



BSHM5310 Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
Biblical Studies Division
Spring 2021 Wed 8:00–10:50 am (NOLA2U Flex)

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Mission Statement

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Leavell College prepare servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission.

Course Description

This course includes a study of the principles of biblical interpretation, an introduction to major resources available as an aid to biblical interpretation, and an exegetical study of selected passages from the various genres of biblical literature. Some attention is directed to current issues in biblical hermeneutics, but the major focus of the course is practical in nature in that the goal of the course is that the students develop a sound method for exegesis of biblical texts.

Student Learning Outcomes

A. *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 a contemporary audience

B. *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

C. *Skills*

Students who complete this course successfully should be able to:

- Contextualize biblical 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

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 One* of the research project and will be assessed as follows:

1. *Paper* - Write a polished, 10-12 page paper. 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.
2. *Exegetical Principles* - Indicate the use of appropriate tools, methods, and resources in the application of sound exegetical principles.
3. *Contemporary Application* - Communicate the meaning of the text, keeping in mind the contemporary audience.
4. *Rubric* - The general grading rubric to be used in evaluating the embedded assignment performance of students in the class is outlined below.

Domain	Level	Inadequate (0 points)	Basic (1 point)	Competent (2 points)	Good (3 points)	Excellent (4 points)
<i>Understanding</i> The student:	Clearly demonstrated an understanding of the sound method for exegesis					
<i>Application</i> The student:	Demonstrated the used of appropriate tools, methods, and resources in the application of sound exegetical principles.					
<i>Communication</i> The student:	Communicated clearly the meaning of the text, keeping in mind the contemporary audience.					

Textbooks

A. Required

- *Holy Bible*, any modern translation (NASB, NIV, ESV, RSV, NRSV, etc.)
- Fee, Gordon D. and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, 4th ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014 (**FS**)
- Klein, Blomberg, and Hubbard. *Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics*, 3d ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017 (**KBH**)

B. Optional

- Bray, Gerald. *Biblical Interpretation: Past and Present*. Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 1996.
- Osborne, Grant. *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, 2d ed. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2006.
- Porter, Stanley and Beth Stovall. *Biblical Hermeneutics: 5 Views*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2012.

Course Teaching Methodology

The course will involve the following methodologies:

- 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, is 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 readings, 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 through written assignments related to word studies, background studies, and an exegetical project.

- Class units will consist of an overview of hermeneutical models, general rules for interpretation, library practicum, and genre-specific principles for interpretation.

Course Requirements

1. Reading Quizzes (15%): Students are to read the portions of the required textbooks and completed the reading quizzes on Blackboard by the date specified in the course schedule. Students should take these quizzes from memory alone without the aid of textbooks or other external resources. Quizzes must be completed by Friday each week.
2. Background Study (25%): (**due March 3**) 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 of the historical and cultural context for an assigned passage. The background study should be 5-6 pages, single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font plus a bibliography and should adhere to Turabian, 8th ed. style guide. Students should use a minimum of 5-6 critical sources. The historical background study will include:
 - background information on the assigned passage
 - information on the setting, authorship, readership, date, place of writing, etc.
 - information on the critical issues of the passage
 - a discussion of the theological issues covered in the passage (use of outside resources such as commentaries, Bible dictionaries/encyclopedias, etc. are required)
 - focus on the specific background topic assigned for the given passage
3. Word Study (15%): (**due March 21**) The historical-critical/grammatical view gives focus to word studies and what words meant in their original context. The student will complete a word study on a word indicated from the assigned text. The word study should be 2-3 pages, single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font plus a bibliography and should adhere to Turabian, 8th ed. style guide. Students should use a minimum of 5-6 critical sources, including theological dictionaries, commentaries, biblical encyclopedias, etc.
4. Exegetical Project (45%): Using the historical-critical/grammatical method, students will exegete a selected passage. The major project for this course consists of practical application in the form of an exegetical project, to be produced in two stages. The detailed instructions for this project are located in the Exegetical Project Guidelines section below.
 - Stage One (30%): (**due April 21**) The first stage of the project will consist of a thorough exegetical study of an assigned passage and should be 10-12 pages, single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font and should adhere to Turabian, 8th ed. style guide. The Stage One paper should also include a bibliography with a minimum of 8-10 critical sources and a cover page. At the end of this stage, the student should have gathered all of the essential knowledge from the assigned text in preparation for constructing a sermon, teaching lesson, or journal article for the next stage of the exegetical project. *The Stage One paper is the embedded assignment for this course.*
 - Stage Two (15%): (**due May 12**) The second stage of the exegetical project may take one of three forms: (1) a sermon manuscript ready to deliver orally; (2) a teaching lesson manuscript, fully developed and ready for teaching purposes; or (3) a journal article manuscript for submission for publication. The purpose of this stage is for the student to synthesize all of that data gathered from the previous writing assignments into a well-written presentation paper. The Stage Two paper should be 4-6 pages, single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman and should adhere to Turabian, 8th ed. style guide. This paper should also include a bibliography with a minimum of 6-8 critical sources and a cover page.

