

***Biblical Studies Ph.D. Comprehensive Examination  
Preliminary Study Guide and Reading List***

You should begin preparing for the comprehensive examination during your first semester in the program. As you take seminars, read the works on the list that are most relevant to the seminar. If you don't know which these are, ask the instructor. Continue reading during academic breaks. As you read the works, take good notes, but do not stop at note-taking. Write a coherent summary of the work, and maybe a brief evaluation of the work. These writing exercises will help you to master the material and integrate it into your own thinking. You can revise the short writings as your understanding develops so that these essays can serve as study materials in the time immediately preceding the examination. As you read books on and off the list, check the index of modern authors (when available) to see how the authors in the list are cited and discussed. You might locate book reviews of the works, or locate them in Google Scholar to further see where and how they are cited.

Similarly, read, reread, and take notes on the non-biblical ancient texts. Check indices of ancient sources in the books you read, whether on or off the reading list. Specifically seek out and read some of the scholarship concerning these texts. Learning about how scholars interpret the texts and relate them to biblical literature will reinforce their content and significance in your mind. Make an effort to include these sources and scholarship in your seminar papers when it seems appropriate.

Read Scripture the same way. Read it often, make notes, and read widely in scholarship beyond the reading list. It will be helpful to your learning to pursue research projects within and beyond seminars that might evolve into articles or a dissertation. Reading scholarship in other disciplines can significantly enhance your capacity to contribute to the field by making new connections between biblical and other fields of study.

Practice reading German and French early and often. Use non-English sources in your papers and strive to always have something in these languages that you are working through. Your foreign language skills improve the more you use them, and you develop an ever-greater base of knowledge of the scholarship available in these languages.

Participate in the Teaching and Learning Program by taking the initial class on pedagogy, working as a TA and TF, and attending optional events pertaining to teacher training. Read the scholarship on teaching and learning.

The Ph.D. comprehensive examination is normally taken the semester after the student's last coursework. Students must register for comps in the semester after coursework completion and can only register for comps two semesters. In your last semester of coursework, meet with

the Biblical Area Director about taking the comprehensive exam. The Area Director, in consultation with other members of the Biblical Faculty, will then provide you with a proximate study guide to supplement this document by outlining the scope of your examination and the grading criteria. You may also speak with other faculty about expectations for comps.

The comprehensive examination is given over a period of three days, as outlined below. Once you have passed the examination, petition to be admitted to doctoral candidacy. If you are admitted to candidacy, you will begin the process of preparing a doctoral dissertation proposal.

In the event that you fail the comprehensive examination the first time, you will be allowed to take it a second time. Students who fail the comprehensive examination the second time will not be allowed to take it again and cannot be promoted to candidacy. It is possible to fail one day of the exam and pass the others, in which case you could retake the failed day.

### **Day One: Working with the Original Text (6 hours)**

The first day of the Biblical Studies Ph.D. comprehensive exam assesses your ability to work with Hebrew (MT) and Greek (LXX, NT) texts and the major reference works associated with these texts. The examination questions will ask for brief answers to a range of questions related to passages that may be drawn from anywhere in the biblical corpus. Some questions may be specifically keyed to reference materials. It is not a translation test, although you will need to be able to read the Hebrew and Greek texts and limited translation may be required. Instead, the questions will ask you to demonstrate your analytical skills including your ability to use reference works. The best way to prepare for the exam is to be sure you are familiar with how to use each reference work. You are permitted (indeed expected) to have access to the materials for the exam that are listed at the end of this guide (these will be provided in the exam room).

For a clearer indication of the nature of the exam, see the sample examination. Note that even questions asking for some explanation are not asking for detailed essays, but concise answers (a paragraph). Also, for questions asking how many times a word or phrase occurs (e.g., MT questions B.3-4), the answer need not be exact since different sources may have slightly different answers (e.g., Even-Shoshan concordance v. computer concordance v. lexicon). No question should require much time to answer if you know which source to consult.

