



LEAVELL COLLEGE

NEW ORLEANS BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

BSCM2300-30 Biblical Backgrounds

Fall 2019/20- Term 201

Thursday, 6:00 – 7:50 pm

Joe Mira, Mdiv
Adjunct Professor
Email: joemira@nccmiami.com
Cell: 786-261-5325

The mission of Leavell College 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.

Core Value

The seminary has five core values.

1. **Doctrinal Integrity:** Knowing that the Bible is the Word of God, we believe it, teach it, proclaim it, and submit to it. This course addresses Doctrinal Integrity specifically by preparing students to grow in understanding and interpreting of the Bible.
2. **Spiritual Vitality:** We are a worshiping community emphasizing both personal spirituality and gathering together as a Seminary family for the praise and adoration of God and instruction in His Word. Spiritual Vitality is addressed by reminding students that a dynamic relationship with God is vital for effective ministry.
3. **Mission Focus:** We are not here merely to get an education or to give one. We are here to change the world by fulfilling the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries. This course addresses Mission Focus by helping students understand the biblical foundations for fulfilling the Great Commission and the Great Commandments.
4. **Characteristic Excellence:** What we do, we do to the utmost of our abilities and resources as a testimony to the glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Characteristic Excellence is addressed by preparing students to excel in their ability to interpret Scripture, which is foundational to effective ministry.
5. **Servant Leadership:** We follow the model of Jesus and exert leadership and influence through the nurture and encouragement of those around us. Servant Leadership is modeled by classroom deportment.

The core value focus for this academic year is *Spiritual Vitality*.

Course Description

This course familiarizes the student with the geographical, historical, social, and cultural backgrounds of the Old and New Testament periods. The emphasis is on examination of relevant

biblical, extra-biblical, and archaeological data of these periods in order to understand the context of the biblical books.

General Education Competencies (GECs)

Leavell College has identified four General Education Competencies:

1. Critical Thinking
2. Oral Communication
3. Written Communication
4. Quantitative Reasoning

This course addresses GEC #1.

Bachelor of Arts in Christian Ministry Program Student Learning Outcomes (BACM SLOs)

Leavell College has identified three program Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Biblical Interpretation
2. Service and Leadership
3. Historical and Theological Interpretation

This course addresses BACM SLOs 1 and 3.

Course Student Learning Outcomes (CSLOs)

At the conclusion of the semester, the student will be able to:

1. Appreciate the geography of the Old and New Testament times;
2. Understand the historical background of the biblical times;
3. Discuss the social background of the biblical times;
4. Recognize the value of understanding the religions, cults, and philosophies prevalent during the biblical times;
5. Understand a basic chronology of the biblical times; and
6. Discern the importance of understanding the background information in order to interpret Scripture properly.

Course Texts

Wilson, Marvin R. *Our Father Abraham: Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990.

Recommended Texts

Jewish Publication Society. *The Jewish Study Bible: Tanakh Translation*, ed. Michael Fishbane. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Keener, Craig S. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*. Grand Rapids: IVP, 2014.

Walton, John H., and Victor H. Matthews. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: IVP, 2000.

Course Requirements and Grading

1. Weekly Textbook Reading Guide: 10% of total grade. *This assignment relates to GEC 1, BACM SLO 3, and CSLO 1, 4, 5.* The student will read a chapter each week from Wilson's *Our Father Abraham*. Questions will be provided.

2. Article Reading Guide: 10% of total grade. *This assignment relates to GEC 1, BACM SLO 3, and CSLO 1, 5.* The student will read several articles or essays throughout the semester as assigned by the professor. Questions will be provided.

3. Background Studies: 40% of total grade. *This assignment relates to GEC 1, BACM SLO 1, and CSLO 1-5.* Each student will:

- (1) Examine four (4) assigned biblical texts,
- (2) Identify the background components of the passage,
- (3) Determine the interpretative significance which the background components provide,
- (4) Develop a detailed teaching outline for the passage which intentionally highlights the background material as essential to understanding and applying the biblical text to a contemporary audience.

Background components to consider include, but are not limited to, the following: Jewish cultural and religious customs; geography notations, time notations, meanings of personal and geographical names, specific historical references, and historical flashbacks and/or flash-forwards in Jewish history.

The assignment will include (1) a title page, (2) 1-2 pages of expositional outline, and (3) a select bibliography. All background material noted in the outline will be footnoted.

Due date: Thursday in Weeks 5, 8, 13, and 17.