5. ***Extra Credit:*** Students may earn up to 3 points toward their final average by completing a 5-6 single-spaced page book review on a selected book relevant to the study of hermeneutics. Students must consult their professors for approval of their selected book.

Evaluation of Grade

The student's grade will be computed as follows:

Reading Quizzes:	15%
Background Study:	25%
Word Study:	15%
Stage One Paper:	30%
Stage Two Paper:	15%

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 and Classroom Etiquette

Students are expected to attend all class meetings; however, your professors recognize that absences are sometimes necessary. NOBTS policy mandates that students may miss no more than nine hours of class meetings for a 3-hour class. That means only three absences are allowed for this class; a student who misses more than three class periods will not receive credit for this course. Students are expected to complete all assignments in a timely manner. This includes the major writing projects for this course as well as the weekly reading quizzes.

Students are also expected to be respectful of their classmates in online as well as in-class discussion and interaction. Any student who repeatedly demonstrates a lack of respect for classmates or the professors may be required to meet with the professors and the Dean of Students and could be subject to removal from the class.

NOLA2U Flex Students

If you are taking this course as a NOLA2U Flex student, please note the following attendance policies:

1. You are required to be in class either through viewing the lectures live or viewing the recorded lectures on Blackboard. When you view the recorded lecture, you will be considered present for that class. Regardless of if you watch the class live or recorded, you are only allowed to miss the amount of class time specified in the NOBTS attendance policy as stated in the graduate catalog. (See p. 184 in the graduate catalog: <https://www.nobts.edu/resources/pdf/academics/GraduateCatalog.pdf>)
2. You will be asked to certify that you have been present for the live session or have viewed the recorded session. This certification will be done through a brief discussion question after having watched the class live or viewing the recorded session.
3. All video lectures are available for seven (7) days after the video is posted. If you are unable to view the video within that time frame, you will be considered absent for that class session.
4. Technical issues will not be considered a valid reason for missing a lecture.

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.

A copy of the approved NOBTS Style Guide can be found in the course Blackboard shell or can be located online at the Writing Center's page on the seminary website at:

<https://www.nobts.edu/resources/pdf/writing/StyleGuide.pdf>

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.

Course Schedule

Date	Discussion Topic	Readings	Assignments
Jan 20	Introduction The Need for Interpretation Components of a Hermeneutical Model	KBH: 39–65 FS: 21–35	Reading Quiz 1
Jan 27	History of Interpretation (Part I) Ancient Jewish Models Ancient Christian Models	KBH: 66–91	Reading Quiz 2
Feb 3	History of Interpretation (Part II) Reformation & Post-Reformation Models Modern & Post-Modern Models	KBH: 92–164	Reading Quiz 3
Feb 10	Canon and Translations Interpreter, Goals, & Application	KBH: 165–197 FS: 36–56	Reading Quiz 4
Feb 17	Background & Word Studies Library Practicum	KBH: 637–681 FS: 275–290	Reading Quiz 5
Feb 24	General Rules - Prose General Rules - Poetry	KBH: 293–413	Reading Quiz 6
Mar 3	Interpreting OT Narrative	KBH: 417–438 FS: 93–111	Reading Quiz 7 Background Study
Mar 10	Interpreting Gospels	KBH: 510–532 FS: 132–153	Reading Quiz 8
SPRING BREAK Mar 15-19			
Mar 24	Interpreting the Parables	FS: 154–167	Reading Quiz 9 Word Study
Mar 31	Interpreting Law	KBH: 438–450 FS: 168–186	Reading Quiz 10
Apr 7	Interpreting Acts	KBH: 532–541 FS: 112–131	Reading Quiz 11
Apr 14	Interpreting Epistles	KBH: 541–558 FS: 74–92	Reading Quiz 12
Apr 21	Interpreting Prophecy	KBH: 462–491 FS: 187–211	Reading Quiz 13 Stage One Paper
Apr 28	Interpreting Poetry & the Psalms	KBH: 451–461 FS: 212–232	Reading Quiz 14
May 5	Interpreting Apocalyptic & Wisdom	KBH: 491–509; 558–567 FS: 233–273	Reading Quiz 15
May 12	Exam Week (no class)		Stage Two Paper

Exegetical Project Topics

Students will select one (1) of the following passages to use for each of the four papers in this course: Background Study, Word Study, Stage One, and Stage Two. Note that your word study and background study topics have been preselected for each passage. In addition to the specific topic focus, the background study should also include general background information as detailed in the assignment description above.

