



## HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY & ARCHAEOLOGY OT 710

---

SYLLABUS

WINTER 2010  
Mon. 1-5 PM

PAUL W. FERRIS, JR., PH.D.  
Office hours by appointment  
Office A201; 651/638-6175  
Home office: 651/636-6369  
email: [pferris@bethel.edu](mailto:pferris@bethel.edu)  
Blackboard: <http://blackboard.bethel.edu>

*The passion of Bethel Seminary is to advance the Gospel of Jesus Christ among all people in culturally sensitive ways. As a Spirit-empowered, biblically grounded community of learning, Bethel strives to develop and equip whole and holy persons to serve and lead so that churches and ministry agencies can become all they are called to be and do in the world for the glory of God.*

The objectives and assignments of HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY are designed in light of that statement of mission and in light of the degree program aims appropriate to this course. In addition, each member of this learning enterprise is expected to set out personal objectives to pursue in their studies this term.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

---

A basic study of the historical geography of Israel. Set within the framework of redemptive history from Abraham to the New Testament era, this course highlights significant geographical details and regional aspects of the land of the Bible, the relationship of humans to their environment, the concept of "place"/"land" and its impact for understanding and interpreting important events and sayings in Scripture. The learning process makes extensive use of photography, maps, and charts to clarify geographical and historical detail.

Anson Rainey concludes that "of all the writing held sacred by the world's religions, only the Bible presents a message linked to geography. This is not just the location of religious centers but the experience of a people in its land.... The religious experiences of that ancient people took place in relation to a geographical setting.... The Bible is replete with geographical information, not as a guidebook for travellers or a textbook on geography, but often almost incidental to the message. Yet without the geography, that message is often obscured or vitiated for the uninformed reader." (*The Sacred Bridge*. p.9)

This term we get to dig into ways the historical-geographical "stage" and cultural "props" enhance our understanding of the Drama of Redemption as well as our ability to communicate its message more effectively to our own culture and others'. We will use primary literary sources, material remains, satellite imaging, photography and other resources to provide a virtual "up close and personal" experience for the student.

## COURSE BENEFITS

---

Upon completion of this course you should have a deeper appreciation of God and gracious reclamation project by means of a better understanding of the "stage" on which the "drama of redemption" was played out and be able to

- ✓ Describe the physical geography, biogeography and demography of the Land. (Knowledge)
- ✓ Describe the progression of biblical history and ways that the geo-political setting relates to that history (Analysis & synthesis)
- ✓ Visualize key elements of the biblical literature and explain ways the background enhances understanding the message (Knowledge & synthesis)
- ✓ Discuss ways an understanding of the physical settings of the Bible enhances exegetical clarity. (Analysis & synthesis)
- ✓ More effectively and faithfully apply the Scripture in life and ministry. (Valuing & application)
- ✓ Articulate personal objectives achieved.

## COURSE MATERIALS

---

### Primary literature:

Bible. (Whichever translation you are comfortable with. International students may use a translation in their mother-tongue) An on-line concordance featuring several biblical translations can be found at:  
<http://bible.gospelcom.net>

Selections from ancient Near Eastern literature

### Secondary Literature

#### Required Texts:

Ferris, Paul. *Glory of the Kingdom – Prophecy & Renewal: An Historical Synopsis*.

<http://www.bethel.edu/~pferris/historical/hispass.html>

\*Lancaster, Steven & James Monson. *Geobasics in the Land of the Bible*. Rockford: Biblical Backgrounds, 2008. (*Abbrev. GLB in assignments*)

Lancaster, Steven & James Monson. *Geobasics Study Guide*, 3.0. Rockford: Biblical Backgrounds, 2008. (free download [http://www.bibback.com/PDF/Geobasics\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.bibback.com/PDF/Geobasics_Guide.pdf)) (*Abbrev. GSG in assignments*)

\*Lancaster, Steven & James Monson. *Introductory Study Package*. Rockford: Biblical Backgrounds, 1998. (*Abbrev. RoR in assignments*)

Lancaster, Steven & James Monson. *Regional Study Guide*, v.3.1. Rockford: Biblical Backgrounds, 2007 (free download [http://www.bibback.com/PDF/Guide\\_current.pdf](http://www.bibback.com/PDF/Guide_current.pdf)) (*Abbrev. RSG in assignments*)

Lancaster, Steven & James Monson. *Regional Study Guide Supplement*, v. 1.1. Rockford: Biblical Backgrounds, 2001 (free download <http://www.bibback.com/PDF/RSG-Supplement.pdf>)

Rasmussen, Carl. *Geographical Markings*. Rockford: Biblical Backgrounds, 2001 (free download <http://www.bibback.com/PDF/GeographicalMarkings.pdf>)

\_\_\_\_\_. *NIV Atlas of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989.

