

General Introduction to the Bible

Course Objective: Our goal is to gain a good understanding of the structure, formation, main themes, principle authors and the history of the synthesis of the biblical text. Some attention will be given to textual (lower) criticism and the discovery of ancient biblical manuscripts. By the end of the class each student should be able to describe how the Bible is made up, who were the main persons and the reasons for why the Bible is significant.

Course Text & Requirements: It is recommended that the student obtain copies of the course textbooks either from www.amazon.com or from www.Christianbook.com, who offer good pricing and timely service. If the student has no way to order on-line, call the Dartmouth Bible Church office to make other arrangements.

- ***Understanding the Bible*** (2001 edition) by John Stott published by Baker Books
 - ***How to Read the Bible Book by Book*** (2002) by Gordon D. Fee & Douglas Stuart published by Zondervan
 - a copy of ***the Bible*** - I teach from the New American Standard Bible (pre-1995 edition). You may wish to procure a copy of this translation if you do not own one, although it is not necessary.
1. Each student must read the course textbook in its entirety.
 2. The student must also submit a five page paper on a topic selected from the provided list, or on a Biblical subject on approval of the instructor.
 3. He/she also must complete a final exam which will cover both the text and material covered during the classroom lectures.

Schedule:

February 2nd - Literature types in the Bible; general structural considerations

February 9th - Authorship of the Bible, authenticity of Biblical sources; reading:
Chapter 1 Stott

February 16th - Old and New Testaments: differences, similarities,
connectedness; reading: Ch. 2 Stott

February 23rd - Inspiration theories of the Bible; reading: Chapter 3 Stott

March 1st - A strategy for Bible study: observation, interpretation, application;
reading: Chapter 4 Stott

March 8th - No class?

March 15th - Manuscript history (textual criticism); development of manuscript
"families;" the Dead Sea Scrolls; reading: chapter 5 Stott

March 22nd - History, Time and Epochs in the Bible; Mid-term exam; reading:
Chapter 6 Stott

March 29th - Old and New Testament Prophecy, the prophetic office; reading:
Chapter 7 Stott

April 5th - Jesus and the Bible; reading: Chapter 8 Stott

April 12th - General Tools (part 1)

April 19th - General Tools (part 2), English translations

April 26th - Final exam and last considerations

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Schedule:

September 9th - Literature types in the Bible; general structural considerations

September 16th - Authorship of the Bible, authenticity of Biblical sources; reading:
Chapter 1 Stott

September 23rd - Old and New Testaments: differences, similarities,
connectedness; reading: Ch. 2 Stott

September 30th - Inspiration theories of the Bible; reading: Chapter 3 Stott

October 7th - A strategy for Bible study: observation, interpretation, application;
reading: Chapter 4 Stott

October 14th - Manuscript history (textual criticism); development of manuscript
"families;" the Dead Sea Scrolls; reading: chapter 5 Stott

October 21st - History, Time and Epochs in the Bible; Mid-term exam; reading:
Chapter 6 Stott

October 28th - Old and New Testament Prophecy, the prophetic office; reading:
Chapter 7 Stott

November 4th - Jesus and the Bible; reading: Chapter 8 Stott

November 11th - NO CLASS

November 18th - General Tools (part 1)

November 25th - General Tools (part 2), English translations

December 2nd - Final exam and last considerations

GENERAL SURVEY OF BIBLE KNOWLEDGE ☺

1. The Bible contains ____ individual books.
2. T or F Hezekiah is one of the books of the Bible.
3. T or F First Corinthians isn't really First Corinthians.
4. T or F The apostle John wrote the Book of Revelations.
5. Which book of the Bible was partially "written" by a female? _____
6. How many books did Luke write? _____
7. The last Book of the Bible is
 - a. The Book of Concordance
 - b. The Book of Malachi
 - c. The Book of Maps
 - d. The Book of Revelation
8. Peter knew that Paul's letters were special because he called them _____.
9. Who were some of the *first recipients* of the biblical writings?

