



THE BOOK OF KINGS: A TALE OF TWO KINGDOMS

Class meets asynchronously online:

- Sept 13–Dec 10, 2021

Class meets synchronously online:

- Tuesdays @ 1:00–2:50pm EST (Sept 14, Oct 19, Dec 7)

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Course Description:

What about all those Kings in the Old Testament? In this course we will have a close look at the biblical books of 1–2 Kings and study the *epic storyline* of the book, explore its historical significance, and also examine the key theological contributions of the book of Kings to Christian theology. We will examine the literary structure, authorial purpose and historicity of the books of Kings, as well as literary issues raised by the text. We will also focus on important questions like: Since God was Israel's king, what was the proper role of the kingship in Israel's history? Since God promised David a son on the throne forever, how do we make sense of the end of the Davidic dynasty in the Babylonian Exile? Due to the key role of David's example and God's promises to David in the history we will also undertake a biblical theological exploration of the "*son of David*" in Kings and messianic expectation. We will also consider in what way the kingdom of Israel represented the *Kingdom of God* on earth and how this theme of *God's Kingdom* gets picked up in the preaching of Jesus Christ and consider how the Church fits into this theology of the *Kingdom of God* today.

Specializations: Biblical Studies and Pastoral Studies

Course Objectives:

Knowing

- To gain in-depth knowledge of the contents and message of the books of 1–2 Kings
- To gain familiarity with the assumptions, methods and conclusions of modern critical scholarship on the Old Testament
- Understand how ancient Israel accounted for its history and how their methods of history writing compare with those of other history writers in the ancient world.
- To understand the significance of Israel's role as God's kingdom and its implications for NT talk of the Kingdom of God and the Church's view of its role in the world today

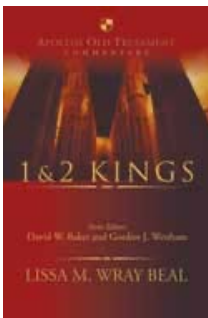
Being

- To embrace the contemporary relevance of these biblical books for the Church today
- To grow closer to God through study of his Word
- To grow in awareness of being part of God's Kingdom

Doing

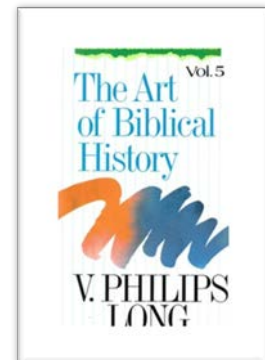
- To be able to interpret 1–2 Kings in its original contexts
- To be able to explain the role of Israel's Kings in Salvation History
- To be able to apply the message of 1–2 Kings to contemporary audiences

Required Textbooks:



Lissa Wray Beal. *1 and 2 Kings*. Apollos Old Testament Commentary Series, 9. InterVarsity Press, 2014.

V. Philips Long, *The Art of Biblical History*, vol. 5 in Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994.



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. Other book services may also carry the texts.

Course Requirements

I. Classroom Experiences

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

A. Synchronous (via Zoom conferencing app)

Successful classroom experiences depend on student commitment commensurate as how it would be in a face-to-face experience. Just as in a normal physical classroom experience, students are encouraged to take notes, participate in discussion through asking and answering questions, and wear appropriate attire. As much as is possible students should join the Zoom class in a quiet place where you will not be interrupted. Please have your video turned on whenever possible. It is best practice to mute your microphone except for when you are intending to speak to the class. Students are encouraged to use digital virtual backgrounds if desired. Tasteful backgrounds can help with the issues of privacy, equity, and prevent distractions for others in the class (e.g., in the case of a family member walking in the background of your video).

*****A link to participate via Zoom will be posted in an announcement on Avenue to Learn each week we meet.**

1. Tuesday Sept 14 at 1:00–2:50pm EST

Class will meet virtually via Zoom. Our time together will include introductions and an overview of the class.

