

Northern Rockies Institute of Theology Digital Education

Syria in the Bible and in the Early Church: A Heritage at Risk

With Dr. Thomas Lee who served for many years as Lutheran campus pastor at the University of Montana, Missoula, where he also-as a faculty affiliate-taught biblical Hebrew and Aramaic in UM's Religious Studies Department. During the 1980s and into the 1990s he served on the staff of two archaeological projects in the Kingdom of Jordan and one in the Republic of Syria. In recent months we've become aware as well of the tragic loss of Syria's rich cultural heritage at the hands of ISIS and by those who profit from the looting and sale of antiquities. This loss of antiquities and the humanitarian tragedy are not unrelated. As Dr. Amr al-Azm, a former official in the Syrian Ministry of Antiquities who now teaches Middle Eastern History and Archaeology at Shawnee State University in Ohio, reminds us: "A people without a history is a lost people . . . and history without people is meaningless." Not only the Syrians, but we too are deeply invested in Syria's history as evidenced by the bible and in the history of the early church. The loss of Syria's cultural heritage, then, is not only a tragedy for the Syrian people, but a tragedy for us as well. In this NRIT presentation by Tom Lee, we will explore the importance of ancient Syria for the bible and the church and will attempt to convey some sense of the threat posed by the Syrian civil war to our common cultural heritage.



The Cost of the class is \$25. After the percentage taken out by the online registration company, the remaining amount of each registration fee will be sent to the American Schools of Oriental Research for their "Syrian Heritage Initiative." ASOR's "Syrian Heritage Initiative" is committed to assist in whatever ways possible the preservation of antiquities under threat by the Syrian civil war.

http://www.montanasynd.org/store/c9/NRIT_Digital_Education.html