

GORDON-CONWELL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

OT 523

Study Seminar in Israel and Jordan

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<http://www.gordonconwell.edu/global-education/Israel-and-Jordan.cfm>

Dates of travel: January 10-24, 2019

Preparation Lecture: one Saturday, November 3, 2018

Debriefing Lecture: one Saturday, February 16, 2019 (*tentative*)

Course Description

In the tradition initiated by Dr. Robert Cooley and continued by Dr. Gary Pratico, GCTS study tours provide a distinctive and unique synthesis of archaeological expertise along with exegetical and theological context into the lands where the history of redemption finds its roots. An essential component of a study tour includes contextualized instruction on the archaeology of visited sites. This hands-on immersion exposes participants to the relevant settlement histories of the site, including the diagnostic material culture. On-site discussions may include the significance of long-distance trade, tribal warfare, the pastoral-nomadic lifestyle, the emergence of urban centers, landscape and climate as well as other factors that contributed to understanding life in the Southern Levant/Palestine during the biblical periods.

These rich historical foundations pave the way for in-depth exegetical, biblical-theological, ethnographic and missional implications. By our presence in the lands of the Bible, we become an eyewitness of the stage upon which the God who acts revealed himself in Scripture. As a result, integration of history, theology and application (“living out” the Scripture) is a constant priority, which in some cases may also include missional exposure to the contemporary situation in the Middle East.

In addition to GCTS students, the course is open for auditors, which include family of students, alumni, and friends of the seminary.

Important notice: the trip involves a certain degree of physicality, including long days and hiking to the different sites involving uneven terrain. In addition, we are traveling during the cold season, which should not be equated with our New England winters. Nevertheless, everyone should bring that New England winter layer (a packable goose down jacket) as a precautionary measure. See the Web page for details <http://www.gordonconwell.edu/global-education/Israel->

[and-Jordan.cfm](#).

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Identify archaeological phases related to the Southern Levant (from Early Bronze Age II to Roman Period)
2. Identify key diagnostic features of the material culture related to biblical history
3. Identify key elements of the settlement history of each region in the Southern Levant
4. Develop a sense of the placement and importance of the Southern Levant within the context of the ancient Near East.
5. Develop critical skills to relate the material cultural data to the biblical data
6. Develop an appreciation for the geographical and historical context of Scripture
7. Develop critical skills to relate relevant historical and archaeological data to the contemporary context and the application of Scripture in our lives.

Course requirements (credit participants):

1. Attendance to pre- and post-trip lectures
2. Active participation in all events pertaining to our time in Israel and Jordan (this will include evening debriefing times)
3. Completion of at least 60% of all readings. Note: less than 60% of the reading will result in failing the course (10%). **Reading report is due by January 10, 2019.**
4. Final Exam (50%) **TBD but will be given approximately 4 weeks after return.**
 - Identification questions (one- or two-sentence answers; e.g., What is a collar-rim storejar? Answer: An Iron I diagnostic storage vessel that has been associated with the emergence of Israel in Canaan)
 - Geography (identify key sites and physical features of the Southern Levant and the ancient Near East; e.g., Where is Ur? Where is Megiddo?)
 - Short essay questions (e.g., describe key features of 10th century B.C. Israel)

5. Integrative essay (about 10 pages **40%**) **Due March 4, 2019.**

Example of a topic: “The conquest of Canaan and the ethical question regarding destruction of the Canaanites.” Instructions will be given in class along with suggestions for other topics. The goal of the exercise is to develop the skills to integrate known data (both material-cultural and biblical) within a biblical-theological framework. Articulating the contemporary significance is a key element of the essay (interaction with a minimum of 10 refereed resources is required).

Required Readings:

- J. Currid and D. Barrett, *The ESV Bible Atlas* (2010).
Required reading for both credit and non-credit participants

Note: The *Carta Bible Atlas* (the old *Macmillan Bible Atlas* edited by Y. Aharoni) is an excellent resource and is highly recommended for purchase.