Finally, the exam is pass/fail. To pass, you must get at least 75% of the questions correct. A sample exam is available on request from Dr. Miller or Dr. Bosworth.

## **Day Two: Reading List in the Student's Major Area (8 hours)**

The second day of the comprehensive exam assesses your ability to discuss issues related to your primary Testament and major issues in your secondary Testament. You will be given several problems or scenarios that will ask you to demonstrate mastery of all the texts on the reading list for your primary Testament and the **highlighted texts** on the reading list for your minor Testament. *Familiarity with information included in the books for incoming students to read before taking seminars is assumed as general background knowledge for anyone taking comps. You will be asked to answer four of six questions over a period of eight hours.*

## **Day Three: Reading List in the Student's Minor Area (4 hours)**

The second day of the comprehensive exam assesses your ability to discuss issues related to your secondary Testament. When you meet with the Area Director the semester before your exam date, you will select **two categories** of readings from the comprehensive reading list for your secondary Testament. You will be given several problems or scenarios that will ask you to demonstrate mastery of all the texts in the two categories you selected, **plus the highlighted titles** from categories you did not select. *Familiarity with information included in the books for incoming students to read before taking seminars is assumed as general background knowledge for anyone taking comps. You will be asked to answer two of four questions over a period of four hours.*

## **Post Exam: Admission to Candidacy**

If the Biblical Area Faculty decide that you have passed the comprehensive exam, you must still apply for doctoral candidacy. The completion of all previous requirements does not automatically guarantee admission to candidacy for the doctoral degree. Before you are admitted to candidacy, the Biblical Area Faculty must evaluate your progress and determine that you (1) have completed all biblical course work and modern language requirements at a satisfactory level; (2) have passed the comprehensive examination; and (3) are otherwise qualified to write a doctoral dissertation in a timely manner.

To be admitted to candidacy you must (1) maintain a GPA of at least 3.3 in biblical course work, (2) pass the doctoral comprehensive examination, and (3) have demonstrated in course work that you have the research and writing skills to write and complete a doctoral dissertation, the primary evidence for which is your submission of four seminar papers according to the guidelines on the document "Research Paper Approval Form." Note that all four papers must have received a grade of A- or higher, no more than two may come from one professor, all four must come from biblical studies courses, and at least two must evidence use of French and German works that do not exist in an English translation. *If you do not have four seminar*

***papers with grades A- or better, you should take more seminars before taking comprehensive exams so that you do.***

The Biblical Area faculty will proceed in the following way in determining your suitability for admission to candidacy. After you have completed the comprehensive examination, the Biblical Area faculty will meet to review (1) your performance on the comprehensive examination and (2) your overall academic performance to date to determine if you should be admitted to candidacy or terminated from the program. After a discussion of these matters, the Biblical Area Faculty will vote. To be admitted to candidacy, you must receive a favorable majority vote.

## **List of Tools Permitted for Day 1**

All the tools listed below are available in the Cabinet in Caldwell 426 and will be available to you when you take the Day 1 exam.

### **Critical editions of texts:**

BHS	<i>Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia</i> . Ed. K. Elliger and W. Rudolph. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1969-77.
BHQ	<i>Biblia Hebraica Quinta</i> . Ed. R. Althman et al. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2004-.
Göttingen LXX	<i>Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum graecum auctoritate societatis editum</i> . Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1926-. (relevant volume(s))
NA <sup>27</sup>	<i>Novum Testamentum Graece</i> , ed. by Barbara and Kurt Aland <i>et al.</i> , Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, <sup>27</sup> 1993.
GNT	<i>The Greek New Testament</i> , ed. by B. Aland, K. Aland <i>et al.</i> , <sup>4</sup> 1993.

