

**NTGK6317 JAMES**  
**ADVANCED GREEK EXEGESIS (ONLINE Summer 2015)**  
**New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary**  
**New Testament Department, Biblical Studies Division**  
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## **Seminary Mission Statement**

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

## **Core Values**

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary has five core values: Doctrinal Integrity, Spiritual Vitality, Mission Focus, Characteristic Excellence, and Servant Leadership. This course addresses Doctrinal Integrity specifically in that the course is designed to prepare the student to grow in the understanding and interpreting of the Word of God. Characteristic Excellence is also addressed in that the student should be as prepared as possible to be ministers for Christ. Mission Focus is emphasized in that interpreting the Bible is a key element in presenting the Good News of the Gospel to the world. Proper interpretation is vital in fulfilling the Great Commission. This course addresses the competency of Biblical Exposition by preparing the student to interpret and communicate the Bible accurately. The core value for NOBTS this year is Spiritual Vitality.

## **Key Competency**

The seminary has seven key competencies in its academic program. They are: Biblical Exposition, Christian Theological Heritage, Discipleship Making, Interpersonal Skills, Servant Leadership, Spiritual and Character Formation, and Worship Leadership. The key competency addressed in this course is Biblical Exposition.

## **Catalogue Description of the Course**

An advanced course giving consideration to text-critical, grammatical, syntactical, literary, and historical issues through text analysis in a variety of genres. The course will emphasize sound hermeneutical principles for discovering the meaning of the text and for applying the text in teaching and preaching. Students may repeat the course for non-reduplicating books. *Prerequisites: Introduction to Biblical hermeneutics; Exploring the New Testament; Introduction to Greek Grammar; and Intermediate Greek Grammar.*

## **Student Learning Outcomes**

This course will consist of a thorough study of selected passages from the Greek New Testament. Consideration of pertinent historical and cultural issues, and interaction with the major literature and commentaries will be conducted. The student will translate the passages giving consideration to morphology, syntax, diagramming, and exegesis. The course will emphasize proper methods for utilizing the information discovered through exegesis in order to make application to teaching and preaching the text of the New Testament.

### *Student Course Objectives*

In order to interpret and communicate the Bible accurately, the student, by the end of the course should:

- Be able to apply Greek vocabulary recognition and grammatical and syntactical analysis for translation and interpretation to the practice of interpreting and communicating the Bible accurately.
- Value working with the original Greek language.
- Be able, with the help of resources, to exegete the New Testament.
- Be able to translate the book of James from the Greek text.

### *Knowledge*

Students who completes this course successfully should:

- Know more thoroughly the significance of Greek grammar for translation of the James
- Increase knowledge of the basic methods of studying Greek grammar that will contribute to a regular application of Greek grammar in teaching and preaching of James
- Solidify knowledge of basic principles of Greek grammar that lead interpreters to discover the meaning intended by the biblical author
- Master the major areas of Greek morphology, especially regarding both verb and noun systems, including so-called “irregular” verbs
- Increase vocabulary acquisition to words occurring 15 or more times in the New Testament to facilitate reading and use of the Greek New Testament
- Understand more thoroughly the major theories and the basic principles dealing with issues of translation of James
- Understand syntactical issues as they relate to the exegesis of James
- Learn the basic principles of textual criticism in order to understand the textual variants in James

### *Attitudes*

Students who complete this course successfully should:

- Appreciate the richness of the Greek language
- Recognize the importance of original language for sound exegesis in James
- Be more confident in interpreting the biblical text of James

### *Skills*

Students who complete this course successfully should:

- Increase skills for translating New Testament Greek
- Increase his understanding and grasp more deeply grammatical issues in translation that affect an understanding of the biblical text James for preaching and teaching

## **Required Texts**

### **Class Textbooks**

Blomberg, L. Craig and Kamell, Mariam J., *Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament: James*, Clinton E. Arnold, Gen. ed., Zondervan, 2008.

This commentary phrases the text in English and will be very helpful for the student in phrasing the exercises in the class workbook.

Davids, Peter H. *The Epistle of James*, in *The New International Greek Testament Commentary*. Eerdmans, 1982.