Suggested resources: (a) *IVP Bible Background Commentary: OT*; (b) *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Background Commentary*; (c) *Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary*; (d) *Anchor Bible Dictionary*.

4. Exams: 40% of total grade. The student will complete a mid-term and final exam.

5. Course Evaluation:

- a. Weekly Reading Reviews –20%
 - b. Background Studies – 40%
 - c. Mid-Term Exam – 20%
 - d. Final Exam – 20%
- Total – 100%

6. Grading Scale: As outlined in the Leavell College catalog will be utilized:

- A = 93-100
- B = 85-92
- C = 77-84
- D = 70-76
- F = 69 and below

Additional Course Information

Plagiarism Policy: A high standard of personal integrity is expected of all students. Copying another person’s work, submitting downloaded material without proper references, submitting material without properly citing the source, submitting the same material for credit in more than one course, and other such forms of dishonesty are strictly forbidden. Although anything cited in three sources is considered public domain, we require that all sources be cited. Any infraction may result in failing the assignment and the course. Any infraction will be reported to the Dean of Leavell College for further action.

Technology Assistance: If you have any questions about Blackboard, SelfServe, or ITC services, please access the ITC page on our website: www.NOBTS.edu/itc/ - General NOBTS technical help information is provided on this website.

Course Outline

BSCM 2300 – BIBLICAL BACKGROUNDS: <i>READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS SCHEDULE</i>			
Week	Dates	Lectures	Assignments
1	August 22	Introduction: Why Biblical Backgrounds?	
2	August 29	Ethnicity	
3	September 5	Methodology	<i>Our Father Abraham – Preface & 1</i> Dever – Archaeology & Ideology
4	September 12	Methodology	<i>Our Father Abraham – 2 & 3</i> Davies, “What separates a Minimalist from a Maximalist? Not Much

5	September 19	Philosophy & Worldview	<i>Our Father Abraham – 4</i> Background Study 1: Genesis 17
6	September 26	Philosophy & Worldview	<i>Our Father Abraham – 5 & 6</i> Reid, “Minimalism and Biblical History”
7	October 3	Conceptions of the Divine	<i>Our Father Abraham – 7 & 8</i>
8	October 10	Conceptions of the Divine	Background Study 2: 1 Samuel 1 Kitchen, “The Patriarchal Age: Myth or History?”
		Mid-Term Exam	
9	October 14-18	Fall Break- No Class	
10	October 24	Conceptions of the Divine	<i>Our Father Abraham – 10</i>
11	October 31	Conceptions of the Divine	<i>Our Father Abraham – 12</i> Krahmalkov, “Exodus Itinerary Confirmed by Egyptian Evidence.”
12	November 7	Sacred Geography	<i>Our Father Abraham – 13</i>
13	November 14	Social Backgrounds	Background Study 3: John 4
14	November 21	Social Backgrounds	<i>Our Father Abraham – 14</i> Wood, “Did the Israelites Conquer Jericho?”
15	November 25-29	Thanksgiving Break – No Assignments!	
16	December 5	Review	<i>Our Father Abraham – 15</i> Background Study 4: Revelation 3:14-22
	December 12	Final Exam– Thursday, December 12 @ 6:00 pm	

Selected Bibliography

- Aharoni, Y. *The Archaeology of the Land of Israel*. Trans. Anson Rainey. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1982.
- _____. *The Land of the Bible: A Historical Geography*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1979.
- Aharoni, Y. and Avi-Yonah, M. *The Macmillan Bible Atlas*. NY: Macmillan, 1968, rev. 1977. 3rd Revised Edition, A. Rainey, Z. Safrai, 1991.
- Albright, William F. *The Archaeology of Palestine*. Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1949, rev. 1960, reprinted by Peter Smith Publishers, 1971.
- Avi-Yonah, Michael. *The Holy Land: From the Persian to the Arab Conquest (536 BC-AD 640)*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1966.
- Avi-Yonah, Michael and Stern, Ephraim ed. *Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavation in the Holy Land*, 4 vols. Jerusalem: Massada Press, 1975.
- Baez Camargo, Gonzalo. *Archaeological Commentary on the Bible*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1984.
- Baly, Dennis. *The Geography of the Bible*. NY: Harper, 1957.
- Ben-Tor, Amnon, ed. *The Archaeology of Ancient Israel*. NY: Yale, 1991.
- Biran, Abraham, ed. *Temples and High Places in Biblical Times*. Jerusalem: Nelson Glueck School of Biblical Archaeology, 1981.
- Bright, John. *A History of Israel*. 3rd ed. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1981.
- Bruce, F.F. *Israel and the Nations*. Grand Rapids: W.B.Eerdmans, 1969. Rev 1998.
- Cleave, Richard. *Pictorial Archive: ANE History; Student Map Manual*. Jerusalem, 1975.
- Craigie, Peter. *Ugarit and the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983.
- DeVries, LaMoine. *Cities of the Biblical World*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997.
- Dothan, Trude. *The Philistines and Their Material Culture*. NY: Yale, 1981.
- Dothan, M. and T. *The Sea Peoples*. Jerusalem: IES, 1992.
- The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary*. (rev. ed.) Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987. Rev. 1999.

