



# BB008-506/706

# Introduction to Biblical Interpretation

## Online Learning Mode

## Unit Outline

### About this Unit Outline

This unit outline contains information essential to finding your way around the unit **Introduction to Biblical Interpretation – Online Learning Mode**. It provides a structure for your learning, giving details of lecture topics, assessment requirements, and key resources.

SEMESTER 2 2021

## Important notice

While every care has been taken to ensure accuracy in the information given below, **it is the personal responsibility of each student to check the current ACT Handbook**, copies of which may be found in the Library or online at [www.actheology.edu.au](http://www.actheology.edu.au)

It is very important that students plan their time carefully to ensure that reading and especially assignments receive adequate attention and so as to prevent a bottleneck of work at the end of the semester.

It is very important that all quoted material in assignments be properly footnoted and acknowledged. The attention of students is drawn to the ACT's **Academic Misconduct Policy**, as well as ACT **Late Penalties Policy** and **Extensions Policy**, all of which are available on the ACT website. Failure to comply with the standards required will incur penalties as outlined in the relevant ACT Policies.

The attention of students is also drawn to the section in the current ACT Handbook, headed **"Guidelines for Essays in Coursework Units"** (see also the QTC Student Handbook). All essays and assignments should comply with these standards.

Students should be aware that the delivery of this unit and results awarded are moderated by the ACT. See the ACT "Moderation Policy" and "Moderation Procedure" at [www.actheology.edu.au/documents/](http://www.actheology.edu.au/documents/) for full details.

## Information about this unit

### Unit description

'Introduction to Biblical Interpretation' is the foundation of everything we seek to do at QTC. This unit aims to go 'back to basics' to ensure that everyone is handling the Bible in a helpful and responsible way before we throw ourselves into the detail of studying the text in earnest. In this unit, you will be introduced to a way of reading and studying the Bible, which is coherent, flexible and will shape the way in which you interpret the Bible in every context – whether reading it for personal study or studying the text in order to teach it to others.

We will examine in turn the importance of History, Literature and (Biblical) Theology in reading the Bible, before giving some attention to the way in which this will affect how we seek to communicate the message of any text in the context of the flow of the whole Bible. After completing this unit, every student should be equipped to understand how the Bible fits together, how Jesus Christ is the key to all the Scriptures and how to approach the task of interpreting any part of the Bible.

### ACT Census Date

**30 July 2021**

Students must confirm their enrolment in this unit with the QTC Registrar by Friday 30 July 2021. This is the last day on which you may withdraw from the unit without academic penalty (a Fail), or without being liable for the tuition fees. To make a change in your enrolment you must contact the QTC Registrar in writing at: [registrar@qtc.edu.au](mailto:registrar@qtc.edu.au).

### Learning Outcomes

#### BB008-506 Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit, the student should have achieved the following learning outcomes:

#### Know and understand

1. Demonstrate foundational knowledge and understanding of the biblical writings and methods of interpretation.

#### Be able to:

1. Describe the main genres of the biblical writings.
2. Demonstrate skill in applying methods of biblical interpretation.
3. Present organised evidence-based perspectives on their biblical writings and their interpretation

#### Be in a position to:

1. Relate perspectives from 'Introduction to Biblical Interpretations' to contemporary Christian living and ministry contexts.

## BB008-706 Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit, the student should have achieved the following learning outcomes:

### Know and understand

1. Demonstrate functional knowledge and understanding of the biblical writings and methods of interpretation.

### Be able to:

1. Discuss the main genres of the biblical writings.
2. Explore the relationship of biblical theology to other related disciplines.
3. Present critical evidence-based perspectives on their biblical writings and their interpretation

### Be in a position to:

1. Apply perspectives from 'Introduction to Biblical Interpretation' to contemporary Christian living and ministry.

## How this Unit Contributes to the Course

We are very aware that our students start at very different places – some come to us straight from studying another course, whereas others have been in the workplace for years and are petrified about the challenge of tertiary level study! But we are also mindful of the fact that our students come from a variety of church backgrounds and have had very different spiritual journeys. As if that were not all, some of us have (often unconsciously) picked up some very bad habits over the years when it comes to reading and studying the Bible! That is why 'Introduction to Biblical Interpretation' is very deliberately set up as a 'back to basics' unit, in which we strip away our presuppositions and rebuild from the ground up, in order to ensure that every student is well-equipped to study ensuing units (and to serve well in the church) over the years ahead.

