



Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics (BSHM5310)

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
Biblical Studies Division—Fall 2017 Hybrid

Dr. Matt Solomon
Adjunct Professor of NT and Greek
msolomon35@gmail.com
Office: Hardin 280
Phone: (504) 816-8555

Dr. Jonathan Patterson
Adjunct Professor of OT and Hebrew
jmerrillpatterson@gmail.com
Office: Baptist College Partnership
(504) 816-8171

I. SEMINARY MISSION

The mission of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandment through the local church and its ministries.

II. SEMINARY CORE VALUES:

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary has five core values: Doctrinal Integrity, Spiritual Vitality, Mission Focus, Characteristic Excellence, and Servant Leadership. This course supports these five core values of the seminary.

1. *Doctrinal Integrity:* We believe, teach, proclaim, and submit to the Bible as the Word of God. This course addresses Doctrinal Integrity specifically by equipping students to understand and gain ability to articulate biblical, theological, and historical truths.
2. *Spiritual Vitality:* We emphasize both personal spirituality as a worshipping seminary family gathering together for the praise and adoration of God and instruction in his Word. Spiritual Vitality is addressed by challenging students to grow in spiritual and moral integrity through biblical study and spiritual and ethical practices.
3. *Mission Focus:* We purpose to change the world by fulfilling the Great Commission and the Great Commandment 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 Great Commandment.
4. *Characteristic Excellence:* We aim for characteristic excellence 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 understand and 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 and lifestyle patterns.

The core value emphasis for this academic year is: Servant Leadership.

III. COURSE PURPOSE

This purpose for this course is to discover the principles and methods of sound interpretation of the biblical text and make application in written assignments.

IV. CURRICULUM COMPETENCIES:

The Seminary has seven key competencies in its academic program: Biblical Exposition, Christian Theological Heritage, Discipleship Making, Interpersonal Skills, Servant Leadership, Spiritual and Character Formation, and Worship Leadership. This course addresses six competencies directly.

1. *Biblical Exposition*: by preparing students to understand, interpret, and communicate the Bible accurately.
2. *Christian and Theological Heritage*: by reminding students of the Christian theological heritage of the Old and New Testament and Baptist polity for the church
3. *Discipleship Making*: by stimulating church health through mobilizing the church for missions, evangelism, discipleship, and church growth through modeling the principles of discipleship through classroom department.
4. *Interpersonal Skills*: by performing pastoral care effectively with skills in communication and conflict management through interaction among students in the class and in small group activities.
5. *Servant Leadership*: by serving churches effectively in team ministry through modeling and reflecting the attitude of Christ in the life of a disciple.
6. *Spiritual and Character Formation*: by providing moral leadership and modeling and mentoring Christian character and devotion through discussion and modeling of spiritual disciplines as a normal part of class discussion and activity.

V. **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course is a study of the principles of biblical interpretation, an introduction to the major resources available for biblical interpretation, and an exegetical study of selected passages from the various types of biblical literature. The major focus of the course is practical—the course goal is that the student would develop sound methods of exegesis and application of biblical texts.

VI. **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

Knowledge

Students who complete this course successfully should:

- Understand the significance of hermeneutics for biblical exposition
- Know the basic methods of biblical interpretation that have been practiced throughout history
- Know basic principles of grammatical-historical interpretation that lead interpreters to discover the meaning intended by the biblical author
- Know the major genres of scripture and the hermeneutical principles that should be applied to each genre
- Know the important tools that may be useful in the study of the biblical text
- Know principles that guide modern preachers and teachers in applying biblical truths to our contemporary context

Attitudes

Students who complete this course successfully should:

- Appreciate the complexities of the exegetical task
- Recognize the importance of sound exegesis
- Be more confident in interpreting biblical texts

Skills

Students who complete this course successfully should be able to:

- Contextualize New Testament texts within their ancient historical, cultural, social, and literary settings for the purpose of interpretation
- Prepare word studies that lead the interpreter to understand better the biblical author's usage of special vocabulary significant to the exegetical task

- Write a formal paper using required form and style guidelines that integrates learning activities of the course into the sound exegesis of an assigned passage
- Derive timeless truths from the biblical text and show how these should affect the beliefs and behavior of contemporary Christians

VII. TEACHING METHODOLOGY:

- Class sessions will consist of presentations overviewing units of study followed by general discussion. Readings and lectures are central to covering the knowledge base needed for the course. Small group discussions allow for student interaction with the material presented. Multimedia technology, including video, audio, graphics, and presentation media, are incorporated into classroom activity to enhance the learning process. Biblical texts are used as examples to illustrate hermeneutical principles discussed in class. The combination of threaded discussion, reading, lectures, multimedia, class discussions, and small groups should help build appreciation for sound exegesis of the Bible.
- Class preparation will consist of textbook readings according to the syllabus schedule, book reports, and execution of written assignments. That is, the student's skills as an exegete are developed further through written assignments related to word studies, background studies, and an exegetical paper.
- Class units presented are: five units on hermeneutical models, two units on general rules with library practicum, and fifteen units on genre specific principles.