Martin, Ralph P. *James*, *Word Biblical Commentary*. Vol. 51, gen. eds. David A. Hubbard, Glenn W. Barker. Dallas: Word Publishing, 1988.

Price, Craig. *Biblical Exegesis of New Testament Greek: James*. Eugene, OR: 2008.

This resource is the workbook for this course. The student will submit this workbook at the end of the course for the professor to grade.

### **Greek Text**

United Bible Society's 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> rev. ed. of the *Greek New Testament with Dictionary*.

OR

*Nomum Testamentum Graece*, 27<sup>th</sup> or 28<sup>th</sup> ed. (NA 27), ed. Barbara and Kurt Aland.

## **Recommended Texts**

### **Lexical**

Danker, Frederick William. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 3d ed. Chicago: University of Chicago, 2000.

This lexicon is the current standard for Greek studies. It is thorough and extremely helpful for the student. Most Greek software packages offer it as an add-on resource. It is very helpful and should be in every serious Greek student's library.

### **Text Critical**

Metzger, Bruce M. *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. New York: American Bible Society, 1994.

This commentary details Metzger's decisions for selecting many of the variant readings found in the Greek text. This book will assist you in answering many of the questions in the class workbook.

### **Greek Grammars**

Mounce, W. D. *Basics of Biblical Greek*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993.

A standard among Greek grammars. Now in its third edition, this work is used for most college and seminary introductory Greek courses. This work is a great edition for every serious Greek student's library. The book is inductive in approach to learning Greek.

Stevens, Gerald L. *New Testament Greek Primer*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2007.

This Greek grammar is published by NOBTS Greek guru, Dr. Jerry Stevens. The grammar is deductive in approach and is loaded with detailed information for using the Greek language. The exercises are systematically keyed for programmed learning of the language. It is a very helpful resource for serious Greek students.

\_\_\_\_\_. *New Testament Greek Intermediate*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2008.

This intermediate grammar extends the process of the Primer above. This is also very helpful for Greek studies and should be in your library.

Wallace, Daniel B. *The Basics of New Testament Syntax: An Intermediate Greek Grammar*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000.

Wallace's grammar is now a standard in the field. Although it does not replace Robertson's grammar, it is a working grammar that you will use regularly in advanced Greek studies. This is a must have for every serious Greek student's library.

## **Grading Percentages**

Part of ministry preparation is learning how to prepare for deadlines. We recommend that you prepare a Study Plan. First, take all of your course syllabi and mark all your assignments and deadlines on the calendar (exams, papers, Discussion Boards, quizzes, and the like). Second, back up from each calendar deadline date an appropriate amount of time you (realistically) believe it will take you to prepare for the project. Mark that as the start date you anticipate you will begin studying or preparing for that project in order to meet its deadline. Third, stick to your calendar Study Plan for the best success.

You will be working with deadlines all of your ministerial career. Meeting your deadlines are a huge part of your professionalism and ministerial preparedness. Take your deadlines seriously and you will be more highly respected in your places of service.

Grades will follow the Graduate School Catalog grading scale. See below for instructions on submitting all projects for grading. Grades will be based upon the following breakdown:

Greek Workbook (completed) & Notebook	30%
Background Paper	20%
Exegesis Paper	30%
Discussion Board	20%

1) Greek Workbook Lessons 30%: Due Date: With Notebook **July 24**

The weekly lessons are located in the class textbook authored by Dr. Price. The phrasing and sermon outline portions may be hand written into the workbook OR the student may download the Greek text from Blackboard. We recommend that the student download the Greek text (either from Blackboard or from your own language software) and cut and paste the passages for phrasing each lesson. The student will discover that working with the text in a word processor is easier. These sheets are then easily inserted into the student's Workbook along with the sermon outline for each lesson.

Notebook Due date: **July 24**

The student shall compose a notebook containing the materials from the class. This notebook shall serve as a life-long resource for the student in teaching and preaching. Include the following in this order:

- a) Course Syllabus
- b) Background Paper
- c) Exegesis Paper
- d) Application Paper
- e) Include your Greek Workbook with the Notebook. Be sure to include a self-addressed, self-stamped mailer with adequate postage. We have no budget for return postage.

