



# Nazarene Theological Seminary

1700 E Meyer Blvd • Kansas City, MO 64131 • 816/268-5400

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BIB810 — Biblical Archaeology  
Spring, 2012

## ***Essential Information***

Please refer to the following resources for information essential for the successful completion of courses and degree programs at Nazarene Theological Seminary. Links to these resources are available in the Essential Information section at <http://support.nts.edu>.

- NTS Mission Statement & Purpose Degree Objectives
- Tips for online learning success
- NTS library services
- NTS textbook information
- Online technical requirements and Moodle support information
- NTS Student Handbook including statements on quality of work, plagiarism, and academic probation
- *Handbook for Inclusive Language*

## ***Instructor Information***

Professor: Joseph Coleson, Ph.D.

Email: [jecoleson@nts.edu](mailto:jecoleson@nts.edu)

Office: (816) 268-5482

Office Hours: By appointment

## ***Catalog Description***

A study of modern archaeological methods and discoveries in the Bible lands and the ways they advance understanding of biblical history, religion, and literature. Focus is on the archaeology of both the Old and the New Testaments.

## ***Course Narrative & Rationale***

The Living Word of God, revealed first by the written word, is the Christian minister's only unique message to the world. As we come to know the written word better, it should follow that we come to know the Living Word better, and thus are able to minister Christ and his word more effectively.

As a significant part of its content, the Bible reports many events from ancient western Asia, primarily Canaan/Israel/Judah, and from the New Testament world of the Roman Empire. Assuming the reality of ancient nations and cities, it refers to ancient cultures in matter-of-fact

ways. The Bible takes much for granted in the knowledge base of its hearers and readers. But for us, two thousand and more years removed from these events and these cultures, much remains wholly or partially a puzzlement.

Over the last two hundred years, much new information has come to light to advance our understanding of biblical history and cultures. No new field of inquiry has been more rewarding in this respect than has archaeology; it illumines historical epochs and everyday life, the military movements of great kings, and the focus of humble proverbs. God approached God's ancient people in their everyday lives; we read in the Bible of God's faithfulness to them. As we understand better the lives of the ancients to whom God's words of assurance and instruction first came, our own faith in God's trustworthiness grows stronger. In our day, a primary tool for understanding the life and culture of God's ancient people is archaeology and the abundant fruits of its labors.

## ***Degree Objectives***

This course addresses particularly the following NTS Degree Program Objectives:

- MDiv Objective 2: Articulation of the knowledge of God through prayerful, scholarly study and a deepening understanding of the Christian Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments
- MACFD Objective 1: Appropriate and enhance the student's ecclesial understanding of the Word of God, the heritage of the faith, the doctrines of the church, and the fellowship of believers, sufficient to enable him or her to deepen a personal commitment to God and the Church and to inform a passionate, vital, and redemptive ministry
- MAICS Objective 4: Graduates will articulate, communicate, and contextualize the essential affirmations of the Christian faith in a cross-cultural setting
- MA(TS) General Academic Track Objective 1: Students will develop a comprehensive knowledge of the major theological disciplines and their interrelationships
- MA(TS) General Academic Track Objective 2: Students will demonstrate the ability to use the theological disciplines to reflect on and engage the world as informed, thinking, Christian persons
- MA(TS) Research Track Objective 1: Students will gain specialized knowledge in designated theological disciplines as a basis for further graduate studies
- MA(TS) Research Track Objective 2: Students will develop skill in academic research and writing as a basis for further graduate studies.

## ***Course Outcomes***

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Identify and discuss major tools, methods, techniques, and results of the archaeological enterprise.  
(Accomplished by Assignments 1 and 2.)

2. Identify and discuss the importance of the major sites of biblical archaeology.  
(Accomplished by Assignments 1 and 2.)
3. Set forth and discuss the importance of archaeology for our understanding of the Bible and its world.  
(Accomplished by Assignments 1 and 2.)

## **Required Texts**

Currid, John D. *Doing Archaeology in the Land of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999.  
Hoerth, Alfred J. *Archaeology and the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998.  
McRay, John. *Archaeology and the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1991.

