

THE PARABLES OF JESUS (NTGK6323)

**New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
New Testament Department, Biblical Studies Division
Dr. Bill Warren, Landrum P. Leavell, II, Professor of NT and Greek
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NOBTS MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries.

COURSE PURPOSE, CORE VALUE FOCUS, AND CURRICULUM COMPETENCIES:

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary has five core values: Doctrinal Integrity, Spiritual Vitality, Mission Focus, Characteristic Excellence, and Servant Leadership. These values shape both the context and manner in which all curricula are taught, with “doctrinal integrity” and “Characteristic Excellence” especially highlighted in this course. The seminary is emphasizing the core value of Characteristic Excellence this year and encourages all at the seminary to focus especially on this emphasis.

NOBTS has seven basic competencies guiding our Masters degree programs: Biblical Exposition, Christian Theological Heritage, Disciple Making, Interpersonal Skills, Servant Leadership, Spiritual & Character Formation, and Worship Leadership. This course addresses the “Biblical Exposition” competency by helping the student learn to interpret the Bible accurately.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This study will include a detailed analysis of the Greek text of selected parables of Christ as found in the Synoptic Gospels. The literary genre of parable will be studied, recent studies in the area will be reviewed, the backgrounds for understanding the parables will be examined, and the Synoptic parables will be interpreted.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

The objectives of this course include the following:

1. Students should understand the state of research related to the parables of Jesus
2. Students should gain an increased appreciation for the relevance of the exegetical study of the parables
3. Students should acquire the ability to apply their understanding of the Greek language and of the parables to a sound interpretation of the text

COURSE TEACHING METHODS:

This course will be taught via a combination of pedagogical methods, including but not limited to the following: lectures, student assignments, small group work, on-line resources, book reviews, and student presentations. Both inductive and deductive approaches to learning will be utilized.

TEXTBOOKS:

1. *The Greek New Testament*, UBS 5th ed. (or 4th Revised), or the Nestle-Aland 28th ed.
2. Kenneth Bailey, *Poet and Peasant* and *Through Peasants' Eyes*
3. Craig Blomberg, *Interpreting the Parables*, 2nd edition

REQUIREMENTS IN THE COURSE:

1. Complete the assigned translations and readings according to the schedule. Translation will be graded based on class participation when called upon. Questions on the readings from the textbooks will be included on the exams. (10%)
2. Sectional exams cover the Greek text, assigned readings, and all class material studied up to the time of the exam. Each exam includes short answer & exegesis questions. (15% each)
3. The final exam will only cover the material studied since the last sectional exam. It will be given as scheduled by the Seminary. (20%)
4. Each student will select a background study from the attached list. A typed study about 3 to 4 pages in length will be presented in class, with digital or print copies made available for all class members. The presentation is on the date assigned for the parable. (15%)
5. Each student will select a parable and prepare a rewrite of it in a modern setting, seeking to be faithful to the original “punch” and focus of the parable. The rewrite will be presented in class on the date assigned, with copies for class members (via print or digital). (5%)
6. Each student will prepare an exegetical paper on one of the parables or a topic that applies to several parables. The paper topic must be approved by the professor ahead of time. The paper should be a formal research paper about 15 to 20 pages double-spaced in length according to Turabian on form and style. (20%)

COURSE EVALUATION:

Translations & Participation	15%	Sectional Exams	30% (15% each)
Final Exam	15%	Exegetical Paper	20%
Rewrite	10%	Background Study	10%

CLASS SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS: (KB1 = Bailey, Poet & Peasant, KB2 = Bailey Through Peasant Eyes, CB = Blomberg)

Week 1:	Introduction to the course		
Aug. 23, 25	Intro. to the Parables	Mk. 4:10-12	CB:13-25, 29-69
Week 2:	Day 1: Intro. to the Parables	KB1: 27-43	CB:165-72, 213, 255
Aug. 30,	Day 2: Intro.: The Sower	Mk. 4:1-9, 13-20	CB:226f
Sept. 1	Children in the Market	Mt. 11:16-19; Lk. 7:31-35	CB:208f
Week 3:	Day 1: The Wheat and the Tares	Mt. 13:24-30, 36-43	CB:197f
Sept. 6, 8	Day 2: The Two Sons	Mt. 21:28-32	CB:186f
Week 4:	Day 1: The Midnight Visitor	Lk. 11:5-8	CB:274f; KB1:119-41
Sept. 13, 15	Day 2: A Publican and a Pharisee	Lk. 18:9-15	CB:256f; KB2:142-56
Week 5:	Day 1: A Lost Sheep, A Lost Coin	Lk. 15:1-10	CB:179f; KB1:142-57
Sept. 20, 22	Day 2: A Prodigal Son (Elder Son)	Lk. 15:11-32	CB:172f; KB1:158-206
Week 6:	Day 1: The Unfaithful Steward	Lk. 16:1-13	KB1:86-118
Sept. 27, 29	Day 2: SECTIONAL EXAM		
Week 7:	Day 1: The Rich Man and Lazarus	Lk. 16:19-31	CB:203f
Oct. 4, 6	Day 2: The Rich Fool	Lk. 12:16-21	CB:266f; KB2:57-73