2) Background Paper 20% Due Date: **June 12**

This paper is to be **5-7 pages of single spaced** using Turabian or SBL style. The page requirement does not include bibliography and frontal pages. The bibliography is to contain a minimum of **6 sources**. Include the required texts for the course and four other critical type commentaries that deal with the Greek text. The use of devotional type commentaries may be used in the application exercises, but a minimum of six critical commentaries must be utilized.

3) Exegesis Paper 30% Due Date: **July 24**

The student will write a paper on a selected passage of his/her choosing. The passage will be chosen in consultation with the instructor. This section will be **8-15 pages** of text, **single spaced** and footnoted to Turabian or SBL style. The page requirement excludes bibliography and frontal pages. The bibliography is to contain a minimum of **8 sources**, using commentaries that focus on grammar, language, and syntactical issues (see the detailed description below).

#### 4) Discussion Board 20%

Due Date: **Weekly**

Discussion questions will be posted weekly. Each class member will log on to the Blackboard course and interact with the other classmates on the subject of that week's Discussion Board. For Units 1-2, we are looking for 2-3 quality postings each week. A quality post is one where the student interacts with other classmates with ideas, opinions, answers, etc. We want you to post more than something like, "I agree," or "Yes/no," etc. We are looking for thoughtful interaction.

Beginning at Unit 3, you will upload your phrasing for that week plus your sermon outline that is based upon your phrasing exercise. Your phrasing and sermon outlines are due by midnight on the closing date for that given week. See the schedule in the syllabus for the dates. I will post the answers to the phrasings and also give you my suggested sermon outline. For the first few weeks I will post them ahead of time so you can get a feel for phrasing. As the semester progresses, I will post the answers AFTER the deadline so you can check your work. This will help facilitate your skill in phrasing the text. Our goal is for you to phrase on your own the last half of the semester and beyond. I recommend you correct your phrasings for your workbooks.

## **Recommended Computer Software**

The student is strongly encouraged to purchase Bible software for his/her use in biblical exegesis. Biblical Studies majors will soon be required to have one of the software programs listed below. At this level of Greek study a program capable of producing the text, performing sophisticated content and morphological searches, with available lexicons, commentaries, and other helpful supplemental works is an absolute necessity.

The software packages listed below are capable of intense, complex searches required for biblical studies research purposes and/or sermon preparation. The purchase of this kind of software is indispensable at this level of language study. The Biblical Studies Division recommends one of the three software packages:

BibleWorks (bibleworks.com)

Accordance (accordancebible .com)

Logos 6 (logos.com)

Vendors offer discounts for students. Call their Customer Service representatives or go online for further information on discounts. NOBTS teaches Logos 6 as a course for credit and students who purchase Logos for PREA6230-6330 Technological Applications

for Bible Study and Preaching may receive a 50% discount on any package from the Bronze Level or higher. We recommend Silver or higher.

## Guidelines for Writing Class Papers

### 1. Background Paper

The student will write a historical background paper on James. This information is contained in the front matter of most commentaries, NT introductory texts, and other reference materials. Be sure to include all of the information in this guide. The historical background study will include the following:

- 1) Background information on James
- 2) Information on the setting, authorship, readership, James' connection to his readers, date and place of his writing of the letter, etc.
- 3) Information on the critical issues and/or major themes of the letter
- 4) A discussion of the theological issues covered in the letter.  
Outside sources (such as Bible commentaries, dictionaries, encyclopedias, or histories) *should* be used here.

