



# JOSHUA

Syllabus  
McMaster Divinity College  
Fall 2019

## Course Designation

OT 5XJ5 Joshua  
DPT Advanced Elective

## Course Schedule

*Tuesday 6:30 p.m. – 8:20 p.m.*

Classes begin Tuesday September 10.  
No class on Tuesday Oct. 15 (intensive hybrid week)  
Final class is Tuesday Dec. 10

## Instructor

August H. Konkell, Professor of Old Testament (Ph.D.)  
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## Course Description

The book of Joshua is challenging in various ways. It is difficult to bring coherence to apparently contradictory assertions: all the land was conquered yet much land remains to be taken; all the Canaanites are to be destroyed yet Israel lives amongst the Canaanites. Joshua is a challenging book theologically, as the promise of redemption comes about through war and conflict. The goal of this course is to provide a guide in understanding the book of Joshua in its literary intent and its theological

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message in dealing with the concepts of judgment and redemption. It is to provide guidance for living in a world that is torn by strife.

### Course Objectives

#### *Knowing*

- Content and structure of the versions of Joshua (Masoretic, Greek, and Qumran)
- Questions of textual history and the process of composition
- Relationship of Joshua to the Pentateuch and the Deuteronomistic History
- Theological concepts of sovereignty, mercy, and judgment

#### *Being*

- Courage and conviction in a society of strife
- Understanding persistence and consequences of human conflict
- Hope of divine promise in formidable circumstances

#### *Doing*

- Engage in confronting violence with a theology of redemption
- Address strife with an understanding of the human condition that perpetuates violence
- Become active in church congregations in teaching a theologically sound anthropology

### Course Texts

Richard Hess, *Joshua: An Introduction and Survey*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, Inter-Varsity Press, 2008.

James Gordon McConville, *Joshua: An Introduction and Study Guide: Crossing Divides*, Bloomsbury Publishing, 2017.

### 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 Bookstore, Etobicoke, ON M9C 5K1: phone 416.620.2934; fax 416.622.2308; email [books@readon.ca](mailto:books@readon.ca). Other book services may also carry the texts.

### Course Lectures

Sept. 10	Text and history of composition
Sept. 17	Historical and archaeological interpretations of Joshua
Sept. 24	Joshua within the Deuteronomistic History
Oct. 1	Spying out the land
Oct. 8	Shittim to Gilgal
Oct. 22	Covenant renewal
Oct. 29	Jericho and the <i>kherem</i>
Nov. 5	Divine warfare
Nov. 12	Canaanite agreements
Nov. 19	Hazor
Nov. 26	Tribal territories
Dec. 3	Keeping the peace

### Course Assignments

The book of Joshua is one phase in the story of divine redemption, not just of Israel but the restoration of creation. To most people Joshua reads like an aggressive military campaign in nationalistic interests. This is to reduce the book to misconceptions; redemption in Scripture is never limited to Israel nor is the creation of Israel for nationalistic ends. Joshua must be read as part of God's divine work in bringing an end to sin and violence and establishing a transforming covenant.

Contemporary society is engulfed with violence at all levels, often of a random and senseless variety. Joshua brings an important theology to understanding humanity, society, judgment and redemption. There are many ways to employ this theology. The task of the assignments in this course is to engage the theology of Joshua in addressing a contemporary situation.

#### I. Literature Review: *Develop a suitable title for the assignment*

- a. The student will develop an annotated bibliography of approximately 15-20 resources (4000 pages) related to *the topic of the course* and write a 100-150 word annotation for each one. The required texts for the course can be included as part of the book list. **The literature review will be approximately 2,000 words. This assignment is due Oct. 1<sup>st</sup> and will constitute 25% of the course grade.**
- b. A paper will also be prepared that summarizes the key learnings from the annotated bibliography and provides a cogent foundation for a theology and practice of *the topic of the course*. **The paper will be approximately 3,000 words. It is due Oct. 22<sup>nd</sup> and will constitute 25% of the course grade.**

#### II. Major Paper: *Develop a suitable title for the paper according to the topic of the course*

The paper should include four key sections. First a brief, but clear explanation of how the paper is rooted in a Practice Led-research approach, second an exploration of the challenges and problems that provoke this study (i.e. why does this ministry practice need to be addressed? What are the problems that you want to identify?) Third, a consideration of a foundational theology of the practice of ministry under consideration in this course and a deep consideration of how new approaches to this practice can be employed in helping to address and improve ministry practice in this area. Fourth some reflection on the application of these ideas to the student's own ministry context (both in terms of the local church and also their ministry beyond the local church).