VIII. TEXTBOOKS:

A. Required

- The Bible: any modern committee translation, such as RSV, NRSV, NIV, NASB, etc.
- Fee, Gordon D. and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*. 3d ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003 (= FS)
- Duvall, J. Scott and J. Daniel Hays. *Grasping God's Word*, 3rd ed., Zondervan, 2012 (= DH)
- Porter, Stanley and Beth Stovall. *Biblical Hermeneutics: 5 Views*, Intersity Press, 2013 (= P&S)

B. Optional

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

IX. OTHER RESOURCES:

- *Dr. Stevens's DrKoine Website:*

<http://www.drkoine.com>

This website is for students in classes taught by Dr. Stevens. The site has a three-fold purpose: (1) to provide personal information to get to know the professor beyond the classroom in the areas of background, family, music and photography, (2) to provide professional information to get to know the professor within the academic guild in the areas of publications, presentations, and sermons, and (3) to provide educational

information in support of his teaching career in the areas of classes, travel, and museums.

- To go straight to the Classes page for information about any of Dr. Stevens's classes, use the following link:

<http://drkoine.com/classes/index.html>

- To go straight to the Hermeneutics course page with a brief course description, introductory video, syllabus, textbooks used, and related course files, use this link:

<http://drkoine.com/classes/hermeneutics/index.html>

- For NOBTS assistance with technology issues, call ITC (504-816-8180) or consult the following websites.

—For online registration, financial account, online transcript. etc.:

selfserve.nobts.edu (email: selfserve@nobts.edu)

—For Blackboard Learning Management system:

nobts.blackboard.com (email: blackboardhelpdesk@nobts.edu)

—For general technical questions and support requests:

www.nobts.edu/itc/ (email: itcsupport@nobts.edu)

- For help in writing papers, NOBTS maintains a Writing Center called “The Write Stuff” (HSC 290B, x8193) to improve English writing at the graduate level. Students can receive writing guides, tips, and valuable information towards becoming a better writer. Email writingcenter@nobts.edu

X. COURSE REQUIREMENTS and EVALUATION:

- 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-spaced. 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:

- a. background information on your assigned passage
 - b. information on the setting, authorship, readership, date and place of writing of the letter, etc.
 - c. information on the critical issues of the passage
 - d. a discussion of the theological issues covered in the passage. Outside sources (such as Bible commentaries, dictionaries, encyclopedias, or histories) *should* be used here.
 - e. a section where you focus upon your specific background topic as indicated in the Bible passages below. (See further in this 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 is 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.)
- a. **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.
 - b. **Stage Two (15%):** STAGE TWO 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.

8. **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.
9. **Due Date Policy:** Every assignment that you have for this course is listed with an assignment due date. You are expected to have your work submitted on time. Late penalties will be assessed for late work. The only exceptions to this policy will be extreme circumstances and the professor reserves the right to determine exceptions. Procrastination is not considered an extreme circumstance, or a valid exception.
10. **Embedded Assignment:** This core course incorporates an embedded assignment for the purposes of assessing institutional effectiveness and for program evaluation. *The embedded assignment is stage two of the research project.* The embedded assignment description and grading rubric follows.
 - a. *Paper.* 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.
 - b. *Exegetical Principles.* Indicate the use of appropriate tools, methods, and resources in the application of sound exegetical principles.
 - c. *Contemporary Application.* Communicate the meaning of the text, keeping in mind the contemporary audience.
 - d. *Format.* 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*.
 - e. *Rubric.* The general grading rubric to be used in evaluating the embedded assignment performance of students in the class is outlined in the table below.