### 2. Exegesis Paper

The exegesis paper is a thorough exegetical study that is to follow the guidelines below. The order of the first chapter is exactly as follows, each section about one to two, single-spaced pages in length, except as noted:

- a. Text. Write out your translation of the passage chosen, *single-spaced*, including verse numbers *and* indications of your own paragraph divisions. Make footnote reference to problematic words, syntax, or textual variants.
- b. Phrasing and Sermon Outline of the text. Phrase your passage based upon Mounce's principles presented in the class and workbook. From your phrasing, construct a sermon or teaching outline which reflects your phrasing. Phrasing instructions are included in Dr. Price's workbook.
- c. Literary Context. (1) Discuss the *placement* of the passage in its immediate and larger contexts within the book, and (2) justify the paragraph divisions you have provided above. Look for clues in the immediately preceding and following contexts (the surrounding paragraphs and chapters) that show how the passage you are considering fits into its context (i.e., why it is where it is).
- d. Paragraph Analysis. Identify the theme of each paragraph in one sentence per paragraph. This may be a key sentence taken directly from the text *or*

a statement in your own words of the paragraph's theme. Justify your judgment in each case (i.e., give your reasons for it).

- e. Verse Analysis. Comment here on important features of individual verses. (In a longer passage, focus on each paragraph instead of each verse.) Do *not* merely summarize each verse (or paragraph) or re-state the obvious. *Do* comment on the flow of the argument or story-line from verse to verse (or paragraph to paragraph), including commenting upon why certain things may be stated in the particular way that they are, why certain statements are included where they are, why there may be omissions of expected materials, etc. Comment as needed on important theological words or ideas. Notice where else in the book or in other Biblical books certain words or ideas are found. You may use concordances or theological wordbooks here, including any cross-referencing guide you like (such as that found within most Bibles themselves).
- f. Theme. Provide a one-sentence statement of the theme of the entire text (i.e., what is the author's main point in this section?). This should be based upon the various stages of your detailed analysis above, especially building upon your statements of theme for each paragraph. Please explain the basis of your decision.
- g. Word Study. Select a minimum of (3) three key words from your passage. Once you have determined these, perform a diachronic analysis and a synchronic analysis on each word. The *diachronic analysis* involves the etymologic and historic discussion of the use of the word through time. The *synchronic analysis* involves the contemporary and contextual analysis of the word within the New Testament. (see below)
- h. Outline. Write an "exegetical" ("historical") outline of the text, reflecting the theme. Base your outline upon your phrasing of the passage. Express this outline using *past tense* statements.
- i. Commentary Comparison. Include here any additional essential insights gleaned from five exegetical commentaries.

Examples of publications *not* acceptable for the exegesis paper are preacher's sermons, "notes" included with individual Bible translations, or devotional materials, such as Matthew Henry, Maclaren's, Charles Swindol, John MacArthur, Pulpit Commentary, NIV Application Bible, The Bible Speaks Today series, etc.

Examples (not exhaustive) of works acceptable for this part of the chapter would be Anchor Bible Commentary, Harper's (or Black's) New Testament Commentaries, The New Testament Commentary, New International Biblical Commentary, New International Greek New Testament Commentary, New

Century Bible Commentary, Pillar New Testament Commentaries, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, Word Biblical Commentary, etc.

At the end of this stage, the student should have gathered all the essential knowledge from the text and be ready to begin the task of constructing a sermon or a teaching lesson for the third paper.

## **Submission of the Papers**

Submit your papers in the Assignment Uploads located in your Bb main menu. Include your Name in your file title with an identifying name like 'Price-James Background Paper', 'Price-James Exegesis Paper,' etc. This will help us keep track of your files on our computers when we download them in order to grade them. Corrections will be made and the papers will be sent back to you.

## **Submission of the Class Notebook**

Either: (1) submit the notebook by mail to the office of Dr. Craig Price, postmarked by the due date. Please include return shipping in order to receive your notebook by mail (we have no budget to return these to you). You may choose to pick them up at the Office of Online Learning. Please call our Administrative Assistant to schedule a pick up time.

(2) You may use the digital files located in each Unit. These .doc files allow you to edit your workbook spaces and enter your answers. Simply use the Assignment Uploads to submit the workbooks and class notebook at the end of the semester on the due dates.

### **Address all mail-in submissions to:**

Dr. Craig Price: Associate Dean of Online Learning  
Attn: Vinh Nguyen  
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary  
3939 Gentilly Blvd.  
New Orleans, LA 70126

## **Return of Materials**

To have papers and notebooks returned, you *must* include a self-addressed, self-stamped mailer with adequate postage. *No paper will be returned without a self-addressed, self-stamped return mailer with adequate postage.*

OR

Pick the graded papers up from the Online Learning Office in the Hardin Student Center.

