PITTSBURGH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY **COURSE NO.** BI 483

THE CONTENT OF THIS DESCRIPTION IS NOT A LEARNING CONTRACT AND THE INSTRUCTOR IS NOT BOUND TO IT. IT IS OFFERED IN GOOD FAITH AND INTENDED AS A HELPFUL GUIDE TO THE STUDENT.
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TITLE: Archaeology and the Biblical World **TERM:** January 2027

INSTRUCTOR: Michael Danti **CREDIT HOURS:** 3

REGISTRATION: LIMITED TO: # UNLIMITED
AUDITORS: # NO AUDITORS

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course introduces students to the archaeology of the ancient Near East and its relevance for understanding the historical, social, and cultural worlds of the Old and New Testaments. Students will learn basic archaeological methods and examine selected case studies involving ancient Israel, the Assyrian and Babylonian empires, Second Temple Judaism, and the Roman-era world of Jesus and early Christianity, considering how material evidence informs biblical interpretation and where its limitations lie. Through hands-on engagement with the Kelso Museum's collections and a concluding examination of cultural heritage preservation, students will explore how archaeological knowledge is produced, interpreted, and applied to questions of history, faith, and contemporary responsibility.

CLASS OBJECTIVES: Students in this course will develop a foundational understanding of archaeological methods and the historical and cultural contexts of the Old and New Testaments. Through selected case studies, they will learn to evaluate archaeological evidence critically, explore its contributions and limitations for interpreting biblical texts, and understand the material cultures of ancient Israel, Judah, and the wider Near East. Hands-on engagement with Kelso Museum collections will provide experience in interpreting ancient artifacts, while a concluding unit on cultural heritage preservation will examine contemporary responsibilities for safeguarding the archaeological heritage of the Middle East. No prior experience in archaeology is required.

PREREQUISITES: None

REQUIRED TETBOOKS/READINGS:

- *HarperCollins Study Bible-NRSV*, Harper One, 22006, ISBN: 978-0061228407, $22.22
- Eric H. Cline, *Biblical Archaeology: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2009, ISBN: 978-0195342635, $12.99

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING

Students will complete a short paper (2 pages, single-spaced) analyzing an artifact in the Kelso Museum relevant to our understanding of the Old Testament or New Testament southern Levant. Students will also complete a final paper of 5–7 pages (single-spaced) chosen from a list of topics provided on the syllabus.

Grading:

- Class attendance and participation 30%
- Artifact Analysis Paper 20%
- Final Paper 50%

ATTENDANCE: Required.