

**Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary**  
**BS 802/130: The World of the Bible (3 credits/1 credit)**  
***Fall 2016***

**Instructor Information:** Dr. Michael P. V. Barrett

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I want to be available to help and answer your questions as much as I possibly can. Unless I'm on the phone or someone else is in the office, feel free to see me. I should be in the office most days for most of the day though I may sneak out early occasionally during deer season, particularly on Fridays. You may also email your questions, and I will respond as soon as I can. You may also call, but I would ask that you call my home only in extreme situations.

**Purpose of the Course:**

God did not reveal His Word all at once neatly bound in the leather volume we call the Bible. Rather, He revealed it progressively through time—to real people living in a real world. Consequently, the more we know about those people and world in which they lived the better we can understand and appreciate why God spoke as He did through the holy men of old that the Spirit moved to record the holy word. The better we understand the historical context the more accurately we can extract the timeless and universal truths that are as relevant for us as they were the ancient world. The purpose, therefore, of this course is to explore the ancient world—its people and its customs—in order to shed further light on the text of Scripture that will aid us interpreting and applying God's word to a modern audience. This relates directly to the first objective of both the ThM and MDiv programs to be able to exegete the Scripture accurately employing understanding of the historical circumstances. The nature of the study will also meet the goals of research and writing.

**Description of the Course:**

A study of ancient near eastern and biblical history, including the cultures, religions, and peoples preceding and contemporary with Israel from the Exodus to the post-exilic era, including the inter-testamental period and the first century Mediterranean world. Includes the study of key archaeological discoveries that are relevant to providing information crucial to the historical context of the books of the Bible, which is vital information in the overall exegetical process. This study of the

background of Scripture constitutes one component in the discipline of biblical introduction.

### **The Objectives of the Course:**

*The student will:*

1. Learn both the value and limitations of extra-biblical historical and archaeological data for biblical study.
2. Become familiar with both popular and technical literature dealing with biblical history and archaeology.
3. Be able to identify the historical context in which the books of the Bible were written and use that information to supplement understanding of the biblical content.
4. Be able to defend the accuracy and reliability of the Bible against contrary secular documents and evidence.

### **Reading Material for the Course:**

Following is an extensive but not exhaustive bibliography. Some works are general, and others address specific areas relevant to the course topic. Those taking this as a one-credit survey course are required to read a minimum of 200 pages in addition to the following assigned pages. Those taking this as a three-credit course are required to read a minimum of 1000 pages. Pages read in research for particular assignments count toward this total. A paragraph annotation is required for everything that is read. This is not a review but simply a content summary of the pages read.

*All must read the following dealing with introductory issues:*

Charles L. Feinberg, "The Value of Archaeological Studies for Biblical Research," in *Tradition and Testament*, 265-291.

Alfred J. Hoerth, *Archaeology and the Old Testament*, 13-30.

John McRay, *Archaeology and the New Testament*, 17-34.

K. A. Kitchen, *The Bible in Its World*, 9-36.

\_\_\_\_\_, *Ancient Orient and the Old Testament*, 15-34.

### **Reading List**

#### **Archaeology and ANEH**

Ahoroni, Yohanan, and Michael Avi-Yonah. *The Macmillan Bible Atlas*, 20-109.

Albright, W. F. *History, Archaeology, and Christian Humanism*, 103-156.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Toward an Organismic Philosophy of History." *From the Stone Age to Christianity*, 82-126.

Bengtson, Hermann, ed. *The Greeks and the Persians*, 1-25, 333-423.

*The Biblical Archaeologist Readers* (3).

Bimson, John J. *Redating the Exodus and Conquest*, 15-65, 229-37.

Blaiklock, E. M. *The Archaeology of the New Testament*.

Blaiklock, E. M., and R. K. Harrison, eds. *The New International Dictionary of Biblical Archaeology*.

Bottero, Jean, Elena Cassin, and Jean Vercoutter, eds. *The Near East: The Early Civilizations*, 10-13, 52-57, 97-102, 232-275.

Brinkman, J. A. *A Political History of Post-Kassite Babylonia*, 3-85, 260-67.

Bruce, F. F. *The Hittites and the Old Testament*, 5-23.

Bryce, Trevor. *The Kingdom of the Hittites*.

Coogan, Michael D. *The Oxford History of the Biblical World*.