2. Tuesday Oct 19 at 1:00–2:50pm EST

Class will meet virtually via Zoom. Our time together will include some lecture on Elijah and discussion of readings and class materials.

3. Tuesday Dec 7 at 1:00–2:50pm EST

Class will meet virtually via Zoom. In our time together we will share our reflections on course materials

B. Asynchronous Class Discussions (Sept 13 – Dec 10)

Much of the class discussion will occur asynchronously online on the Avenue to Learn course website. On weeks noted on the schedule below, students must actively participate in the online discussion and **post** minimum **two** discussion topics at the beginning of a week (Sun-Tues). Student posts must be in regard to the posted lecture videos / 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 adequate time for all students to respond to posts in a timely manner.

II. Formal Assignments: *The assignments and their weights are as follows:***A. Reading - 10% - Due Dec 10, 2021 (no extensions)**

Each student is to read the biblical books of 1–2 Kings as well as the textbooks in their entirety as well as assigned readings provided on A2L. Students will submit a detailed list of the reading that they have completed in the assigned textbooks (including page spreads for partial reading) and assigned articles available through A2L.

- Upload Reading List assignment to the appropriate Assignment Box on A2L.

B. Critical Book Review - 15% - Due Oct 4: Length: 4 pages.

After reading *The Art of Biblical History* students must abstract and critically review either chapter 2 or 3 of this textbook. The review paper must be **no more than 4 pages** double-spaced. The paper must summarize the contents of the chapter and give critical interaction and evaluation of the chapter. See “Critical Review Guidelines” below.

C. Character Study - 25% - Due Nov 1: Length: 8-10 pages.

After reading handouts and articles on characterization in biblical narratives students will write a paper on the characterization of their chosen biblical character.

Possible topics: Solomon, Jeroboam, Rehoboam, Jehu, Ahab, Jezebel, Elijah, Elisha, Asa, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Huldah, Josiah, Jehoiachin, Zedekiah, Jehoshaphat. *Choice of another biblical character must be approved by your professor*

D. Reflective Paper - 10%: Due: Dec 6: Length: 4 pages.

For this paper students write a reflection on implications of the issues and research covered in the course for a student’s view of the OT as scripture and other implications for their faith.

E. Major Assignment - 40%. Due on Dec 4: Length: 12–15 pages

All major assignment papers must follow the MDC Style Guide. Papers should be double-spaced, 12pt Times New Roman font (footnotes should be single-spaced and 10pt). The major assignment must draw on (and explicitly cite) at least 12 sources within the paper. See “**Major Assignment Evaluation Guidelines**” below.

i. Major Assignments 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 This is especially recommended if you are planning to go on to a research degree or write a thesis in OT (or if you have a particular topic in mind that you wish to write on). The topic of this research must be related to 1–2 Kings and approved by the professor.

b. Exegetical Paper: 12–15 pages Students will write an exegetical paper on a chosen text from 1–2 Kings (your chosen text must be approved by your professor).

The exegetical paper should include

1. A thesis statement
2. Discussion of the historical and cultural context
3. An exegesis of the story
4. Discussion of how the story fits within its broader context
5. Theological reflections and conclusion

ii. Major Assignments for Pastoral Specializations:

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

a. Exegetical Paper: 12–15 pages Students will write an exegetical paper as outlined above

b. Sermon on a passage from 1–2 Kings (oral presentation). 25-30 minute video-taped sermon uploaded to YouTube or Vimeo.

Beginning with the text of 1-2 Kings this sermon will expound a passage, applying it to the contemporary context. The sermon will be delivered orally but include a written paper with an outline. The paper may be a combination of sentence, bullets/point form, paragraphs (it need not be a complete essay of the words you preach). This paper should be grammatically correct and include appropriate citation of sources employed. See “Paper Evaluation” below.

c. Sermon on a passage from 1–2 Kings (written). 10 pages double-spaced. This is the same assignment as outlined above, except the sermon will be an original written composition instead of delivered orally (but written with an aim to oral

delivery). The submitted text should include an outline. 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 (using Endnotes—not footnotes). See “Paper Evaluation” below.

