



PREPARATION FOR BIBLICAL COMPETENCY EXAMS

In order to prepare for the exam, the following textbooks are recommended reading:

OLD TESTAMENT (O.T.):

Arnold, B. T. and Beyer, B. E. *Encountering the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999.

Baylis, A. H. *From Creation to the Cross. Understanding the First Half of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996.

Hill, A. E. and Walton, J. H. *A Survey of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000.

Walton, J.H. and Hill, A.E. *Old Testament Today*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004.

NEW TESTAMENT (N.T.):

Elwell, W. A. and Yarbrough, R. W. *Encountering the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998.

Gundry, R. H. *A Survey of the New Testament*. Third edition. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994.

Metzger, B. *The New Testament: Its Background, Growth and Content*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1983.

The following topics list should be kept in mind while preparing for the exams:

OLD TESTAMENT:

1. Old Testament text and canon
2. Geography of Ancient Near East, with special emphasis on Israel
3. Survey of Israelite history (within the context of the history of the Ancient Near East) from the patriarchal era to Alexander the Great
4. Key archaeological finds and texts that shed light on the O.T.
5. Old Testament interpretation, including application
 - a. The authority of the O.T. for the N.T. believer, e.g. O.T. Christology
 - b. The interpretation and application of the major O.T. genres:
Law, narrative (history), prophecy (including apocalyptic), psalms, wisdom
 - c. Introduction to O.T. criticism, as illustrated by the composition of the Pentateuch and Isaiah
 - d. Basic methodology for interpreting individual texts (theory and practice) within their original context
6. The O.T. covenants and other key O.T. themes
7. Survey of Genesis, Exodus (and parts of Numbers), and the individual O.T. historical books
 - a. History and historiography
 - b. Key content (events and persons)
 - c. Structure, message, and major theological themes
 - d. Disputed issues in their interpretation (i.e. date of Exodus, archaeological evidence for the conquest, the annihilation of the Canaanites, miracles)
8. Survey of representative books (or passages) from each major O.T. section or genre: (Pentateuch or law; Latter Prophets or prophecy, including apocalyptic; Psalms, including an introduction to Hebrew poetry; wisdom)
 - a. Key content
 - b. Structure and message or major theological themes, especially noting how these are typical of that particular section or genre
 - c. Disputed issues in their interpretation

NEW TESTAMENT:

1. New Testament text and canon
2. Geography of Palestine and the Roman Empire
3. Survey of Hellenistic and Roman history and culture from Alexander the Great to AD 135
4. Survey of second temple Jewish history and culture from the coming of Alexander to the Second Revolt, with special reference to:
 - a. The Maccabean/Hasmonean period (166-63 BC)
 - b. The Roman period (63 BC-135 AD)
5. Survey of second temple Judaism
 - a. Political institutions and leaders
 - b. Social and religious groups
 - c. Literature
 - d. Theology
 - e. Samaritans
6. The Gospels
 - a. Composition and genre
 - b. Introduction, including:
 1. Authorship
 2. Date
 3. Recipients
 4. Occasion
 5. Structure
 - c. Survey of content and message of each Gospel
 - d. Introduction to the life and teachings of Jesus
 - e. Modern critical studies of the Gospels
7. The Acts of the Apostles
 - a. Genre
 - b. Introduction, including:
 1. Authorship
 2. Date
 3. Recipients
 4. Occasion
 5. Structure
 6. Critical issues
 - c. Contents
 - d. Main theological themes
8. Epistles
 - a. Genre
 - b. Introduction to each epistle, including:
 1. Authorship
 2. Date
 3. Recipients
 4. Occasion
 5. Structure
 6. Critical issues
 - c. Contents
 - d. Main theological themes
9. Revelation
 - a. Apocalyptic literature
 - b. Theories of interpretation
 - c. Introduction
 1. Authorship
 2. Date
 3. Recipients
 4. Occasion
 5. Structure
 - d. Contents
 - e. Main theological themes