BB008-506 is taken by students enrolled in the following accredited courses of the Australian College of Theology: DipMin / DipTh / AssocDegTh / BMin / BTh

BB008-706 is taken by students enrolled in the following accredited courses of the Australian College of Theology: GradCertDiv / GradDipDiv / MTS / MDiv

## Pre-requisites and Co-requisites

There are no pre-requisites for this unit.

Prior to 2020, this unit was content was delivered under the codes RYB31 and RBY51.

Unit exclusions: BB006-512, BB006-712.

## How this unit is organised & what we expect of you

This unit is delivered in online mode over 6 weeks with an extra week at the end of the teaching weeks for completing the final assessment. The start date of this unit is 12 July and it will conclude on 3 September, the day the Exegetical Summaries are due. This unit is organised in terms of learning activities for you to undertake each week.

Every week we will look at the topics described in the Unit Timetable, with learning each week involving a combination of reading notes provided by the lecturer, listening to audio / watching video material from the lecturer, short readings from relevant books and articles, and short non-assessed exercises to get you thinking about and applying the material learnt.

Video / audio recordings and reading notes will normally be provided to you in brief sections, to help your learning to be more varied and enjoyable.

During most weeks of the unit you will also participate briefly in discussion on the online forum for the unit, as indicated in the assessment section of this unit outline: further details on what is expected regarding online forum contributions will be provided in Week 1 of the Semester.

The unit will also involve the completion of two further assessments which are designed not only to assess your learning, but also to help you to deepen your understanding of the text.

This unit is worth 6 credit points towards your degree. A 6cp unit is considered to require an average time commitment of around 5 hours per week across all of the teaching and assessment weeks. Please speak with the lecturer as a matter of urgency if you are finding that you need to consistently spend more time than this on BB008.

Students are required to listen to all audios / watch all videos, complete any set pre-reading and complete any assessment tasks by the relevant due date.

## Teaching staff

LECTURER & UNIT CO-ORDINATOR

**Rev Dr Gary Millar**

P 07 3062 6939

E [gmillar@qtc.edu.au](mailto:gmillar@qtc.edu.au)

Please feel free to contact Gary if you have any problems or concerns about the unit.

## Other Key Contacts

### Registrar's office

Contact the Registrar's office for any queries about which unit to enrol in next, if you wish to change your enrolment, defer due to illness, family circumstances etc., or request an extension for your assessment (criteria apply).

P 07 3062 6939

E [registrar@qtc.edu.au](mailto:registrar@qtc.edu.au)

### Moodle and Turnitin functions and queries

Contact the Registrar for help if something on Moodle is not working, if you need help using Moodle or Turnitin.

P 07 3062 6939

E [registrar@qtc.edu.au](mailto:registrar@qtc.edu.au)

### Library/Resources

Contact the Librarian for help with finding resources for your assessment, for finding full-text database articles, for help with logging into the library databases and catalogue, to request a chapter of a book or article emailed to you, to request a book posted to you, and for help with how to renew a book for longer or place a hold on a book currently out to another person. Also contact the library for any queries about audio recordings of your class on Moodle.

