

**OTBA6350 BIBLICAL ARAMAIC**  
**Dr. R. Dennis Cole**  
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**FALL 2015**  
**Thursday 500-800p**

**Course Description:** This course is designed to introduce the student to the essential elements of Biblical Aramaic. Grammar and syntax are studied and then illustrated through translation and exegesis of the Aramaic portions of Daniel and Ezra. The course also includes a brief introduction to the Syriac dialect developments based upon Aramaic grammar.  
Prerequisite: OTHB5300 Introductory Hebrew Grammar

**NOBTS Mission** - 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.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

1. Students will supplement and enhance their knowledge of Hebrew grammar and syntax through an introduction to the grammar and syntax of the Aramaic language of the Old Testament (Imperial Aramaic).
2. Students will translate selected portions of the Aramaic sections of Daniel and Ezra in **BHS** to facilitate their understanding of the grammar and syntax of Biblical Aramaic.
3. Students will study the early Syriac dialect of the Aramaic language so as to utilize the Targumic literature and Syriac inscription materials in the study of the Old and New Testaments.
4. Students will gain a knowledge of the Aramaean people as an introduction to the historical setting and development of Aramaic as the *lingua franca* of the Ancient Near East.
5. Students will enhance their skills in Biblical Aramaic and Hebrew for use in preparing Bible studies, sermons and other ministry educational opportunities.

**Core Values Addressed in This Course:**

1. Doctrinal Integrity: Knowledge and Practice of the Word of God
2. Characteristic Excellence: Pursuit of God's Revelation with Diligence
3. Spiritual Vitality: Transforming Power of God's Word
4. **MISSION FOCUS:** NOBTS Core Value Focus for 2015-16  
Highlighting the Message of God's Blessing through Abraham and his descendants, His call for Israel to be Light to the Nations, and as Daniel was to Babylonia and Persia

**Course Textbooks:**

***Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia.*** Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft.  
(**BHS**).

Miles V. Van Pelt, ***Basics of Biblical Aramaic.*** Grand Rapids: Zondervan,  
2011. **BBA**

## Course Requirements:

MID-TERM EXAM	33%
TERM PAPER	33%
CLASS PARTICIPATION	34%

### Bible Software

Each student should acquire a Bible Software program and such is required for those in a specific Biblical Studies degree (like the MA in Biblical Studies, or the MDiv in Biblical Studies or Biblical Languages), with the following being recommended by the Biblical Studies Division: Logos, BibleWorks, and Accordance. For those not majoring in biblical studies or in a Biblical Studies degree program, a free program from online can be used such as <http://mywsb.com>, <http://crosswire.org> and <http://www.e-sword.net>. Please consult with the professor if you have questions on this, and know that special discounts on the three major programs are available for NOBTS students.

### Suggested Research Paper Topics (if chosen option)

1. Imperial Aramaic and the Dating of the Book of Daniel
2. Aramaic Diplomatic Correspondence in the Persian Empire and Its Relationship to Ezra 4-7.
3. Musical Instruments in the Book of Daniel: A Study of Early Greek Influence in the Ancient Near East
4. Daniel Among the Dreamers: Dream Patterns in the 1st Millennium B.C. Ancient Near East
5. Daniel Among the Wisemen: Wisemen, Enchanters, Magicians and Soothsayers in the Neo-Babylonian Empire
6. The Political Structure of the Neo-Babylonian Empire (and/or Persian Empire)
7. Exegetical Papers in Daniel, Ezra or Aramaic portions of other OT books

(Other topics may be selected in consultation with the professor.)

### Exegetical Research Paper (if chosen as the option)

The student may choose to write an exegetical research paper (20+ pages) on a section of Daniel or Ezra (approx. 10-20 verses) which will include the following elements:

**Introduction.** To the passage (not the entire biblical book) including the historical and cultural setting, important biblical background material, etc.

**Translation.** Your own translation, having the following quality goal: the precision of the *NASB* or the *NKJV*, with the readability of the *NIV* or *NLV*.

**Textual Footnotes.** Address the issues in important text critical notes, as well as any key words which you have translated in a nuanced manner.

**Exegetical Outline.** Provide an exegetical outline of the chosen passage, with at least one but no more than two sub-levels. Option: Structural Analysis Outline.

**Exegetical Notes and Discussion** Explicate the meaning of the text, highlighting words studies, structural elements, pertinent background material.

**Homiletical Outline** Assuming you will be teaching or preaching from this material, provide an outline of your presentation, including Title, Theme or Key Point, Outline with one sub-level, Conclusion.

