
Reflective Thought (theological depth, sensitivity)	1	2	3	4	5
Literary Style (awkward, wordy, repetitive)	1	2	3	4	5
Grammar/Spelling	1	2	3	4	5
Neatness/Presentation	1	2	3	4	5

§ Note: this is a simple evaluation tool to assist in paper assessment. The categories are not weighted equally, and thus are not added together or averaged to calculate your grade.

II. The following need attention if checked

- Use inclusive language
- Write a unified review
- Line spacing, Font size, Margins, Page numbers etc. need attention
- Cite primary resources correctly/consistently (e.g., Gen 1:26; Gen 1; etc.)
- The paper is too long/too short
- Edit your paper more thoroughly
- The paper needs balance
- Follow MDC Style guide
- Cite secondary resources correctly/consistently

Paper Evaluation Guidelines

I. The next items are rated according to this scale: 1 = inadequate; 2 = adequate; 3 = good; 4 = very good; 5 = superior.

Bibliographic consciousness	1	2	3	4	5
Range and Use of Sources	1	2	3	4	5
Clarity in Defining Issues	1	2	3	4	5
Strength of Argument	1	2	3	4	5
Awareness of Exegetical Issues	1	2	3	4	5
Accuracy of Data and Assertions	1	2	3	4	5
Analysis /Critical Thinking	1	2	3	4	5
Introduction (Thesis Statement /Clear Issue)	1	2	3	4	5
Development of Thesis (focus)	1	2	3	4	5
Literary Style (awkward, wordy, repetitive)	1	2	3	4	5
Organization/coherence of ideas	1	2	3	4	5
Grammar/Spelling	1	2	3	4	5
Neatness/Presentation	1	2	3	4	5

§ Note: this is a simple evaluation tool to assist in paper assessment. The categories are not weighted equally, and thus are not added together or averaged to calculate your grade.

II. The following need attention if so indicated

- Use inclusive language
- Write a unified essay
- Line spacing, Font size, Margins, Page numbers etc. need attention
- Cite primary resources correctly/consistently (e.g., Gen 1:26; Gen 1; etc.)
- The paper is too long/too short
- Edit your paper more thoroughly
- The paper needs balance
- Follow MDC Style guide
- Cite secondary resources correctly/consistently

Selected Bibliography

- Anderson, Bernhard W., and Steven Bishop. *Contours of Old Testament Theology*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1999.
- Beale, G. K. *A New Testament Biblical Theology: The Unfolding of the Old Testament in the New*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011.
- Brueggemann, Walter. *The Psalms and the Life of Faith*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1995.
- _____. *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997.
- Brueggemann, Walter, and Walter Brueggemann. *Spirituality of the Psalms*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2002.
- Ceresko, Anthony R. *Introduction to Old Testament Wisdom: A Spirituality of Liberation*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1999.
- Craghan, John F. *Love and Thunder, a Spirituality of the Old Testament*. Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1983.
- Eichrodt, Walther. *Theology of the Old Testament. Translated by J.A. Baker*. Old Testament Library. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967.
- Gallares, Judette A. *Images of Faith: Spirituality of Women in the Old Testament*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1994.
- Goldingay, John. *Old Testament Theology: Israel's Faith*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2006.
- _____. *Old Testament Theology: Israel's Gospel*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2003.
- _____. *Old Testament Theology: Israel's Life*. Old Testament Theology. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2009.
- Graef, Hilda C. *The Light and the Rainbow: A Study in Christian Spirituality from Its Roots in the Old Testament and Its Development through the New Testament and the Fathers to Recent Times*. London: Longmans, 1959.
- Holder, Arthur G. *The Blackwell Companion to Christian Spirituality*. Blackwell Companions to Religion. Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2005.
- House, Paul R. *Old Testament Theology*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1998.

McCarthy, Carmel, and William Riley. *The Old Testament Short Story: Explorations into Narrative Spirituality*. Message of Biblical Spirituality ;. Wilmington, Del.: M. Glazier, 1986.

Paul Marie de la, Croix. *Spirituality of the Old Testament*. 3 vols. Cross and Crown Series of Spirituality ;. St. Louis, Mo.: B. Herder Book Co., 1961.

Ralph, Margaret Nutting. *The Spirituality of the Psalms: Prayers for All Times*. Adult Faith Formation Library. New London, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 2015.

Stuhlmüller, Carroll, Carol J. Dempsey, and Timothy A. Lenchak. *The Spirituality of the Psalms*. Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2002.