P 07 3062 6939

E [library@qtc.edu.au](mailto:library@qtc.edu.au)

## Unit timetable: topics & teaching and learning activities

<b>Week</b>	<b>Lecture Topic</b>
Week 1 12 July	Learning to Read – why it’s as easy as watching Netflix
Week 2 19 July	You know what I mean? What the text is (and isn’t) saying
Week 3 26 July	King Context (thinking local, historical and biblical)
Week 4 2 August	The Power of Words (and the power of the Word) – why exegesis matters
Week 5 9 August	The Text and the Message – on Theology and Application
Week 6 16 August	Putting it all together – including dealing with hard passages and how to spot ‘the real thing’
Assessment Weeks: 23 August – 3 September	

## BB008-506 Assessments

**Assessments are submitted online via Moodle by 11.55pm on the due date** (with the exception of timed online quizzes and onsite exams). If you experience difficulty submitting due to internet issues close to 11.55pm, please email [registrar@qtc.edu.au](mailto:registrar@qtc.edu.au) explaining the issue. Attach a copy of your assessment and a screen shot of the folder in which your document is saved to show that you have not made changes after the due time.

**In order to pass the unit, you must submit all assessment pieces and attain a mark of at least 50% for the unit as a whole.**

Unless an extension has been applied for and granted in accordance with the Policy found in the QTC Handbook, where a student submits an assessment past its due date, in accordance with the ACT **Late Penalties** Policy, the assessment marks will be reduced at the rate of **3%** of the total possible marks for the assessment item **per calendar day**, up to 14 days late, after which point the mark awarded shall be zero.

Your submitted assessment items must also be within **10% of the required word limit**, and failure to meet this requirement shall result in a penalty of **10%** of the total possible mark being deducted. **See the QTC Handbook for full details on what is included within your total word count.** Please also note that **footnotes** in their entirety **should not exceed 25% of the prescribed essay length**. A **10%** penalty of the final grade applies if footnotes are more than 25% of the prescribed essay length. QTC seeks to prepare you for ministry, and in ministry delivering presentations on time and within an acceptable length are essential skills.

Assessment Task	Description
<p><b>Pre-reading and Initial Online Forum Contribution</b>  <b>200 words</b>  <b>10% of final grade</b>  <b>DUE: Wednesday 21 July 2021</b></p>	<p>By Wednesday 21 July, you are required to read the extracts from John Piper's book <i>Think!</i>, which will be available on Moodle. You must post your answer to the question 'How does Piper challenge us to approach reading the Bible?', which should reflect on your own experience to date.</p> <p>No interaction is expected on these initial posts, but you are expected to contribute to the forum discussions in subsequent weeks.</p>
<p><b>Review Essay</b>  <b>800 words</b>  <b>30% of final grade</b>  <b>DUE: Monday 9 August 2021</b></p>	<p>Write an 800 word review essay assessing the value of <i>Dig Deeper</i> (Beynon and Sachs) in learning how to interpret the Bible.</p>
<p><b>Exegetical Summary</b>  <b>1200 words</b>  <b>60% of final grade</b>  <b>DUE: Friday 3 September 2021</b></p>	<p>Using the skills and approaches learned in this unit, write a 1200 word exegetical summary on one of the following passages:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Matthew 5:13-16</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Acts 3:1-10</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Romans 15:1-7</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">James 1:19-25</p>

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Assessment Task	Description
<p><b>Pre-reading and Online Forum Contribution</b></p> <p><b>350 words</b></p> <p><b>10% of final grade</b></p> <p><b>DUE: Wednesday 21 July 2021</b></p>	<p>By Wednesday 21 July, you are required to read the extracts from John Piper's book <i>Think!</i>, which will be available on Moodle. You must post your answer to the question 'How does Piper challenge us to approach reading the Bible?', which should reflect on your own experience to date.</p> <p>No interaction is expected on these initial posts, but you are expected to contribute to the forum discussions in subsequent weeks.</p>
<p><b>Review Essay</b></p> <p><b>1250 words</b></p> <p><b>30% of final grade</b></p> <p><b>DUE: Monday 9 August 2021</b></p>	<p>Write a 1250 word review essay assessing the value of <i>How to Read the Bible for all it's worth (4<sup>th</sup> ed.)</i> (Fee and Stuart) in learning how to interpret the Bible.</p>
<p><b>Exegetical Summary</b></p> <p><b>1500 words</b></p> <p><b>60% of final grade</b></p> <p><b>DUE: Friday 3 September 2021</b></p>	<p>Using the skills and approaches learned in this unit, write a 1500 word exegetical summary on one of the following passages:</p> <p>Matthew 12:1-21</p> <p>Acts 12:1-25</p> <p>Romans 5:1-11</p> <p>James 4:1-10</p>