## **Schedule and Assignments**

The student will be expected to complete the lessons in the textbook each week during the semester. Read the appropriate sections of the class required commentary for the portion of Scripture covered in that week's lesson.

*(Note: Entry to your Blackboard Class Shell is restricted until your account has been cleared by the Business Office. Once cleared, the Business Office notifies the Information Technology Center and they place your name in the Blackboard class shell)*

For purposes of this course, each week will begin on Sunday and end on Saturday.

**Phrasing exercises are due in the Discussion Board by each Saturday night**

Unit 1 Jun 1-6      Lesson 1 in Dr. Price's Workbook  
Unit 2              Lesson 2

Unit 3 Jun 7-13      Lesson 3  
Unit 4              Lesson 4

**Background Paper Due June 12 by midnight  
CDST**

Unit 5 Jun 14-20      Lesson 5  
Unit 6              Lesson 6

Unit 7 Jun 21-27      Lesson 7  
Unit 8              Lesson 8

Unit 9 Jun 28-Jul 4      Lesson 9  
Unit 10              Lesson 10

Unit 11 Jul 5-11      Lesson 11  
Unit 12              Lesson 12

Unit 13 Jul 12-18      Lesson 13  
Unit 14              Lesson 14

Last Week Jul 19-24      **ALL ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE BY MIDNIGHT JULY 24  
CDST (You will loose access to the course at this hour and day)**

**Exegesis Paper Due: Dec 5** (online in the assignment box; or if mailed, postmarked this date)

**Completed Notebook Due** in the Online Learning Center: **Dec 5** by 4:00 PM, or if you are mailing the notebook, the mailer must be postmarked Dec 5 to be considered on-time.

**Attention Graduates!!**

If you are planning to graduate this semester, please let our office know via email or phone prior to the last day of class. This will enable us to have your work graded and grades turned in to the Registrar before their deadline for graduating seniors.

## **GUIDE TO WRITING A BACKGROUND STUDY FOR BIBLICAL EXEGESIS PAPERS:**

**1. Research the broader or general historical context/background.**

*Technique:* Study the general world setting and historical context or developments that create the background for your text.

*New Testament.* The background for the NT extends from at least 400 BC to 4 BC, that is, the intertestamental period. Potential topics would include the return from exile (Persians, Cyrus), the reformation of the Jewish nation politically and religiously (Nehemiah, Ezra), the impact of world empires (Greeks, Romans), the changing regional powers (Egypt and the Ptolemies, Syria and the Seleucids), Hellenization, Maccabean Revolt, Hasmonean Dynasty, Herod the Great. Also, one would want to follow changes in Judaism, including literature, groups, and movements. Begin with general resources, such as Ferguson or Russell.

Basically, for this step one should read the text asking historical questions. For example, if the text mentions Herod, ask, who is he? What power does he represent? When did he live? How is he connected to Israel's history? Or again, if the text mentions Sadducees, ask, who are they? What do they do? Be curious: why are Sadducees never mentioned in the Old Testament? Thus, one might want to ask, where do they come from? If they seem to have some type of power or to function politically, ask, whom do they represent? What is their base of power?

**2. Research the immediate historical context/background of the book that contains your passage.**

*Technique:* Study the composition of the document containing the text in question, asking questions such as authorship, date, and audience.

*New Testament.* First, ask specific *historical* questions about the book that contains your passage. The most immediate questions are those of authorship, recipients, date, and occasion. Second, ask *literary* questions about this book. For example, what is the genre of the material? How does this genre affect the way the material is written? Where does your specific passage come in the order of the book? Use the same resources for this step as for OT: dictionaries, encyclopedias, introductions, and comprehensive commentaries.

**3. Research the specific social and cultural features within the text that affect your passage.**

**Technique:** Study the specific social and cultural issues within the text in question that impact the original setting as determined in Step 2 above.