- Finegan, Jack. *Archaeological History of the Ancient Middle East*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1979.
- _____. *The Archaeology of the New Testament: The Life of Jesus and the Beginning of the Early Church*. Princeton: University Press, 1969,
- _____. *The Archaeology of the New Testament: The Mediterranean World of the Early Christian Apostles*. Boulder, COL Westview Press, 1981.
- Finkelstein, Israel. *The Archaeology of the Israelite Settlement*. Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1989.
- Gardiner, Sir Alan. *Egypt of the Pharaohs*. Oxford: University Press, 1961.
- Gower, Ralph. *The New Manners and Customs of Bible Times*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1987.
- Hallo, W.W. and Simpson, W.K. *The Ancient Near East: A History*. NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1971.
- Harrison,, R.K., ed. *Major Cities of the Biblical World*. Nashville: Nelson, 1985.
- Hoerth, A. *Archaeology and the Old Testament*. Baker, 1998.
- Hoerth, A.; G. Mattingly; and E. Yamauchi; eds. *Peoples of the Old Testament World*, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994.
- The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*. NY, London: Tyndale Publishers, 1980, 1986.
- Kenyon, Kathleen. *Archaeology in the Holy Lands*. NY: Nelson (reprinted), 1960, 1985.
- Kramer, Samuel Noah, ed. *Mythologies of the Ancient World*. Garden City: Doubleday, 1961.
- Lloyd, Seton. *The Archaeology of Mesopotamia: From the Stone Age to the Persian Conquest*. London: Thames & Hudson, 1978.
- McRay, John. *Archaeology and the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991.
- Mazar, Amihai. *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible, 10,000 - 586 B.C.E.* Anchor Bible Reference Library. New York: Doubleday, 1990.
- Moorey, Roger. *Excavation in Palestine*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981.
- Negev, Avraham, ed. *Archaeological Encyclopedia of the Holy Lands*. Jerusalem: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1972.
- Olmstead, A.T. *History of the Assyrian Empire*. Chicago: University Press, 1960

- _____. *History of the Persian Empire*. Chicago: University Press, 1959.
- Pfeiffer, Charles, ed. *The Bible Atlas*. (rev. ed.) Nashville: Broadman, 1979.
- Pritchard, James, ed. *Ancient Near Eastern Texts: Relating to the Old Testament*, 2nd ed., Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955.
- _____. *The Ancient Near East*, vols 1 and 2: *Anthology of Texts and Pictures*, 1958, 1975.
- Redford, Donald. *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times*. Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1992.
- Stiebing, William. *Uncovering the Past: A History of Archaeology*. Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1993.
- Unger, Merrill, *Archaeology of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962.
- _____. *Archaeology of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1954.
- Vanderkam, James. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994.
- Van Der Woude, A.S., gen. ed. *The World of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986.
- Vaux, Roland de. *Ancient Israel*. vol. 1: Social Institutions: vol. 2: Religious Institutions. NY: McGraw-Hill, 1961.
- Vermes, Geza. *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Qumran in Perspective*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977, 1981.
- Wilson, John A. *The Culture of Ancient Egypt*. Chicago: University Press, 1951.
- Wiseman, Donald J. ed. *Peoples of Old Testament Times*. Oxford: University Press, 1973.
- Wright, G. Ernest. *Biblical Archaeology*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1962, 1974.
- Yamauchi, Edwin, and Marvin R. Wilson. *Dictionary of Daily Life in Biblical & Post-Biblical Antiquity*. 4 vols. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2014-2016.
- _____. *Persia and the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990.

Archaeological Encyclopedias

- The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land* --eds. E. Stern, et al. Simon and Schuster, 1992.
- The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Archaeology in the Near East*. eds. E. Meyers. Oxford, 1997.