

INTRODUCTION TO BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS

BSHM5310

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

Biblical Studies Division

Online Course Fall Semester 2015

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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. These values shape both the context and manner in which all curricula are taught, with “doctrinal integrity” and “academic excellence” especially highlighted in this course. This academic year the core value focus is “Mission Focus.”

NOBTS also has seven basic competencies that guide our Masters degree programs: Biblical Exposition, Christian Theological Heritage, Disciple Making, Interpersonal Skills, Servant Leadership, Spiritual & Character Formation, and Worship Leadership. This course addresses the “Biblical Exposition” competency especially helping the student learn to interpret the bible accurately.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course includes a study of the principles of biblical interpretation, an introduction to the major resources available as an aid to biblical interpretation, and an exegetical study of selected passages from the various genres of biblical literature. Some attention is directed to current issues in biblical hermeneutics, but the major focus of the course is practical in nature in that the goal of the course is that the students develop a sound method for exegesis of the biblical texts.

ACADEMIC HONEST POLICY

All graduate and undergraduate NOBTS students, whether on-campus, internet, or extension center students, are expected to adhere to the highest Christian standard of honesty and integrity when completing academic assignments for all courses in every delivery system format. The Bible provides our standard for academic integrity and honesty. This standard applies whether a student is taking tests, quizzes, exams, writing papers, completing Discussion Boards, or any other course requirement.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. The student will be able to understand the principles guiding the exegetical process for biblical interpretation.
2. The student will be able to use appropriate tools, resources, and methods to apply sound exegetical principles toward biblical interpretation.

3. The student will be able to communicate clearly the meaning of the biblical text to a contemporary audience.

Assignment Description:

1. Using the research developed in the Stage One portion of the exegesis paper, write a polished, 7-8 page paper demonstrating the understanding of appropriate principles guiding the exegetical process for the particular genre assigned.
2. Indicate the use of appropriate tools, methods, and resources in the application of sound exegetical principles.
3. Communicate the meaning of the text, keeping in mind the contemporary audience.
4. The paper may take two forms: 1) a ready to deliver, word-for-word, sermon manuscript; 2) a teaching article, such as an article for *Biblical Illustrator*.

DOMAIN	LEVEL	INADEQUATE (0 POINTS)	BASIC (1 POINT)	COMPETENT (2 POINTS)	GOOD (3 POINTS)	EXCELLENT (4 POINTS)
UNDERSTANDING The Student:	Understood the principles guiding the exegetical process for biblical interpretation					
APPLICATION The Student:	Used appropriate tools to apply sound exegetical principles toward biblical interpretation					
COMMUNICATION The Student:	Communicated clearly the meaning of the biblical text to a contemporary audience					

COURSE TEACHING METHODS:

This course is taught totally online and involves readings, projects, quizzes, and Discussion Board interaction between the students and the instructors. The textbook readings cover the knowledge base the student will need in order to become an effective interpreter of the Bible. The student will learn the fundamentals of biblical hermeneutics and how to apply these to the various genres of the Old and New Testaments. The Discussion Boards take the place of regular classroom face-to-face interactions. The writing projects are designed to enable the student to demonstrate mastery of the methodology learned in the course. The quizzes provide the accountability for the student to complete the course textbook readings. Elaborating word studies, background studies, and an exegetical project/paper provide the practical application of

the methodology and principles necessary for the student to develop into a skilled interpreter of the Word of God. This valuable skill will enable the student to minister the Bible as pastor, teacher, missionary, or in any other context of ministry calling.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:

1. *Holy Bible*. In modern translation: RSV, NRSV, NASV, NIV, GNB and NLT
2. Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, 3rd ed. (FS)
3. J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hays, *Grasping God's Word*, 3rd ed., Zondervan, 2012 (DH)
4. Stanley Porter and Beth Stovall, *Biblical Hermeneutics: 5 Views*, Intervarsity Press, 2013. (P&S)

OPTIONAL TEXTBOOKS: Great Resources for Extra Credit Work (see below)

1. Gerald Bray, *Biblical Interpretation: Past and Present* (GB)
2. Klein, Blomberg, and Hubbard, *Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics* (KBH)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:

The following components comprise the student's grade for the course. Grades for each component will be calculated on the basis of the following percentages. Due dates are given in the Course Schedule below.