## **Outline of Course Reading and In-Class Discussion**

Feb. 6 – Syllabus; course introduction; geography of the biblical world  
Feb. 13 – Currid, entire text  
Feb. 20 – Hoerth, chapters 1-4  
Feb. 27 – Hoerth, chapters 5-9  
Mar. 5 – Hoerth, chapters 10-14  
Mar. 12 – Hoerth, chapters 15-20  
Mar. 19 – Reading and Research Week  
Mar. 26 – McRay, Introduction and chapters 1-2  
Apr. 2 – McRay, chapters 3-4  
Apr. 9 – McRay, chapters 5-6  
Apr. 16 – McRay, chapters 7-9  
Apr. 23 – McRay, chapters 10-11  
Apr. 30 – Visit to local archaeological site  
May 7 – Major reports due; synopses shared in class session

## **Course Written Assignments**

### **1. Eight, 600-word, essays/reports will constitute 80% of the course grade.**

Essays are assigned weekly; for each student, the eight essays with the highest letter grades will factor into the course grade.

(Course Outcomes: Numbers 1, 2, and 3, variously)

Eight of the eleven assigned reports are required. Unless otherwise noted, the minimum length of each is 600 words. If nine, ten, or eleven reports are submitted, the lowest one, two, or three weekly grades will be dropped in calculating the course grade. The visit to a local archaeological site scheduled on or around April 30 will count as the last “report”; it is *not* optional.

### **Essay/report topics, week by week:**

- Feb. 13 – Identify/define the words, numbers, and other features of Currid’s Figure 4 (p 73). This report may be in the form of a list, but please conclude with a short discussion of the importance of a “top plan.” (May be shorter than 600 words.)
- Feb. 20 – Discuss whether and how archaeology illuminates, confirms, and/or “proves” the Bible.

Feb. 27 – Summarize the main arguments for both the earlier and the later dates of the Exodus, and suggest which is (or may be) the more persuasive for you.

Mar. 5 – Summarize Bryant Wood’s evidence for correlating the archaeology of one destruction level found at Jericho, with the account of Joshua 6.

Mar. 12 – Map/diagram and discuss the city plan of Sennacherib’s Nineveh *or* Hezekiah’s Jerusalem, *or* Nebuchadnezzar’s Babylon.

Mar. 19 – Reading and Research Week; no report due.

Mar. 26 – Discuss the various means of supplying New-Testament-era cities with water.

Apr. 2 – Describe one of Herod’s major building projects within the Holy Land.

Apr. 9 – Summarize the archaeological arguments in *favor* of Jesus’ crucifixion and burial at/in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre *or* summarize the arguments *against* the Garden Tomb site.

Apr. 16 – Present archaeological information *beyond* that found in McRay on one city, or one feature within a city, discussed in McRay, chapters 7-9.

Apr. 23 – Discuss the contribution of the Roman road system to the spread of the Christian Gospel within the Empire.

Apr. 30 – Visit to local archaeological site--*not* optional; counts as final weekly report.

(May 7 – Major site reports due; synopses shared in class session.)

**2. A report on a site important to biblical archaeology will constitute 20% of the course grade.**

A 3,500-4,000-word report on a single archaeological site is the culminating course assignment. Each report is to include a bibliography of publications relating to the site. Bibliography, footnotes, title page, and other apparatus will not contribute to the word count of the report.

The site chosen to report on is to be cleared with the professor by **March 12**.

The report is due **May 7**.

(Course Outcomes: Numbers 1, 2, and 3.)

### ***Distribution of Student Learning Hours***

	Hours
Face-to-face Class Sessions	45
Reading	45
Writing	55
<b>Total</b>	<b>145</b>

### ***Submitting Assignments; Posting Grades***

All assignments are to be submitted in the “Assignments” section(s) of our Moodle course.

All grades will be posted as letter grades in the “Grades” section of our Moodle course. Grade descriptions are included in the *NTS Student Handbook*.