*New Testament.* Ask specific *social* and *cultural* questions. The most immediate sociological questions are those of honor/shame, patronage, and dyadic personality. Cultural questions relate to way of life, daily living, economy, work, and family. Ask, what ancient customs and practices enlighten our understanding of a text? For example, what were Jewish marriage customs of the first century that set the context for Joseph's relationship with Mary? What clothing styles are behind the image "gird up the loins of your mind" in 1 Pet. 1:13? What was the world of the traveling businessman behind James 4:13? How does the patronage system between the Roman emperor and social elites in Asia Minor affect our understanding of the social pressures brought to bear on the seven churches in Revelation? Use specialized resources, such as Jeremias, Barrett, or Vermes, for example.

## HOW TO DO WORD STUDIES

Dr. Craig Price

### Step One: Decide Which Word to Study

1. Look for words that are *repeated* by the author
2. Look for *theological* terms
3. Look for words that are *central* to the passage
4. *Compare* your selected word in different English translations

### Step Two: Identify the Greek Word Behind the English Word

#### A. If you are using computer software:

- For PC Microsoft Windows Users:
  - BibleWorks- fairly inexpensive, but powerful to do word searches
  - NIV Study Bible- by Zondervan, fairly inexpensive but limited
  - Logos- library base, language package; very expensive, but excellent
- For Mac users:
  - Accordance by Oaktree Software  
(newer Macs now have a Windows platform to run the programs above)

#### B. If you are using books:

1. Look up your English word in a concordance
  - Concordance = lists all English words & gives references
  - Exhaustive concordance = lists *every* word in the Bible
  - Partial concordance = many Bibles have an abbreviated listing in the back

Note: You must use a concordance that matches the English translation you are using. Here are some examples:

*Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*- lists every English word in KJV translation;  
REF BS 425 S776 2001

*NIV Exhaustive Concordance*- lists every English word from the NIV translation

*NASB Exhaustive Concordance* lists every English word from the NASB translation

*Greek-English Concordance to the New Testament*- lists every place the Greek word behind your English word is used in the NT and then gives you the English translation! REF BS 2302 K646 1997

2. Locate the verse you are studying in the concordance
3. Find the reference number for your English word in that reference
4. Locate your reference number in the dictionary of your concordance  
Note *Strong's* has one set of numbers for Hebrew (OT) and another for Greek (NT)
5. Read and record the definitions of your English word in the Hebrew or Greek dictionary provided in *Strong's* dictionary

Now you can locate the Hebrew or Greek word behind any English word without knowing the the biblical language!

### **Step Three: Determine the Range of Meaning for Your Word**

#### Semantic Range: Different possibilities of meanings for a word

The semantic range gives the entire range of possible meanings for a particular word. Look at all the different definitions in your *Strong's* dictionary to get an idea of the range of meanings for your word. Check different translations of your verse to get a feel for the ways your word might be used.

You can also look at your English word in Hebrew (OT) or Greek (NT) and look it up in a lexicon (dictionary).

#### Etymology: History of how a word was used:

Diachronic (through time)

This is a word's origin and developmental history. Words change in meaning over time and in different contexts. Etymology of a word may have nothing to do with the word's usage in a particular passage. Avoid the "root fallacy," which assumes the basic root meaning is the same in every context.

#### Contextual usage of the word: How the word is used by your writer/book:

Synchronic (within time)

Determine the use of your word in the immediate context of your passage, the usage in the larger context of the book, and how it is used in the genre you are studying. For

example, “fear” takes on a different flavor when used in Wisdom literature.

#### **Step Four: Decide What the Word Means in Your Verse**

Now you are ready to write the word study in your paper/sermon based upon your research.