1. Reading Quizzes (10%) – Students are to read the portions of the required texts by the date specified in the course schedule. A quiz will be opened for the student to take for the section of readings as outlined in the course schedule below and will be taken during the week of the unit covered. These quizzes are open book, but are timed. Due Weekly

2. Discussion Board Participation (10%) – The student will participate in Discussion Board questions designed to supplement the class materials and build community online with the professor and classmates. Length is 100-150 words in your original post and this post is due each week due by the Saturday night of the weekly unit. Be sure to cite your sources informally using author's last name and page in parenthesis. Turabian format is not necessary here. Due weekly

3. Book Report: (10%) - The student will turn in a book review on Porter and Stovall's *Biblical Hermeneutics: 5 Views*. This report will be 6-8 pages single -paced. Define and summarize each of the 5 views. State two weaknesses from opposing views.

4. Background Study (10%) – The historical-critical/grammatical view begins with a review of the historical background of the book being studied. The student will compile a background study about the historical and cultural context for an assigned passage. Students will be given a guide in Blackboard for completing this assignment. Single-spaced, Turabian format, 4-6 pages excluding cover page and bibliography. Please use a minimum of 5-6 sources on this paper. Look at the guides in Blackboard for assistance on ways background studies are written.

The historical background study will include the following:

- 1) Background information on your assigned passage

2) Information on the setting, authorship, readership, date and place of writing of the letter, etc.

3) Information on the critical issues of the passage

4) A discussion of the theological issues covered in the passage. Outside sources (such as Bible commentaries, dictionaries, encyclopedias, or histories) *should* be used here.

5) A section where you focus upon your specific background topic as indicated in the syllabus

5. Word Study (10%) – The historical-critical/grammatical view gives focus to word studies and what words meant in the original context. The student will complete a word study on a word indicated from an assigned text (see the list in this syllabus below). Students will be given a guide in Blackboard for completing this assignment. The paper is to be single-spaced, Turabian format, 2-3 pages excluding the cover page and bibliography. Please use a minimum of 5-6 sources on this paper.

6. Project (40% Total for Two stages) – Using the historical-critical/grammatical method of exegesis, the student will exegete the selected passage. The major project in the course consists of a practical application in the form of an exegetical paper, which is to be produced in two stages. The detailed instructions are located at the end of the syllabus. (See Below)

(1) Stage One (25%) – The *first stage* is a thorough exegetical study that is to follow the attached guidelines, 10-12 pages in length, single-spaced, Turabian format excluding the cover page and bibliography. At the end of this stage, the student should have gathered all the essential knowledge from the text and be ready to begin the task of constructing a sermon or a teaching lesson. Please use a minimum of 7-8 sources on this paper.

(2) Stage Two (15%) – THIS IS THE EMBEDDED ASSIGNMENT. The *second stage* is a polished, written paper, 5-6 pages excluding the cover page and bibliography, Turabian format, single-spaced which presents the information gathered in the first stage in ready-to-deliver form. The purpose of this stage is to synthesize the data you have gathered in the first two stages into a well-written presentation. The paper may take either of two forms: (1) a sermon manuscript, i.e., written out word-for-word, ready to deliver orally, or (2) a teaching plan, fully developed and ready for teaching purposes, or (3) a manuscript for submission for publication. Please use a minimum of 5-6 sources on this paper.

In either case, this stage should have an interesting introduction, developed body, and a conclusion that ties the paper together. Thus, this stage contrasts in presentation with the first stage, in that the first stage is merely a step-by-step distillation of your findings, whereas the second stage is a finished and polished work. Be sure to consider your

audience when choosing the format of the paper and in shaping the material for presentation. More detailed instructions for this stage are also to be found attached.

