



OTEN5315 English Exegesis: Ezra-Nehemiah
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
Biblical Studies Division
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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.

Core Value Focus

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 Doctrinal Integrity.

Curriculum Competencies

NOBTS faculty members realize that all ministers need to develop specific competencies if they are going to have an effective ministry. To increase the likelihood of NOBTS graduates having an effective ministry, the faculty developed a competency-based curriculum after identifying seven essential competencies necessary for effective ministry. All graduates are expected to have at least a minimum level of competency in all of the following areas:

Williamson, H. G. M. *Ezra, Nehemiah*. Vol. 16 of *Word Biblical Commentary*. Nashville, TN: Nelson Reference and Electronic, 1985.

Yamauchi, Edwin M. *Persia and the Bible*. Foreword by Donald J. Wiseman. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1990.

Textbooks Recommended:

Benquist, Jon L. *Judaism in Persia's Shadow*. Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1989.

Blenkinsopp, Joseph. *Ezra-Nehemiah*. OTL. Westminster John Knox Press, 1988.

Briant, Pierre. *From Cyrus to Alexander*. Translated by Peter T. Daniels. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2002.

Fensham, F. Charles. *Ezra, Nehemiah*. NICOT. Eerdmans, 1982.

Levenson, Jon D. *Esther*. OTL. Westminster John Knox Press, 1997.

Lipschits, Oded, and Manfred Oeming, eds. *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006.

Moore, Carey. *Esther*. AB. Yale University Press, 1995

Myers, Jacob. *Ezra-Nehemiah*. AB. Doubleday, 1965.

Course Requirements

1. Read all three of the required textbooks.

2. For the Yamauchi textbook:

A. Prepare one Powerpoint assisted presentations over assigned portions of the Yamauchi textbook. Approximately 10-20 slides, plus a summary handout for every member of the class. SIGN UP for your topic on syllabus day.

B. Prepare twenty questions, multiple choice or short answer, from the assigned section of Yamauchi and submit them to every member of the class. Also, give a copy to the professor and the teaching assistant; be sure to provide all the answers along the corresponding page numbers from which each question derived.

3. Take one midterm (or earlier) exam: Prepare for one exam that covers class lectures over the introductory materials, especially those pertaining to critical issues, authorship, and historical setting for the Ezra-Nehemiah corpus, along with approximately fifty (50) of the student-made questions out of the Yamauchi text.

4. Make a presentation, choosing from the following topics. The dates for each presentation will be determined during the first week of class. All presentations will begin after the exam. Each student must present a summary handout, a PowerPoint presentation (10-20 slides), and make 30 min. presentation to the class (as the lecture for that day).

A. Divorce in the Bible

- B. Epistolary Structure
- C. Historiography
- D. History of the City of Jerusalem
- E. Jerusalem's Gates from the Postexilic Period to the New Testament
- F. Rhetorical Speech and Discourse
- G. Usury
- H. Government and Persian Politics
- I. Leadership, Decision Making, and Confrontation
- J. Tithes and Offerings: OT System of Giving
- K. Reformation & Restoration
- L. Feasts/Festivals and Proclamation
- M. Confessions in the Old Testament
- N. Religion in the Persian Period to 4BC

5. Complete one exegetical, research paper: Students will select a passage to exegete from either Ezra or Nehemiah (of no fewer than 10 verses and no more than 25 verses [unless with permission]). Exegetical papers should be 20-25 pages, double spaced, and should include the following: 1. Title page 2. Background issues a. Historical context b. Impact on the message/understanding of the text 3. A word study a. Key word from the passage and, b. Its importance for the message/understanding of the text 4. Literary analysis a. Relevant literary features (prose/poetry, parallelism, chiasm, etc.) b. How does this passage fit into the broader context of the book? 5. Detailed explanation of the text a. Interact with critical, technical commentaries b. Provide your own explanations showing awareness of current research (verse-by-verse or paragraph-by-paragraph, however you see fit) 6. Conclusion/Implications a. Summation of your findings b. Application for the modern Church

Evaluation of Grade

The student's grade will be computed as follows:

