



JOSHUA

Syllabus
McMaster Divinity College
Winter 2023

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<https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/faculty-and-administration/august-h-konkel/>

Course Designation

OT 3XJ3 Joshua

Specializations

Biblical Studies

Pastoral Studies

Class Schedule

First day of class is Monday January 9th.

No class family day holiday Monday February 20th.

No class during intensive hybrid week on Monday February 27th.

Last day of class is Monday April 3rd.

Class meets every Monday from 4:00 p.m. – 5:50 p.m.

This course is in person and live streamed, so is available in any location.

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

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Canaanites are to be destroyed yet Israel lives amongst the Canaanites. Joshua is a challenging book ethically, 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 form and its theological message in dealing with the concepts of judgment and redemption.

The course is to provide guidance to the Christian living in a world that is continually afflicted with mortal conflict. When Jesus spoke of wars and rumors of wars, he expressly declared that this was a sign the end is not yet. War is part of our present age and always involves the participation of those serving the kingdom of God.

Course Objectives

Knowing

- Textual versions of Joshua (Joshua is preserved in two different editions)
- Relationship of Joshua to the Pentateuch and the Deuteronomistic History
- Theological concepts of sovereignty, mercy, and judgment

Being

- Living with courage and conviction in a societies of conflict
- Learning submission and faithfulness to God in times of conflict
- Understanding the 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
- Actively participate in church congregations by teaching and living 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

Read On Bookstore
5 International Blvd
Etobicoke, Ontario. M9A 3C3

Bookstore Phone: 416 620 2934

Cell to text orders: 416 668 3434

Email for orders books@readon.ca

The new Hurlburt Family Bookstore is located beside the Chapel entrance, opposite Cullen Hall.

Course Topics

Text and history of composition
Historical and archaeological interpretations of Joshua
Joshua within the Deuteronomistic History
Spying out the land
Shittim to Gilgal
Covenant renewal
Jericho and the *kherem* (review of Moabite stele)
Divine warfare
Canaanite agreements
Hazor
Tribal territories
Keeping the peace
Theology of Joshua in contemporary context

Course Assignments and Grading

Text and Composition (15%)

Compare the book of Joshua in the Masoretic text in a translation of your choice and the Greek text (*New English Translation of the Septuagint* or its equivalent) which was used in the Orthodox church. Indicate the differences of the two editions of Joshua and the effect this has on understanding the book. These are not questions of textual differences but of a different stage of composition. Explain what this teaches us about composition and the adoption of canonical texts. Use the bibliography of the syllabus to assist you.

Length: approximately 1500 words

Due: January 23rd

Land of Canaan (10%)

Review chapters 6 and 7 in Amihai Mazar, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible, 10,000—586 B.C.E.* (Yale University Press, 1990) pp. 174–294. Describe the land of Canaan during the middle bronze age and the situation in Canaan at the time of the entrance of Israel into the land.

Length: 1000–1500 words

Due: February 6th

Emergence of Israel (25%)

Review the article posted in Avenue to Learn taken from *HaAretz* written by Ariel David, “You were (not) Slaves in Egypt: the Ancient Memories Behind the Exodus Myth.” This article gives a summary of some current views of the exodus and settlement of Israel in Canaan drawing on conclusions of literary criticism (Thomas Romer) and archaeology (Israel Finkelstein) to defend their view of how the narrative

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of the entrance to the land came about. Review these literary and archaeological arguments and evaluate this theory. Defend your version of the emergence of Israel in the promised land. The paper should critique contemporary research in literary criticism and archaeological evidence on this question.

Length: 2500 words

Due: February 13th

Biblical Theology (20%)

Joshua and Judges have a significant amount of overlapping material, such as the account of the death of Joshua and the settlement of southern Judah. Joshua continues the account of Israel found in Deuteronomy but is part of the story of Israel in Canaan that is called the Former Prophets. Using chapter five of McConville as a guide, what are the themes of Joshua that prepare the reader for the critique of the nation which will follow in the former prophets?

