



BIBB9401 BIBLICAL BACKGROUNDS IN INTERPRETATION

**New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
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Fall Semester 2017**

NOBTS Mission Statement

The mission of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries.

Course Purpose, Core Value Focus, and Curriculum Competencies

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary has five core values: Doctrinal Integrity, Spiritual Vitality, Mission Focus, Characteristic Excellence, and Servant Leadership. This course addresses Doctrinal Integrity in that it enhances the student's ability to interpret the Bible accurately. Characteristic Excellence is addressed in that the student should exhibit excellence in the ability to interpret Scripture. Servant Leadership is modeled in classroom demeanor. This course primarily addresses the competency of Biblical Exposition by preparing the student to interpret and communicate the Bible accurately. The 2017-18 emphasis on **Servant Leadership** will be addressed through careful examination of Biblical principles in interpretation, highlighting aspects of biblical authority and infallibility, and maintaining a focus on the Scriptural aspects of the Baptist Faith and Message (2000).

Course Description

This seminar is designed to address the hermeneutic principles and resources for integrating biblical backgrounds materials in interpreting the Old and New Testaments. Resources from archaeology, historical geography, social and cultural settings, Ancient Near Eastern and Greco-Roman literature, and others will be explored. Current issues and discoveries in the field of archaeology which supplement and illuminate the study of the Bible are examined.

Student Outcomes: Goals and Objectives

1. The student will comprehend the roles of historical, archaeological, socio-cultural, and literary background materials in the interpretation of the Old and New Testaments.
2. The student will value the necessity of bridging the temporal and cultural gaps between contemporary society and the biblical period.
3. The student will read extensively in the primary literature of the Ancient Near East and Greco-Roman worlds.
4. The student will apply his or her knowledge and comprehension of the background of the Bible including: archaeology, historical geography, religion, manners and customs, historical and social setting, and the literature of the ancient world to the process of interpreting and communicating the Bible accurately.

Course Textbooks

BenTor, Amnon and R. Greenberg. *The Archaeology of Ancient Israel*

Charlesworth, James, ed. *Jesus and Archaeology*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006.

Kenneth Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*. Eerdmans, 2003.

Hess, Richard. S. *Israelite Religions: An Archaeological and Biblical Survey*. Hoerth, Alfred. *Archaeology and the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009.

John Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament: Introducing the Conceptual World of the Old Testament* Baker Academic, 2006.

Jeffers, James. *The Greco-Roman World of the New Testament Era: Exploring the Background of Early Christianity*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 1999.

Magness, Jodi. *The Archaeology of the Holy Land: From the Destruction of Solomon's Temple Until the Muslim Conquest*.

Mazar, Amihai. *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible: 10,000 - 586 BCE*. Anchor Bible, 1992.

Dever, William G. *What Did the Biblical Writers Know & When Did They Know It? What Archaeology Can Tell Us about the Reality of Ancient Israel*.

DeSilva, David. *Honor, Patronage, Kinship, and Purity: Unlocking New Testament Culture*.

Student Requirements

Book and Journal Article Review Guidelines

Each Student will compile an Annotated Bibliography of 25 journal articles and 25 quality internet sites for the study of biblical backgrounds and the study of the Old and New Testaments.

Book Reviews will be evaluated on the following criteria:

1. Grammar and Style: spelling, sentence and paragraph development; punctuation; conformity to Turabian
2. Summary: A fair, concise presentation of the book's / journal article's content
3. Evaluation: A balanced, critical assessment of the book's / journal article's strengths and weaknesses
4. Research Insight: Awareness of the book's / journal article's interpretive significance and place in the Prophetic literature

Each of the four areas will count as 25% of the grade for the book reviews.

Preliminary Paper

Each student will write an analytical and informed opinion paper concerning their view(s) on the roles and relationship between Biblical Backgrounds and Biblical Studies. These will be discussed in the first seminar session.

Research Papers

For the research paper assignments, the student is to write two research papers on student selected topics of critical issues in the study of biblical backgrounds and the study of the Old and New Testaments (one OT related, one NT related, and/or one related to the Interbiblical Period). The research papers are to be about 25 pages in length, thoroughly covering the selected topic. The paper must be written according to the rubric below and posted in the *Group Everybody* File Exchange on Blackboard **no later than one week before the class session** in which it is presented. Papers will be presented, evaluated, and defended at the class session as indicated on the Seminar Schedule. Presentations will be spread out over the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th sessions.

A response to the paper is to be presented to the writer of the paper in writing and to the class orally by another student who will be assigned. Like the paper, the response will be defended in class. Papers and responses may be chosen by sending in two choices to the professor before the first class session. Assignments will be made to cover all the papers.

Papers will be evaluated on the following criteria:

1. Grammar and Style: Spelling; sentence and paragraph development; punctuation; conformity to Turabian; use of quotations (use them sparingly to clarify your analysis and interpretation).
2. Clarity and Coherence: Organization; logical development; overall sense of the paper.
3. Research: Bibliography; type and variety of sources (primary, secondary monographs, journal articles, etc.); [Most bibliographic entries should be accompanied by footnote citations].
4. Interpretive awareness and insight: Factual accuracy; awareness of context and connection to other material (i.e., continuity/discontinuity; cause/effect; relationships/comparisons; sensitivity to context; awareness of persons, movements, or forces, historical and otherwise).
5. Analysis and Evaluation: Going beyond the mere reporting of facts to include explanation, interpretation, analysis of material; evaluation of the material at hand; demonstration that you have done a thorough critique of the material that you have researched.