## ***Form and Style Expectations***

All written work is to exhibit best practices for graduate-level academic writing. The NTS faculty have adopted Turabian as the Seminary standard; each student should own a copy of the latest edition of Turabian, and should use it conscientiously. A convenient summary of common issues of concern is included in the general resources section of the NTS Moodle platform.

## ***Inclusive Language***

NTS is committed to the equality of women and men. Recognizing that people often have used language to imply the exclusion or inferiority of women, NTS urges students, faculty, and staff to avoid sexist language in public discourse, in classroom discussions, and in writing. All written work presented to meet requirements of this course will use gender-inclusive language.

## ***Policy Regarding Late Work***

In justice to all students, **no** written work will be accepted late. Weekly essays are due at class time--defined, for this purpose only, as 9:20 a.m. of each Monday class session.

## ***Additional Costs***

The professor does not anticipate significant additional costs for this course, beyond NTS tuition and fees, and the cost of textbooks. The archaeological site visit near the end of the semester may entail a modest entrance fee, and students also may choose to purchase a meal that day.

## ***Course Grading***

1. Eight, 600-word, essays/reports will constitute each ten percent (10%) of the course grade. Essays are assigned weekly; eight of the eleven assigned reports are required. If nine, ten, or eleven reports are submitted, the lowest one, two, or three weekly grades will be dropped in calculating the course grade. Both the content and the quality of the writing will factor into the grading of each essay/report.

(The visit to a local archaeological site scheduled on or around April 30 will count as the last "report"; it is *not* optional.)

2. A 3,500-4,000-word report on a site important to biblical archaeology will constitute twenty percent (20%) of the course grade. Both the content and the quality of the writing will factor into the grading of this report. Each report is to include a bibliography of publications relating to the site. Bibliography, footnotes, title page, and other apparatus will not contribute to the word count of the report.

## ***Reasonable Modifications***

In accordance with the provisions of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, NTS is committed to providing students with disabilities the opportunity to participate and benefit from its programs and activities. Accordingly, NTS will make reasonable modifications to its programs and activities to accommodate otherwise qualified students with disabilities, unless such

modifications would impose an undue burden on the operation of the particular program or activity, or would fundamentally alter the nature or purpose of the program or activity. Any student needing accommodation(s) should contact the Office of the Registrar. S/he also should contact the professor no later than the end of the first week of our course to discuss learning needs, and adaptive strategies that have been beneficial in the past.

## ***Class Attendance***

Class attendance is essential for realizing maximum benefit from this educational experience. If a student is absent for more than the equivalent of one full class session, the course grade will be lowered. Absence(s) totaling more than the equivalent of two full class sessions may cause a student to fail the course. Prior notification of any absence is expected, if possible; the professor is to be notified of the reasons for/circumstances of all absences as soon as possible.

Daily attendance records must be reported for those obtaining Veterans Administration and/or Department of Education benefits. It is the student's responsibility to notify the professor if attendance is to be reported.

## ***Course Calendar***

Date	Week	Assignment
Feb. 6	1	Syllabus; course introduction; geography of the biblical world
Feb. 13	2	Interpretation of Figure 4 in Currid's text
Feb. 20	3	Does archaeology illumine/confirm/"prove" the Bible?
Feb. 27	4	Early/late dating of Israel's Exodus from Egypt
Mar. 5	5	Wood on a destruction level of Jericho and Joshua 6
Mar. 12	6	City plan of Nineveh, <i>or</i> of Jerusalem, <i>or</i> of Babylon; clear with the professor the choice of a major site for May 7 report
Mar. 19	7	Reading and Research Week; no class session; no written work due
Mar. 26	8	Water supply(ies) in New-Testament-era cities
Apr. 2	9	One major building project of Herod the Great
Apr. 9	10	Joseph's tomb: Church of the Holy Sepulchre or the Garden Tomb?
Apr. 16	11	Expansion of information on one city discussed in McRay, chapters 7-9
Apr. 23	12	The Roman road system and the spread of the Christian faith
Apr. 30	13	Visit to local archaeological site (Course Evaluations released by the Dean's Office)
May 7	14	Major site reports due; synopses shared in class session