Length: about 1500 words

Due: March 6th

Research for Specializations (30%)

Length: 2500–3000 words

Due: Mar. 27th

Biblical Studies Major

Choose an issue in interpreting Joshua that is of special interest to you. This could be an exegesis and exposition of a text unit in Joshua, study of a specific archaeological site, a study of the questions of chronology, an examination of textual or compositional questions, or something theological like the concept of the *kherem* and its function in ancient near eastern societies. Make the topic specific enough that you can do reasonably thorough research in addressing the questions.

Pastoral Studies Major

Warfare in the book of Joshua has been a problem for Christians from the very beginning of the preaching of the gospel. Some Christians have tended to be Marcionite in their approach, distinguishing in some fashion the ethics of the Old Testament from that of the gospels. Others have understood the warfare of Joshua as part of a divine judgment against sin. Research how these questions have been addressed. Explain the theology of judgment in Joshua as you understand it. Show how you would teach or preach the book of Joshua in a society that denies the legitimacy of judgment or punishment and even some Christians that believe judgment is contrary to the love of God.

Assignment Summary

Text and Composition, 15%, Jan. 23rd

Land of Canaan, 10%, Feb. 6th

Emergence of Israel, 25%, Feb. 13th

Biblical Theology, 20%, Mar. 6th

Specializations Research, 30%, Mar. 27th

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/resources-forms/mdc-style-guide/>. 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.

Greenspoon, Leonard. "The Book of Joshua—Part 1: Texts and Versions." *Currents in Biblical Research* 3 (2005) 229–61.

_____. *Textual Studies in the Book of Joshua*. Harvard Semitic Monographs, 28. Chico, California: Scholar's Press, 1983.

Mäkipelto, Ville. "The Four Deaths of Joshua: Why the Septuagint is Pivotal for the Study of Joshua 24." *Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel* 6 (2017) 217–42.

Tov, Emmanuel. "The Literary Development of the Book of Joshua as Reflected in the Masoretic Text, the LXX, and 4QJoshua." In *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible, Qumran, Septuagint*, 132–153. VTSup 167. Leiden: Brill, 2015.

_____. "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^a and M, G," 314–316. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012.

_____. "The Growth of the Book of Joshua in the Light of the Evidence of the Septuagint." In *The Greek and Hebrew Bible: Collected Essays on the Septuagint*. VTSup 72, 385–396. Leiden: Brill, 1999.

Trebolle Barrera, Julio C. "The Text-Critical Value of the Old Latin and Antiochean Greek Texts in the Books of Judges and Joshua." In *Interpreting Translation: Studies on the LXX and Ezekiel in Honour of Johan Lust*, edited by F. García Martínez and Marc Vervenne, 401–13. Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium 192. Leuven: Peeters, 2005.

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.

Butler, Trent C. *Joshua 1–12*. Word Biblical Commentary 7A. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014.

———. *Joshua 13–24*. Word Biblical Commentary 7B. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014.

Creach, Jerome F. D. *Joshua: A Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*. Interpretation. Louisville: John Knox, 2003.

Currid, John D. *Strong and Courageous: Joshua*. Grand Rapids, MI: Evangelical, 2010.

Dallaire, Hélène. *Joshua: The Expositor's Bible Commentary*. Revised ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012.

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.

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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.

Lennox, Stephen. *Joshua: A Commentary in the Wesleyan Tradition*. New Beacon Bible Commentary. Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill, 2015.

Matties, Gordon H. *Joshua*. Believers Church Bible Commentary. Harrisonburg, VA: Herald, 2012.

McConville, J. Gordon, and Stephen Williams. *Joshua*. Two Horizons Old Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010.

Mobley, Gregory. *Joshua*. Theological Bible Commentary. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2009

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.

Curtis, Adrian H. W. *Joshua*. Old Testament Guides. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994.