Attendance and Participation	10%
Reading of all three textbooks	15%
Yamauchi presentation, plus 20 exam questions	15%
Presentation on Selected Topic (plus PowerPoint & Handout)	15%
"Midterm Exam"	20%
Exegetical Research Project (20-25pp)	25%

Technical Assistance

For assistance regarding technology, consult ITC (504-816-8180) or the following websites:

1. Selfserve@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the Selfserve.nobts.edu site (Access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, etc.)
2. BlackboardHelpDesk@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS Blackboard Learning Management System NOBTS.Blackboard.com.
3. ITCSupport@nobts.edu - Email for general technical questions/support requests.
4. www.NOBTS.edu/itc/ - General NOBTS technical help information is provided on this website.

Attendance Policy

Please refer to the Graduate catalog concerning attendance and absences policies. In a typical 3 hour course, a student can miss no more than 9 hours of seat time (not the same as missing 9 classes) and still receive credit for a course.

Make-up of a missed exam, quiz, report, or submission of course requirements is not allowed. As such, the professor will assess a late penalty for any submission of past due requirements. The typical penalty is ½ letter grade drop per day late. Contacting the professor before or during the absence/situation (via phone, text, or e-mail) can result in a reduced penalty. The responsibility of obtaining missed lecture notes or handouts is entirely the responsibility of the student.

Class decorum can impact the final grade for this class. Inappropriate behavior or lack of respect will constitute grounds for temporary and/or permanent dismissal from the class. Likewise, gum, food, and open drinks are not allowed in class. Cell phones and computer equipment must be muted; and, no phone conversations are allowed during class time. Excessive disturbance of a class by the acceptance of a phone call (or exiting/re-entering the room) can result in dismissal from class for that day. Repeated offenders can be dismissed from the class.

In the event that the professor is delayed from starting class on time, please wait for 15 minutes (should there be no announcement by other faculty or teaching assistant) before leaving. After that, class is dismissed.

Help for Writing Papers at “The Write Stuff”

NOBTS maintains a Writing Center designed to improve English writing at the graduate level. Students can receive writing guides, tips, and valuable information to help in becoming a better writer.

Plagiarism on Written Assignments

NOBTS has a no tolerance policy for plagiarism. Plagiarism in certain cases may result in expulsion from the seminary. See the NOBTS Student Handbook for definition, penalties, and policies associated with plagiarism.

OTEN5315, **English Exegesis:** Ezra-Nehemiah *Weekly Assignment Schedule*

		Tuesday	Thursday
1	01/22 01/24	Syllabus Day	Course Overview
2	01/29- 01/31	Ezra overview	Nehemiah overview
3	02/05- 02/07	Persian & Bible Presentations 1	Persian & Bible Presentations 2
4	02/12-		Divorce in the Bible

	02/14		
5	02/19- 02/21		Epistolary Structure/Historiography
6	02/26 02/28		History of the City of Jerusalem/ Jerusalem's Gates in Post Exilic Period to NT
7	03/05- 03/07	<i>Mardi Gras (3/05) - No Class</i>	Rhetorical Speech and Discourse
8	03/12- 03/14		Usury, Government and Persian Politics
9	03/19- 03/21	<i>Spring Break</i>	<i>No Classes</i>
10	03/26- 03/28		Leadership, Decision Making, Confrontation
11	04/02- 04/04		Tithes and Offerings: OT System of Giving
12	04/09- 04/11		Reformation & Restoration; Feasts/Festivals, and Proclamation
13	04/16- 04/18		G4: Confession in the OT
14	04/23- 04/25		
15	04/30- 05/02		Religion in the Persian Period to 4BC
16	05/07- 05/09		
17	05/14 05/16	Final Project	Approximately 30 verses of Esther plus exegetical assessment