### **Lexica:**

HALOT	<i>Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Ed. Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner. 2 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2001. BDB
DCH	<i>The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew</i> . Ed. David J. A. Clines. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993-2011.
BDAG	<i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. Third Edition Revised and Edited by F.W. Danker based on Walter Bauer's griechisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der frühchristlichen Literatur</i> , Chicago, IL-London: University Press, <sup>3</sup> 2000. L&N
Muraoka	<i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint</i> . T. Muraoka; Leuven: Peeters, 2002.
Lust	<i>Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint</i> . Ed. J. Lust, E. Eynikel, and K. Hauspie; Rev. ed.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2003.
LSJ	Liddell-Scott: <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> . Eds. H. G. Liddell, R. Scott, H. S. Jones, and R. MacKenzie. Oxford, UK: Clarendon, 1940.

### **Concordances:**

You may use whatever biblical software you own (BibleWorks, Logos, Accordance). Note that it is possible to pass the exam without answering the few questions that require computer software to answer.

- Lisowsky *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*. Ed. Gerhard Lisowski. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1981.
- Even-Shoshan *A New Concordance of the Bible*. Ed. Abraham Even-Shoshan. Jerusalem: Kiryat Sefer, 1990.
- Hatch and Redpath *A Concordance to the Septuagint*. Eds. Edwin Hatch and Henry A. Redpath. With “Hebrew/Aramaic Index to the Septuagint” by Takamitsu Muraoka. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1998.
- Moulton-Geden Moulton, J.H., Geden, *A Concordance to the Greek testament According to the Texts of Westcott and Hort, Tischendorf and the English Revisers*, Edinburgh, UK: T&T Clark, 1978.
- Bachmand and Slaby H. Bachmann and W. Slaby, *Computer-konkordanz zum Novum Testamentum graece von Nestle-Aland, 26. Auflage und zum Greek New Testament*, Berlin-New York, NY: de Gruyter.

### **Reference Grammars:**

- Gesenius* *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*. Ed. and enlarged by E. Kautzsch. Trans. A. E. Crowley; Oxford, UK: Clarendon, 1910.
- Joüon Paul Joüon, and T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*. Subsidia Biblica 27; Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2006.
- IBHS* *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. Bruce Waltke and Michael O’Connor. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990. BDF
- BDF Blass, F., Debrunner, A. & R.W. Funk, *A Greek Grammar of the New testament and Other Christian Literature*, Chicago-London, 1961.
- Zerwick Maximilian Zerwick, *Biblical Greek Illustrated by Examples*. Trans. Joseph Smith; Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1990.

### **Works on Textual Criticism:**

- Tov Emanuel Tov. *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*. 3rd ed.; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2012.
- Metzger B.M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: It Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*. 4th ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

***Ph.D. Comprehensive Reading List  
For Old Testament Specialists***

**Category One  
Ecclesial Documents, Classic Works, and History of Interpretation**

Béchar, D. P., ed. *The Scripture Documents: An Anthology of Official Catholic Teachings*. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2002.

The Pontifical Biblical Commission. *The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible*. Vatican City: Biblical Institute Press, 2001.

Cross, Frank Moore. *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973.

Fishbane, Michael. *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985.

Grant, Robert M., with David Tracy. *A Short History of the Interpretation of the Bible*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2001.

Gunkel, Hermann. *Introduction to the Psalms*. Macon: Mercer University Press, 1998.

Mowinckel, Sigmund. *The Psalms in Israel's Worship*. Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 2004. Volume 1, chapters 1-5 only.

Noth, Martin. *The Deuteronomistic History*. 1981; repr., Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2005.

von Rad, Gerhard. *Old Testament Theology*. 1962; repr., Peabody: Prince Press, 2005.

Venard, Olivier-Thomas. "Problématique du sens littéral." Pp. 293-353 in *Le sens littéral des Écritures*, ed. O.-T. Venard. Lectio Divina. Paris: Cerf, 2009.

Wellhausen, Julius. *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel*. 1957; repr., Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2003. NT specialists read chaps. 1-5 only.

Westermann, Claus. *Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech*. 1967; repr., Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1991.

**Category Two  
Language and Text**

Barr, James. *The Semantics of Biblical Language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961.

Carr, David M. *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible*. Oxford University Press, 2011. **Read Part 1** (pp. 1-100).