Domain	Level	Inadequate (0 points)	Basic (1 point)	Competent (2 points)	Good (3 points)	Excellent (4 points)
<i>Understanding</i> The student:	Understood the principles for guiding the exegetical process					
<i>Application</i> The student:	Used appropriate tools to apply sound exegetical principles in biblical interpretation					
<i>Communication</i> The student:	Communicated clearly the meaning of a biblical text to a contemporary audience					

11. **Final Average:**
 - Reading Quizzes = 10%
 - Discussion Board = 10%
 - Book Report = 10%

Background Study =	10%
Word Study =	10%
Project Stage One =	25%
Project Stage Two =	15%
Final Exam =	10%

XI. INTERNET ATTENDANCE and ETIQUETTE

- **Attendance:** Consult the student handbook and seminary bulletin on measuring attendance in Internet classes. Punctual assignments, threaded discussion participation, timely tests, and other factors count for class attendance.
- **Etiquette:** Show respect in online interactions. Written words have no body language, so you can be misunderstood easily. Patiently clarify your meaning. Avoid abuse, ridicule, or demeaning comments or personal attack. Any perceived violations will be referred to the office of the Dean of Students.

XII. PLAGIARISM, HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

- **Plagiarism:** 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.
- **Honesty and Integrity:** An Internet course by default puts almost all accountability and responsibility on the student. In this environment, NOBTS students are expected to exemplify the highest levels of honesty of work and integrity of character in the performance of assignments for this class. Unless specifically indicated otherwise, *all online quizzes and exams are closed-book* and the use of any memory aids of any kind whatsoever is *expressly forbidden*. All work is expected to be the student's own.

XIII. ASSIGNMENTS:

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 *Saturday night at midnight for each scheduled unit*. **Units marked with yellow shading include a four-hour, CIV session, 6:00–9:50 pm CST on Friday of that week.**

For example, Unit 1 will begin on the opening day of the online course as stated in the NOBTS academic catalog. Due dates will be the following Saturday night at midnight. The final exam is due by midnight the day Internet courses close, as listed in the academic catalog. The Information Technology Center will close all Blackboard courses at midnight Central Time on this date. Students no longer will have access to the Blackboard course after this time. Such dates will be listed in the NOBTS catalog. *Knowing these dates is the student's responsibility.*

UNIT	Topic	Assignments
Unit 1: Aug. 21–26	History of Interpretation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Porter/Stovall (review due Unit 3) • View all unit PowerPoints • Discussion Board post by Sat., mid.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>CIV Session, 6:00–9:50 pm CST, Fri.</i> • Take Quiz 1 by Saturday, midnight
Unit 2: Aug. 27– Sept. 2	Overview of Interpretation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principles, Process of Interpretation • The Interpretative Journey • The Need to Interpret 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DH: Chapter 2 and 39–49; 443–54 • FS: Chapter 1 and 17–31 • View all unit PowerPoints • Discussion Board post by Sat., mid. • Take Quiz 2 by Saturday, midnight
Unit 3: Sept. 3–9	Reading Strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentences and Paragraphs Resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DH: 51–63; 69–54 • FS: Chapter 1 and 17–31 • View all unit PowerPoints • Discussion Board post by Sat., mid. • Take Quiz 3 by Saturday, midnight • <i>Porter/Stovall book report, Sat., mid.</i>
Unit 4: Sept. 10–16	Reading Strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discourses • What Do We Bring to the Text? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DH: Chapters 5 and 7 • View all unit PowerPoints • Discussion Board post by Sat., mid. • Take Quiz 4 by Saturday, midnight
Unit 5: Sept. 17–23	Contexts Now and Then, Part 2.1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Historical-Cultural Context • What do We Bring to the Text? • The Literary Context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DH: Chapters 6–8 • View all unit PowerPoints • Discussion Board post by Sat., mid. • <i>CIV Session, 6:00–9:50 pm CST, Fri.</i> • Take Quiz 5 by Saturday, midnight
Unit 6: Sept. 24–30	Contexts Now and Then, Part 2.2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word Studies • Bible Translations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DH: Chapters 1 and 9 • FS: Chapters 1–2 • View all unit PowerPoints • Discussion Board post by Sat., mid. • Take Quiz 6 by Saturday, midnight
Unit 7 Oct. 1–7	Meaning and Application, Part 3.1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who Controls Meaning? • Bible Translations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DH: Chapters 10–11 • View all unit PowerPoints • Discussion Board post by Sat., mid. • Take Quiz 7 by Saturday, midnight • <i>Background Study due, Sat., mid.</i>
Unit 8 Oct. 8–14	Meaning and Application, Part 3.2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Role of the Holy Spirit • Application • The Need to Interpret 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DH: Chapters 12–13 • FS: Chapter 1 • View all unit PowerPoints • Discussion Board post by Sat., mid. • Take Quiz 8 by Saturday, midnight
Break Oct. 15–21	FALL BREAK	