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Friedeberg, S. *Joshua: An Annotated Hebrew Text with Introduction, Vocabulary, Geographical, and Historical Glossary and Three Maps*. London: Heinemann, 1913.

Goslinga, C. J. *Joshua, Judges, Ruth*. Bible Student's Commentary. Translated by Ray Togtman. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1987.

Gray, John. *Joshua, Judges, Ruth*. New Century Bible Commentary. Revised ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1986.

Hamlin, E. John. *Inheriting the Land: A Commentary on the Book of Joshua*. International Theological Commentary. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1983.

Harris, J. Gordon, et al. *Joshua, Judges, Ruth*. Understanding the Bible Commentary Series 5. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1995.

Howard, David M. *Joshua: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture*. New American Commentary 5. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1998.

Miller, J. Maxwell, and Gene M. Tucker. *The Book of Joshua*. The Cambridge Bible Commentary. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974.

Nelson, Richard D. *Joshua: A Commentary*. OTL. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1997.

Rast, Walter E. *Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings*. Proclamation Commentaries. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1978.

Rosenberg, A. J. *The Book of Joshua*. Brooklyn, NY: Judaica, 1984.

Soggin, J. Alberto. *Joshua: A Commentary*. The Old Testament Library. Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1972.

Woudstra, Marten H. *The Book of Joshua*. New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1981.

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Bratcher, Robert, and Barclay M. Newman. *A Translator's Handbook on the Book of Joshua*. New York: United Bible Society, 1983.

Earl, Douglas S. *Reading Joshua as Christian Scripture*. Journal of Theological Interpretation Supplements 2. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2010.

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McConville, J. Gordon. *Joshua: Crossing Divides*. T&T Clark Study Guides to the Old Testament. London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017.

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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Nelson, Richard. *The Double Redaction of the Deuteronomistic History*. JSOTSup 18. Sheffield: University of Sheffield, 1981.

Peckham, Brian. *The Composition of the Deuteronomistic History*. Harvard Semitic Monographs 35. Atlanta: Scholars, 1985.

Taylor, Marion Ann, and Christiana De Groot, eds. *Women of War, Women of Woe: Joshua and Judges through the Eyes of Nineteenth-Century Female Biblical Interpreters*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016.

Wahl, Otto. *Die Sacra-Parallela-Zitate: aus den Büchern Josua, Richter, 1/2 Samuel, 3/4 Könige sowie 1/2 Chronik*. Mitteilungen des Septuaginta-Unternehmens 29. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004.

Joshua and Literary Readings

Beal, Lissa M. Wray. "The Past as Threat and Hope: Reading Joshua with Numbers." *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 27 (2017) 461–83.

Beck, John A. "Why do Joshua's Readers Keep Crossing the River?: The Narrative-Geographical Shaping of Joshua 3–4." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 48 (2005) 689–99.

Biddle, Mark E. "Literary Structures in the Book of Joshua." *Review & Expositor* 95 (1998) 189–201.

Chambers, Nathan J. "Confirming Joshua as the Interpreter of Israel's Tôrâh: The Narrative Role of Joshua." *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 25 (2015) 141–53.

Firth, David G. "Disorienting Readers in Joshua 1:1–5:12." *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 41 (2017) 413–30.

Robinson, Robert B. "The Coherence of the Jericho Narrative: A Literary Reading of Joshua 6." In *Konsequente Traditionsgeschichte: Festschrift für Klaus Baltzer zum 65 Geburtstag*, edited by Rudiger Bartelmus, 311–35. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993.

Joshua and Archeology

Browning, Daniel C., Jr. "'The Hill Country is not Enough for Us': Recent Archeology and the Book of Joshua." *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 41 (1998) 25–43.

Finkelstein, Israel. "Shiloh Yields Some, but not All, of Its Secrets." *Biblical Archeology Review* 12 (1986) 22–41.

Frendo, Anthony J. "Was Rahab Really a Harlot?" *Biblical Archeology Review* 39 (2013) 62–65, 74–75.

