

BISR9303 READINGS IN BIBLICAL BACKGROUNDS
Ph.D. Reading Colloquium
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
Dr. R. Dennis Cole, Professor of Old Testament Hebrew & Archaeology
Dodd 201; 282-4455 (ext. 3248); rdcole@nobts.edu
Spring Semester 2014

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. This course addresses Doctrinal Integrity, the focus core value for this year, in that it enhances the student's ability to interpret the Bible accurately. Characteristic Excellence is addressed in that the student should exhibit excellence in the ability to interpret Scripture. Servant Leadership is modeled in classroom demeanor. This course primarily addresses the competency of Biblical Exposition by preparing the student to interpret and communicate the Bible accurately.

Course Description

This Ph.D. reading colloquium in Biblical Backgrounds in Interpretation covers general works related to biblical backgrounds in the field as well as the specific areas of Old Testament and New Testament studies. The student is expected to read thoroughly the assigned material and to participate actively in the discussions of the material. Written reviews and/or summaries of the works are expected.

Required Textbooks

See Bibliography (except for multi-volume reference works).

Course Requirements

The student will:

1. Read and review the required texts as stipulated in the schedule below.
 - a. Each student will prepare four book reviews. The reviews will consist of the following: bibliographic data about the author, the thesis/purpose of the book, a summary of the development of the thesis, a critique of the book, and a synopsis of 2 reviews of the book from scholarly journals. The reviews of the more lengthy books should be 4-5 pages, single-spaced.
 - b. Each student will read the books being reviewed by fellow students in order to discuss the books during the meeting. Thus reviews should be submitted to the professor and to fellow students a minimum of 2 days in advance of the colloquium meeting.
2. Participate actively in the discussion of the readings.

3. Attend every meeting. Because of the nature of the course, no absences are allowed. If emergency situations dictate an absence, the student will schedule a make-up session with the professor. Work is still due the day scheduled even if the student is absent. Any student missing more than one meeting must repeat the colloquium.

Student Outcomes: Goals and Objectives

1. The student will comprehend the roles of historical, archaeological, socio-cultural, and literary background materials in the interpretation of the Old and New Testaments.
2. The student will value the necessity of bridging the temporal and cultural gaps between contemporary society and the biblical period.
3. The student will read extensively in the primary literature of the Ancient Near East and Greco-Roman worlds.
4. The student will apply his or her knowledge and comprehension of the background of the Bible including: archaeology, historical geography, religion, manners and customs, historical and social setting, and the literature of the ancient world to the process of interpreting and communicating the Bible accurately.

Colloquium Schedule

Jan 23 Meeting One - Introduction / Methodologies & Literature

Book Reviews

DeSilva, David. *Honor, Patronage, Kinship, and Purity*

King, Philip and Lawrence Stager. *Life in Biblical Israel*

Sparks, Kenton L. *Ancient Texts for the Study of the Hebrew Bible*

Levy, Thomas, ed. *The Archaeology of Society in the Holy Land*.

Bailey, Kenneth. *Jesus Through Mediterranean Eyes: Cultural Studies in the Gospels*.

Each student will read the following sections of

Flavius Josephus *Antiquities of the Jews*: Books XI-XX
Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English (7th ed.), pp. 1-300.

Mishnah, Read the tractates “Aboth” and “Sabbath” in any translation.

Feb 27 Meeting Two - Old Testament Archaeology

Book Reviews

Kenneth Kitchen. *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*. Eerdmans, 2003.

James Hoffmeier, *The Archaeology of the Bible*

BenTor, Amnon and R. Greenberg. *The Archaeology of Ancient Israel*

Mazar, Amihai. *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible, 10,000-586 BCE*

Stern, Ephraim. *Archaeology and the Land of the Bible, II: The Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian Periods (732-332 BC)*.

Apr 3 Meeting Three - ANE and Greco-Roman Religion & Culture

Book Reviews

DeSilva, David. *Honor, Patronage, Kinship, and Purity: Unlocking New Testament Culture*.

Hess, Richard. *Israelite Religions: An Archaeological and Biblical Survey*.

Jeffers, James. *The Greco-Roman World of the New Testament Era*

Malina, Bruce. *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*

May 1 Meeting Four - New Testament Archaeology

Book Reviews

Jeffers, James. *The Greco-Roman World of the New Testament Era*

McRay, John. *Archaeology and the New Testament*

Reed, Jonathan. *Archaeology and the Galilean Jesus*

Snodgrass, Anthony M. *An Archaeology of Greece: The Present State and Future Scope of a Discipline*.

Charlesworth, James, ed. *Jesus and Archaeology*

BIBLIOGRAPHY

HISTORY

- Bright, John. *A History of Israel*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press (4th Edition), 1981.
- Josephus, Flavius. *Antiquities of the Jews: Complete and Unabridged*. CreateSpace, 2013.
- Niswonger, Richard. *New Testament History*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992.
- Provan, Iain, V. Philips Long, Tremper Longman III. *A Biblical History of Israel*. Louisville: John Knox Press, 2003.

ARCHAEOLOGY

- Ben-Tor, Amnon and R. Greenberg. *The Archaeology of Ancient Israel*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994.
- Hoerth, Alfred. *Archaeology and the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009.
- Hoffmeier, James. *The Archaeology of the Bible*. London: Lion UK, 2008.
- Jeffers, James. *The Greco-Roman World of the New Testament Era: Exploring the Background of Early Christianity*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 1999.
- Mazar, Amihai. *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible, 10,000-586 BCE*. New York: Doubleday, 1990.
- McRay, John. *Archaeology and the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008.
- Reed, Jonathan. *Archaeology and the Galilean Jesus: A Re-examination of the Evidence*. Trinity Press, 2002.
- Snodgrass, Anthony M. *An Archaeology of Greece: The Present State and Future Scope of a Discipline*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987.
- _____. *Archaeology and the Emergence of Greece*. NY: Cornell Univ. Press, 2006.
- Stern, Ephraim. *Archaeology and the Land of the Bible, II: The Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian Periods (732-332 BC)*. New York: Doubleday, 2001.

SOCIAL SETTINGS

- DeSilva, David. *Honor, Patronage, Kinship, and Purity: Unlocking New Testament Culture*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2000.
- Ferguson, Everett. *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. 3rd ed. Eerdmans, 2003.
- King, Philip and Lawrence Stager. *Life in Biblical Israel*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002.
- Malina, Bruce. *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*. 3rd ed. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001.

OTHER

- Kitchens, Kenneth. *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006.
- Vanderkam, James and Peter Flint. *The Meaning of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Their Significance For Understanding the Bible, Judaism, Jesus, and Christianity*. San Francisco: HarperOne, 2004.
- Vermes, Geza. *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*. 7th ed. Baltimore: Penguin, 2012.

REFERENCE VOLUMES

Arnold, Clinton. Editor. *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary on the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002

Hallo, William and Lawson Younger. *The Context of Scripture: Canonical Compositions, Monumental Inscriptions and Archival Documents from the Biblical World*. 3 vols. Leiden: EJ Brill, 2003.

Sparks, Kenton L. *Ancient Texts for the Study of the Hebrew Bible: A Guide to the Background Literature*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2005.

Walton, John. Editor. *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary on the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009.