10. T or F The Book of First Maccabees is a biblical writing.
11. What did the apostles use to write with?
 - a. Word 2000
 - b. Parker pen
 - c. charcoal
 - d. quill & ink on parchment or papyrus rolls
12. Name four apostles who wrote letters which ended up in the Bible?

13. The Book of Romans is primarily about
 - a. doctrine
 - b. daily Christian practice
 - c. prophecy
 - d. history
14. The Book of Revelation includes seven direct letters from Jesus to _____.
15. Why is it generally thought that the Book of Hebrews was written *before* the destruction of Israel/Jerusalem in AD 70?

16. T or F Two cars that are mentioned in the Bible are "Pharoah's triumph" and that the early Christians were all in "one accord."
17. The earliest existing manuscripts of the Bible go back to
 - a. 1847
 - b. 1000 AD
 - c. 750 AD
 - d. 350 AD
 - e. 140 AD
18. Every Old Testament book is represented in the Dead Sea Scrolls except _____.
19. Nathan the prophet ministered in the time of King _____.
20. Israel's first King's name was _____.

Literature Types in the Bible and General Structural Considerations

Introduction: The Bible is the most unique collection of literature in the world. It is not a single work, but a collection of many writings, synthesized into a single book and possessing a timeless attraction. The Bible represents approximately fifteen centuries of time and many different authors from various walks of life. It has changed countless millions of lives because as the written Word of God it possesses the inspiration of God. However, it is also a book made up of real writings—writings not dissimilar (for the most part) from how people today might write. There are several categories of “literature types” contained in the Bible. They are:

Literature of the Old Testament

History and law	Genesis – Deuteronomy	These books are called the Pentateuch.
History	Joshua - Esther	
Wisdom literature	Job – Song of Solomon, Lamentations	
Major prophecy	Isaiah - Ezekiel	
Minor prophecy	Hosea - Malachi	
Apocalyptic	Daniel	

Literature of the New Testament

History	Matthew - Acts
Epistles	Romans - Jude
Apocalyptic	Revelation

Most of the Old Testament books were written in Hebrew (a very small portion was written in Aramaic, which is similar to Hebrew). While we do not possess any *original* manuscripts, we know the general writing style of the ancients—writing was done on vellum scrolls, pottery, clay tablets and on papyrus rolls. (Books, as we know them, were not invented until about the fourth century A.D.)

“Old and New Testaments”

A “testament” is another word for “covenant.” It refers to the *arrangement* that God made with men. Christians call Genesis through Malachi (which Jews simply call “the Bible”), the “Old Testament” *because* of the New Testament. It is hard to know how aware the writers of the New Testament were that they also were producing “holy writings” (Scripture) the way they knew the Old Testament writers had... To some extent, there was an awareness (see 2nd Peter 3:16 for example).

Some Specific Structural Observations

1. Proverbs – The Book of Proverbs is the only book where verses are generally intended to be digested singly. The book is arranged by author and it is a general collection of sayings.
2. Psalms - the Book of Psalms is arranged by psalm-type and to some extent by author. Psalm 119 is interesting because it is arranged with headings for each letter of the Hebrew alphabet.
3. In the Hebrew Bible, we have simply Kings, Chronicles, Samuel rather than what we see in our Bibles as 1st and 2nd Kings, 1st and 2nd Chronicles, 1st and 2nd Samuel—although the material is the same.
4. In the original manuscripts there are generally no chapter or verse divisions and sometimes no word divisions! Scribes and scholars are able to easily discern natural breaks and divisions.
5. Traditionally, the oldest Old Testament book is thought to be Job and the oldest New Testament book is thought to be Mark.

New Testament Structure

The Gospels and Acts – Matthew, Mark and Luke are called the “synoptic” Gospels and possess the same general chronological approach to the life of Jesus. The Gospel of John is unique—most of this Gospel concerns itself with the last couple of months of Jesus’ ministry. Some sayings of Jesus are contained in more than one Gospel (some are in all four) and others are in only one Gospel. An interesting example is how the synoptics all describe the last supper. John does not, although the *evening* is mentioned and only he adds the story of the washing of the disciples’ feet by Jesus. Acts was also written by Luke, and in some cases was circulated with the Gospel, as Luke, volume 2.