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Introductions

- Archer, Jr., Gleason. *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*. Revised edition. Moody, 1994.
- Arnold, Bill T., and Bryan E. Beyer. *Encountering the Old Testament: A Christian Survey*. Baker, 1999.
- Broyles, Craig C., ed. *Interpreting the Old Testament. A Guide for Exegesis*. Baker, 2001.
- Childs, Brevard S. *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*. Fortress, 1979.
- Collins, John J. *Introduction to the Hebrew Bible*. Fortress, 2004.
- Dillard, Raymond and Tremper Longman III. *An Introduction to the Old Testament*. Zondervan, 1994.
- Eissfeldt, O. *The Old Testament: An Introduction*. Translated by P. R. Ackroyd. Harper and Row, 1965.
- Goldingay, John. *An Introduction to the Old Testament: Exploring Texts, Approaches and Issues*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2015.
- Harrison, R. K. *An Old Testament Introduction*. Eerdmans, 1979.
- Hess, Richard S. *The Old Testament: A Historical, Theological, and Critical Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016.
- Hill, Andrew E., and John H. Walton. *A Survey of the Old Testament*. Third edition. Zondervan, 2009.
- Hubbard Jr., Robert L. and J. Andrew Dearman. *Introducing the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018.
- LaSor, William S., David A. Hubbard, and Frederick.W. Bush. *Old Testament Survey*. Eerdmans, 1982.
- Merrill, Eugene H., Mark F. Rooker, and Michael A Grisanti. *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament*. Nashville: B&H, 2011.
- Soggin, J. Alberto. *Introduction to the Old Testament*. OTL. Westminster, 1989.

Ancient Near Eastern Histories

- Arnold, Bill T. and Brent A. Strawn, *The World around the Old Testament: The People and Places of the Ancient Near East*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016.
- Briant, Pierre. *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire*. Winona Lake:

- Eisenbrauns, 2002.
- Chavalas, Mark W., and K. Lawson Younger, Jr., eds. *Mesopotamia and the Bible: Comparative Explorations*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002.
- Gurney, O. R. *The Hittites*. Revised edition. Penguin, 1990.
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- Hoerth, Alfred, Gerald Mattingly, and Edwin Yamauchi, editors. *Peoples of the Old Testament World*. Baker, 1994.
- Kemp, Barry J. *Ancient Egypt: Anatomy of a Civilization*. 2nd edition. Routledge, 1991.
- Oppenheim, A. Leon. *Ancient Mesopotamia*. University of Chicago, 1977.
- Provan, Iain, V. Philips Long, and Tremper Longman III. *A Biblical History of Israel*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003.
- Van de Mieroop, Marc. *A History of the Ancient Near East: ca. 3000-323 BC*. Blackwell, 2004.
- Von Soden, Wolfram. *The Ancient Orient: An Introduction to the Study of the Ancient Near East*. Translated by D. G. Schley. Eerdmans, 1993.
- Wiseman, D. J. (ed.). *Peoples of Old Testament Times*. Oxford, 1973.

Commentaries

Ezra & Nehemiah

- Allen, L. and T. Laniak. *Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther*. NIBC. Hendrickson - Paternoster, 2003.
- Blenkinsopp, J. *Ezra-Nehemiah*. OTL. Westminster, 1988.
- Breneman, Mervin. *Ezra Nehemiah Esther*. NAC. Broadman, 1993.
- Clines, D. J. A. *Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther*. NCB. Eerdmans, 1984.
- Fensham, F. C. *The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah*. NICOT. Eerdmans, 1982.
- Kidner, D. *Ezra and Nehemiah*. TOTC. IVP, 1979.
- Throntveit, Mark A. *Ezra-Nehemiah*. Int. John Knox, 1992.
- Williamson, H. G. M. *Ezra-Nehemiah*. WBC. Word, 1985.

Esther

(See also commentaries listed above for Ezra & Nehemiah.)

Allen, L. and T. Laniak. *Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther*. NIBC. Hendrickson - Paternoster, 2003.

Baldwin, J. G. *Esther*. TOTC. IVP, 1984.

Berlin, Adele. *Esther*. JPS. Jewish Publication Society, 2001.

Day, Linda M. *Esther*. Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries. Nashville: Abingdon, 2005.

Fox, Michael V. *Character and Ideology in the Book of Esther*. University of South Carolina Press, 1991.

Jobes, Karen J. *Esther*. NIV Application Bible. Zondervan, 1999.

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