7. Final Exam (10%) – The final will include all material covered in the main Duvall and Hays textbook. The exam is open book, but is timed. Your final exam will include an essay question asking you to define the historical-critical/grammatical view of hermeneutics.

7. Extra Credit – Up to 3 points added to the student’s final average can be earned by doing an extra credit project.

a. Book Review (up to 3 points added to the student’s overall final grade): The student may present a 6 page, single-spaced book review where the student is awarded 1 point per 150 pages read. The book must be germane to the study of hermeneutics and approved by the professors.

b. Short Research Paper (up to 3 points added to the student’s overall final grade): The student may prepare a research paper on a hermeneutical topic approved by the professors. The paper must be at least 6 pages, single-spaced, cite at least 10 sources, and be germane to the study of biblical interpretation.

CLASS SCHEDULE:

Each Unit begins on a Sunday and ends on the Saturday of that given week. The due dates for assignments, quizzes, and Discussion Board entries will be the *Saturday night at midnight for each scheduled Unit.*

For example, Unit 1 will begin on the opening day of the online course as stated in the NOBTS catalog. Due dates will be the following Saturday night at midnight. Final exams are due by midnight on the day internet courses close, as listed in the Academic Catalog. The Information Technology Center will close all Blackboard shells at midnight Central Time on this date. Students will no longer have access to the Bb shell after this time. Such dates will be listed in the NOBTS catalog.

Unit Week of:	Topic	Reading Assignment
Unit 1 Aug 23-29	History of Interpretation View all power point presentations <u>Discussion Board Unit 1</u> - Post By Saturday Night Midnight of This Week Quiz #1 - Take By Saturday Night Midnight of This Week	Read Porter and Stovall. Your review of this text is due in Unit 3.
Unit 2 Aug 30-Sept 5	Principles and Process of Interpretation The Interpretative Journey The Need to Interpret View all Unit power point presentations <u>Discussion Board Unit 2</u> -Post By Saturday Night Midnight of This Week Quiz #2- Take By Saturday Night Midnight of This Week	(DH: 39-49; 443-454) (FS: 17-31)

Unit 3 Sept 6-12	How to Read the Book Sentences & Paragraphs Resources View all Unit power point presentations <u>Discussion Board Unit 3-Post By Saturday</u> Night Midnight of This Week Quiz #3- Take By Saturday Night Midnight of This Week	(DH: 51-63) (DH 69-82; 40) Book Report on Porter and Stovall by Saturday night
Unit 4 Sept 13-19	How to Read the Book Discourses What Do We Bring to the Text? View all Unit power point presentations <u>Discussion Board Unit 4-Post By Saturday</u> Night Midnight of This Week Quiz #4- Take By Saturday Night Midnight of This Week	(DH: 91-104; 40) (DH: 137-146)
Unit 5 Sept 20-26	Components of a Model The Historical-Cultural Context The Literary Context View all Unit power point presentations <u>Discussion Board Unit 5-Post By Saturday</u> Night Midnight of This Week Quiz #5- Take By Saturday Night Midnight of This Week	(DH: 115-135) (DH: 115-135) (DH: 149-161)
Unit 6 Sept 27-Oct3	Components of a Model Word Studies Bible Translations View all Unit power point presentations <u>Discussion Board Unit 6-Post By Saturday</u> Night Midnight of This Week Quiz #6- Take By Saturday Night Midnight of This Week	(DH: 163-184) (DH: 23-38)
Unit 7 Oct 4-10	Meaning and Application Who Controls the Meaning? Levels of Meaning View all Unit power point presentations <u>Discussion Board Unit 7-Post By Saturday</u> Night Midnight of This Week Quiz #7- Take By Saturday Night Midnight of This Week	(DH: 189-201) (DH: 203-223) Background Study Due Saturday Night of This Week
Unit 8 Oct 11-17	Meaning and Application The Role of the Holy Spirit Application View all Unit power point presentations <u>Discussion Board Unit 8-Post By Saturday</u> Night Midnight of This Week Quiz #8- Take By Saturday Night	(DH: 225-233) (DH: 235-246)