The Pauline Epistles – The apostle Paul is the author or the most inspired New Testament letters. Some were written to individuals and some to whole congregations, and in some cases to a whole region of churches (Galatians). It is interesting to note that in 1st Corinthians, Paul refers to a letter he had *previously written*, which would make 1st Corinthians really 2nd Corinthians and 2nd Corinthians really 3rd Corinthians. This merely illustrates that not ALL things written by the apostles were necessarily inspired.

The General Epistles – These letters were written by a variety of apostles and are generally shorter letters than those of Paul. The apostle John wrote three inspired letters. Peter wrote two.

The Letter to the Hebrews – this letter is written TO an early congregation of Jewish Christians. Its authorship has been disputed for two thousand years (it does not say who wrote it). Some have thought it to be Pauline, others have thought it was written by Apollos or another of Paul’s associates.

The Revelation – This is the most unique book of the New Testament but in the first century, apocalyptic literature was by no means unknown. It predicts the future and is prophetic in nature.

Could More Scripture Be Written?

We think not. At the end of Revelation, there is a warning given about adding to *that* prophecy. That seems to imply that written revelation was complete and that the writings given by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to that point would be sufficient for people for the rest of the age. This does not mean that God no longer communicates to mankind—simply that we are persuaded that there is no need for any more written revelation. In other words, almost all conservative scholars agree that the “canon” of Scripture was closed with the completion of the Book of Revelation by the apostle John in approximately AD 90-95.

AUTHORSHIP AND AUTHENTICITY OF THE BIBLE

Introduction The Bible is unlike any other book on earth. It is a book with a definite human side but also a divine side. In fact, it is not just one book but actually 66 books that have been collected into a single volume. But it was written by real men, with distinct personalities, who lived in real times. There is much discussion among scholars about who really wrote the books of the Bible. And flowing out of that discussion, is much debate about the authenticity of the Bible. "Evangelical" Christians are identified and distinguished primarily in their view that the Bible is completely authentic and beyond that, perfectly sufficient as the sole rule for faith and practice among Christians.

Presuppositions

A key factor in how a person interprets the Bible is in the attitude with which they approach it. No one can completely approach a subject objectively without some assumptions and "presuppositions." No subject evidences this more than the study of the Bible. Illustration: Consider how most Americans probably feel about the Q'ran (Koran) after September 11th, 2001. Before reading any line or verse from that lengthy writing, most or many Americans would *assume* what is often heard, that the Q'ran is full of exhortation for true and faithful Muslims to persecute or kill non-Muslims. Whether that is true or not is not the point. But many Americans, because of the creed of Al Qeda fundamentalists, assume that the Q'ran says just that.¹ Another presupposition given, is that Westerners can never really understand the Q'ran because it can only really be understood as written in Arabic. Point: There are important assumptions which students of sacred writings make, before those books are even opened.

The same is true when we begin to study the Bible. Many people assume its "inspiration" and this is good! But many other people assume its *lack* of inspiration today and therefore its alleged lack of authority. Without even studying the evidence for the inspiration of the Bible many people are coaxed into disbelieving it.

Authorship

Some of the books of the Bible claim a specific author. Some are anonymous and some give evidence for who wrote it. Psalms and Proverbs represent multiple authors. But in the end, a real person wrote each book. Liberal (or "higher") criticism often denies the traditional authorship of many biblical books (by the way—"Bible" is always capitalized and the word "biblical" is not). For instance it is commonly taught that there were two or even three "Isaiahs" because there are style changes in the book at two places. Our understanding is the traditional view on all 66 books, insofar as we can know a specific author. The list of OT authors therefore includes Moses, Joshua, Job, David, Solomon, Nehemiah and each of the prophets. Read Deut.33 – Joshua 1:8

¹ By the way, here are some examples...

Quran 9:5, "Fight and slay the pagans wherever you find them, and seize them, beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them in every stratagem."

Quran 66:9 and 9:73, "O Prophet! Strive hard against the unbelievers and the hypocrites, and be firm against them."