Hardin, James W., Joshua M. Feinberg, and Jeff Blakely. "Archeomagnetism as a Complementary Dating Technique to Address the Iron Age Chronology Debate in the Levant." *Near Eastern Archeology* 79 (2016) 90–106.

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Hess, Richard S. "A Typology of West-Semitic Place Name Lists with Special Reference to Joshua 13–21." *The Biblical Archeologist* 59 (1996) 160–70.

———. "West Semitic Texts and the Book of Joshua." *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 7 (1997) 63–76.

Leith, Mary Joan Winn. "The Archeology of Rahab." *Biblical Archeology Review* 33 (2007) 22, 78.

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Miller, J. Maxwell. "Archeology and the Israelite Conquest of Canaan: Some Methodological Observations." *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 109 (1977) 87–93.

Petrovich, Douglas. "The Dating of Hazor's Destruction in Joshua 11 by Way of Biblical, Archeological, and Epigraphical Evidence." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 51 (2008) 489–512.

Scheffler, Eben. "Jericho: From Archeology Challenging the Canon to Searching for the Meaning(s) of Myth(s)." *HTS Teologiese Studies* 69 (2013) 10 pages, DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/hts.v69i1.1918>.

Stillinger, Michele D., et al. "A Rejoinder on the Value of Archeomagnetic Dating: Integrative Methodology is the Key to Addressing Iron Age Chronology." *Near Eastern Archeology* 81 (2018) 141–44.

Wood, Bryant G. "Did the Israelites Conquer Jericho: A New Look at the Archeological Evidence." *Biblical Archeological Review* 16 (1990) 44–58.

Zertal, Adam. "Has Joshua's Altar Been Found on Mt. Ebal." *Biblical Archeology Review* 11 (1985) 26–43.

Zevit, Ziony. "The Problem of Ai: New Theory Rejects Battle as Described in Bible but Explains How Story Evolved." *Biblical Archeology Review* 11 (1985) 58–69.

Joshua and Covenant

Berner, Christoph. "The Gibeonite Deception: Reflections on the Interplay between Law and Narrative in Josh 9." *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 31 (2017) 254–74.

Campbell, K. M. "Rahab's Covenant: A Short Note on Joshua 2:9–21." *Vetus Testamentum* 22 (1972) 243–44.

DeClaissé-Walford, Nancy L. "Covenant in the Book of Joshua." *Review & Expositor* 95 (1998) 227–34.

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

Harris, Gregory H. "Did God Fulfill Every Good Promise?: Toward a Biblical Understanding of Joshua 21:43–45, Part 1." *The Master's Seminary Journal* 23 (2012) 55–83.

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———. “Did God Fulfill Every Good Promise?: Toward a Biblical Understanding of Joshua 21:43–45, Part 2.” *The Master’s Seminary Journal* 24 (2013) 69–96.

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)

Briend, Jacques. “The Sources of the Deuteronomistic History: Research on Joshua 1–12.” In *Israel Constructs its History: Deuteronomistic Historiography in Recent Research*, edited by Albert de Pury, et al., 360–86. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2000.

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Krause, Joachim J. “The Book of the Torah in Joshua 1 and 23 and in the Deuteronomistic History.” *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 127 (2015) 412–28.

———. “Hexateuchal Redaction in Joshua.” *Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel* 6 (2017) 181–202.

Kugler, Gili. “Who Conquered Hebron?: Apologetic and Polemical Tendencies in the Story of Caleb in Josh 14.” *Vetus Testamentum* 67 (2017) 570–80.

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Joshua and Conquest (holy war, kherem, land distribution)

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- . “The God of Joshua . . . Give or Take the Land.” *Interpretation* 66 (2012) 164–75.
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- Dozeman, Thomas B. “The Book of Joshua in Recent Research.” *Currents in Biblical Research* 15 (2017) 270–88.
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- . “The Truth about Conquest: Joshua as History, Narrative, and Scripture.” *Interpretation* 66 (2012) 129–40.
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