Seminar Schedule

Aug 12 Meeting One Archaeology & Interpretive Methodology

800-100am Introduction - prof

1000-1150am

Book Reviews – See also Colloquium Syllabus for BISR9303

Dever, William G. *What Did the Biblical Writers Know & When Did They Know It? What Archaeology Can Tell Us about the Reality of Ancient Israel.*

Mazar, Amihai. *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible, 10,000-586 BCE*

Sept 1 Meeting Two

Papers: The Roles and Relationship between Biblical Backgrounds and Biblical Studies.

Sept 15 Meeting Three ANE Archaeology and the Old Testament

Book Reviews – See also Colloquium Syllabus for BISR9303

BenTor, Amnon and R. Greenberg. *The Archaeology of Ancient Israel*

Hoffmeier, James. *The Archaeology of the Bible.* London: Lion UK, 2008.

Sept 29 Meeting Four

Research Papers - Archaeology & Biblical Backgrounds in the Interpretation of the Old Testament

Oct 13 Meeting Five ANE & Greco-Roman Religions

Book Reviews

Dever, William G. *Did God Have a Wife?: Archaeology and Folk Religion in Ancient Israel*

Hess, Richard. *Israelite Religions: An Archaeological and Biblical Survey.*

Klingbell, Gerald. *Bridging the Gap: Ritual and Ritual Texts in the Bible.* BBR Supp 1.

Johnson, Luke Timothy. *Among the Gentiles: Greco-Roman Religion and Christianity.*

Klauck, Hans Yosef. *The Religious Context of Early Christianity: A Guide to Graeco-Roman Religions.*

Oct 27 Meeting 6

Research Papers – The Bible in the Context of ANE and Greco-Roman Religions

Nov 10 Meeting Seven Greco-Roman Archaeology and the New Testament

Book Reviews

Horsley, Richard A. *Archaeology, History, and Society in Galilee: The Social Context of*

Jesus and the Rabbis.

Dec 1 Meeting Eight

Research Papers - Archaeology and New Testament

Interpretation

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HISTORY

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- Kitchens, Kenneth. *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006.
- Josephus, Flavius. *Antiquities of the Jews: Complete and Unabridged*. CreateSpace, 2013.
- Niswonger, Richard. *New Testament History*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992.
- Provan, Iain, V. Philips Long, Tremper Longman III. *A Biblical History of Israel*. Louisville: John Knox Press, 2003 (ISBN 0-664-22090-8).

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- Levy, Thomas, ed. *The Archaeology of Society in the Holy Land*. New York: Facts on File, 1995.
- Maeir, A.M. and P. de Miroschedji, eds. *"I Will Speak The Riddle of Ancient Times": Archaeological and Historical Studies in Honor of Amihai Mazar on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Birthday*. 2 vols. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2006.
- Mazar, Amihai. *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible, 10,000-586 BCE*. New York: Doubleday, 1990.
- McRay, John. *Archaeology and the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008.
- Na'aman, Nadav. *Ancient Israel and Its Neighbors: Interaction and Counteraction*. Collected Essays, Volume 1. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2005.
- _____. *Canaan in the Second Millennium B.C.E.*. Collected Essays, volume 2. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2005.
- Reed, Jonathan. *Archaeology and the Galilean Jesus: A Re-examination of the Evidence*. Trinity Press, 2002.
- Stern, Ephraim. *Archaeology and the Land of the Bible, II: The Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian Periods (732-332 BC)*. New York: Doubleday, 2001.

SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS SETTINGS

- Adkins, Lesley, & Roy Adkins. *Handbook to Life in Ancient Greece*. New York: Oxford, 1998.
- _____. *Handbook to Life in Ancient Rome*. New York: Oxford, 1998.
- Albertz, Rainer. *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period*. Vol. 1: From the Beginnings to the End of the Monarchy. Trans. John Bowden. OTL. Louisville: WJK, 1994.
- Bailey, Kenneth. *Jesus Through Mediterranean Eyes: Cultural Studies in the Gospels*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008.
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- Ferguson, Everett. *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.
- Hess, Richard. S. *Israelite Religions: An Archaeological and Biblical Survey*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007.
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- Miller, P.D., Hanson, P.D., and S.D. McBride. *Ancient Israelite Religion: Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2009.
- Morris, Ian. *Death-Ritual and Social Structure in Classical Antiquity*. Key Themes in Ancient History. Cambridge: University Press, 1992.
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- Miller, Robert, II. *Chieftains of the Highland Canaan: A History of Israel in the 12th and 11th Centuries B.C.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005.
- Vanderkam, James and Peter Flint. *The Meaning of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Their Significance For Understanding the Bible, Judaism, Jesus, and Christianity*. San Francisco: HarperOne, 2004.

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ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

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Bierling, Neal. *Giving Goliath His Due: New Archaeological Light on the Philistines*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994.

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Moab, Edom, Ammon, Midian

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