Quran 5:33, "Those that make war against Allah and his apostle and spread disorders in the land shall be put to death or crucified or have their hands and feet cut off on alternate sides, or be banished from the country."

Quran 8:68, "It is not for any prophet to have prisoners until he has made wide slaughter in the land."

In the New Testament we have five histories, written by Matthew (an unlikely disciple of Jesus), Mark (a disciple of the apostles and close friend of Peter and perhaps dependent on Peter for much of his information), Luke (a physician and friend of the apostle Paul) and John, one of Jesus' closest disciples, and apparently the one original apostle who lived to see old age.

Paul wrote thirteen inspired letters. Peter wrote two. John wrote three. Jude wrote one, James wrote one and someone wrote the letter to the Hebrews. John also wrote down the *Apocalypse* (or, the Book of Revelation). Chapters 2 and 3 were clearly dictated to him by Jesus Himself.

There were many other ancient Christian writings in the first three centuries of the church which were circulated and considered for their authenticity. One writing which came very close to being included in the canon of Scripture was the letter of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians (<http://www.ccel.org/fathers2/ANF-01/TOC.htm>). Here is an example...

Chapter One The Church of God which sojourns at Rome, to the Church of God sojourning at Corinth, to them that are called and sanctified by the will of God, through our Lord Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, from Almighty God through Jesus Christ, be multiplied. Owing, dear brethren, to the sudden and successive calamitous events which have happened to ourselves, we feel that we have been somewhat tardy in turning our attention to the points respecting which you consulted us;² and especially to that shameful and detestable sedition, utterly abhorrent to the elect of God, which a few rash and self-confident persons have kindled to such a pitch of frenzy, that your venerable and illustrious name, worthy to be universally loved, has suffered grievous injury.³ For who ever dwelt even for a short time among you, and did not find your faith to be as fruitful of virtue as it was firmly established?⁴ Who did not admire the sobriety and moderation of your godliness in Christ? Who did not proclaim the magnificence of your habitual hospitality? And who did not rejoice over your perfect and well-grounded knowledge? For ye did all things without respect of persons, and walked in the commandments of God, being obedient to those who had the rule over you, and giving all fitting honour to the presbyters among you. Ye enjoined young men to be of a sober and serious mind; ye instructed your wives to do all things with a blameless, becoming, and pure conscience, loving their husbands as in duty bound; and ye taught them that, living in the rule of obedience, they should manage their household affairs becomingly, and be in every respect marked by discretion.

But in time it was determined that as good a letter as this was, and clearly authentic, it just wasn't quite up to the standard of inspiration and also it was not written by an apostle.

Canonicity

The word *canon* comes from the English root word for *reed*, cane. (The Hebrew root is *ganeh* and the Greek root is *kanon*. The reed was used as a measuring rod and it came to mean a "standard." Canonicity was determined by whether a writing was written under the direct authority by God, as did a genuine prophet, Moses the Lawgiver, David the King or an apostle. Truly inspired writings had to be authentic, beyond question. There could be no deception (and there was much of this, for example the Gospel of Thomas, the Acts of Peter, etc.) And, somewhat more mystically or spiritually, we would say, a writing had to bear the flavor and feel of being true and authoritative. This plainly weeded out many writings and left us with what we call the New Testament. Following, is a chart that displays how canonicity should be understood:

The Incorrect View

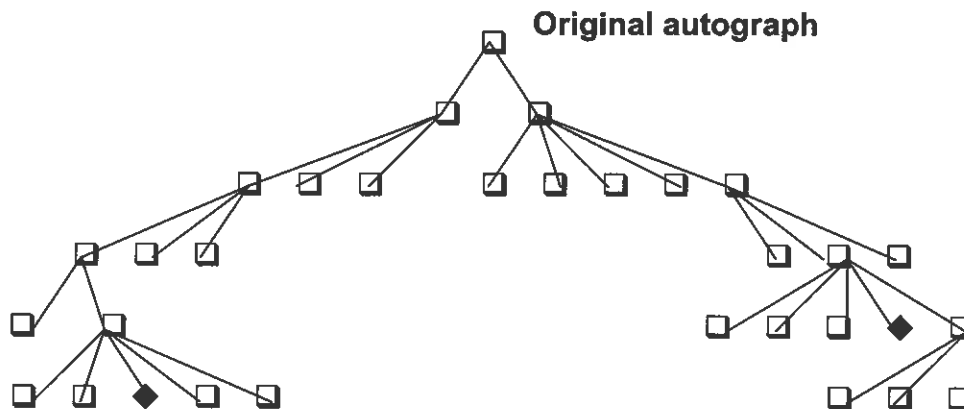
The Church is Determiner of the Canon
The Church is Mother of the Canon
The Church is Magistrate of the Canon
The Church is Regulator of the Canon
The Church is Judge of the Canon
The Church is Master of the Canon