Cornfeld, G. *Archaeology of the Bible*.

Courville, D. A. *The Exodus Problem and Its Ramifications*, 2 vols.

Currid, John D. *Ancient Egypt and the Old Testament*.

Dentan, Robert C., ed. *The Idea of History in the Ancient Near East*, 101-130, 313-353.

Dockery, David, et alia. *Foundations for Biblical Interpretation*.

Driver, G. R., and John C. Miles. *The Babylonian Laws*, 2 vols.

Edey, M. A. *the Sea Traders*, 104-127.

Evans, Craig, and Peter Flint. *Eschatology, Messianism, and the Dead Sea Scrolls*.

Fant, Clyde and Mitchell Reddish, *Lost Treasures of the Bible*.

- Erman, A. *The Ancient Egyptians: A Sourcebook of Their Writings*, li-lxxii.
- Finegan, J. *The Archaeology of the New Testament*.
- Franken, H. J., and c. A. Franken-Battershrill. *A Primer of Old Testament Archaeology*, 19-33.
- Free, Joseph. *Archaeology and Bible History*.
- Freedman, D. N., and E. F. Campbell. *The Biblical Archaeologist Readers* 2, 3-98.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Biblical Archaeologist Readers* 3, 3-99.
- \_\_\_\_\_, and Pam Kuhlken, *What are the Dead Sea Scrolls and Why Do They Matter?*
- Goldstein, Jonathan, *Peoples of an Almighty God*.
- Gordon, Cyrus H. *The World of the Old Testament*, 15-303.
- Gray, John. *Archaeology and the Old Testament World*.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Canaanites*, 15-138.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Legacy of Canaan*, 1-19.
- Grintz, J. M. "On the Original Home of the Semites." *JNES* 21 (1962), 186-206.\
- Gurney, O. R. *The Hittites*. 15-62.
- Hallo, W. W., and W. K. Simpson. *The Ancient Near East*.
- Harrison, R. K. *Old Testament Times*.
- Henze, Matthias, *Biblical Interpretation at Qumran*.
- Hicks, John. *The Empire Builders*, 72-89.
- Hindson, E. E. *The Philistines and the Old Testament*.
- Hirschfeld, Yizhar. *Qumran in Context: Reassessing the Archaeological Evidence*
- Hitti, Philip K. *History of Syria*, 65-78, 150-175, 231-250.
- Hoerth, Alfred J. *Archaeology and the Old Testament*.

Hoerth, Alfred J., and G. L. Mattingly, Edwin Yamauchi. *Peoples of the Old Testament World*.

Hoffmeier, James K. *Israel in Egypt: The Evidence for the Authenticity of the Exodus Tradition*.

Hoffner, H. A. "Some Contributions of Hittitology to Old Testament Study," *Tyndale Bulletin*, 20 (1969), 27-55.

Honor, Leo L. *Sennacherib's Invasion of Palestine*.

Horn, S. H. *Biblical Archaeology: A Generation of Discovery*.

Jacobsen, T. *The Sumerian King List*, 165-208.

Kapellrud, Arvid S. *The Ras Shamra Discoveries and the Old Testament*, 3-85.

Kitchen, K. A. *Ancient Orient and Old Testament*, 15-173.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Bible in Its World*.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Egypt, History of (Chronology)," *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 2:322-31.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Third Intermediate Period*, 287-312.

Kraeling, E. G. *The Brooklyn Museum Aramaic Papyri*, 3-119.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Aram and Israel*.

Lambert, W. G. *Babylonian Wisdom Literature*, 1-20.

Larue, Gerald A. *Babylon and the Bible*.

Lucas, A., and J. R. Harris. *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Industries*, 10-27, 270-326, 457-468.

Macalister, R. A. S. *The Philistines*, 29-67.

Martinez, F. G. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated*.

Mazar, Amihai. *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible*.

McRay, John. *Archaeology and the New Testament*.

Monet, Pierre. *Egypt and the Bible*, xiii-xvi, 3-136.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Lives of the Pharoahs*, 80-203, 272-276.

Moscatti, Sabatino. *The World of the Phoenicians*, 3-41.

Neufeld, Ephraim. *The Hittite Laws*, 116-128.

Noth, Martin. *The Old Testament World*, 267-277.

Owen, G. F. *Archaeology and the Bible*.