Old Testament

Narrative	Joshua 1:1-11
Word Study Paper Topic:	Strong; <i>chazaq</i> (קָיָוֶה) - v.6
Background Paper Focus:	Strength in God
Narrative	Ruth 3:1-18
Word Study Paper Topic:	Kinsman Redeemer; <i>go'el</i> (גֹּאֵל) - v.9
Background Paper Focus:	Levirate Marriage
Law	Exodus 19:1-8
Word Study Paper Topic:	Covenant; <i>berit</i> (בְּרִית) - v.5
Background Paper Focus:	Covenants in the OT
Prophecy	Ezekiel 37:1-14
Word Study Paper Topic:	Spirit, spirit, wind, breath; <i>ruach</i> (רוּחַ) - v.1
Background Paper Focus:	Resurrection in the OT
Prophecy	Amos 6:1-8
Word Study Paper Topic:	Woe; <i>hoy</i> (הוֹי) - v.1
Background Paper Focus:	Complacency
Poetry	Psalms 18:1-19
Word Study Paper Topic:	Sheol; <i>sheol</i> (שְׁאוֹל) - v.5
Background Paper Focus:	Salvation in the OT
Wisdom	Ecclesiastes 1:1-11
Word Study Paper Topic:	Vanity; <i>hevel</i> (הֶבֶל) - v.2
Background Paper Focus:	Futility of life apart from God

New Testament

Gospel	Matthew 26:17-30
Word Study Paper Topic:	Covenant; <i>diathēkē</i> (διαθήκη) - v.28
Background Paper Focus:	Passover Feast (history, celebration, constituent elements)
Parable	Luke 20:9-18
Word Study Paper Topic:	Parable; <i>parabolē</i> (παραβολή) - v.9
Background Paper Focus:	Economy (rich and poor) and Agriculture (tenant farmers)
History	Acts 8:4-25
Word Study Paper Topic:	Baptize; <i>baptizō</i> (βαπτίζω) - v.12
Background Paper Focus:	Samaritans (history, beliefs, first-century setting)
Epistle - Pauline	Romans 3:21-26
Word Study Paper Topic:	Propitiation; <i>hilastērion</i> (ἱλαστήριον) - v. 25
Background Paper Focus:	Righteous, Righteousness (in general, but also specifically "of God")
Epistle - Pauline	1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
Word Study Paper Topic:	Parousia; <i>parousia</i> (παρουσία) - v.15
Background Paper Focus:	Resurrection (history of development, first-century Jewish belief)
Epistle - General	1 Peter 5:1-9
Word Study Paper Topic:	Elders (Jewish cultural background; cultic function)
Background Paper Focus:	Christ; <i>Christos</i> (Χριστός) - v.15
Apocalyptic	Revelation 2:12-17
Word Study Paper Topic:	Satan, <i>satanas</i> (σατανας) - v.13
Background Paper Focus:	Pergamum (history, culture)

Exegetical Project Guidelines

Stage One Paper - due April 21

This paper assignment contains the primary steps to be taken in a thorough exegesis of a biblical passage. When the assignment is completed, students should be read to add the homiletical components of sermon/lesson preparation and then to preach the sermon or teach the lesson. This paper is not a typical term paper in the sense of having an ordered introduction, statement of purpose, development of thought, and conclusion. The final product will be a collection of the separate sections below all ordered in a logical sequence that should help in sermon/lesson preparation. However, even though the Stage One paper does not contain elements of a typical research paper, students should still adhere to proper grammar and style requirements of Turabian, 8th ed.

In doing this in-depth exercise, students 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 the development of any skill set, the more students work the process, the easier the journey will become, and good skills of exegesis will become second nature.

The paper should contain each of the following components, in order:

1. Text. Write out the text of the chosen passage, single-spaced, including verse numbers and indications of your own paragraph divisions from one of the following translations: NKJV, ASV, NASB, RSV, NRSV, NIV, ESV, HCSB, CSB. **(1/2–1 page)**
2. Historical Background. Use your research from your previous background paper to write this section. You should summarize the work that you have done in your background study *but you should not simply copy and paste your background study here*. Focus on information not directly gathered from the text itself or its literary contexts (i.e., matters such as dates, international situation, etc.). 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 (apart from the lone topic focus of your background study). Outside sources (e.g., commentaries, histories, biblical encyclopedias and dictionaries) *should* be used for this section. **(1.5–2 pages)**
3. Literary Context. This section should include two specific items: (1) a discussion of the *placement* of the passage in its immediate and larger contexts within the book as a whole and (2) justification of the paragraph divisions you have provided in the "Text" section. Look for clues in the immediately preceding and following contexts (i.e., 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 a single sentence per paragraph. The theme may be a key sentence taken directly from the text *or* a statement in your own words. You should then justify your judgment for each statement (i.e., give reasons for your choices). **(1 page)**
5. Verse Analysis. Comment here on important features of individual verses (or sections of verses for lengthier passages). *Do not* merely summarize each verse (or section of verses) or restate 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 those found within most Bibles themselves) but *you may not use a commentary here*. Do your own work in this section. **(2.5–3 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 (i.e., what is the author's main point in the text?). Explain the basis for your decision. **(1/2 page)**
7. Word Study. Include here the *major results* (i.e., summary) of your sample word study. *Do not* simply copy and paste the raw data from your word study. Also, remember that you may need to do other word studies for this larger project. **(1 page)**
8. Outline. Present an "exegetical" (i.e., historical) outline of the text, reflecting the theme. Use past tense verbs in your outline (not present or historical present). **(1/2 page)**
9. Homiletical (sermon or teaching) Outline. This outline should derive from the exegetical outline. Use present tense verbs in your outline to contemporize the ideas. Include a one-sentence restatement of the "Theme" above, a desired audience response, and a concluding challenge. **(1/2 page)**
10. Commentary Comparison. Include here any additional insights gleaned from at least three exegetical/critical 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 own work in Stage Two of your exegetical project but, for Stage One, be sure to do the work asked for *in the order requested* (i.e., your commentary comparison should not be used to influence your own observations for the analyses above). **(1–1.5 pages)**

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 in the (1) Historical Background and (2) Commentary Comparison sections of the Stage One paper. The reason for this restriction is to help you see how commentaries can be most helpful to you in your own work rather than becoming an unhealthy crutch and a hindrance to developing your own spiritual insight.

Note 2: Page numbers listed in parentheses after the description of each section of the project indicate the typical anticipated length of that section; however, these page numbers are suggested guides only. The major concern is that you accomplish the required word. Some passages may require more or less for certain sections. But the final product should be no less than **ten (10)** and no more than **twelve (12)** pages, single-spaced.

Stage Two Paper - due May 12

Stage Two of the exegetical project should produce a polished paper presenting the information gathered in Stage One in a ready-to-deliver form. The purpose of this stage is to synthesize the data you have gathered in Stage One into a well-written presentation. The presentation should take one of the following 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 sound methodology and pedagogy.
3. Journal Article. This manuscript should be written with the intent of publication in an academic journal.

Whether you choose to write a sermon manuscript, teaching plan, or journal article, 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 Stage One 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. **(4–6 pages, single-spaced)**

Style and Formatting Guidelines for Papers

All papers for this course should be neatly typed, single-spaced, using 12-point Times New Roman font. Formatting should adhere to Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers*, 8th ed. Page numbers should maintain a difference between the first page number of a chapter (bottom section) and all follow page numbers of that chapter (top, with right margin preferred). Any Turabian-approved scheme of footnotes, endnotes, 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 uses as specified by Turabian. Entries should be by author and book title, commentary, or article (*not* editor!), with series name and editor appearing in 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 (make certain you are aware of NOBTS policy on plagiarism noted above and in the student handbook), and writing in good English. Students for whom English is a second language and may have trouble with writing in English are expected to have their papers proofread by someone conversant in English writing skills *before* submitting their paper(s). Help is also available through the NOBTS "Write Stuff" detailed above.

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 significant 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 may be run on PC and/or Mac platforms.

1. Accordance. Accordance is a premier Bible program, with the highest accuracy in its search results. The basic original languages package—Greek & Hebrew Learner—is about \$200, with many other add-ons available. Accordance is available for both Mac and Windows along with mobile versions for iOS and Android. While Accordance does not offer access to as many commentaries and other publications in the base package(s) as does Logos, they have a variety of individual modules that cover a similar range of resources and have been increasing the range of additional works in recent years. NOBTS is one of Accordance's academic partners and NOBTS students are eligible for discounts. (accordancebible.com)
2. Logos. Logos is offered at varied package prices with the Starter package beginning at about \$250; however, this package does not include any original language material (Greek and Hebrew), so students are recommended to consider at least the Bronze level package. The price for the Bronze package is about \$600 but NOBTS students may be eligible for a discount of as much as 30% off. Although the price of this basic original language bundle exceeds that of Accordance's starter set, it comes with more English language resources (commentaries, etc.) than you will get with the basic Accordance starter set. (logos.com)

Selected Bibliography

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