The Correct View

The Church is the Discoverer of the Canon
The Church is Child of the Canon
The Church is Minister of the Canon
The Church is Recognizer of the Canon
The Church is Witness of the Canon
The Church is Servant of the Canon

Josh McDowell - *The New Evidence That Demands a Verdict*

Canonicity is a fascinating study and a logical question is WHO determined the canon of Scripture? Many early scholars and churchmen worked on the task of collecting the authentic writings of God's prophets and leaders. Jesus' sayings were collected early after the Ascension and the epistles and Gospels came to be circulated quickly. The Old Testament was intact by the beginning of the fourth century B.C. by many Jewish scribes and scholars. Important Note: No original of any biblical writing exists (to anyone's knowledge) today. We have only distant copies. But we have so *many* copies that the "received texts" are so close there can be little dispute. **Less** than one tenth of one percent of all the verses in the Bible know manuscript discrepancies!



Authenticity

There are many books written on this question. Evangelical Christians vigorously defend the authenticity of the biblical writings. By this we mean:

- Are the books really written by who they say they are written by?
- Were they really written when they purport to be written?
- Are they true in what they record and teach?

The apostle Paul spoke plainly to this question concerning the Old Testament when he wrote to Timothy 2nd Timothy 3:16 and 17. There is too much evidence for each biblical book to detail it here. But the evidence is considerable. It is interesting to note, however, that some later New Testament books took their time in being recognized by the church fathers as apostolic and therefore authentically inspired—for instance 2nd Timothy, 2nd Peter and the Revelation.

The Differences, Similarities and Connectedness of the Old and New Testaments

Introduction: Nowhere does the Bible refer to itself in two parts, as we call them, the Old and New Testaments. Jews call the Old Testament, simply, the Bible. The apostles called the Old Testament books simply, the Scriptures (“holy writings”). It wasn’t until the writings of the apostles began to be circulated, collected together and then *attached* to the “Old Testament” that the term “New Testament” came into use. Actually, the term itself comes from Jesus’ words to the disciples, ***This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant [testament] in my blood*** (Luke 22:20b).

A Strategy for Bible study (The “Right” Way to Study the Bible)

Introduction

Is there a “right” way to study Scripture and a “wrong” way? The answer is an absolute YES. If the Bible *is* the inerrant written Word of God (as we suggest), then it deserves a search for the best way to study it. We are suggesting in this lesson that the best way involves three basic steps. Actually, this is not a bad way to study any written document!

Personal Bible study is only a fairly recent phenomena.

1. Until the 1700s most people did not read, let alone possess a personal copy of the Bible.
2. Bibles were not available generally until the 1800s (and then really only in Great Britain, America and perhaps a few other places).
3. Until the Reformation (1500s) individual people, even *if* they could read, were discouraged from studying the Bible for themselves—the Church was the official interpreter of the Bible and the channel through which people were given some biblical ideas. Note: Martin Luther, the great Saxon Reformer, was 19 when he saw his first Bible and it was chained to the wall of a church.

