



**Class begins Jan 6, 2025, and concludes April 8**

**Class meets in person:**

- Tuesdays @ 11:00am–12:50pm EST

**Professor.** Dr. Paul S. Evans

**E-mail.** [pevans@mcmaster.ca](mailto:pevans@mcmaster.ca)

**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

## 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

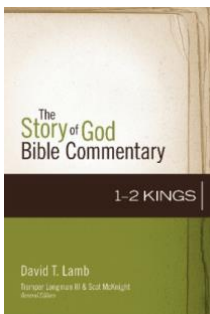
### Being

- 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

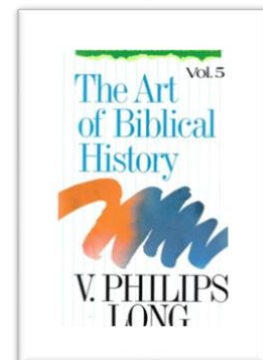
- To be able to interpret 1–2 Kings in its original contexts
- To be able to explain the role of Israel's Kings in Salvation History
- To be able to apply the message of 1–2 Kings to contemporary audiences

### Required Textbooks:



David T. Lamb. *1–2 Kings*. Story of God Bible Commentary. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2021.

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 Hurlburt Family Bookstore located beside the entrance to the Nathaniel H. Parker Memorial Chapel of McMaster Divinity College. To purchase in advance, you may contact the bookstore manager, Bernice Quek, by phone at 416.620.2934 or 416.668.3434 (mobile); or by email at [books@readon.ca](mailto:books@readon.ca). The Hurlburt Family Bookstore also carries other books and merchandise and is open throughout the academic year during posted hours.

### **Course Requirements**

**I. Formal Assignments:** *The assignments and their weights are as follows:*

**A. Reading - 10% - Due April 8, 2025 (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 Feb 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 Mar 4: 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: April 8: 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 April 1: 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

**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 **April 11** 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, for example, the following: NRSVue (2022), TEV/GNB/GNT (1976), CEV (1995), NLT (1996), NIV (2011), and the CEB (2011).

### **AODA**

In accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), the content of this course is intended to be accessible to all students who are enrolled in the course, including those with disabilities. If a student requires accommodation to participate fully in this course, that student is to contact SAS at McMaster University, who will then work directly with the McMaster Divinity College Registrar to negotiate reasonably appropriate accommodation for the student. The MDC Registrar will communicate with faculty regarding necessary accommodations. Please note that an accommodation is not retroactive and must be requested in advance to allow sufficient time for implementation.

### **Academic Honesty:**

Academic dishonesty is not qualitatively different from other types of dishonesty. It consists of misrepresenting the ownership of written work by deception or by other fraudulent means. In an academic setting this may include any number of forms such as: copying or using unauthorized aids in tests, examinations; plagiarism, i.e., submitting work that is not one's own (regardless of the means of its production, including AI) but passing it off as if it is; submitting work for credit in a course for which credit is being or has already been given, unless the previously submitted work was presented as such to the instructor of the second course and has been deemed acceptable for credit by the instructor of that course; aiding and abetting another student's dishonesty; giving false information for the purposes of gaining admission or credit; giving false information for the purposes of obtaining deferred examinations or extension of deadlines; forging or falsifying McMaster University or McMaster Divinity College documents.

**A special note about AI:** You are expected to do your own thinking and to write your own papers, etc., and not to have AI do this work for you. There may be value in using an AI tool to help you locate and collate resources or to help you "tidy up" your English grammar, usage, and mechanics, especially if English is not your native language. However, using AI to create content for you and then submitting that content as if you created it is considered plagiarism (i.e., submitting work that is not one's own as if it is one's own) and is a violation of the academic honesty policy.

### Class Schedule

Wk	Date	Content	Assignment Due
1	Jan 7	Introduction to the book of Kings	--
2	Jan 14	1 Kgs 1-2 - The Death of David and Installation of Solomon	--
3	Jan 21	1 Kgs 3-10 - Solomon in all his glory	--
4	Jan 28	1 Kgs 11-14 - The Kingdom Splits	--
5	Feb 4	1 Kgs 15-16 - Early kings of Israel and Judah	*Critical Book Review due Oct 4
6	Feb 11	1 Kgs 17-19 - Elijah	--
7	Feb 18	NO CLASSES	
8	Feb 25	1 Kgs 20-22 - Ahab and Jehoshaphat	--
	Mar 4	2 Kgs 1-10 - Elisha to Jehu	* Character Study due Mar 4
9	Mar 11	2 Kgs 11-16 - Athaliah to Ahaz	--
10	Mar 18	2 Kgs 17-20 - The Fall of Samaria and the Reign of Hezekiah	--
11	Mar 25	2 Kgs 21-23 - Manasseh to Josiah	
12	April 1	2 Kgs 24-25 - The Fall of Jerusalem and the Babylonian Exile	* Major Assignment due Apr 1
13	April 8	The Theology of the Book of Kings	* Reflective Paper and Reading Report due Apr 8

**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.

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

### **III. Comments**



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