**The paper should be approximately 8,000 words. It is due Dec. 10<sup>th</sup> and will constitute 40% of the course grade.**

#### III. Class Presentation

The student will offer a class presentation of their paper and its findings to the class. **The presentation is due at a time agreed upon by the instructor and the student; it will constitute 10% of the course grade.**

## Course Policies

### *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: <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/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).

### *Style*

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/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/mdcstyleguide.pdf>. Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

## Bibliographic Resources

### Text of Joshua

De Troyer, K. "Reconstructing the OG of Joshua." In *Septuagint Research: Issues and Challenges in the Study of the Greek Jewish Scriptures*, edited by W. Kraus and R.G. Wooden, 105–18. SBLSCS 53. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.

Feldman, Ariel. *The Rewritten Joshua Scrolls from Qumran: Texts, Translations and Commentary*. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2014.

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Tov, Emmanuel. "Two Literary Strata of Joshua: G and M." In *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, third edition, revised and expanded, 294–299; idem, "Different Literary Editions of Joshua: 4QJosh<sup>a</sup> and M, G," 314–316. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012.

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Ulrich, E. and F. M. Cross, eds. *Qumran Cave 4.IX: Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Kings*. Discoveries in the Judaean Desert XIV. Oxford: Clarendon, 1995.

### Recent Commentaries (Post 2000)

Alter, Robert. *Ancient Israel: The Former Prophets; Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings; A Translation with Commentary*. New York: Norton, 2013.

Auld, A. Graeme. *Joshua: A Critical and Exegetical Commentary*. International Critical Commentary. T & T Clark, 2011.

Beal, Lissa M. Wray. *Joshua*. The Story of God Bible Commentary. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2019.

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Dozeman, Thomas B. *Joshua 1–12: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Yale Bible 6B. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015.

Firth, David G. *The Message of Joshua*. The Bible Speaks Today. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2015.

Joshua

Franke, John R., ed. *Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1–2 Samuel*. Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture 4. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2005.

Hawk, L. Daniel. *Joshua: Studies in Hebrew Narrative and Poetry*. Berit Olam. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2001.

Harstad, Adolph L. *Joshua*. Concordia Commentary. St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 2005.

Hess, Richard S. *Joshua: An Introduction and Commentary*. Tyndale Old Testament Commentary. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008.

Hubbard, Robert L. Jr. *Joshua: NIV Application Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009.

Laughlin, John C. H. *Reading Joshua: A Historical-Critical/Archeological Commentary*. Reading the Old Testament. Macon, GA: Smyth and Helwys, 2015.

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Pitkänen, Pikka M. A. *Joshua*. Apollos Old Testament. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2010.

Pressler, Carolyn. *Joshua, Judges, and Ruth*. Westminster Bible Companion. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2002.

Rösel, Hartmut N. *Joshua*. Historical Commentary of the Old Testament. Leuven: Peeters, 2011.

Ziese, Mark S. *Joshua*. College Press NIV Commentary. Joplin, MO: College, 2008.

### **Older Commentaries (Pre 2000)**

Auld, Graeme A. *Joshua, Judges, and Ruth*. Daily Study Bible. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1984.

Boling, Robert G. *Joshua: A New Translation with Notes and Commentary*. Anchor Bible 6. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1982.

Cohen, Abraham, ed. *Joshua and Judges: Hebrew Text and English Translation, with an Introduction and Commentary*. Soncino Books of the Bible. London: Soncino, 1950.

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- . *The Joshua Delusion?: Rethinking Genocide in the Bible*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2010.
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- Mills, Mary E. *Joshua to Kings: History, Story, Theology*. T&T Clark Approaches to Biblical Studies. 3rd ed. New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016.

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### *Joshua and Literary Readings*

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Gentry, Peter J. "The Relationship of Deuteronomy to the Covenant at Sinai." *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 18 (2014) 35–57.

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Sharp, Carolyn J. “‘Be Strong and Resolute!’: Reading Joshua in the Contemporary Church.” *Anglican Theological Review* 97 (2015) 19–32.

### *Joshua and Deuteronomistic History (DH or DtrH)*

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### *Joshua and Conquest/holy war/kherem/land distribution*

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