Parrot, André. *Nineveh and the Old Testament*, 13-93.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Babylon and the Old Testament*, 68-157.

Paul, S. M. *Studies in the Book of the Covenant in the Light of Cuneiform and Biblical Law*, 3-10.

Pettinato, Giovanni. *The Archives of Ebla*, 32-48, 271-318.

Pfeiffer, Charles. *The Divided Kingdom*, 11-106.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Egypt and the Exodus*, 20-88.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Exile and Return*, 11-128.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Patriarchal Age*, 49-56, 61-69.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Ras Shamra and the Bible*, 57-66.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Tell el Amarna and the Bible*, 67-78, 150-175, 231-250.

\_\_\_\_\_, ed. *The Biblical World*, 447-449.

Porten, Bazalel. *Archives from Elephantine*, 3-27.

Pritchard, James B., ed. *Solomon and Sheba*, 40-63.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Archaeology and the Old Testament*.

Redford, Donald, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times*.

Saggs, H. W. F. *The Greatness That Was Babylon*, 3-153.

Sasson, Jack M. *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, 4 vols.

Schwantes, Siegfried J. *A Short History of the Ancient Near East*.

Speiser, E. A. *Oriental and Biblical Studies*, 244-269.

Starr, Chester G. *Early Man*.

Stegemann, Hartmut. *The Library of Qumran*.

Steindorff, George, and Keith C. Seele. *When Egypt Ruled the East*, 1-91, 201-275.

Thomas, D. Winton, ed. *Archaeology and Old Testament Study*, 3-167.

\_\_\_\_\_, ed. *Documents from Old Testament Times*, xvii-xxvi, 3-275.

Thompson, J. *Archaeology and the New Testament*.

Thompson, J. A. *The Ancient Near Eastern Treaties and the Old Testament*, 7-37.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Bible and Archaeology*.

Thompson, T. L. *The Historicity of the Patriarchal Narratives*.

Ulrich, Eugene C. *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Origins of the Bible*.

Unger, M. F. *Archaeology and the Old Testament*.

Unger, Merrill F. *Israel and the Aramaeans of Damascus*, 1-109.

Vanderkam, James C. *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Bible*.

Van Zyl, A. H. *The Moabites*, 102-159, 193-202.

Vos, Howard. *An Introduction to Bible Archaeology*.

Walton, John H. *ancient Israelite Literature in Its Cultural Context*, 111-131, 229-249.

Watts, John D. W. *Obadiah*, 11-19.

Wiseman, Donald J. *Illustrations From Biblical Archaeology*, 5-76.

\_\_\_\_\_, ed. *Peoples of Old Testament Times*.

Wright, G. Ernest. *Biblical Archaeology*, 17-217.

Yamauchi, Edwin M. *Persia and the Bible*, 241-78.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Stones and the Scriptures*, 146-166.

### **Bible Encyclopedias with Important Articles on Ancient Near Eastern History**

*The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman. 1992.

*The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley. 1979-88.

*The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. George A. Buttrick. 1962.

*The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, ed. Merrill C. Tenney. 1975.

*The Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia*, ed. Charles F. Pfeiffer. 1975.

### **Jewish Institutions**

Abrahams, I. *Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels*.

Barnett, Paul. *Behind the Scenes of the New Testament*.

Boccaccini, Gabriele, *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis*

Bowker, J. *Jesus and the Pharisees*.

Cahn, Z. *The Philosophy of Judaism*.

Connolly, P. *A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus*.

Dockery, David, et alia. *Foundations for Biblical Interpretation*.

Finkelstein, L. *Pharisaism in the Making*.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Pharisees*.

Goodenough, Erwin R. *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period*.

Gower, R. *The New Manners and Customs of Bible Times*.

Grabbe, Lester L. *A History of the Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple Period*.

\_\_\_\_\_. *An Introduction to Second Temple Judaism*.