Observation

As soon as you place your eyes on a biblical text, you can begin this step. Observation is the step of determining simply what the Scripture says. Of course this varies with the translation being used but this makes having two or more translations available that much more interesting. The tendency is to try immediately to interpret the text or to find a practical application for your life. Observation is needed to determine plainly what the writer was saying. There are many things in a text he was probably *not* saying—for instance, in John 3:16,

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son,
that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life”

John is not saying:

1. God will save the whole world
2. God loves the whole world equally
3. Believing is intellectual agreement that Jesus exists

According to Robert Traina (*Methodical Bible Study*) “observation is essentially *awareness*.”¹ Observation on a biblical text will pay attention to the **terms** used by the author. The student will note well the

1. definition of a term,
2. whether a term is routine or non-routine (for instance in Mark 9:2,4 the terms *transfigured* and *appeared* would be non-routine terms and *six*, *took* and *them* would be routine words),
Exercise: Look at Mark 10:13-52 and mark every non-routine word.
3. whether a term is literal or figurative.

¹ Robert A. Traina, *Methodical Bible Study*, 1952. p.31

A text without a context is a pretext.

Interpretation

This second step asks the question of the biblical text, “What does it mean?” This is called the science of biblical hermeneutics. It is ALWAYS important to seek to discern what the author originally meant by what he said. That is the first part of interpreting the Bible: original intent. Point: This step should never be bypassed. The original intent determines why the writer said what he said. Rarely did a biblical writer simply explode with an out-of-the-blue utterance without it having some local or immediate context. (An example might be some prophecies about the distant future but even these were usually prompted by some current event).

Most of our doctrine and theology is a wedding of definition and interpretation. For instance, evangelical Christians believe that Jesus’ death on the cross coupled with personal faith in the cross is the means by which a person becomes a Christian. Why do we believe that? The answer is because we take the plain, face-value statements of Jesus and the apostles, and we attach to those statements our personal faith and dependence that they are reliable. Thus, we are told, we are “saved.” Another example of hermeneutics: What happens when a person is filled with the Holy Spirit? What does the Bible say about that? And a final example (from a recent e-mail):

Hi Neil. I had a few questions for you about your sermon. In Matt 18: 21-35 both servants admitted they owed the dough and asked for forgiveness (or at least time to repay the debt).

Also at the end of the parable Jesus reminds us to forgive our "brother". Do you think we should forgive people who have not asked to be forgiven and if they continue to sin against us(God requires us to repent and ask forgiveness, He doesn't just forgive us otherwise). Does the term “brother” mean that this forgiveness is in someway limited to fellow Christians? Thank you, _____.

Application

Here is where people spend most of their time. This is the step whereby we seek to understand how a biblical passage applies to us, here in our time. Once we have it clear what the text says, and we have arrived at a conclusion as to its meaning, then we are prepared to really bring it bear on our daily lives, in our families, in the church and out in the community. A theme verse for this stage of Bible study might be 2nd Timothy 3:17.

Once we have decided upon an interpretation of a text, we then seek to find how it is useful for daily living. Our application will never violate our interpretation, neither will it twist the text to make it say something it does not (“observation.”) Good application of a text flows out of a reasonable and valid interpretation of a text.

The Bible is essentially given to us by the Lord for us to use. Knowing it is not an end in itself, except insofar as it changes your life. Studying the Bible is not a process of brain-washing ourselves. It is the process of doing observation, then responsible interpretation and finally practical application.

We said at the beginning that the three-step method of Bible study is a good guide for studying any document. What about the Gettysburg address? What about the United States Constitution? What about the plays of William Shakespeare? All deserve simple observation, then meaningful and accurate interpretation and finally (especially in the case of the Constitution) valid application. Studying the Bible should undergo the same process.

Bible Study Tools (Part 2)

Word Tools

Words mean a great deal! When we are studying the Bible the meaning of a word or group of words is very important. This is because we believe that God inspired the Bible in such a way as to be deliberate in the words that he gave to the authors. When Jesus said to Nicodemus, beyond us believing that He actually said it, He MEANT something by it? Nicodemus himself was not sure what Jesus meant. What do the two words "born again" mean? In Greek it is "umas genéthénai anóthen" (υμας γεννηθηναι άνωθεν). HOW would we determine what Jesus meant to Nicodemus? We would study:

- The context
- The vocabulary
- The grammar (including ancient idioms and metaphors)
- The ways the words are used elsewhere in the NT
- The ways the words are used in the Greek Old Testament (called the Septuagint, or LXX for the seventy or so ancient Jewish scholars who translated the OT into Greek, c. 2nd century BC).

