Library Tools for Biblical Exegesis

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I. Overview

Exegetical Steps

Exegesis - the process by which one comes to understand a text

These are the typical steps involved in an exegesis; your professor’s instructions for your exegetical paper may include a variation of them.

A. Establish or orient the context of the pericope in the Biblical book as a whole
   - a translation from the original Greek or Hebrew may be required
   - read the text in several different English versions

B. Examine the historical context or setting

C. Analyze the text
   - Literary analysis (what type of literature is it?)
   - Textual analysis (to reconstruct the precise words of the original writer)
   - Grammatical analysis (classify words by their part of speech)
   - Lexical analysis (determine meaning(s) of the words)

D. Critical analysis: employing various critical methods to ask questions of the texts, ex.:
   - Canonical
   - Form
   - Historical
   - Liberation/Black/Feminist
   - Literary
   - Narrative
   - Poststructural
   - Reader-Response
   - Redaction
   - Rhetorical
   - Social-Scientific
   - Source
   - Structural
   - Tradition-Historical

E. Theological analysis

F. Your analysis and/or application

Exegetical Handbooks


II. Groundwork

Bibles

English Language Versions

English language versions of the whole Bible are found between call numbers BS135 and BS198. Listed below are a few of those found in the reference room; you will find many more in both the Reference Room and the circulating stacks:


Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha


Greek and Hebrew Texts


Septuaginta; id est, Vetus Testamentum Graece Iuxta LXX Interpretes. Stuttgart, Privilegierte Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1935. (Ref. BS741 .R3 1952)


Parallels


Interlinear Testaments


Digital Bibles

*Accordance Bible Software.* Bible software designed specifically for the Macintosh Computer. *Accordance* comes in a variety of packages with a wide range of Biblical resources and can be purchased at <http://www.accordancebible.com/>

*BibleWorks.* A searchable database of 93 versions of the Bible in English, Greek, and Hebrew plus 26 other languages. The software is installed on the Divinity School Library public computers and can also be purchased at <http://www.bibleworks.com>

*Bible Gateway.* Searches may be performed on passages or words in one or more versions. Among the English versions included are *Darby, King James, New American Standard, New International, New King James, Worldwide English, Young’s Literal Translation*. It also includes Bibles in over 30 other languages. <http://www.biblegateway.com>

*Bible Study Tools.* Searches may be performed on verses or word/phrase. The versions include: *American Standard, Bible in Basic English, Douay-Rheims, King James, King James with Strong’s Numbers, Latin Vulgate, New American Standard, New Living, New Revised Standard, Revised Standard, Today’s English, Webster’s, Young’s Literal Translation*. Interlinear as well as parallel displays are possible. Strong’s Concordance and Greek and Hebrew lexicons are also included. < http://www.biblestudytools.com/>

*Blue Letter Bible.* Versions include *American Standard, King James, Revised Standard* and the *Vulgate*. Greek and Hebrew as well as multiple version displays are possible. Also includes hymns, maps and images keyed to verses. <http://www.blueletterbible.org>

*e-Sword.* A free basic Bible software with the opportunity to add additional free and fee-based resources and Bible translations individually to the base package. < http://www.e-sword.net/>
Dictionaries

(Ref. BS440 .A54 1992)

(Ref. BS440 .E44 2000)

(Ref. BS440 .H235 1996)

(Ref. BS500 .D5 1999)

*New Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible.* Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2006-
(Ref. BS440 .N445 2006)

(Ref. BS511.3 .S68 2001)

(Ref. BS440 .Z63 2009)

Atlases

(Ref. G2230 .A2 2002)

(Ref. G2230 .D68 1997)

(Ref. BS630 .O96 2007)


(Ref. BS630 .R37 2010)
III. Textual Analysis

Concordances

A concordance enables you to identify the correct book, chapter, and verse in which a word appears in Scripture and to trace a particular topic through the Bible. A particular concordance matches a unique version of the Bible. The titles below are a sample of the concordances held by the library.


Lexicons and Wordbooks

Lexicons and wordbooks define the meaning of specific words in their original language as well as providing grammatical information. In general lexicons are one volume and wordbooks multi-volume in size. Found below is a sampling of the lexicons and wordbooks held by the library.

Lexicons


Wordbooks


IV. Analysis by Others

Online Catalog

For best results in locating call numbers for books on a particular book of the Bible follow the Library of Congress subject headings format, using the Biblical book title that you are seeking:

bible n.t. Corinthians, 1st
bible o.t. genesis

To find a particular work in a commentary series do an keyword search following the form below and substituting the biblical book and series title you are seeking:

jeremiah and hermeneia

Commentaries

There are many commentaries on individual books of the Bible - some are published as individual monographs and others as volumes within a particular commentary series. Some commentary series are classified so that all volumes sit together on the shelf and others are classified separately by the biblical book. Listed below are the commentary series located in the Reference Room with duplicate copies of those found in the stacks.