### **Course Schedule:**

- August 27 Course Introduction: Aramaic in the Semitic World: History and Developments  
**BBA** chs. 1-5 Translate Daniel 2:1-4 Exercises 4.9, 5.10  
Read the following articles in the *Anchor Bible Dictionary*: "Aramaeans" "Aramaic Script" "Aram (Place)" (p. 338-351)
- Sept 3 **BBA** chs 6-8 Exercises 6.9, 7.12, 8.10 Translate Dan 2:5-16
- Sept 10 **BBA** chs 9-11 Exercises 9.10, 10.7  
Translate Daniel 2:16-28
- 17 **BBA** chs 12-14 Exercises 14.10, 14.11  
Translate Daniel 2:29-39
- 24 **BBA** chs. 15-16 Exercises 15.11, 16.11  
Translate Daniel 2:40-49
- Oct 1 **BBA** chs 17-18 Exercises 17.16 (1-10), 18.9 (1-10)  
Translate Ezra 4:1-13
- 8 **BBA** chs 19-20 Exercises 19.8 (1-10)  
Translate Ezra 4:14-24
- 15 Translate Ezra 6:1-18
- 18-25 **FALL BREAK**
- 29 \*\*\*\***MID-TERM EXAM**\*\*\*\*
- Nov 5 **BBA** chs 21-22 Translate Daniel 3:1-23
- 12 Daniel 3:24-30; 4:1-12
- Nov 19 Study Day (Dr. Cole in Atlanta)
- 26 Thanksgiving Holiday Week
- Dec 6 Translate Daniel 4:13-37

## Introduction to Syriac (Daily Handouts)

Exam Week Student Reports

## SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bauer, Hans and Pontus Leander. **Grammatik des Biblisch-Aramaischen**. Hildesheim: George Olms, 1962.
- Black, Matthew. **An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels**. Intro. by Craig Evans. Appendix by G. Vermes. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1998.
- Bowman, Raymond A. **Aramaic Ritual Texts from Persepolis**. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970.
- Cowley, Dir Arthur E. **Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century BC**. Oxford: Oxford University Press at Clarendon, 1923.
- Farris, Theron. "Degrees of Emphasis in the Aramaic Genitive Relationship in the Book of Daniel." Unpublished Th.D. dissertation, NOBTS, 1957.
- Fitzmyer, Joseph A. **A Manual of Palestinian Aramaic Texts (2<sup>nd</sup> century BC - 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD)**. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1978.
- \_\_\_\_\_. **A Wandering Aramaean: Collected Aramaic Essays**. Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1979.
- Greenspahn, F.E. **An Introduction to Aramaic**. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998.
- Knudsen, Ebbe Egede. **A Targumic Aramaic Reader: Texts from Onkelos and Jonathan**. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1981.
- Kraeling, Emil G.H. **Aram and Israel: The Aramaeans in Syria and Mesopotamia**. London: Forgotten Books reprint, 2012.
- Le Deaut, Roger. **The Message of the New Testament and the Aramaic Bible (Targum)**. Trans. by Stephen Miletic. Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1982.
- Levey, Samson. **The Messiah: An Aramaic Interpretation; the Messianic Exegesis of the Targum** Cincinnati: HUC Institute of Religion, 1974.
- Lipinski, Eduard. **Aramaeans: Ancient History, Culture (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta)**. Leuven: Peeters Publishing, 2001.
- \_\_\_\_\_. **Studies in Aramaic Inscriptions and Onomastics**. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1975.
- Malamat, Avraham. "The Aramaeans," in **Peoples of Old Testament Times**, Ed. by D. J. Wiseman. Oxford: Oxford University Press at Clarendon, 1973.
- \_\_\_\_\_. **The Aramaeans in Aram Naharaim and the Rise of Their States**. Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1952. (Hebrew)
- Marcus, David. **A Manual of Babylonian Jewish Aramaic**. Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1981.
- Muraoka, T. and Bezalel Porten. **A Grammar of Egyptian Aramaic**. Leiden: Brill, 1998.
- Niehr, Herbert. **The Aramaeans in Ancient Syria**. HdO Studies 106. Leiden: Brill Publishers, 2013.
- O'Callaghan, Roger T. **Aram Naharaim: A Contribution to the History of Upper Mesopotamia in the Second Millennium BC**. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1948.
- Pitard, Wayne T. **Ancient Damascus: A Historical Study of the Syrian City-State from Earliest Times until its Fall to the Assyrians in 732 BC**. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1987.
- Rowley, H. H. **The Aramaic of the Old Testament: A Grammar and Lexical Study of Its Relationship with Other Early Aramaic Dialects**. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1929.

- Rosenthal, F., ed. ***An Aramaic Handbook***. 4 vols. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1967.
- Scheule, Andreas. ***An Introduction to Biblical Aramaic***. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2012.
- Sokoloff, Michael, ed. ***Aramaean, Aramaic and the Aramaic Literary Tradition***. Ramat-Gan, Israel: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1983.
- Unger, Merrill F. ***Israel and the Aramaeans of Damascus***. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1980. Reprint of 1957 James Clark edition.