# Guide to Assessments

## *What are we looking for?*

### General remarks

All students are expected to avail themselves of the guidelines for written assignments provided in the ACT Handbook (consult the table of contents) and in the QTC Student Handbook section 'Style Requirements for Written Assignments'.

All written work for this unit should conform to the guidelines of the *SBL Handbook of Style* (with the exception of Australian spelling conventions).

Any Hebrew and Greek cited must be typed in a Unicode font; SBL BibLit is commended as one font covering Hebrew, Greek, and Roman Unicode ranges, but is not required. It is freely available from the SBL website: [http://sbl-site.org/educational/BiblicalFonts\\_SBLBibLit.aspx](http://sbl-site.org/educational/BiblicalFonts_SBLBibLit.aspx)

Do note carefully the number of words required for each assessment item, depending on whether you are enrolled for BB008-507 or BB08=. For full information on what is included in the total word count, see the QTC Handbook section headed *Length of Assignments*.

### Online Forum Contributions

The initial post is designed to reflect our various starting points at the beginning of the unit, and will also serve to introduce participants in the unit to one another. Subsequent interactions will be the result of week-to-week direction and questions which arise.

### Review Essay

There are two main purposes in the review essay. Please make sure you (a) summarise the relevant content of the book and (b) reflect on how this content should shape our practice.

### Exegetical Summary Pieces

1. It is important to remember that these assessments are designed *to test if you have grasped the basic principles of interpretation* (looking at the historical context, appreciating the kind of literature we are reading and how that works, and then how this part of the Bible fits into the whole flow of Scripture). We are not asking you to come up with the definitive (or exhaustive) interpretation of any particular Bible passage. Our concern is to make sure that you are *approaching the Bible properly and are aware of the issues and challenges of interpreting the text*, rather than testing your understanding of any given text *per se*.
2. Students often ask 'How many other books should I refer to?' and 'How many footnotes or references do you want to see?' The short answer is that for these assessments, *the primary goal is to ensure that you are using the right strategies in interpretation, rather than interacting with others who have written on the particular text*. The assessments will be marked on the basis of your method and approach, rather than whether or not you are aware of how others have approached the text in the past. *However*, it will be necessary for you to refer to books (generally commentaries) for some help on historical details, literary structure and perhaps theological issues. Where you glean help from these sources, you should include a footnote, and also add the title to your bibliography.

3. In the final session of the unit, you will be shown a couple of representative examples of what we are expecting!

## Learning Resources

### Set Texts

#### **BB008-506 students should purchase:**

Beynon, Nigel and Andrew Sach, *Dig Deeper: Tools to Unearth the Bible's Treasure*. Nottingham: IVP, 2010 [also available as an EBSCO eBook and Perlego eBook accessible through QTC Library]

#### **BB008-706 students should purchase:**

Fee, Gordon D. and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All Its' Worth: A Guide to Understanding the Bible*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Grand Rapids: MI: Zondervan, 2014. [also available as an EBSCO eBook and audiobook AND a ProQuest eBook all accessible through QTC Library]

### Recommended Books for Assessments:

Piper, John. *Think!: The life of the mind and the love of God*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010. [also available as an EBSCO eBook and audiobook accessible through QTC Library]

### Other books you might like to refer to on Biblical Interpretation:

Klein, W.W., Blomberg, Craig L., and R. L. Hubbard. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2017. [also available as a Perlego eBook accessible through QTC Library]

Köstenberger, Andreas J. and Richard D. Patterson. *An Invitation to Biblical Interpretation: Exploring the Hermeneutical Triad of History, Literature and Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2011. [This book looks scary, but isn't! It is also a little expensive, but is really worth the investment; alternatively avail as an EBSCO eBook accessible through QTC Library]

Long, V. Philips, M. Silva, Tremper Longman III, Richard A. Muller and Vern S. Poythress. *Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation: six volumes in one*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996.