Anchor Bible (Ref. BS192.2.A1 1964 .G3)
Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture/New Testament (Ref. BS2341.2 A535)
Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture/Old Testament (Ref. BS1151.52 A535)
Forms of Old Testament Literature (classified separately)
Hermeneia (classified separately)
International Critical Commentary (Ref. BS 491 .I5847)
Interpretation (classified separately)
JPS Torah Commentary (classified separately)
New International Commentary on the New Testament (classified separately)
New International Commentary on the Old Testament (classified separately)
New international Greek Testament commentary (classified separately)
New Testament Library (classified separately)
Old Testament Library (classified separately)
Sacra Pagina (BS 2341.2 S237 1991)
Word Biblical Commentary (Ref. BS 491.2 W67 1982)

One Volume Commentaries

(Ref. BS491.2 .H37 2000)

(Ref. BS491.2 .N485 1999)
Journal Articles

Journal articles on your topic or scripture passage are found by using indexes or databases. Search the online catalog to determine if the library has a subscription to the journal should the article not be available full-text in the database.

*ATLA Religion Database.* An electronic database indexing journal articles and essays from multi-author works; it includes some full-text articles. It is linked on the library's home page: <http://library.duke.edu/divinity>.

**TIP:** the best way to search for biblical passages in the ATLA Religion Database is to browse and choose entries from the Scripture Reference index using the **SCRIPTURES** button found in the middle of the upper green banner.

(Ref. BS410 .N35; located on index shelves). A web version covers 1985 to date and is found under "Divinity School Databases" on our home page.

(Ref. BS410 .O42; located on index shelves). A web version covers 1978 to date and is found under "Divinity School Databases" on our home page.

*Index to Jewish Periodicals.* 1963 – present.  
(Ref. DS101 .I534; located on index shelves). A web version covers 1988 to date and is found under "Divinity School Databases" on our home page.

*RAMBI: Index of Articles on Jewish Subjects.* 1966 – present.  
<http://jnul.huji.ac.il/rambi/>
V. Steps for Word Study

Old Testament

Two numbering systems are used to identify the Hebrew and Greek words from which English translations have been derived and can be helpful in utilizing the textual analysis tools. The *Strong's numbers* \(S\) are keyed to the King James Version and the *Goodrick/Kohlenberger numbers* \(GK\) are keyed to the New International Version.

1. Find the number matching the ENGLISH word you're researching:
   
   \(S\) = Look up the word in *The New Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* [Ref. BS425 .S8 1984]. Note the Strong’s number.

   \(GK\) = Look up the word in *The NIV Exhaustive Concordance* [Ref. BS425 .G62 1990]. Note the G/K number.

2. Find other Bible verses using the same HEBREW term:

   \(S\) = Look in the *New Englishman’s Hebrew Concordance* [Ref. BS1125 .W662 1984]. Arranged numerically by Strong’s number.

   \(GK\) = Look in *The Hebrew English Concordance to the Old Testament* [Ref. BS1121 .K65 1998]. Arranged numerically by G/K number.

3. Brief definitions of the term can be found in *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* [Ref. PJ4833 .B76 1996].

   \(S\) = Look in the back under the Strong’s number to locate the correct page.

   \(GK\) = No index by G/K number.

4. Lengthy articles in English on the Hebrew word can be found in:

     
     \(S\) = Use the Strong’s number in the index at the back of volume 2 to locate the entry number of the article.

     \(GK\) = No index by G/K number.

     
     \(S\) = Use the Table of Conversion in vol. 5 to locate the entry by Strong’s number.

     \(GK\) = Volumes 1-4 are arranged by the G/K number.

     
     This is an ongoing set, without an index, arranged by the Hebrew alphabet so you must know Hebrew to find the article.
New Testament

Two numbering systems are used to identify the Hebrew and Greek words from which English translations have been derived and can be helpful in utilizing the textual analysis tools. The Strong's numbers [S] are keyed to the King James Version and the Goodrick/Kohlenberger numbers [GK] are keyed to the New International Version.

1. Find the number matching the ENGLISH word you're researching:
   
   **S** = Look up the word in *The New Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* [Ref. BS425 .S8 1984]. Note the Strong's number.
   
   **GK** = Look up the word in *The NIV Exhaustive Concordance* [Ref. BS425 .G62 1990]. Note the G/K number.

2. Find other Bible verses using the same GREEK term:
   
   **S** = Look in *The Englishman's Greek Concordance* [Ref. BS2302 .W495 1979]. Arranged numerically by Strong's number.
   

   
   An index to the 1979 edition [Ref. PA881 .B38 1979] is arranged by scripture verse and can be helpful in locating the page in the main work.

4. Lengthy articles in English on the Greek word can be found in:
   
   • *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* [Kittel] [Ref. BS2312 .K5813 1964].
   
   **S** = Volume 10, page 61+, has an index to the set by Strong’s number.

   **GK** = No index by G/K number.
   


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