- Guignebert, C. *The Jewish World in the Times of Jesus*.
- Herford, T. T. *The Pharisees*.
- Horsley, Richard and John Hanson. *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs: Popular Movements in the Time of Jesus*.
- Kaufman, R. *Great Sects and Schisms in Judaism*.
- Mantel, H. *Studies in the History of the Sanhedrin*.
- Marshak, Adam. *The Many Faces of Herod the Great*.
- Muirhead, L. A. *The Times of Christ*.
- Neusner, J. *From Politics to Piety*.
- Nickelsburg, George. *Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah*.
- Pfeiffer, C. F. *Between the Testaments*.
- Roetzel, C. F. *The World that Shaped the New Testament*.
- Schurer, E. *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*.
- Skarsaune, Oskar. *In the Shadow of the Temple: Jewish Influences on Early Christianity*.
- Stambaugh, J. *The New Testament in Its Social Environment*.
- Tomasino, Anthony. *Judaism Before Jesus: The Ideas and Events that Shaped the New Testament World*.

### **Ancient Near Eastern Religion**

- Albrektson, Bertil. *History and the Gods*.
- Bleeker, C. Jouco, and G. Widengren, eds. *Religions of the Past*. Vol. 1, *Historia Religionum*.
- Brandon, S. G. F. *Creation Legends of the Ancient Near East*.
- Bratton, Fred Gladstone. *Myths and Legends of the Ancient Near East*.
- Cross, Frank Moore. *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*.

Engnell, Ivan. *Studies in Divine Kingship in the Ancient Near East*.

Gibson, J. C. L. "Myth, Legend and Folk-Lore in the Ugaritic Keret and Aqhat Texts." *Congress Volume* (Edinburgh, 1974). Vol. 28, Supplements to Vetus Testamentum.

Gray, John. *Near Eastern Mythology*.

Habel, Norman C. *Yahweh Versus Baal*.

Hooke, S. H. *Middle Eastern Mythology*.

Hvidberg, Flemming Friis. *Weeping and Laughter in the Old Testament*, trans. Niels Haistlund.

James, E. O. *The Tree of Life*.

Jevons, Frank Byron. *The Idea of God in Early Religions*.

Kramer, Samuel Noah, ed. *Mythologies of the Ancient World*.

Lenowitz, Haris, and Charles Doria, trans. *Origins: Creation Texts from the Ancient Mediterranean*.

Mendelsohn, Isaac, ed. *Religions of the Ancient Near East*.

Oldenburg, Ulf. *The Conflict between El and Baal in the Canaanite Religion*.

Patai, Raphael. *The Hebrew Goddess*.

Ringgren, Helmer. *Religions of the Ancient Near East*, trans. John Sturdy.

Roberts, J. J. M. *The Earliest Semitic Pantheon*.

Some of the sources in the bibliography will not be readily available. The librarians are available to assist you in locating sources, so take advantage of them.

## **Biblical Points of Interest:**

### **Genesis**

Early chronology

Creation and flood epics  
Flood evidence  
Earliest use of iron  
Rise of urban life  
Sumerian King List  
Early Semites  
Table of Nations  
Ziggurats  
Patriarchal background (Ur, Haran, Nuzi, Alalakh, Mari)  
Genesis 14 background  
Sodom and Gomorrah  
Hurrians  
Egypt of Joseph's time

### **Exodus-Deuteronomy**

Date of Exodus  
Egypt of Moses  
Law codes  
Hittite covenants

### **Joshua**

Amorites  
Canaanites-Ugarit  
Amarna letters  
Hittites  
Jericho  
Hazor

### **Judges-Samuel**

Moabites  
Ammonites  
Philistines  
Merneptah's stela  
Ramses II

### **Kings (Jeremiah and Daniel)**

Syria

Edom  
Shishak  
Mesha Inscription  
Assyria (Shalmaneser III, Tiglath-pileser III,  
Shalmaneser V, Sargon II, Sennacherib)  
Lachish letters  
Babylon (Jehoiachin, Babylonian, Chronicle,  
Nebuchadnezzar-Belshazzar)

### **Ezra-Nehemiah-Esther**

Persia (Cyrus-Artaxerxes)  
Cyrus Cylinder  
Behistun Inscription

### **Peoples, Places, and Things of Interest:**

#### **I. Peoples of the Biblical World**

Aramaeans  
Assyrians  
Babylonians/Chaldeans  
Canaanites (Amorites)  
Egyptians  
Greeks  
Hebrews  
Hittites  
Hurrians  
Moabites/Edomites  
Persians  
Philistines  
Phoenicians  
Romans

