EXEGESIS OF JOSHUA:
INHERITING THE LAND OF PROMISE

(OT 221)

Course Description:

This course will examine the book of Joshua with an eye to understanding its major themes and using them in exposition in a Christian ministry context. After considering various introductory matters, the course will proceed in a verse-by-verse and paragraph-by-paragraph manner. Special attention will be given to (1) distinctive themes in Joshua, (2) their links with other Old Testament themes, and (3) their relevance in the modern world. Special attention also will be given to proper methods of exegesis and ways of reading a text.

Course Goals:

Upon successful completion of this course, each student will have demonstrated a proper grasp of

1. The overall structure and content of the book of Joshua.
2. The major theological and critical issues in the book.
3. Proper ways of interpreting and using the book of Joshua in the present day.
4. Good research, exegetical, and reading skills.

In addition, the course seeks to stimulate in students a new appreciation for the message of this book and to hear God's word for today speaking through it.

Required Textbooks:

1. The Bible.

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<tr>
<th>FORMAL-EQUIVALENCE VERSIONS</th>
<th>DYNAMIC-EQUIVALENCE VERSIONS</th>
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<tr>
<td>New American Standard Bible</td>
<td>New International Version</td>
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<tr>
<td>New King James Version</td>
<td>Tanakh (New Jewish Publication Society Version)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revised Standard Version</td>
<td>Contemporary English Version</td>
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<td>English Standard Version</td>
<td>New Living Translation</td>
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A dynamic-equivalence version is recommended for one-sitting readings of the book, and a formal-equivalence version is recommended for in-depth study, including use in class. Use of a Hebrew Bible is encouraged for those who have studied the language, but not required.

2. One of the following:*
   OR

   *You are encouraged to purchase both commentaries as basic building blocks of a personal library on the book of Joshua, although only one—of your choice—is required.

Course Requirements:

1. **Reading, Class Preparation, and Discussion (10%)**

   Daily discussion will be based upon the readings for each class; you are to do all readings prior to coming to class. You will be reading the book of Joshua three times in its entirety, as well as the entire commentary by Hess or 300 pages of Howard’s. You will account for this reading by the forms attached to the syllabus. Your grade here will be determined by degree of completion of the reading assignments, and class attendance, participation, and interaction.

   You are to read through the book of Joshua at one sitting two separate times before the course begins. A dynamic equivalence translation is recommended for such reading. The third reading will come in the day-to-day schedule, where you must give a slow, careful reading of the assigned passage for each day prior to class. A formal-equivalence translation is recommended for this. In this manner, you should acquire a broad acquaintance with the narrative sweep of the books and also be prepared to discuss each passage in some depth on a day-to-day basis. You must also read the relevant portions of Hess or Howard each day prior to class time.

2. **Original Outline (10%)**

   The process for producing this outline is to proceed in three steps. First, the book must be read through at least once in one sitting. (You should have already done this twice before the course began.) You may want to review the overall book again prior to beginning work on the outline.
Second, you are to produce an original one-sentence statement of the book’s primary theme. That is, you are to compose your own complete, well-worded sentence that encapsulates the entire message of the book.

Third, you are to outline the entire book, using something (a word, a phrase) from your statement of theme in every major heading (i.e., the first-level headings, which use Roman numerals), and wherever practicable elsewhere. This is to be a detailed, original outline, covering at least two pages (typed, single spaced), and is to include inclusive chapter and verse references for every line of the outline, as in the following example:

“3.a: The Inheritance of the Daughters of Zelophehad (17:3-6).”

The outline must consist of three levels, the highest dealing with the book’s main sections (ranging in length from two to ten chapters), the middle level dealing usually—but not necessarily always—with the chapter level, and the lowest level dealing with the main chapter subsections. You may not consult a commentary or other outside source for this. Please resist automatically following any outlines included in your Bible itself, as well. This outline should reflect your own careful interaction with the flow and logic of the text itself—its broad contours and the details of its terrain.

3. Term Papers (40%)

Two term papers are required in the course. The first is to be a topical paper, and the second is to be exegetical (from Joshua 24:14-28). Instructions for both types of papers are found at the end of the syllabus.

4. Worksheets (30 %)

Four worksheets based on individual passages or topics are due on the dates indicated below. These will explore specific issues of exegesis, interpretation, theology, etc. The will be handed out in class.

Integrative Project (10%)

This is an open-book essay, and it will introduce the major themes and message of the book of Joshua, with an adult Sunday School class as the target audience. The essay should be capable of being used as the basis for one of the opening sessions of a Sunday School series on the book, and it should be written with the purpose of convincing people of the importance of this book and its relevance to Christians. It should make people want to attend the entire series and to study the book.