	Midnight of This Week	
Fall Break Oct 18-23		
Unit 9 Oct 25-31	Interpreting the New Testament Letters View all Unit power point presentations <u>Discussion Board Unit 9-Post By Saturday Night Midnight of This Week</u> Quiz #9- Take By Saturday Night Midnight of This Week	(DH: 249-268) (FS: 55-87) Word Study Due Saturday Night of This Week
Unit 10 Nov 1-7	Interpreting the New Testament Gospels View all Unit power point presentations <u>Discussion Board Unit 10-Post By Saturday Night Midnight of This Week</u> Quiz #10- Take By Saturday Night Midnight of This Week	(DH: 269-288) (FS: 127-148)
Unit 11 Nov 8-14	Interpreting the New Testament Parables Narrative—Acts View all Unit power point presentations <u>Discussion Board Unit 11-Post By Saturday Night Midnight of This Week</u> Quiz #11- Take By Saturday Night Midnight of This Week	(FS: 149-162) (DH: 291-306; FS: 107-125)
Unit 12 Nov 15-21	Interpreting the Old and New Testaments Revelation Law View all Unit power point presentations <u>Discussion Board Unit 12-Post By Saturday Night Midnight of This Week</u> Quiz #12- Take By Saturday Night Midnight of This Week	(DH: 309-329; FS: 249-264) (DH: 355-371; FS: 163-180)
Nov 22-28	Thanksgiving Break	
Unit 13 Nov 29-Dec 5	Interpreting the Old Testament Old Testament Narrative Poetry / Wisdom View all Unit power point presentations Quiz #13- Take By Saturday Night Midnight of This Week	(DH: 333-351; FS: 89-106) (DH: 373-393; DH 421-442; FS 225-248)
Unit 14 Dec 6-12	Interpreting the Old Testament Prophets View all Unit power point presentations Quiz #14-Take By Saturday Night Midnight of This Week	(DH: 397-416) (FS: 181-204) Project Stage One Due Saturday Night of This Week

Unit 15-	The final exam must be taken before midnight on the date ITC closes the Blackboard Shell (see NOBTS catalog for exact date)	Project Stage Two Due By the day of the Final Exam Saturday of This Week These are to be uploaded in the Assignments Box in the Blackboard shell Final Exam – Exam must be taken by midnight of the posted date in the Graduate Catalog
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Old Testament

Narrative Word Study Paper Topic: Background Paper Focus:	Ruth 3:1-18 “Kinsman Redeemer” (v. 28), <i>goel</i> , Levirite Marriage
Law Word Study Paper Topic: Background Paper Focus:	Exodus 19:1-8 “Covenant” (v. 5), <i>berith</i> Covenants in the OT
Poetry Word Study Paper Topic: Background Paper Focus:	Psalm 18:1-19 “Sheol” (v. 5), <i>sheol</i> , Salvation in the OT
Wisdom Word Study Paper Topic: Background Paper Focus:	Proverbs 3:13-18 “Wisdom” (v. 13), <i>chomah</i> , Tree of Life in the OT
Prophecy Word Study Paper Topic: Background Paper Focus:	Ezekiel 37:1-14 “Spirit, spirit, wind, breath” (v. 1, 6, 9), <i>ruah</i> Resurrection in the OT

New Testament

Narrative- Gospels Word Study Paper Topic: Background Paper Focus:	Matthew 26:17-30 Covenant, <i>diatheke</i> (v. 28) Passover Feast of the Jews
Narrative- Parables Word Study Paper Topic: Background Paper Focus:	Luke 20:9-19 Parable, <i>parabole</i> (v. 1) Tenant Farmers/Rich and Poor
Narrative- History Word Study Paper Topic:	Acts 8:4-25 To Baptize, <i>baptize</i> (v. 12)

Background Paper Focus: Samaritan-Jewish Relations in the First Century

Epistle 1 Timothy 2:8-15

Word Study Paper Topic: Silence, *hesychia* (v. 11)

