



**McMaster Divinity College**  
**The Book of Hebrews:**  
**Greek Exegesis**

NT 2XT3  
The Book of Hebrews  
Greek Exegesis

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Fall 2019  
Mondays 4–5:50 p.m.  
An additional hour weekly by arrangement

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**Course Description**

The Book of Hebrews is one of the least known books in the New Testament but has so much to offer every student. For the Greek student, it is the best Greek in the New Testament. The core of this course is an exegetical and interpretative study of the Book of Hebrews in English translation and in the analysis and translation of the Greek. This class involves an acquaintance with structure, content, message, context and other interpretive issues of Hebrews as well.

**Course Objectives**

Specific Objectives – Through reading, lectures, discussion and assignments

**Knowing**

- The student will know the characteristic vocabulary of Hebrews, basic Greek grammar that will aid in preaching, exegetical skills for preaching and how to access resources for the use of Greek in ministry.
- The student will know the Hebrews teaching on how to draw closer to God.
- The student will understand Hebrews in its social, historical, literary and religious Jewish Hellenistic context
- The student will be familiar with critical views concerning introductory questions (i.e. authorship, date, settings, etc.) and identify the features in the text that illuminate the options.

**Being**

- The student will be spiritually challenged by the message of Hebrews.
- The student will appreciate the distinctive content and theology of the text and goal(s) of the author.
- The student will enter into partnership with Jesus in his heavenly calling.

**Doing**

- The student will review the manuscript of the NCCS Commentary on the Book of Hebrews
- The student will develop skills in translating and reading Greek for preaching.
- The student will apply insights from Greek to exegesis.

## Reading

### Required

Manuscript of Westfall, Cynthia Long. *Hebrews*. NCCS. Wipf & Stock, forthcoming.  
Distributed by the professor.

The Greek New Testament

Porter, Stanley E. *Idioms of the Greek New Testament*. 2nd ed., with corrections. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999.

### Recommended

Blomberg, Craig and Jenifer Foutz Markley. *A Handbook of New Testament Exegesis*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010.

Ellingworth, Paul. *Commentary on Hebrews*. NIGTC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993.

Greenlee, Harold E. *An Exegetical Summary of Hebrews*. Dallas: SIL, 1998.

Porter, Stanley E. *Fundamentals of New Testament Greek*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010.

## Course Requirements

### **Class Participation (10%)**

Student participation includes interactive lectures and class and group discussions is expected, based on your readings for the week.

### **Reading (10%)**

See the Daily Schedule at the end of the syllabus for dates and pages.

- Read the scheduled material or passage in the NCCS Commentary on the Book of Hebrews and submit a review to Avenue (see “Book Reviews”)
- Read the scheduled passage in Hebrews in Greek.
- Read the scheduled material in Porter.

The student will summarize the percentage of reading completed on **December 11, 11:59 p.m.**, submitted to Avenue.

### **Written Assignments**

**In order to pass the course, all assignments must be completed**

### **Book Reviews of NCCS (15%)**

Each week at class time the student will submit a paragraph on Avenue that reviews the chapter from the NCCS Commentary on Hebrews, lightly interacting with the material from Johnson.

### **Translations (30%, 10% each)**

**Due midnight Friday, Sept 27, Oct 25, Nov 15**

Using translation helps such as Bible Works, interlinears, and commentaries, the student will select and translate 3 passages from each section of Hebrews (12-15 verses each). The translation

will include useful observations on the meaning of the grammar, and its syntax and structure. Specific instructions for formatting the translation and observations will be supplied by the instructor.

### **Greek Exegetical Paper (25%)**

#### **Due midnight Monday Dec 9**

The student will write an exegetical paper on one of the translated passages that reflects the traditional evangelical exegetical skills that are used in sermon preparation, utilizing the insights from translation, due by midnight Dec 9. Instructions for writing an exegetical paper (“Steps for Greek Exegesis”) will be supplied by the instructor.

### **Vocabulary Test (10%)**

#### **Dec 2**

Based on the more common words in Hebrews and words in Hebrews that occur 50x or more in the NT (based on Sakae Kubo’s *Greek-English Lexicon*).

### **Grading Summary**

➤ Reading	10%
➤ Participation	10%
➤ Book Review	15%
➤ Translations	30%
➤ Exegetical Paper	25%
➤ Vocabulary Quiz	10%

### **Classroom Behavior**

#### ***Attendance***

- Students should be on time to class or be prepared to offer an explanation to the professor.
- Students are expected to stay for the entire class session, unless arranged in advance.
- More than 2 absences may result in a penalty. More than 4 absences will result in a failure of the course.

#### ***Participation***

- Please respect the opinions of others without disrespect or ridicule, even if you do not agree with them. However, feel free to respond logically and critically in an orderly manner.
- Students are not expected to be doing work on any other subject except that which is appropriate in the course outline.
- Students are not to carry on off-topic conversations in class.
- Students are not to access e-mail, send or receive text messages, surf the net, etc., while class is in session
- Students may eat or drink in class if they do not distract others and they clean up their desks.

Students who fail to respect these guidelines may lose participation points and/or be dismissed from the class.