The essay must include the following elements:

1. A statement of the book’s primary overarching theme, with detailed support.
2. Development of 3–4 subsidiary themes or important issues, with detailed support.
3. A statement of why a Christian should study the book of Joshua, with detailed support.
You may use your Bible and any notes you choose. This is not to be a research paper (no footnotes and no references to secondary literature). But, you must include supporting references from the Bible whenever possible. You are to do your own work, without consulting any outside resources except for your own notes and Bible, and it is to be based upon the text of Joshua itself.

**Grading Summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Reading, etc.</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>Outline</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term Papers</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<td>Worksheets</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Integrative Project</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>100%</td>
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**Grading Scale**

- 93-100% A
- 86-92% B
- 78-85% C
- 70-77% D
- 0 - 69% F

**Note:** Because of the obvious educational benefits, as well as common courtesy to others, regular and on-time class attendance is expected. Unexcused absences beyond two class periods (segments) will result in a grade reduction. An average student should expect to invest ca. 120 hours in this class in order to achieve an average grade of “B.” Individual outcomes, of course, may vary.

**Note on cell phones:** Please turn these off—or set to “vibrate” or “silent ring”—during class.
## COURSE SCHEDULE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Daily Topic</th>
<th>Homework Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept 2</td>
<td><strong>A</strong> Course Introduction</td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong> Joshua (twice; one sitting each time) <em>(Pre-course assignment)</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Introduction to the book of Joshua</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>B</strong> Introduction to the book of Joshua</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>C</strong> Joshua 1:1</td>
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<td>Sept 3</td>
<td><strong>A</strong> Joshua 1:2-5</td>
<td><strong>Due:</strong> Original Outline</td>
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<td><strong>B</strong> Joshua 1:6-9</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>C</strong> Joshua 1:6-9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 4</td>
<td><strong>A</strong> Joshua 2:1-24</td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong> “The Student, the Fish, and Agassiz” <em>(on Web site)</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>B</strong> Joshua 3:1-13</td>
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<td><strong>C</strong> Joshua 3:14-17</td>
<td><strong>Due:</strong> Worksheet 1</td>
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<td>Sept 5</td>
<td><strong>A</strong> Joshua 4:1-24</td>
<td><strong>Due:</strong> Worksheet 2</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>B</strong> Joshua 5:1-15</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>C</strong> Joshua 6:1-27</td>
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<td>Sept 8</td>
<td><strong>A</strong> Joshua 7:1-8:29</td>
<td><strong>Due:</strong> Topical Paper</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>B</strong> Joshua 8:30-35</td>
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<td><strong>C</strong> Joshua 9:1-27</td>
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<td>Sept 9</td>
<td><strong>A</strong> Joshua 10:1-11</td>
<td><strong>Due:</strong> Worksheet 3</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>B</strong> Joshua 10:12-15</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>C</strong> Joshua 10:12-15</td>
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<td>Sep 10</td>
<td><strong>A</strong> Joshua 10:16-43</td>
<td><strong>Due:</strong> Worksheet 4</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>B</strong> Joshua 11:1-12:24</td>
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<td><strong>C</strong> Joshua 13:1-17:18</td>
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<td>Sep 11</td>
<td><strong>A</strong> Joshua 18:1-21:45</td>
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<td><strong>B</strong> Joshua 22:1-34</td>
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<td><strong>C</strong> Joshua 23:1-16</td>
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<td>Sep 12</td>
<td><strong>A</strong> Joshua 24:1-33</td>
<td><strong>Due:</strong> Exegetical Paper</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>B</strong> Review</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>C</strong> INTEGRATIVE PROJECT</td>
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A. Guidelines for Topical Paper

The text of this paper is to consist of 7-8 pages (excluding title page, endnotes, bibliography, etc.). The due date is indicated in the schedule above. This paper is due at the beginning of class time on the day assigned. Late papers will be penalized proportionately.

This paper is to be a research paper on any topic of interest to you. The professor must approve any topic not listed below. Since this is a research paper, you must consult good outside sources to complement your reading of the Bible itself. Steer clear of simple lay-oriented sources, such as study-Bible notes, sermon or conference notes, Bible handbooks, etc., and use more detailed tools as Bible dictionaries and encyclopedias, exegetical commentaries, first-hand source materials, etc.

See also the guidelines for style and formatting below.