Fernández Marcos, N. *The Septuagint in Context: Introduction to the Greek Versions of the Bible*. Leiden: Brill, 2000.

Sáenz-Badillos, Ángel. *A History of the Hebrew Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Tov, Emanuel. *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*. 3rd ed. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012.

### Category Three Methods

Berlin, Adele. *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism*. Rev. ed. Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 2008.

Bible and Culture Collective. *The Postmodern Bible*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995.

Knight, Douglas A. *Rediscovery of the Traditions of Israel*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Leiden: Brill, 2006.

Sawyer, John F. A., ed. *The Blackwell Companion to the Bible and Culture*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006. Chapters 1–9 and 23–30.

Sternberg, Meir. *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985.

Sweeney, Marvin, and Ehud Ben Zvi. *The Changing Face of Form Criticism for the 21st Century*. Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 2003.

Trible, Phyllis. *Texts of Terror: Literary-Feminist Readings of Biblical Narratives*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984.

### Category Four History of Israel and Ancient Near East, Archaeology

Bible, both Testaments (including books contained in the Catholic and Orthodox canons; e.g. New Oxford Annotated Bible: An Ecumenical Study Bible)

*The Context of Scripture*. Ed. William W. Hallo. 3 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 2003. The following texts identified by volume and text number (not page number). **Read the following texts:**

- 1.28, 38, 39, 41, 47, 77, 86 (the Baal Cycle), 102, 103, 108, 109, 111 (Epic of Creation), 114, 117, 118, 130 (Atra-Hasis), 133, 137, 138, 151, 153, 154, 166.  
2.6, 23, 27, 28, 30, 31, 39, 54, 85, 89, 90, 113A-I, 119A-E, 124, 131.  
3.41-44, 46, 87A, 392A-G.

*The Epic of Gilgamesh*. Trans. Andrew George (Penguin, 1999) or Benjamin Foster (Norton Critical Edition, 2001). The complete text is not available in *Contexts of Scripture*.

*A Reader of Ancient Near Eastern Texts*. Ed. Michael D. Coogan (OUP, 2012). **Read the following texts:** (Vassal Treaty of Esarhaddon) 51, (Ahiqar) 195. These texts are not found in *Contexts of Scripture*.

Dever, William G. *Who Were the Israelites and Where Did They Come from?* Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 2003.

Grabbe, Lester L. *Ancient Israel: What Do We Know and How Do We Know It?* London: T & T Clark, 2007.

King, Philip J., and Lawrence Stager. *Life in Biblical Israel*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001.

Magness, Jodi. *The Archaeology of Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls*. Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 2002.

Sparks, Kenton L. *Ancient Texts for the Study of the Hebrew Bible: A Guide to the Background Literature*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005.

### **Category Five**

#### **Theology of the Old Testament and Religion of Ancient Israel**

Bird, Phyllis. *Missing Persons and Mistaken Identities: Women and Gender in Ancient Israel*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997.

Brueggemann, Walter. *Theology of the Old Testament*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997.

Childs, Brevard. *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993.

Levenson, Jon D. *Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son*. Yale University Press, 1995.

Lohfink, Norbert. "Das Alte Testament und sein Monotheismus." Pp. 133-51 in *Studien zur biblischen Theologie*, ed. N. Lohfink. SBAAT 16. Stuttgart: KBV, 1993.

Perdue, Leo. *Reconstructing Old Testament Theology: After the Collapse of History*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005.

Smith, Mark S. *The Early History of God*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 2002.

Zevit, Ziony. *The Religions of Ancient Israel: A Synthesis of Parallaxic Approaches*. New York: Continuum, 2001.



## ***Ph.D. Comprehensive Reading List For New Testament Specialists***

### **Category One**

#### **Selections from Literature Pertinent to the New Testament Period**

*The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. 2 vols. Edited by James H. Charlesworth (Garden City: Doubleday, 1983, 1985). **Read the following texts:** Letter of Aristeas; 2 & 3 Baruch; 1, 2 & 3 Enoch; Fourth Ezra; Joseph and Asenath; Jubilees; 3 & 4 Maccabees; Sibylline Oracles; Odes of Solomon; Psalms of Solomon; Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs.