Background Paper Focus: Role of Women in the Ancient Near East

Apocalyptic Revelation 7:9-17

Word Study Paper Topic: Great Tribulation, *thlipsis megas* (v. 14)

Background Paper Focus: Palm Branches

GUIDELINES FOR THE EXEGETICAL PROJECT:

Stage One

This paper assignment contains the primary steps to be taken in a full-blown exegesis of a Biblical passage. When it is completed, you should be ready to add the homiletical components of sermon preparation and then to preach the sermon. The paper *must* follow the following steps, *in order*. In your paper, please give each heading and then do the work asked for. This paper is *not* a typical term paper in the sense of having an ordered introduction, statement of purpose, development of thought, and conclusion. These are not needed. You should begin on the first page with the “Text” section and proceed through the paper according to the outline below. The final product will be a collection of the separate sections below, but they are all ordered in a logical sequence that should help in sermon preparation. (For more instructions on the mechanics of producing the paper, see the last page.) Note that the work going into this paper will undoubtedly be more than you will have available to you week-by-week for sermon preparation. However, in doing this in-depth exercise, you should learn the essential steps for a proper exegesis. The more you do this, the easier it will become, and the more it will be second nature to you. Enjoy!

1. **Text**. Write out the text of the passage chosen, *single-spaced*, including verse numbers *and* indications of your own paragraph divisions, from one of the following translations: KJV, NKJV, ASV, NASB, RSV, NRSV, NIV, NJPSV, REB, RAB, NLT. (1/2–1 page).

2. **Historical Background**. This section should be a summarized presentation of your previous background study. Use your research from your background paper to write this section.

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.). Include here the major results of your sample historical background study. Also remember that you will need to do more general background study for the larger project, as well as other specific historical, cultural topical studies. Outside sources (such as Bible commentaries, dictionaries, encyclopedias, or histories) *should* be used here. **(1–1.5 pages)**

3. **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. Look

for clues in the immediately preceding and following contexts (the surrounding paragraphs and chapters) that show how the passage you are considering fits into its context (i.e., why it is where it is). **(1 page)**

4. **Paragraph Analysis**. Identify the theme of each paragraph in one sentence per paragraph. The theme may be a key sentence taken directly from the text *or* a statement in your own words. *Justify your judgment in each case (i.e., give your reasons for it)*. **(1 page)**

5. **Verse Analysis**. Comment here on important features of individual verses. (In a longer passage, focus on each paragraph instead of each verse.) Do *not* merely summarize each verse (or paragraph) or re-state the obvious. Do comment on the flow of the argument or story-line from verse to verse (or paragraph to paragraph), including addressing why certain things may be stated in a particular way, why certain statements are included where they are, why omissions of expected materials occur, 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. **(2–3 pages)**

6. **Theme**. Based upon the various stages of your detailed analysis above, and especially building upon your statements of theme for each paragraph, provide a one-sentence statement of the theme of the entire text (i.e., what is the author's main point in this section?). Explain the basis for your decision. **(1/2 page)**

7. **Word Study**. Include here the major results (summary) of your sample word study (not the raw data you presented earlier). Also remember that you probably will need to do other word studies for this larger project. **(1 page)**

8. **Outline**. Present an “exegetical” (“historical”) outline of the text, reflecting the theme. Use past tense verbs in your outline. **(1/3–1/2 page)**

9. **Homiletical (Sermon or Teaching) Outline**. This outline should derive from the exegetical outline. Use present tense verbs in your outline in order to make it contemporary. Also include a one-sentence re-statement of the theme (point "6." above), a desired audience response, and a concluding challenge. **(1/2 page)**

10. **Commentary Comparison**. Include here any additional essential insights gleaned from three exegetical commentaries. *These must be insights that you did not already uncover in your own work*. You may include these insights into the body of your work in Stage Two of your paper, but here, be sure to do the work asked for *in the order requested*. **(1 page)**

Note 1: The use of commentaries is to be limited to the specific instructions for the Project; the only points at which you are to use them are in the Historical Background step and in Step 10 of Stage One. The reason for this restriction is to help you to see how commentaries can be most helpful to you in your work, rather than becoming an unhealthy crutch and a hindrance to developing your own spiritual insight.