Osborne, Grant R. *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Guide to Biblical Interpretation*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2006. [available as an EBSCO eBook accessible through QTC Library]

### Key books on Biblical Theology:

Alexander, T. D. and Brian S. Rosner, eds. *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*. 1 vol. Leicester: IVP, 2000. [available as a Perlego eBook accessible through QTC Library]

Goldsworthy, G.L. *Gospel and Kingdom*. Exeter: Paternoster, 1981. [available as an EBSCO eBook accessible through QTC Library]

Goldsworthy, G. L. *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture: the application of biblical theology to expository preaching*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000.

Goldsworthy, G. L. *Christ-centred Biblical Theology: hermeneutical foundations and principles*. Nottingham: Apollos, 2012. [available as a Perlego eBook accessible through QTC Library]

Klink, Edward W. and Darian R. Lockett. *Understanding Biblical Theology: a comparison of theory and practice*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012. [available as an EBSCO eBook accessible through QTC Library]

Roberts, Vaughan. *God's Big Picture*. Leicester: IVP, 2009. [available as a Perlego eBook accessible through QTC Library]

### **Biblical Theologies:**

Gentry, Peter J. and Stephen J. Wellum. *Kingdom through Covenant: a biblical-theological understanding of the covenants*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012. [available as an EBSCO eBook and a Perlego eBook accessible through QTC Library]

Hamilton, James M. Jr. *God's Glory in Salvation through Judgment: A Biblical Theology*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010. [available as a Perlego eBook and a ProQuest eBook, accessible through QTC Library]

Schreiner, T. *The King in his beauty: a Biblical theology of the Old and New Testaments*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2013. [available as an EBSCO eBook and Perlego eBook accessible through QTC Library]

### **JOURNAL ARTICLES**

In most of the units you study at QTC, you will be asked to demonstrate your understanding of the subject matter by writing a research paper, essay, take-home exam or the like. Your lecturers and the Moderators of the Australian College of Theology will expect to see that you have consulted current academic research in the form of journal articles.

Q: So how do you find good journal articles?

A: Search the online Journal Databases

### **QTC makes available the following Journal Databases which will be useful for finding information for your assessments:**

- ATLASerials Plus – available via EBSCO

ATLASerials Plus is the full text version of the ATLA Religion Database (ATLA). This database is a collection of major religion and theology journals selected by some of the major religion scholars in the United States. Coverage of this database dates back to 1949.

- Religion and Philosophy Collection

This database provides extensive full-text coverage of such topics as world religions, major denominations, biblical studies, religious history, epistemology, political philosophy, and philosophy of language, moral philosophy and the history of philosophy.

- JSTOR

JSTOR provides full-text access to journal articles as well as eBooks. It includes theological journal titles such as the Harvard Theological Review and other titles not found in ATLASerials Plus or the Religion and Philosophy Collection.

Most journal articles will be available as a PDF which you can read, print or save.

## INTRODUCTION TO BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

Access the databases via the QTC Library Webpage

<https://www.qtc.edu.au/students/resources/library/databases/>

and login with the username and password provided on Moodle under the QTC Library unit.

## ACT Standards: Grades

Grades in assessment instruments are awarded in the following categories-

Grade	Score	GPA
Fail (F)	0-49%	0
Pass (P)	50-57%	1
Pass+ (P+)	58-64%	1.5
Credit (C)	65-74%	2
Distinction (D)	75-84%	3
High Distinction (HD)	85+%	4