Week 8:	Day 1: The Persistent Widow	Lk. 18:1-8	CB:271f; KB2:127-41
Oct. 11, 13	Day 2: The Banquet Guests	Mt. 22:1-14,	CB:233f

Oct. 18, 20 FALL BREAK

Week 9:	Day 1: The Good Samaritan	Lk. 10:30-35	CB:229f ; KB2:33-56
Oct. 25, 27	Day 2: The Faithful Servant	Lk. 12:42-48, Mt. 24:44-51	CB:190f

Week 10:	Day 1: Two Debtors, A Master and his Servant	Lk. 7:41-43, Lk. 17:7-10	CB:184f ; KB2:1-21 CB:260f; KB2:114-26
Nov. 1, 3	Day 2: SECTIONAL EXAM		

Week 11:	Day 1: The Ten Virgins	Mt. 25:1-13	CB:193f
Nov. 8, 10	Day 2: The Talents	Mt. 25:14-30; Lk.19:12-27	CB:214f

Week 12:	Day 1: The Wicked Tenants	Mk. 12:1-12	CB:247f
Nov. 15, 17	Day 2: Workers in the Vineyard	Mt. 20:1-16	CB:221f

THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week 13:	Day 1: The Great Banquet	Lk. 14:15-24,	CB:233f; KB2:88-113
Nov. 29, Dec. 1	Day 2: Pearls, Treasure & Leaven	Mt.13:33,44-47 Lk.13:20-21	CB:279f

Week 14:	Day 1: Figs, Harvest & Mustard Seeds	Lk. 13:6-9 Mk. 4:26-32	CB:268f, 284f
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Dec. 6, 8	Day 2: The Theology of the Parables		CB:289-327
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Week 15: Dec. 15 = Final Exam

REWRITES & BACKGROUND TOPICS: (1st c. Palestine unless otherwise noted)

The Sower	Climate and Agriculture in Palestine
The Children in the Market	The Daily Life of Children in Palestine
The Wheat and the Tares	Wheat and Tares, Figs and Harvest Time
The Two Sons	Scribes & Pharisees: Social Status, Scribal Work, Diversity, Political Affiliations, and Authority
Who Has a Friend	Jewish Friendship relationships: with whom & protocol
A Publican and a Pharisee	Personal Prayer Practices among Jews Publicans and Tax Collectors in Palestine
A Prodigal Son (Elder Son)	The Family Status of Sons in Judaism
The Rich Fool	Living Conditions among the Wealthy
The Rich Man and Lazarus	The Concepts of Hades and Abraham's Bosom
The Banquet Guests	Banquets, Celebrations and Hospitality Rules
The Persistent Widow	Widows: Status, Rights and Economic Security Local Judges and Justice in Palestine
The Good Samaritan	Highway Robbers/Robbery in Palestine Samaritan--Jew Relations in Palestine

The Faithful Servant	Landowners and Tenant Farmers in Palestine
Two Debtors,	Loans, Payments, and Collection Practices
A Master and his Servant	Gentile & Jewish Slaves/Servants in Palestine
The Ten Virgins	Wedding Practices in Judaism
The Talents	“Banking” in the first century
The Wicked Tenants	Expectations of tenants in the first century
Workers in the Vineyard	Migrant Farm Workers in Palestine
The Great Banquet	Hospitality rules in the first century
Pearls	Land Ownership and Sales in Palestine
Treasure, and Leaven	Cooking practices in the first century

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY ON BACKGROUND SOURCES

Primary Sources:

Archaeological Finds	Pseudepigrapha	Josephus
Dead Sea Scrolls	Apocrypha	Philo
Nag Hammadi	Targums	Suetonius
LXX	Rabbinic Lit.	Church Fathers

Secondary Sources:

Bible Dictionaries:

Anchor Bible Dict., IDB, ISBE (rev.), ZPEB, Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge (incl. the 20th Century E. of R. K. supplements), Hasting’s Dict. of the Bible, etc.

Books on Parables:

Bailey, *A Poet and a Peasant*
 Bailey, *Through Peasants’ Eyes*
 Blomberg, *Interpreting the Parables*, 2nd ed.
 Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom*
 Hultgren, *The Parables of Jesus*
 Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*
 McArthur and Johnston, *They Also Taught in Parables*
 Scott, *Hear then the Parable*
 Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent: A Comprehensive Guide to the Parables of Jesus*

Biblical Backgrounds Books:

Lohse, *The New Testament Environment*
 Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in Their Encounter in Palestine during the Early Hellenistic Period* (in 1 vol., formerly 2 vol.)
 Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*
 Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: NT*
 Matthews, *Manners and Customs in the Bible*
 Theissen, *Sociology of Early Palestinian Christianity*
 Meeks, *The First Urban Christians*
 Meeks, *The Moral World of the First Christians*
 Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*
 Stambaugh and Balch, *The New Testament in Its Social Environment*
 Wilkens, *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them*
 Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary on the NT