#### **New Testament Word Study Resources**

*New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (4 vols.) has several indices for looking up words (user-friendly)

*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (10 vols.) has extensive research into meaning, background, and usage in OT, NT, and Apocrypha. Several indices in vol. 10 to locate word in other volumes (somewhat user-friendly)

*Theological Lexicon of the New Testament* requires reader to locate word in Greek alphabetically. (Not user-friendly)

*Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament* (3 vols.) has index in volume 3 to help locate words (user-friendly)

*Robertson’s Word Pictures* (6 vols.) is set up by biblical book, chapter, and verse; it does not assume the reader has knowledge of Greek and gives the part of speech and definition of the word in the context of the NT book (user friendly)

## **ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR JAMES**

(from David Nystrom, *NIV Application Commentary: James*)

James B. Adamson. *The Epistle of James*. NICNT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976. Adamson studied under both C. H. Dodd and C. F. D. Moule, and his commentary reflects the careful study expected of one with this pedigree. Adamson argues that the style, content, and structure of the letter reflect the teaching of Jesus as transmitted through James, his brother. The letter betrays not only the environment of Palestine, but also “the home bond between James and Jesus.” This is a good commentary, but is beginning to feel dated.

Peter H. Davids. *The Epistle of James: A Commentary on the Greek Text*. NICGT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982. This is a stimulating commentary, bristling with insights, particularly concerning the Jewish backgrounds relative to the thought of James. Davids argues that the letter reflects the conditions of Palestine before the Jewish War of A.D. 66-70. It was composed of homilies and maxims that originated with James, the brother of Jesus. He is less certain than most that James is trying to combat a Pauline or misunderstood Pauline position. Davids sees the letter organized around three great themes introduced in the double opening: rich and poor; tongue and speech; trials and wealth. While there is much to commend

- this view, we must admit that much of what Davids claims relates to the tongue in 3:1-4:12 is of a far more varied nature. Nonetheless, this is a splendid commentary.
- Peter H. Davids. *James*. Good News Commentary. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983. A shorter, more popular commentary than his 1982 publication. Given its limitations, it is a fine work; if only one of Davids' commentaries can be chosen, the other is preferable.
- D. E. Hiebert. *The Epistle of James: Tests of a Living Faith*. Chicago: Moody, 1979. Hiebert's fine commentary is intended for the student who does not know Greek but who is nonetheless serious. Hiebert sees James's chief emphasis as the testing of faith. He argues that the letter was written by James, the brother of Jesus, about A.D. 46.
- Sophie Laws. *The Epistle of James*. Black's New Testament Commentaries. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1980. While hardly brief (273 pages), this spare commentary conveys an enormous amount of helpful information and observations with a minimum of extraneous material. Laws argues for a relatively late date and pseudonymous authorship. She believes the letter was written from Rome and is reacting to a misunderstood Pauline position on the matter of faith and deeds. Laws provides no outline for the letter, following Dibelius in seeing it as a collection of ill-fitting units of material. She does argue for a theological basis upon which its rigorous ethical teaching rests, and sees a chief contrast between the doubleness of human beings and the singleness of God. In general this is an insightful and fair-minded resource.
- Ralph P. Martin, *James*. WBC. Waco, Tex.: Word, 1988. This commentary from a distinguished scholar and former professor at Fuller Theological Seminary is richly knowledgeable and luxuriantly detailed. Martin is taken with the theory that James represents a tension involving the poor (with whom he has great sympathy) and the rich (whom he condemns); but James does not go far as to embrace the violent revolutionary plans of the Zealots. Martin has surveyed all of the relevant material and offers the benefit of his shrewd and balanced judgment. This is a first-class commentary.
- C. L. Mitton. *The Epistle of James*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966. This dated commentary is nonetheless able to yield worthwhile observations. Mitton points out that James has been subjected to dismissive treatment and seeks to rehabilitate the letter. He does so by pointing out connections between the teaching of James and that of Jesus, Paul, and even John. He also believes that the letter was written by James, the brother of Jesus, and for the benefit of Jewish Christian visitors to Jerusalem. Like others who wish to be responsible for the evidence in James that supports an early composition as well as that which supports a late composition, Mitton argues for a two-stage development.
- J. A. Motyer. *The Message of James: The Test of Faith*. The Bible Speaks Today. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1985. Motyer offers the intriguing observation that the control of the tongue is introduced in 1:26 and then expanded in 3:1-12, and the care of the needy is introduced in 1:27 and then expanded in 2:1-26, thus forming a chiasmic structure. This is a serviceable commentary, but one that places too much emphasis on the role of biological metaphors in James.