Sample Topics:

1) **Word studies of significant words or word groups.**
   Examples: *erets* [earth, land], *maqom* [place], etc.; *natan* [give]; *yarash* [possess, dispossess], *nahal* [inherit], etc.; *dibber* [speak], *amar* [say], etc.; *haram* [devote to destruction, utterly destroy]; *nkh* [strike], *laqad* [capture], etc.; *nuah* [rest]

2) **Background or apologetic studies.**
   Examples: the international scene during the days of Joshua; peoples in Joshua [e.g., see the list in 3:10]; archaeological issues related to cities such as Jericho, Ai, Hazor, etc. [best to choose one]; Joshua’s “long day” [see Joshua 10]

3) **Text-based papers**
   Topical paper dealing with a larger issue, such as holy war; patterns in the land distributions; covenant-making in Joshua; holiness in Joshua; treatment of miracles in Joshua; question of incomplete conquests.
B. Guidelines for Exegetical Paper (Joshua 24:14-28)

a. **Text.** Write out the text of the passage, including verse numbers and indications of your own paragraph divisions, from a formal-equivalence translation. *(1 page)* NO COMMENTARY NEEDED.

b. **Historical background.** Focus here is on information not directly gathered from the text itself or its literary contexts (i.e., things such as dates, international situation, etc.). Outside sources (such as Bible commentaries, dictionaries, encyclopedias, or histories) *should* be used here. *(½–1 page)*

c. **Literary Context.** (1) Discuss the *placement* of the passage in its immediate and larger contexts within the book, and (2) justify the paragraph divisions you have provided above. That is, how does it flow logically from the preceding verses in chapter 24, as well as from the larger context of chapters 22 and 23? Be as specific and thorough as you can here. *NO COMMENTARY NEEDED.* *(1 page)*

d. **Paragraph Analysis.** Identify the theme of each paragraph in one sentence per paragraph. This may be a key sentence taken directly from the text or a statement in your own words of the paragraph’s theme. Give the reasons (in detail) for your judgment in each case. *NO COMMENTARY NEEDED.* *(1 page)*

e. **Verse Analysis.** Comment here on important features of individual verses. Do not merely summarize each verse or re-state the obvious. Do comment on the flow of the argument or story-line from verse to verse, including commenting upon why certain things may be stated in the particular way that they are, why certain statements are included where they are, why there may be omissions of expected materials, etc. Comment as needed on important theological words or ideas. Notice where else in the book or in other Biblical books certain words or ideas are found. You may use concordances or theological wordbooks here, including any cross-referencing guide you like (such as that found within most Bibles themselves), but, you may not use a commentary here. Do your own work here. *NO COMMENTARY NEEDED.* *(2–3 pages)*

f. **Theme.** Provide a one-sentence statement of the theme of the entire text (i.e., what is the author’s main point in this section?). This should be based upon the various stages of your detailed analysis above, especially building upon your statements of theme for each paragraph. Please explain the basis for your decision in detail. *NO COMMENTARY NEEDED.* *(1/2 page)*

g. **Outline.** An “exegetical” (“historical”) outline of the text, reflecting the theme. This is to be similar to the type of outline you produced for the entire book of Joshua. See the sample at the end of the syllabus for an example of such an outline. *NO COMMENTARY NEEDED.* *(1/2 page)*
h. **Homiletical (sermon) outline.** This should derive from the exegetical outline. See the sample at the end of the syllabus for an example of such an outline. Please also include a one-sentence re-statement of the theme (point “f.” above), a desired audience response, and a concluding challenge. NO COMMENTARY NEEDED. (1/2 page)

**Note:** Page numbers here are suggested guides only. They may be adjusted as needed, provided the asked-for material is covered adequately within the confines of 8–9 pages. **Exegetical papers must be no longer than 9 pages** (excluding title page, endnotes, bibliography, etc.).

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### C. Style and Formatting Guidelines for All Papers

The papers are to be neatly typed, doubled-spaced, using no larger than a 12-point font. Please number the pages, use a “ragged right” margin (i.e., not justified right), and staple the pages together. You may use any standard scheme of footnotes, end notes, or text notes found in Kate L. Turabian’s *A Manual for Writers*, but you must use it consistently, and you must provide full and proper documentation for any sources you use, including a separate bibliography appended to the paper.

When citing a Bible dictionary or encyclopedia, be sure to list the author of the individual article you are consulting, the title of the article, and the rest of the pertinent information following (dictionary name and editor, and publication information, including page numbers).

You must follow standard academic writing procedures, including writing in your own words, giving proper credit when quoting or referring to material from another work, and writing in good English. If you have trouble with writing of English, you are expected to have your papers proofread by someone conversant in English writing skills **prior to** turning in your papers.

Failure to pay attention to matters in this section will result in a reduction in the paper’s grade.
READING REPORT

By affixing my name below, I affirm that I have read all of the assigned reading for this class period, which consists of the following:

This was done

Completely and on time _____
Completely, but late _____
Partially and on time _____
Partially, and late _____

NAME (printed) ____________________________ DATE: __________}

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