Unit 9 Oct. 22–28	Interpretive Journey, NT, Part 4.1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Testament Letters • Epistles: Thinking Critically (FS) • Epistles: Hermeneutical Questions (FS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DH: Chapter 14 • FS: Chapters 3–4 • View all unit PowerPoints • Discussion Board post by Sat., mid. • <i>CIV Session, 6:00–9:50 pm CST, Fri.</i> • Take Quiz 9 by Saturday, midnight
Unit 10 Oct. 29– Nov. 4	Interpretive Journey, NT, Part 4.2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Testament Gospels • One Story, Many Dimensions (FS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DH: Chapter 15 • FS: Chapter 7 • View all unit PowerPoints • Discussion Board post by Sat., mid. • Take Quiz 10 by Saturday, midnight • <i>Word Study due, Sat., mid.</i>
Unit 11 Nov. 5–11	Interpretive Journey, NT, Part 4.3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Testament Acts • Historical Precedence (FS) • Parables: Do You Get the Point? (FS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DH: Chapter 16 • FS: Chapters 6 and 8 • View all unit PowerPoints • Discussion Board post by Sat., mid. • Take Quiz 11 by Saturday, midnight
Unit 12 Nov. 12–18	Interpretive Journey, NT/OT, Part 4.4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revelation • Law: Covenant Stipulations (FS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DH: Chapters 17 and 19 • FS: Chapters 9 and 13 • View all unit PowerPoints • Discussion Board post by Sat., mid. • Take Quiz 12 by Saturday, midnight
Break Nov. 19–25	THANKSGIVING	
Unit 13 Nov. 26– Dec. 2	Interpretive Journey, OT, Part 4.5 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old Testament Narrative • Poetry and Wisdom • Psalms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DH: Chapters 18, 20, and 22 • FS: Chapters 5, 11, and 12 • View all unit PowerPoints • Discussion Board post by Sat., mid. • <i>CIV Session, 6:00–9:50 pm CST, Fri.</i> • Take Quiz 13 by Saturday, midnight
Unit 14 Dec. 3–9	Interpretive Journey, OT, Part 4.6 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old Testament Prophets • Prophets: Covenant Enforcers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DH: Chapter 21 and Appendices • FS: Chapter 10 and Appendices • View all unit PowerPoints • Take Quiz 14 by Saturday, midnight • <i>Project Stage One due, Sat., mid.</i>
Unit 15 Dec. 10–16	Final Exam (on Blackboard) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive, open book • Due midnight, Posted ITC Date • Consult NOBTS catalog for date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take Final Exam by midnight posted • <i>Project Stage Two due, Sat., mid.</i> • Upload project to Assignments Box in Blackboard

XIII. EXEGETICAL PROJECT TOPICS: Select ONE

Select *one* (1) of the following passages that you will use for all of your written exercises in this course. Note that your word study topic and background topic have been

preselected for you related to each specific passage. Your background paper topic, in addition to general background, also should include the specific background of your passage.

Old Testament

Narrative	Josh. 1:1-10
Word Study Paper Topic:	“Strong,” <i>chazaq</i> (vv. 6, 7, 9)
Background Paper Focus:	Reliance on God
Law	Exod. 19:1–8
Word Study Paper Topic:	“Covenant,” <i>berith</i> (v. 5)
Background Paper Focus:	Covenants in the OT
Poetry	Psalm 18:1–19
Word Study Paper Topic:	“Sheol,” <i>sheol</i> (v. 5)
Background Paper Focus:	Salvation in the OT
Wisdom	Prov. 3:13–18
Word Study Paper Topic:	“Wisdom,” <i>chomah</i> (v. 13)
Background Paper Focus:	Tree of Life in the OT
Prophecy	Ezek. 37:1–14
Word Study Paper Topic:	“Spirit, spirit, wind, breath,” <i>ruach</i> (v. 1, 6, 9)
Background Paper Focus:	Resurrection in the OT
Prophecy	Amos 6:1-8
Word Study Paper Topic:	“Evil,” <i>ra'</i> (v. 3)
Background Paper Focus:	Complacency in the OT