- Craig Price. *Biblical Exegesis of New Testament Greek: James*. A workbook designed to help students review their introductory Greek skills in an inductive approach. Students will also learn grammatical and exegetical concepts through an inductive approach in each lesson. Students will perform phrasing on the text and formulate outlines for sermons and teaching purposes.
- Douglas J. Moo. *The Letter of James: An Introduction and Commentary*. TNTC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985. This is a brief but helpful commentary based on the NIV text. Moo teaches at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School.
- J. H. Ropes. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle of St. James*. ICC. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1916. This commentary remains a good resource for investigations of the Greek text of James. Commentary on the argument and thematic content of James, already sparse, is now out of date. Ropes argues for late pseudonymous authorship.
- E. M. Sidebottom. *James, Jude, 2 Peter*. NCBC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982. This commentary by a well-known scholar takes the position that James was written in the context of the flood tide of Pauline Christianity. Sidebottom argues that James, the brother of Jesus, is responsible for the letter, and that it was written in the decade before the Jewish War of A.D. 66-70.
- George M. Stulac. *James*. The IVP New Testament Commentary Series. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1993. This recent effort by the pastor of Memorial Presbyterian Church in St. Louis is both fresh and helpful, although it is directed towards those who have not mastered Greek. The series is intended for use in the church by “pastors, Bible teachers, and small group leaders.”

## GENERAL NEW TESTAMENT BIBLIOGRAPHY

### **New Testament Background Study**

#### *Primary Resources* (in English)

- Barrett, *The New Testament Background*  
 Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English*  
 Danby, *The Mishnah*  
 Goodenough, *An Introduction to Philo Judaeus*  
 Hennecke and Schneemelcher, *The New Testament Apocrypha*  
 Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers*  
 Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*  
 Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*  
 Whiston, *Josephus: Complete Works*

#### *Secondary Resources*

- Achtemeier, *Harper's Bible Dictionary*  
 Beitzel, *The Moody Atlas of Bible Lands*  
 Blaiklock and Harrison, *The New International Dictionary of Biblical Archeology*  
 Bromily, *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*  
 Bruce, *New Testament History*

Butler, *Holman Bible Dictionary*  
Charlesworth, *Jesus Within Judaism*  
Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*  
Freedman, *Anchor Bible Dictionary*  
House, *Chronological and Background Charts of the New Testament*  
Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*  
Kee, *The New Testament In Context: Sources and Documents*  
Reicke, *The New Testament Era*  
Russell, *Between the Testaments*  
Wilken, *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them*

### *General Resources*

New Testament introductions, commentaries, dictionaries  
Various *critical commentaries* could be helpful, especially *introductory material*.  
A commentator may summarize distinctive ideas of the author being studied in the introductory section. For helpful commentary information, consider suggestions from:  
Carson, *New Testament Commentary Survey*; Fee and Stuart, Appendix, *How To Read The Bible For All Its Worth*, pp. 219–24; Klein, Blomberg, Hubbard, *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation, Commentaries*, pp. 487–91

### *Other Resources*

Aland, *Synopsis of the Four Gospels, English Edition*  
Aune, *The New Testament in Its Literary Environment*  
Bailey and Broek, *Literary Forms in the New Testament*  
Bruce, *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free*  
Carson, Moo, and Morris, *An Introduction to the New Testament*  
Green, McKnight, Marshall, *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*  
Hawthorne, Martin, Reid, *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*  
Kümmel, *Introduction to the New Testament*  
Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*  
Polhill, *Paul and His Letters*  
Ryken, *Words of Life: A Literary Introduction to the New Testament*  
Stein, *The Method and Message of Jesus' Teaching*

### *Social Resources*

Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in Their Encounter in Palestine during the Early Hellenistic Period*  
Keener, *Bible Background Commentary*  
Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*  
Mathews, *Manners and Customs in the Bible*  
Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul*  
Stambaugh and Balch, *The New Testament in Its Social Environment*  
Thiessen, *Sociology of Early Palestinian Christianity*  
Tidball, *The Social Context of the New Testament: A Sociological Analysis*