### **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, 5 International Blvd, Etobicoke, Ontario M9W 6H3: phone 416.620.2934; fax 416.622.2308; email [books@readon.ca](mailto:books@readon.ca). Other book services may also carry the texts.

### **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 <http://mcmasterdivinity.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/mdcstyleguide.pdf> Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

### **Appointments**

Contact me if I can assist you in any way via E-mail (most effective): [westfal@mcmaster.ca](mailto:westfal@mcmaster.ca)  
Friend me on Facebook and send me a message!  
Phone: 905-525-9140 ext. 23605

### **Office hours (Rm 242):**

Monday 1–2  
Tuesday 1–3  
Wednesday 1–3

### **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.

Deleted: Thursday 3:30-5:30 p.m.

–Weekly Schedule

DATE	CLASS SESSION	Porter	New Testament Gk Reading
Sept 9	Introduction to the course Specializations The critical introductory issues		
Sept 16	Pay attention to what the son said—Hang on!	Chs. 1–2	1:1-2:4
Sept 23	Think of Jesus as an apostle and high priest <b>First translation due midnight Sept 27</b>	Chs. 3–4	2:5-3:1
Sept 30	Let's not be like the Israelites—let's enter the rest—Move forward!	Chs. 5–6	3:1-4:1
Oct 7	Since the promise of rest is open, let's enter the rest—Move forward! Themes: Move forward! Hold on! Draw near!	Chs. 7–8	4:1-4:16
Oct 14	Thanksgiving		
Oct 21	Let's press on to maturity with the new teaching about Jesus' priesthood—Move forward! <b>Second translation due midnight Oct 25</b>	Chs. 9–10	5:1-6:3
Oct 28	The new teaching results in access to God	Chs. 11–12	6:1-7:4
Nov 4	Jesus is a priest according to the order of Melchizedek	Chs. 13–14	7:4-28
Nov 11	Jesus' priesthood Part 1 <b>Third translation due midnight Nov 15</b>	Chs. 15–16	8:1-9:14
Nov 18	Jesus' priesthood Part 2—Draw near! Themes: Draw near! Hold on! Move forward!	Chs. 17–18	9:15-10:25
Nov 25* SBL*	Let's run the race—Move forward!	Chs. 19–20	10:26-12:2
Dec 2	Climax: Let's serve God as priests in heavenly Jerusalem—Draw near! <b>Vocabulary Test</b>		12:1-13:25
Dec 9	<b>Exegetical Paper due midnight Dec 9</b> <b>Reading Reports due 11:59 p.m., Dec 11</b>		

*Selected Bibliography on the Book of Hebrews*

- Attridge, Harold W. *Hebrews*. Hermeneia. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1989.
- Brown, Raymond. *The Message of Hebrews*. The Bible Speaks Today. Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1984.
- Bruce, F. F. *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, 2d ed. NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990.
- Buchanan, G. W. *To The Hebrews*. Anchor Bible. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1972.
- deSilva, David A. *Perseverance in Gratitude: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.
- Cockerill, Gareth. *The Epistle to the Hebrews*. NICNT; Eerdmans, 2012.
- Ellingworth, Paul. *The Epistle to the Hebrews*. NIGTC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993.
- Glaze, R. E. *No Easy Salvation: A Careful Examination of the Question of Apostasy in Hebrews*. Nashville: Broadman, 1966.
- Gromacki, Robert G. *Stand Bold in Grace: An Exposition of Hebrews*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984.
- Guthrie, Donald. *The Letter to the Hebrews*. Tyndale New Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983.
- Guthrie, George H. *The Structure of Hebrews: A Text-Linguistic Analysis*. Biblical Studies Library. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Hebrews*. NIV Application Commentary. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998.
- Hagner, Donald A. *Hebrews*. Good News Commentaries. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1983.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Hebrews*. New International Biblical Commentary 14. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1990.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Encountering the Book of Hebrews: An Exposition*. Encountering Biblical Studies. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002.
- Hughes, R. Kent. *Hebrews: An Anchor for the Soul*, 2 Volumes. Preaching the Word. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1993.
- Hurst, L. D. *The Epistle to the Hebrews: Its Background of Thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Johnson, Luke Timothy. *Hebrews: A Commentary*. The New Testament Library. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knowx Press, 2006.
- Käsemann, Ernst. *The Wandering People of God: An Investigation into the Letter of Hebrews*. Translated by R. A. Harrisville and I. L. Sandberg. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984.
- Koester, Craig. *Hebrews*. Anchor Bible. New York: Doubleday, 2001.

- Lane, William L. *Hebrews 1-8*. Word Biblical Commentary. Dallas: Word, 1991.
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- Lea, Thomas D. *Hebrews and James*. Holman New Testament Commentary 10. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1999.
- Manson, William. *The Epistle to the Hebrews: An Historical and Theological Reconsideration*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1951.
- Stedman, Ray C. *Hebrews*. IVP New Testament Commentary. Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992.
- Thompson, James W. *Hebrews*. Paideia Commentaries on the New Testament. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2008.
- Westcott, B. F. *The Epistle to the Hebrews: The Greek Text with Notes and Essays*, 3d ed. New York: Macmillan, 1903.
- Westfall, Cynthia Long. *A Discourse Analysis of the Letter to the Hebrews*. London: T&T Clark, 2005.