New Testament

Narrative- Gospels	Matt. 26:17–30
Word Study Paper Topic:	Covenant, <i>diathēkē</i> (v. 28)
Background Paper Focus:	Passover Feast of the Jews
Narrative- Parables	Luke 20:9–19
Word Study Paper Topic:	Parable, <i>parabolē</i> (v. 1)
Background Paper Focus:	Tenant Farmers/Rich and Poor
Narrative- History	Acts 8:4–25
Word Study Paper Topic:	To Baptize, <i>baptizō</i> (v. 12)
Background Paper Focus:	Samaritan-Jewish Relations in the First Century
Epistle	1 Tim. 2:8–15
Word Study Paper Topic:	Silence, <i>sigō</i> (to keep silent), <i>hēsychia</i> (silence) (v. 11)
Background Paper Focus:	Role of Women in the Ancient Near East

Epistle **1 Corinthians 7**
 Word Study Paper Topic: Divorce, *apolyoœ* (to set free), *apostasion* (divorce)
 Background Paper Focus: Marriage

Apocalyptic **Rev. 7:9–17**
 Word Study Paper Topic: Great Tribulation, *thlipsis megas* (v. 14)
 Background Paper Focus: Palm Branches

XIV. EXEGETICAL PROJECT GUIDELINES

A. Stage One

This paper assignment contains the primary steps to be taken in a thorough exegesis of a biblical passage. When the assignment 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 outline, use the headings given below and then do the work specified. 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 elements are not needed. Instead, 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.)

In doing this in-depth exercise, you should learn the essential steps for a proper exegesis. At first, the work seems daunting for the time constraints of practical ministry week by week. However, as with developing all skill sets, the more you work this process, the easier you will find the journey, and good skills of exegesis will become second nature.

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 on information not directly gathered from the text itself or its literary contexts (i.e., matters such as dates, international situation, etc.). Include here the *major results* of your sample historical background study. (That is, summarize your background study results; do not just cut and paste your background study in whole.) 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. **(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 for each theme statement (i.e., give your reasons for your choices).* **(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 storyline from verse to verse (or paragraph to paragraph), including addressing why certain thoughts 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. (What is the author’s main point in this text?) 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 contemporize the ideas. Include a one-sentence restatement 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 two points at which you are to use them are (1) in the Historical Background step and (2) 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 listed in parentheses after each section of the project indicate typical length of that section; these page numbers 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.

B. Stage Two

Stage Two of the project 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 well-written presentation should take *one* (1) of the following two forms:

1. **Sermon Manuscript.** This manuscript should be written out word-for-word, ready to deliver orally.
2. **Teaching Plan.** This manuscript should be a complete teaching plan, fully developed, and represent good teaching methodology and practice.

Whether a sermon manuscript or a teaching plan, Stage Two of the project 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 12-point font. All formatting should follow fully Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers*. Page numbers should maintain a difference between the first page number of a chapter (bottom center) and all following page numbers of that chapter (at top, with right margin preferred). Any Turabian approved scheme of footnotes, end notes, or text notes is acceptable; but must be used consistently (do not mix schemes in the same paper). The paper should include a full bibliography of sources consulted. Complete and proper documentation must be provided for all sources used as specified by Turabian. Entries should be by author and title of book, commentary, or article (*not* editor!), with series name and editor appearing at the appropriate place.

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. Note the help available with the NOBTS “Write Stuff” center in Section “IX. OTHER RESOURCES” above.

Plagiarism on Written Assignments

NOBTS has a no tolerance policy for plagiarism. Plagiarism in certain cases may result in expulsion from the seminary. If the student is not aware of the seminary policy or 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 associated policies and penalties.

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 encouraged to purchase Bible software for 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 crucial. 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.

1. **Accordance.** Accordance is a premier Bible program, with the highest accuracy in its search results. 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. Accordance does not offer as many commentaries and other publications in their base packages as does Logos, but they do have individual modules that cover a similar range of resources, and they have been increasing the range of additional works in recent years. A special arrangement has been worked out for NOBTS students particularly. Call their customer service for questions and student discounts. (accordancebible.com)
2. **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)
3. **Logos.** Logos 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 Logos 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)