Encyclopedia

This is where you will find extended help on a wide variety of biblical topics. The one I use and like is the Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedias of the Bible which currently costs \$90 **CBD Stock Number: WW6700** (5,000 pages!)

The classic International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (4 volumes) is more expensive (about \$200, although for some reason Vol.1 is only 3 bucks!) but is perhaps more extensive in its individual articles...

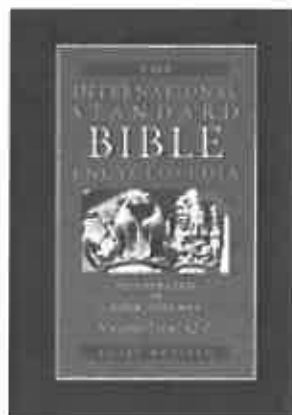
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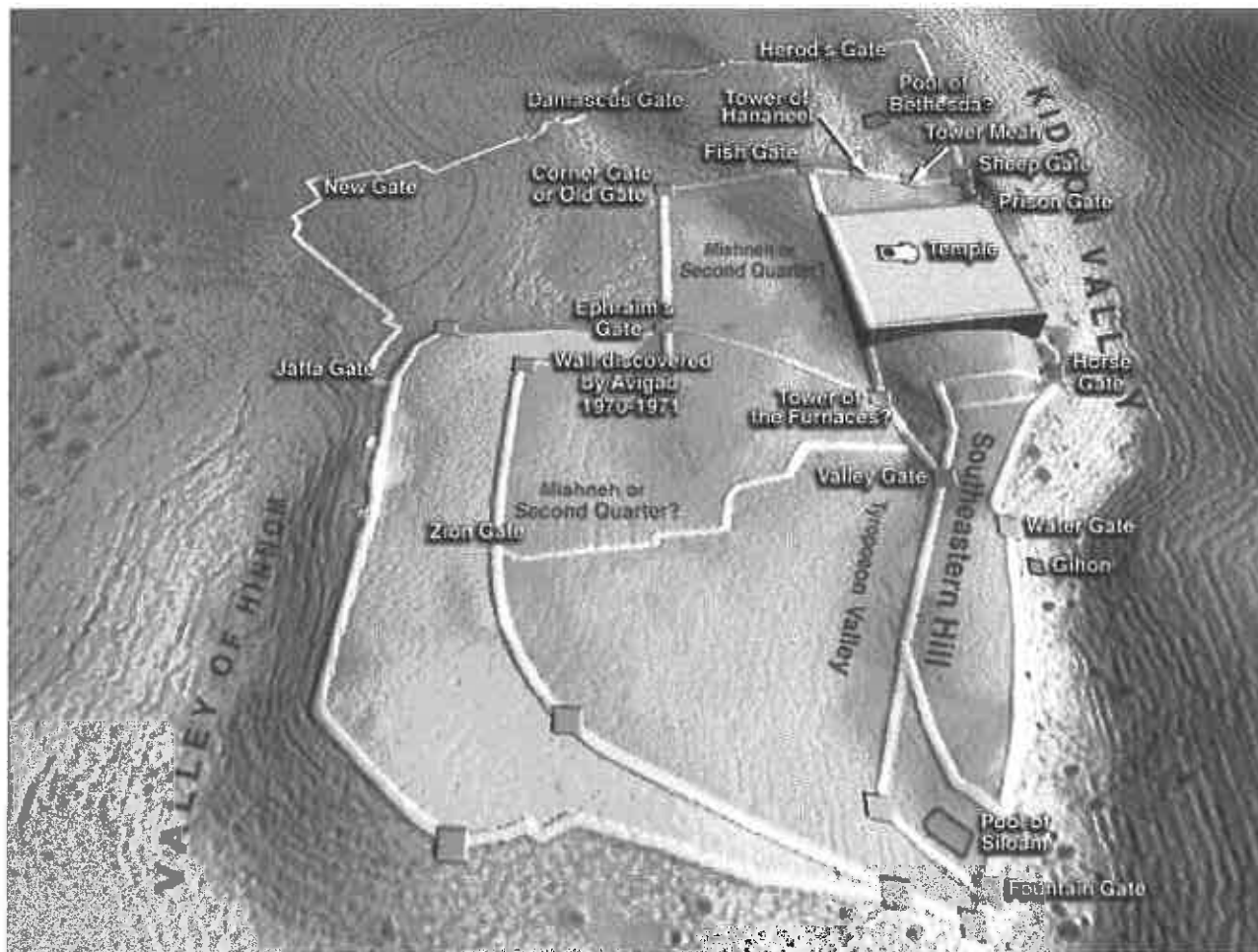