\*Regional Study Maps. Rockford: Biblical Backgrounds. (*Abbrev. RSM in assignments*)

Marker set - for sale in class.

\*Must be ordered directly from Biblical Backgrounds: [www.bibback.com](http://www.bibback.com) or phone toll free 1-877-425-0909

### Supplemental Literature & Resources:

Anon. *Bible Atlas*. <http://bibleatlas.org/>

Anon. *Bible Geocoding* <http://www.openbible.info/geo/>

Anon. *Online Biblical Image Library* <http://biblestudio.com/>

Barrett, David. *Bible Mapper*. <http://www.biblemapper.com/>

Beck, John. "[David and Goliath, a Story of Place: The Narrative-Geographical Shaping of 1 Samuel 17](#)," *WTJ* 68 (2006): 321-330.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Faith in the Face of Famine: The Narrative-Geographical Function of Famine in Genesis," *The Journal of Biblical Storytelling* 11 (2001): 58-66.

\_\_\_\_\_. "[Geography and the Narrative Shape of Numbers 13](#)," *BibSac* 157 (2000): 271-280

\_\_\_\_\_. "[Geography as Irony: the Narrative-geographical Shaping of Elijah's Duel with the Prophets of Baal \(1 Kings 18\)](#)," *SJOT* 17 (2003): 291-302.

\_\_\_\_\_. "[Gideon, Dew, and the Narrative-Geographical Shaping of Judges 6:33-40](#)," *BibSac* 165 (2008): 28-38.

\_\_\_\_\_. "[The Narrative-geographical Shaping of 1 Samuel 7:5-13](#)," *BibSac* 162 (2005): 299-309.

\_\_\_\_\_. "[Why Do Joshua's Readers Keep Crossing the River? The Narrative-geographical Shaping of Joshua 3-4](#)" *JETS* 48/4 (2005): 689-699.

\_\_\_\_\_. "[Why Did Moses Strike Out? the Narrative-geographical Shaping of Moses' Disqualification in Numbers 20:1-13](#)," *WTJ* 65 (2003): 135-141.

Greenwold, Doug. *Above Israel*. 4 vols. Gaithersburg: Preserving Bible Times, 2002. DVD

Hoerth, Alfred. *Archeology & the O.T.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998.

Mazar, Amihai. *Archeology of the Land of the Bible*. N.Y.: Doubleday, 1992.

Murphy-O'Connor, Jerome. *The Holy Land: An Oxford Archeological Guide*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. N.Y.: Oxford: 2008.

Rainey, Anson & Steven Notley. *The Sacred Bridge*. Jerusalem: Carta, 2006.

Rasmussen, Carl. *Holy Land Photos* <http://www.holylandphotos.org/>

\_\_\_\_\_. *Zondervan NIV Atlas of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989. (*Abbrev. NIVAB in assignments*)

Rotem. *BibleWalks*. <http://www.biblewalks.com/index.html>

Vaux, Roland de. *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961.

## COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

---

**Geological Foundations:** Study the *Geobasics Study Guide* and complete the assignments

**Regional Studies:** Complete assignments in *Regions on the Run* using the *Regional Study Guide* and the *Regional Study Guide Supplement*. Mark your regional study maps as assigned following the “General Instructions for Geographical Markings for Regional Study Maps.”

**Reviews & Annotations:** Write reviews of articles as assigned per following format: full bibliographic citation; author’s main point(s); issues author treats; ways author uses supporting evidence; what data does the author use in support; what other approaches are possible? Annotate details and impressions of visual information. Submit via Blackboard.

**Blogging:** With the intent of enhancing your own learning, each week you get to post a blog on and interact with others’ blogs on the topic of the week.

**Research Paper:** Research and write a 2000-2500 word article on either:

Ways the archaeology of an ancient site and its surroundings aids in understanding biblical history and literature. (Suggested sites: Dan, Hazor, Sepphoris/Zippori, Beth Shean, Jerusalem, Lachish, Beer Sheba); OR

A significant aspect of ancient Israelite society as it bears on interpreting the ancient biblical text and applying it to our contemporary situation.