#### **II. Key Archaeological Sites**

Tel-el-Amarna  
Nuzi  
Ur  
Bogazkoy  
Alalakh  
Mari  
Ugarit  
Hazor  
Jericho

Leachish  
Transjordan  
Jerusalem  
Megiddo  
Dan  
Bet-shan  
Gezer  
Niveveh  
Tel Mardikh

### III. Key Epigraphic Discoveries

Amarna letters  
Atrahasis  
Babylonian Chronicle  
Behistun Inscription  
Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III  
Cyrus Cylinder  
Dead Sea Scrolls  
Ebla Tables (Tell Mardikh)  
Egyptian Execration Text  
Elephantine Papyri  
Enuma Elish  
Gezer Calendar  
Siloam Inscription  
Karnak King List  
Sumerian King List

Gilgamesh Epic  
Law Codes  
Lachish Letters  
Merneptah (Israel) Stele  
Mesha Inscription  
Vulture's Victory Stele  
Narmer Palette  
Palermo Stone  
Rosetta Stone  
Siloam Inscription  
Taylor Prism  
Ugaritic Texts  
Coffin Texts  
Assyrian Eponym Lists

### **Schedule of Assignments and Requirements for the Course:**

#### *One credit assignments:*

1. Complete required reading with annotations. Due no later than the last class period before Exam Week, Dec. 6.
2. Submit responses to the online questions. Check Populi for when the questions will come due.
  - a. How do the ANE creation/flood accounts affect our understanding of the historicity of Genesis 1-11?
  - b. Why is it that the date of the Exodus no longer seems to be litmus test revealing conservative or liberal interpreters?
  - c. How does/can archaeological evidence from Canaan "justify" the divine command to exterminate the Canaanites?

- d. Reflect on how the rise and fall of world empires in the ancient world accomplished God's redemptive plan and purpose. How does that relate to our understanding of current events?
  - e. How does the rise and development of the Pharisees stand as a warning for evangelical and conservative Christianity?
3. Write a 7-10 paper on the Contributions of Archaeology to Biblical Studies.

This paper may focus on either the Old Testament or New Testament, but not both. The paper should address these three areas of potential contribution: a) background information; b) historical events; c) linguistic knowledge. In the main body of the paper you should develop one main example and then identify in the footnotes other examples. When applicable, show how the archaeological data has answered critical claims against the Scripture.

The papers will follow the format required by PRTS (see the Catalog). Note that the page count does not include the bibliography.

The paper is **due** no later than the last class period before Exam Week, Dec. 6.

*Three-credit assignments:*

1. Complete required reading with annotations. Due no later than the last class period before Exam Week, Dec. 6.
2. Submit responses to the online questions. Check Populi for when the questions will come due.
  - a. How do the ANE creation/flood accounts affect our understanding of the historicity of Genesis 1-11?
  - b. Why is it that the date of the Exodus no longer seems to be litmus test revealing conservative or liberal interpreters?
  - c. How does/can archaeological evidence from Canaan "justify" the divine command to exterminate the Canaanites?
  - d. Reflect on how the rise and fall of world empires in the ancient world accomplished God's redemptive plan and purpose. How does that relate to our understanding of current events?
  - e. How does the rise and development of the Pharisees stand as a warning for evangelical and conservative Christianity?
3. A twenty-page paper on the significance of Qumran for Biblical Studies. Due Oct. 18.
4. A twenty-page paper on Jewish institutions and the New Testament. Due Dec. 6.

The papers will follow the format required by PRTS (see the Catalog). Note that the page count does not include the bibliography.

**Policies for the Course:**

Consult the policy of PRTS regarding class attendance and plagiarism in the catalog and Student Handbook. Any plagiarism is an automatic failure for the project in addition to the procedures outlined in the Handbook. A penalty proportionate to the infraction will be deducted from the final grade for failure to meet minimum reading requirements. Late work will also be penalized a letter increment for every week it is late. Assignments that are not in by the time grades are due to the Registrar on January 6 will be assigned a zero. I will not give an "I" (Incomplete) unless by previous arrangement due to significant extenuating circumstances.

**Grading Procedure for the Course:**

The course grading scale is per the PRTS catalog.

Procedure for 1 credit course:

- 10% Reading
- 15% Online discussions
- 75% Paper

Procedure for 3 credit course:

- 10% Reading
- 10% Online discussions
- 40% Qumran Paper
- 40% Jewish Institutions Paper