Maps and Atlases

Every home should own at least one Bible Atlas. You will find a few maps in the back of any Study Bible but a more complete atlas will be helpful.

Note: Most Bible study software packages now include a set of maps. The Logos maps are excellent!





JERUSALEM from the Logos Deluxe Map Set, *Libronix* edition

Theological Studies

There are no end to these, but basic is a theological dictionary. Theology is generally categorized as Systematic, Biblical, Historical or Pastoral.

- Systematic theology looks at theological biblical subjects by category (angelology, anthropology, hamartiology (sin), Theology Proper (the Father), Christology (the Son), Pneumatology (the Spirit), Soteriology (salvation), Ecclesiology (the Church) and eschatology (last things).
- Biblical theology looks at the development of *each* of the above over the centuries.
- Historical theology looks at the actual history of Israel and the church.
- Practical theology considers the things related to the Christian life, from a theological perspective (i.e. prayer, worship, discipline, leadership, discipleship, stewardship, evangelism, missions, family relationships, parenting, divorce and remarriage, etc.)

Commentaries

A commentary is a running study and explanation of a biblical book (or books) from one man's perspective or that of a group of scholars. A two volume commentary on the whole Bible which is excellent is The Bible Knowledge Commentary, CBD Stock No: WW7800 and goes for about \$50. It is well worth the expense!

There are many, many other good commentaries available!



Bible Software

A glance through the latest CBD catalog will acquaint you with all the software titles available today. I use *Logos*. All software packages come with multiple Bibles, commentaries, word study tools, etc. etc.

Web sites

Crosswalk.com is representative of many helpful web sites around. It is good to become acquainted with the root-organization of a study related web site. There are many cultic sites and they can be deceiving as to the orthodoxy. Christianity.com is a good launch point too.

Sermonic literature

Expositional sermons are very helpful. Some of the best are provided by John MacArthur, J. Vernon McGee ("Through the Bible"), Charles Swindoll ("Insight for Living"), etc. Many thousands of sermons are also available in print form.

Radio Broadcasts

Once again, no end to these. WARV, WEZE are good New England radio stations. Go to their web sites for program schedules.

List of Possible Topics for Course Paper

Requirements

Write a minimum five-page paper on an approved topic from the list below or one of your choosing with the instructor's approval. The paper should include a title page and a bibliography. The Title Page should include the title of the paper, your name and the sub-heading "In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Course General Introduction to the Bible, Spring 2004." The bibliography should include at least three sources cited. Footnotes or endnotes should reference the sources cited.

Possible Topics

A Survey of the Life of Joseph in the Book of Genesis
How Jesus Selected His Disciples
The Women in Jesus' Life
Women in the Book of Acts
A Study of Romans 16
A List of the Covenants in the Bible and Their Meaning
Paul's Conversion
Jesus and the Woman at the Well (John 4)
Who Jesus Is from the Book of Hebrews
The Message of Malachi
The Last Old Testament Prophet (John the Baptist)
How Marriages Happened in the Bible
Foods of the Bible
Military Leaders of the Old Testament
Timothy – Who He Was and His Significance
The Relationship Between Saul and Barnabas
Was Peter St. Peter?
A Brief Summary of the Life of Daniel
The Man, Nehemiah
The Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15)
Introductory Considerations of New Testament Geography
Did Jesus Say He Was God?
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