XV. BIBLIOGRAPHY

General Introduction Books on Hermeneutics

- Dana, H. E. & Glaze, R. E. *Interpreting the New Testament*. Nashville: Broadman, 1961.
- Danker, Frederick W. *Multipurpose Tools for Bible Study*, Revised and Expanded. St. Louis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1993.
- Fee, Gordon D. *Gospel and Spirit: Issues in New Testament Hermeneutics*. Peabody: Hendrickson Publ., 1991.
- Ferguson, Duncan S. *Biblical Hermeneutics*. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1986.
- Fitzmyer, Joseph A. *An Introductory Bibliography for the Study of Scripture*. Rev. ed. Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1981.
- Mickelsen, A. Berkeley. *Interpreting the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963.
- Ramm, Bernard L. and others. *Hermeneutics*. In *Practical Theology Series*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, n.d.
- Sire, James W. *Scripture Twisting: 20 Ways the Cults Misread the Bible*. Dowers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1980.
- Smart James D. *The Interpretation of Scripture*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961.
- Tate, W. Randolph. *Biblical Interpretation: An Integrated Approach*. Peabody: Hendrickson Publ. Inc., 1991.
- Virkler, Henry A. *Hermeneutics: Principles and Process of Biblical Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981.
- Ward, Wayne E. *The Word Comes Alive*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1969.
- Wood, James D. *The Interpretation of the Bible: A Historical Introduction*. London: Gerald Duckworth and Co. Ltd., 1958.

The Text and Authority of the Bible

- Barr, James. *The Scope & Authority of the Bible*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1980.
- Bruce, F. F. *The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978. Carson, D.A. and Woodbridge, John D., eds
- McKim, Donald K., ed. *A Guide to Contemporary Hermeneutics*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986.
- _____. *The Authoritative Word: Essays on the Nature of Scripture*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983.
- Montgomery, John Warwick, ed. *God's Inerrant Word: An International Symposium on the Trustworthiness of Scripture*. Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, Inc., 1974.
- Proceedings of the Conference on Biblical Inerrancy* 1987. Nashville: Broadman, 1987.

The History of Interpretation

- Bray, Gerald. *Biblical Interpretation: Past and Present*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1996.
- Brown, Jerry Wayne. *The Rise of Biblical Criticism in America, 1800-1870; The New England*

Scholars. Middleton, Conn: Wesleyan University Press, 1969.

Cameron, Nigel M. de S. *Biblical Higher Criticism and the Defense of Infallibilism in 19th Century Britain*. In *Text and Studies in Religion*. Vol. 33. Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1987.

Evans, Craig A. and Stinespring, William F., eds. *Early Jewish and Christian Exegesis: Studies in Memory of William Hugh Brownlee*. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987.

Froehlich, Karlfried, trans. and ed. *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church*. In *Sources of Early Christian Thought*. Edited by William G. Rusch. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984.

Grant, Robert with David Tracy. *A Short History of Interpretation of the Bible*. Second edition revised and enlarged. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984.

Neill, Stephen. *The Interpretation of the New Testament 1861-1961*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1966.

Silva, Moisés. *Has the Church Misread the Bible? The History of Interpretation in the Light of Current Issues*. In *Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation*. Vol. 1. Edited by Moisés Silva. Grand Rapids: Academic Books, Zondervan Press, 1987.

Wood, A. Skevington. *The Principles of Biblical Interpretation: As Enunciated by Irenaeus, Origen, Augustine, Luther and Calvin*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1967.

Contemporary Methodologies

Hayes, John H. and Holladay, Carl R. *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook*. Rev. ed. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1987.

Kennedy, George A. *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1984.

Krentz, Edgar. *The Historical-Critical Method*. In *Guides to Biblical Scholarship*. Edited by Gene M. Tucker. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975.

Russell, Letty M., Editor. *Feminist Interpretation of the Bible*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1985.

Soulen, Richard *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*, rev. ed. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1981.

Talbert, Charles H. *What is a Gospel?: The Genre of the Canonical Gospels*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977.

Wilson, Robert R. *Sociological Approaches to the Old Testament*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984.

Various Works on the Theory and Practice of Interpretation

Cotterell, Peter. *Linguistics and Biblical Interpretation*. Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 1989.

Cox, William E. *An Examination of Dispensationalism*. Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1963.

Johnson, Cedric B. *The Psychology of Biblical Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1983.

Poythress, Vern Cox, William E. *An Examination of Dispensationalism*. Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1963.

Johnson, Cedric B. *The Psychology of Biblical Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1983.

Poythress, Vern Sheridan. *Science and Hermeneutics: Implications of Scientific method for Biblical Interpretation*. In *Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation*. Vol. 6. Edited by Moisés Silva. Grand Rapids: Academic Books, Zondervan Press, 1988.

Smart James D. *The Strange Silence of the Bible in the Church: A Study in Hermeneutics*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1970.