- □Hoerth, *Archaeology and the Old Testament* (2009)
Entry-level textbook of OT history that interacts with archaeological data

Note: The Hoerth text must be read before we go to Israel and Jordan (for both credit and non-credit participants).

- Mazar, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible* (1990)
A dated book, but it remains the benchmark as an introduction to the technical field of biblical archaeology (credit participants only).
- *NIV Archaeological Study Bible*
Excellent resource for participants with little background to biblical history and archaeology (credit and non-credit participants)
- Read all the entries from the blog from our last trip in 2015 before we go to Israel and Jordan: http://pettersposts.blogspot.com/2014_06_01_archive.html (required for both credit and non-credit participants).
- Select articles and website links will be added to this reading list.

Orientation Lecture, Fall 2018 (Date TBD, tentatively Oct.)

Required for both credit and non-credit participants

Discussion topics:

- Introduction to the history and archaeology of the ancient Near East
- Introduction to the geography of the Southern Levant
- The interface of biblical text and archaeology: problems and prospects
- Travel tips

Debriefing Lecture, Spring 2019 (Date TBD, tentatively Feb. 16)

Required for credit participants only

Discussion topics:

- Preparing for the final exam
- Paper topics
- Biblical-Theological reflections

Itinerary (subject to change) January 10 to 24, 2019

For description of these sites, consult http://pettersposts.blogspot.com/2014_06_01_archive.html

DAY 1-2 Jan 10-11 Travel from Boston to Tel Aviv, Israel

DAY 3 Jan 12 Coastal plain and Jezreel Valley
Caesarea
Mount Carmel
Valley of Jezreel
Megiddo
Mt. of Precipice lookout (Luke 4) for a view of Nazareth

DAY 4 Jan 13 Northern Galilee
Hula Valley
Mount Hermon
Hazor
Tel Dan archaeological park and Nature Reserve
Banias/Caesarea Philippi

DAY 5 Jan 14 Around the Sea of Galilee and Jordan Valley
Capernaum
Mount of Beatitudes (traditional site)
Magdala

DAY 6 Jan 15 Central Transjordan
 Transfer to **Amman, Jordan**
Jerash
Mount Nebo
Madaba

DAY 7 Jan 16 Moab

Machaerus Fortress
Wadi Mujib/Arnon River

DAY 8 Jan 17 Petra

Nabatean Petra
Hikes

DAY 9 Jan 18 Wadi Rum □

Wadi Rum one of the most beautiful desert regions of the eastern Mediterranean, made famous by the exploits of Lawrence of Arabia. We will tour the area by jeep.

Edom
Gulf of Aqaba
Border crossing back to Israel at **Eilat**

DAY 10 Jan 19 Southern Israel □

Aravah Valley
Tel-Arad
Lachish (hike up to the Assyrian ramp)
Elah Valley
First night in **Jerusalem**

DAY 11 Jan 20 Mount of Olives; City of David; Israel Museum

Mount of Olives
Palm Sunday road
Garden of Gethsemane
City of David (including new excavations)
Israel Museum

DAY 12 Jan 21 Temple Mount

Wailing Wall
Ophel digs (first century AD street)
Western Wall Tunnels (an extraordinary underground network that reveals the foundations to Herod's temple complex)

DAY 13 Jan 22 Judean Wilderness and Dead Sea

Descent to the **Dead Sea/Qumran**
Ein Gedi nature preserve
Masada
Ein Bokek (a float on the Dead Sea)

DAY 14 Jan 23 Herodion and Jerusalem □

Herodion (site of King Herod's palace and burial place)
Bethlehem (Church of the Nativity)

Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem

DAY 15 Jan 23-24 Travel back to Boston

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Reading Report – Due by January 10, 2019

Required Texts	Percentage Complete
Currid and Barrett, <i>The ESV Bible Atlas</i> (2010)	_____ %
Hoerth, <i>Archaeology and the Old Testament</i> (2009) □	_____ %
Mazar, <i>Archaeology of the Land of the Bible</i> (1990) □	_____ %
Blog Entries from 2015 http://pettersposts.blogspot.com/2014_06_01_archive.html	_____ %