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/resources-forms/mdc-style-guide/> Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

All papers to be submitted in PDF format only. Upload the PDF file to the appropriate assignments folder on Avenue to Learn. 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 EST).

Policy Concerning Late Papers

Extensions for papers will not be given except in very exceptional circumstances. (serious illness, family crises, etc.). Busy-ness, computer problems etc. are not legitimate reasons to grant extensions and in the interests of fairness any request for extensions will take into account the entire class. 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 Dec 10, 2021 in order to avoid a failing grade in the class. Late assignments receive no critical feedback.

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).

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/>

Class Schedule

Wk	Date	Classroom Experiences	Content	Assignment Due
1	Sept 13-18	Sept 14 - Zoom Meeting: 1:00-2:50pm EST	Introduction to the book of Kings	--
2	Sept 20-25	Avenue to Learn asynchronous discussions of readings and lecture video	1 Kgs 1-2 the Death of David and Installation of Solomon	--
3	Sept 26-Oct 2	--	1 Kgs 3-10 Solomon in all his glory	--
4	Oct 3-9	Avenue to Learn asynchronous discussions of readings and lecture video	1 Kgs 11-14 - The Kingdom Splits	*Critical Book Review due Oct 4
5	Oct 10-16	--	1 Kgs 15-16 - Early kings of Israel and Judah	--
6	Oct 17-23	Oct 19- Zoom Meeting: 1:00-2:50pm EST	1 Kgs 17-19 - Elijah	--
7	Oct 24-30	STUDY WEEK	NO CLASSES	NO READINGS
8	Oct 31-Nov 6	Avenue to Learn asynchronous discussions of readings and lecture video	1 Kgs 20-22 - Ahab and Jehoshaphat	* Character Study due Nov 1
	Nov 7-13	--	2 Kgs 1-10 - Elisha to Jehu	--
9	Nov 14-20	Avenue to Learn asynchronous discussions of readings and lecture video	2 Kgs 14-16 -Uzziah to Ahaz	--
10	Nov 21-27	--	2 Kgs 17-20 -The Fall of Samaria and the Reign of Hezekiah	--
11	Nov 28-Dec 4	Avenue to Learn asynchronous discussions of readings and lecture video	2 Kgs 14-16 - Uzziah to Ahaz	* Major Assignment due Dec 4
12	Dec 5-10	Dec 7 - Zoom Meeting: 1:00-2:50pm EST	2 Kgs 24-25 - The Fall of Jerusalem and the Babylonian Exile	* Reflective Paper due Dec 6 * Reading Report due Dec 10

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.

PAPER EVALUATION

I. The following 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

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use inclusive language | <input type="checkbox"/> The paper is too long/too short |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Write a unified essay | <input type="checkbox"/> Edit your paper more thoroughly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Line spacing, Font size, Margins, Page numbers etc. need attention | <input type="checkbox"/> The paper needs balance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cite primary resources correctly/consistently (e.g., 1 Kgs 18:1; etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Cite secondary resources correctly/consistently |

III. Comments

CRITICAL REVIEW GUIDELINES

I. The chapter review from V. Phillips Long. *The Art of Biblical History* should roughly follow this format:

Summary of Content: 1 - 1½ Page
 Critique of Content ½ - 1½ Page
Personal Reflection ½ - 1 Page

Total=*no more* than 4 pages per review! Pages 5ff *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

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use inclusive language
<input type="checkbox"/> Write a unified review
<input type="checkbox"/> Line spacing, Font size, Margins, Page numbers etc. need attention
<input type="checkbox"/> Cite primary resources correctly/consistently (e.g., Gen 1:26) | <input type="checkbox"/> The paper is too long/too short
<input type="checkbox"/> Edit your paper more thoroughly
<input type="checkbox"/> The paper needs balance
<input type="checkbox"/> Cite secondary resources correctly/consistently |
|--|--|

III. Comments

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