### Submitting Assignments

The Seminary Catalog stipulates: “students are expected to submit all work by the dates set by the course instructors and complete all course requirements on or before the last day of the quarter.” **N.b.**, normally late work will not be accepted. (Circumstances that a congregation would accept for postponing a Sunday sermon may be considered with a reduction in grade) An *Incomplete Contract* may be approved for extenuating circumstances (not for simply getting behind in the assignments). Such exceptions may involve a grade reduction.

Map work is to be submitted in class on due date. Written work is to be submitted via Blackboard in either MSWord or WordPerfect format. **N.b.**, the filename given each assignment must follow a prescribed protocol. The filename will include *course number, term, your last name, and assignment name* (e.g., **ot710-w10-yourname-assignmentname**). Documents submitted without this filenaming protocol may not be registered and graded. The research paper is to be submitted via Turnitin\* and Blackboard. (\* Turnitin.com, class ID 3015279)

### Miscellany:

- Policies: Refer to the seminary catalogue and student handbook for policies that apply to all courses.
- Attendance: Regular engagement in the class is an essential part of the learning enterprise. Being on-time for class is a matter of respect. Unexcused absence and multiple tardiness will result in reduction of grade.
- Etiquette: Phones & beepers must be turned off during class. Tardiness & inappropriate behavior will result in reduction of grade. Tape recording is not permitted inasmuch as it can inhibit class participation. Men: hats off to you. ☺
- A summary of library resources may be found at <http://seminary.bethel.edu/library/research-help/bib-stud>
- **N.b.:** The professor may modify or otherwise supplement this syllabus and/or class instructions via Blackboard or e-mail. Other course material is available on Blackboard. It is the student's responsibility to avail herself or himself to such resources and check Blackboard and/or their email for such notices.

**Grading Rubric:** See “Rubric for Assessment” under the “Assignments” tab on the course website.

## COURSE ASSESSMENT

---

Class preparation & participation	
Discussion & participation.....	20%
Written assignments	
Map Work.....	20%
Reviews & Annotations.....	15%
Research Paper.....	25%
Tests.....	20%

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Assignment due Monday noon</i>
Jan 11	<b>Why is an understanding of the physical &amp; cultural settings of the Bible important?</b> Introductions: Course; Place & Time of Scripture	Review Rainey, pp. 9-24; Study RoR, p. 40 & chart inside back cover; Study "Archaeological Chronology" (web handouts) Blog on topic of the week
Jan 25	<b>How do we know what life was like in Bible times?</b> Survey of Archaeology: methodologies and findings	Read Walton, "Methodology" ZIBBCOT v.1, pp. viii-xiii. Review Hoerth, pp. 13-30; Review Mazar, pp. 1-34; Review four Beck articles; Blog on topic
Feb 1	<b>In what ways does the "staging" effect the way the "drama" is played out?</b> Survey of Geography: geological foundations of socio-political realities	Markup <i>GLB</i> per GSG Study archaeology display in Library and annotate; Blog on topic of the week
Feb 8	Research & Reading Week	Research
Feb 14	"At Home" – 7 PM	1822 Tioga Blvd., New Brighton
Feb 15	Research & Reading Week	Write & revise
Feb 22	<b>What difference does "place" make on events?</b> Survey of Geography: regional distinctives & communication	Research paper due Study RoR, pp. 5-9; Mark RSM per instr.; Review Rainey pp. 30-42; Blog on topic; Quiz
Mar 1	<b>What are some notable aspects of the "drama" in the North?</b> Survey of Geography: regional dynamics - Northern arena	Study RoR, pp. 10-15; Mark RSM per instr. View <i>Above Israel: Galilee &amp; the North</i> - annotate; Blog on topic
Mar 8	<b>What are some notable aspects of the "drama" in the South?</b> Survey of Geography: regional dynamics - Southern arena	Study RoR, pp. 16-21; Mark RSM per instr. View <i>Above Israel: The Coast, Shephelah &amp; the Negev</i> - annotate; Blog on topic
Mar 15	<b>What are some notable aspects of the "drama" in the Center?</b> Survey of Geography: regional dynamics - Central arena	Study RoR, pp. 22-29, 38-39; Mark RSM View <i>Above Israel: Samaria, Judea &amp; Dead Sea</i> - annotate; <i>Above Israel: Jerusalem</i> - annotate; Blog on topic
Mar 22	<b>What are some notable aspects of the "drama" in the NT?</b> Survey of Geography: regional dynamics - Setting of the NT	Study RoR, pp. 30-37; Mark RSM per instr.; Blog on topic; Quiz