

# **THE HISTORY OF THE BIBLE (BSHS 5302 Internet)**

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary  
New Testament Department, Biblical Studies Division  
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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. The seminary is emphasizing the core value of “spiritual vitality” this year and encourages all to focus especially on that facet.

NOBTS also has seven basic competencies that guide our Masters degree programs: Biblical Exposition, Christian Theological Heritage, Disciple Making, Interpersonal Skills, Servant Leadership, Spiritual and Character Formation, and Worship Leadership. This course especially addresses the “Biblical Exposition” competency by means of helping the student learn to interpret the Bible accurately and the Christian Theological Heritage by aiding in the understanding of the historical process that has led to the formation of the Christian Canon.

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course is a study of the history of the Bible from the time of the first written documents until the modern English translations. The general themes include the development of the Old Testament canon, the development of the New Testament canon, the transmission of the text, and the modern English versions of the Bible.

## **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

The objectives of this course include the following:

1. Students should gain a general knowledge of the history of the formation and textual transmission of the Old and New Testaments.
2. Students should gain a general knowledge of the history of the English Bible from the time just prior to the reformation to the modern period of multiple English translations.
3. Students will be equipped for presenting the material in this course in a local church setting as a study course.
4. Students will gain an appreciation for the benefits of studying and teaching about the history and transmission of the Bible from the original languages to modern translations.

## **COURSE TEACHING METHODS:**

This course will be taught via a combination of pedagogical methods, including but not limited to the following: lectures, student assignments, small group work, computer resources, textbook reviews, and student presentations in class. Both inductive and deductive approaches to learning will be utilized.

## TEXTS:

The basic texts are the following:

Clinton Arnold, *How We Got the Bible: A Visual Journey*

Paul Wegner, *The Journey from Texts to Translations*

Sheeley & Nash, *Choosing a Bible: A Guide to Modern English Translations and Editions*

Short readings will also be assigned during the week as noted on the schedule below.

## EVALUATION METHODS/REQUIREMENTS:

- (1) Students will read the three textbooks during the course, with reference made to the textbooks in the assignments and discussions. Quizzes will be given on the reading assignments. 20%
- (2) Translation Reports. Each student will evaluate an English translation of the Bible. The history behind the making of the translation, the textual base, the intended readership, and an overall evaluation of the version should be included. Two written reports will be submitted. One is a brief, one page overview that will be made available to all of the class members and that is geared to a local church setting, with the outline serving as a handout for the church members. The second is a formal paper on the translation, with a suggested length of 10-15 pages in length and include a logical, scholarly presentation of the material. The bibliography should include all sources consulted, not simply sources cited. Overview paper = 5%, full paper = 20%
- (3) Three exams will be given basically covering the following topics: The OT Text and Canon; The NT Text and Canon; and Printed Texts and English Translations. 15% each
- (4) Discussion Board participation is required, with a minimum of 2 posts per student per unit. 10%

## COURSE SCHEDULE/UNITS: W = Wegner—chapters are listed, A = Arnold—pages listed

UNIT 1:	Introduction to the course Ancient and Modern Divisions of the Bible The Languages of the Bible Alphabets, Literacy, and Ancient Books	W=1, 2, 3, 4, & 6; A=6-9
UNIT 2:	The Canon of the OT	W= 5 & 7; A=10-19
UNIT 3:	The OT Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha	W= 8; A= 20-21
UNIT 4:	The Text of the OT Ancient Versions of the OT, the Use of the OT in the Early Church	W= 11 & 12; A= 22-25
UNIT 5:	<b>OT Exam</b> , The Canon of the NT in the First and Second Centuries	W= 9
UNIT 6:	The Canon of the NT in the late Second through early Fourth Centuries The Canon of the NT in the Fourth Century and Beyond	W= 10
UNIT 7:	The Text of the NT: Witnesses and Text-types Biblical Manuscripts: Practicum	W= 13 & 14; A=26-31
UNIT 8:	Early Versions of the NT The NT Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha Read one of the following: Barnabas, Didache, 1 Clement, or Shepherd of Hermas	W= 15; A= 32-37
UNIT 9:	The Text of the NT: Transmission to the TR	W= 16; A= 38-43
UNIT 10:	The Text of the NT: The TR to Today	(Unit Docs & Files)
UNIT 11:	<b>NT Exam</b> , The Bible and Missions Early English Versions of the Bible	W= 17; A= 44-63
UNIT 12:	The King James Version Translation Efforts and Practices, How to Evaluate a Translation	W= 18 & 21; A= 64-71
UNIT 13:	Major Modern English Versions	W= 19 & 20; A= 72-89
UNIT 14:	Minor Modern English Versions and Unusual English Translations, <b>Final Exam</b> (Unit Docs & Files)	

## SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, *The Text of the NT*  
American Bible Society, *A Concise History of the English Bible*  
Clinton Arnold, *How We Got the Bible: A Visual Journey*  
Kenneth L. Barker, *The NIV: The Making of a Contemporary Translation*  
Margaret Baxter, *The Formation of the Christian Scriptures*  
James Bentley, *Secrets of Mount Sinai: The Story of the World's Oldest Bible*  
F. C. Bratton, *A History of the Bible*  
R. C. Briggs, *Interpreting the New Testament Today*  
F. F. Bruce, *History of the Bible in English*  
\_\_\_\_\_. *The Books and the Parchments*, 3d ed.  
\_\_\_\_\_. *The Canon of Scripture*  
*The Cambridge History of the Bible* (three volumes)  
Philip Comfort, *Encountering the Manuscripts*  
J. v. W. Cronje, *Style and Discourse*  
Christopher de Hamel, *An Illustrated History from Papyrus to Print Bibles*  
Bart Ehrman and Michael Holmes, eds, *The Text of the NT in Contemporary Research*  
David Ewert, *From Ancient Tablets to Modern Translations: A General Introduction to the Bible*  
David C. Fowler, *The Bible in Early English Literature*  
H. Y. Gamble, *The NT Canon*  
E. J. Goodspeed, *How Came the Bible?*  
R. M. Grant, *The Formation of the New Testament*  
John H. Hayes, *An Introduction to Old Testament Study*  
Robert Hull, *The Story of the New Testament Text*  
Ralph W. Klein, *Textual Criticism of the Old Testament: From the Septuagint to Qumran*  
Jack P. Lewis, *The English Bible from KJV to NIV: A History and Evaluation*  
Eduard Lohse, *The Formation of the New Testament*  
Geddes MacGregor, *A Literary History of the Bible: From the Middle Ages to the Present Day*  
\_\_\_\_\_. *The Bible in the Making*  
Lee M. McDonald, *The Formation of the Christian Biblical Canon* (Revised ed.)  
David G. Meade, *Pseudonymity & Canon: An Investigation into the Relationship of  
Authorship and Authority in Jewish and Earliest Christian Tradition*  
Bruce M. Metzger, *The Canon of the NT: Its Origin, Development, and Significance*  
\_\_\_\_\_. *Manuscripts of the Greek Bible: An Introduction to Greek Palaeography*  
C. F. D. Moule, *The Birth of the NT*  
Eugene A. Nida, *Good News for Everyone: How to Use the Good News Bible*  
E. A. Nida, J. P. Louw, A. H. Snyman, and R. C. Briggs, *Interpreting the New Testament Today*  
E. A. Nida and C. R. Tabor, *The Theory and Practice of Translation*  
G. S. Paine, *The Men Behind the KJV*  
David Parker, *Codex Sinaiticus*  
Steven Sheeley and Robert Nash, *Choosing a Bible: A Guide to Modern English Translations  
and Editions*  
Beryl Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*  
Paul Wegner, *The Journey from Texts to Translations*