*The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*. 2 vols. Edited by García Martínez, F. and E. J. C. Tigchelaar (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000); Also available in *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*. By Geza Vermes (New York: The Penguin Press, 1997): **Read the following texts:** The Temple Scroll (11Q19-20); The Community Scroll (1QS) + Fragments (4Q255-264; 5Q11); The Damascus Scroll (CD) + Fragments (4Q265-273; 5Q12; 6Q15); Rule of the Community (1Q28a); Ritual Purity Laws and Initiation Laws (4Q274-279.284); Purification Ritual (Q512); Baptismal Liturgy (4Q414); The War Scroll (1QM)+ Fragments (4Q285; 4Q491-496; 4Q471; 4Q529; 11Q14); The New Jerusalem (2Q24; 4Q554-555; 5Q15; 11Q18); Vision of the Messiah (4Q246).

*Josephus in Nine Volumes*. The Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927, 1928). Also available in *The Jewish War* (New York: Penguin Classic): **Read the following texts:** *The Jewish War*; and *Against Apion*.

*The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Text and English Translation*. Edited and revised by Michael W. Holmes (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999). There are also other translations.

*The Apocryphal New Testament: A Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation Based on M. R. James*. Edited by J. K. Elliott (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993). **Read the following texts:** Apocryphal Gospels, pp. 3-225.

*The Mishnah: A New Translation*. By Jacob Neusner. (New haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988). You may also use another appropriate translation. **Read the following texts:** Second Division: The Sabbath (1.1–24.5); The Fusion of the Sabbath Limits (1.1–10.15); Feast of Passover (1.1–10.9); The Shekel Dues (1.1–7.8); The Feast of Tabernacles (1.1–5.8); Fourth Division: The Sanhedrin (1.1–11.6).

### **Category Two**

#### **The History of Biblical Interpretation**

John J. O’Keefe and R. R. Reno. *Sanctified Vision: An Introduction to Early Christian Interpretation of the Bible*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005.

William Yarkin. *History of Biblical Interpretation: A Reader*. Baker, 2004. **Read chapters 4–19.**

William Baird. *History of New Testament Research: Vol. 1. From Deism to Tübingen*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992.

William Baird. *History of New Testament Research: Vol 2. From Jonathan Edwards to Rudolf Bultmann*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003.

### **Category Three**

#### **Methodology in New Testament Exegesis**

Raymond F. Collins. *Introduction to the New Testament*. Image Books. New York: Doubleday, 1987.

M. Reiser, "Die Stellung der Evangelien in der antiken Literaturgeschichte," *ZNW* 90 (1999): 1-27

Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza. *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Early Christian Origins*. New York: Crossroads, 1983.

Ben Witherington. *New Testament Rhetoric: An Introductory Guide to the Art of Persuasion in and of the New Testament*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2009.

### **Category Four**

#### **The Text and Canon of the New Testament**

A. Paul, "Les Écritures dans la société juive au temps de Jésus," *RSR* 89 (2001) : 13-42.

David C. Parker. *An Introduction to the New Testament Manuscripts and their Texts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Bruce M. Metzger. *The Canon of the New Testament: Its Origin, Development, and Significance*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1997.

### **Category Five**

#### **Introduction to and Theology of the New Testament**

Raymond E. Brown. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. New York: Doubleday, 1997; reprint Yale University Press.

D. A. Carson & Douglas Moo. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. 2nd ed.; Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005.

Udo Schnelle. *The History and Theology of the New Testament Writings*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998.

Rudolf Bultmann. *Theology of the New Testament*. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2007.

James D. G. Dunn. *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament: An Inquiry into the Character of Earliest Christianity*. 2nd ed.; London: SCM Press, 1990.

Matera, Frank J. *New Testament Theology: Exploring Diversity and Unity*. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007).