Note 2: Page numbers here are suggested guides only. The major concern is that you accomplish the required work. However, the final product should be no less than ten (10) and no more than twelve (12) pages, single-spaced.

Stage Two

The last stage is a polished paper presenting the information gathered in the first stage in ready-to-deliver form. The purpose of this stage is to synthesize the data you have gathered in the first stage into a well-written presentation. The paper may take one of two forms:

- 1) A sermon manuscript, i.e., written out word-for-word, ready to deliver orally, or

- 2) A teaching paper and plan, fully developed. In either case, this stage should have an interesting introduction, a developed body, and a conclusion that ties the paper together. Thus, this stage contrasts with the first stage in that the first stage is merely a step-by-step distillation of your findings. The second stage is a finished and polished work. Be sure to consider your audience in choosing the format of the paper and in shaping the material for presentation. (5-6 pages, single-spaced, 5-6 sources minimum)

Style and Formatting Guidelines for Papers

The papers are to be neatly typed, *single-spaced* using no larger than a 12-point font. Please number the pages with page numbers in the center of the lower header. Any standard scheme of footnotes, end notes, or text notes found in Kate L. Turabian's *A Manual for Writers* is acceptable; but it must be used consistently, and full and proper documentation must be provided for any sources used (listings should be by author and title of book, commentary, or article [*not* editor!], with series name and editor appearing at the appropriate place), including a separate bibliography appended to the paper.

Standard academic writing procedures must be followed, including writing in your own words, giving proper credit when quoting or referring to material from another work, and writing in good English. Students who may have trouble with writing of English are expected to have their papers proofread by someone conversant in English writing skills *prior to* production of the papers.

Plagiarism on Written Assignments

NOBTS has a no tolerance policy for plagiarism. Please be aware that plagiarism in certain cases may result in expulsion from the seminary. If the student is not aware of the seminary policy or of what constitutes plagiarism, he or she should contact the Dean of Student's Office for information on how to obtain a copy of the NOBTS Student Handbook. The Student Handbook clearly defines plagiarism and the penalties and policies associated with it.

Netiquette: Appropriate Online Behavior

Each student is expected to demonstrate appropriate Christian behavior when working online on the Discussion Board. The student is expected to interact with other students in a fashion that will promote learning and respect for the opinions of others in the course. A spirit of Christian charity will be expected at all times in the online environment.

Recommended Computer Software

The student is strongly encouraged to purchase Bible software for his/her use in biblical exegesis. At this level of study, a software program capable of producing the text, performing sophisticated morphological searches, with available lexicons, commentaries, and other helpful supplemental works is an absolute necessity. The software packages listed below are capable of intense, complex searches required for biblical studies research purposes and/or sermon preparation. The purchase of this kind of software is indispensable at this level of language study. The major software packages all run on either PC or Mac platforms.

BibleWorks:

BibleWorks (bibleworks.com) provides discounts for our students when purchased in bulk orders (see your professor for more information). BibleWorks costs about \$350 for their basic software program which includes many supplemental works. Ordered in bundles of 10 or more, the price is reduced to \$250 for NOBTS seminary students. Bulk orders are placed through the local NOBTS LifeWay Store. Call their customer service for questions and student discounts. (bibleworks.com)

Accordance:

The Original Languages Package is around \$300 with many other add-on texts available and they offer student discounts. Accordance has a PC emulator as well. Responses have been varied on this emulator. Call their customer service for questions and student discounts. (accordancebible.com)

Logos 6:

Logos 6.0 is offered at varied package prices, but we recommend that you consider a minimum of the Bronze Level package that has the Greek and Hebrew texts for NOBTS language courses. NOBTS offers a training course called PREA6230/6330 Technological Applications for Bible Study and Preaching. Students who take this course may purchase the software at a 50% discount. Students who purchase the software directly from Logos receive a 30% discount. Call their customer service for questions and student discounts. (logos.com)

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