



**THE HISTORY OF THE BIBLE**  
**BSHS 5302 Internet Spring 2022**  
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary  
New Testament Department, Biblical Studies Division  
Dr. Bill Warren, Landrum P. Leavell, II, Professor of NT and Greek

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

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

This course seeks to realize the following in student learning:

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

**COURSE TEACHING METHODS:**

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

**TEXTS:** The basic texts are the following:

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

Paul Wegner, *The Journey from Texts to Translations*

**And one of the following:**

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

Or Donald Kraus, *Choosing a Bible: For Worship, Teaching, Study, Preaching, and Prayer*

Short readings may also be assigned for some course units.

**EVALUATION METHODS/REQUIREMENTS:**

- (1) Students will read the three textbooks during the course, with reference made to the textbooks in the assignments and discussions. Quizzes will be given on the reading assignments. The readings from Sheeley & Nash or Donald Kraus will be incorporated into the translation reports. 20%
- (2) Translation Reports. Each student will evaluate an English translation of the Bible. The history behind the making of the translation, the textual base, the intended readership, and an overall evaluation of the version should be included. Two written reports will be submitted. The first one is

a brief, one page overview for sharing with all class members and that is geared to a local church setting, with the outline serving as a handout for the church members. The second is a formal paper on the translation, with a suggested length of 10-15 pages in length and including a logical, scholarly presentation of the material. The bibliography should include all sources consulted, not simply sources cited. Overview paper = 5%, Due in Unit 13, full paper = 20%, Due in Unit 14

(3) Three exams will be given basically covering the following topics: The OT Text and Canon; The NT Text and Canon; and Printed Texts and English Translations. 15% each

(4) Discussion Board participation is required, with a minimum of 2 posts per student per unit. 10%

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[www.NOBTS.edu/itc/](http://www.NOBTS.edu/itc/) - General NOBTS technical help information is provided on this website.

**WRITING STYLE GUIDE:**

Writing assignments should follow the **NOBTS/Leavell College Manual of Form and Style** (*revised August 2019*). To access this manual on the seminary website, please use the following link: <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 UNITS (1 UNIT= 1 WEEK FOR THE REGULAR SEMESTER SCHEDULE):**

**W = Wegner—chapters are listed, A = Arnold—pages listed**

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

UNIT 13: Major Modern English Versions, OVERVIEW PAPER DUE W= 19 & 20; A= 72-89  
UNIT 14: Minor Modern English Versions & Unusual Translations, MAJOR PAPER DUE  
FINAL EXAM

### SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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