



JAMES (NTEN5317)
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
New Testament Department, Biblical Studies Division
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ISRAEL TRAVEL, JAN. 2020
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NOBTS MISSION STATEMENT:

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Leavell College prepare servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission.

COURSE PURPOSE, CORE VALUE FOCUS, AND CURRICULUM COMPETENCIES:

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary has five core values:

1. Doctrinal Integrity,
2. Spiritual Vitality,
3. Mission Focus,
4. Characteristic Excellence,
5. and Servant Leadership.

The core value for this academic year (2019-20) is spiritual vitality. These values shape both the context and manner in which all curricula are taught, with “doctrinal integrity” and “academic excellence” especially highlighted in this course.

NOBTS also has seven basic competencies that guide 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:

These offerings consist of a thorough study of selected New Testament books or passages through verse-by-verse and paragraph-by-paragraph analysis, comparison of various English versions, consideration of pertinent historical and cultural issues, and consultation with major literature and commentaries. The course emphasizes proper methods for discovering the meaning of a text and applying it in teaching and preaching. Students may repeat this course if the individual biblical books or passages being studied are not duplicated. Prerequisites: BSHM5310 Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics and NTEN5300 Exploring the New Testament.

Student Learning Outcomes:

The objectives of this course include the following:

1. Students should understand the state of research and exegetical meaning of the Letter of James
2. Students should gain an increased appreciation for the relevance of the exegetical study of James.
3. Students should acquire the ability to apply their understanding of the Letter of James 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, computer resources, textbook reviews, travel notes and journal, and student presentations. Both inductive and deductive approaches to learning will be utilized.

TEXTS:

James: An Introduction and Commentary (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries) by Douglas J. Moo. IVP Academic, 2009.

James: Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, Craig Blomberg and Mariam J Kamell.

REQUIREMENTS IN THE COURSE:

1. Students are expected to participate and take notes in the class sessions, travel lectures, and site presentations.
2. Students are expected to complete reading of the two textbooks **and the professor's notes** (supplied to the students prior to the trip by email). Brief written reviews on the books are due at the first class period on the first day of the trip. The book reviews should be 3-5 single-spaced pages and include the following elements:
 - 1) Bibliographic Entry
 - 2) Statement of the Author's Purpose
 - 3) Summary of the Contents. The summaries should be general in nature, covering the broad topics and three or four specific texts or topics as examples of the author's approach.
 - 4) An Evaluation of the book, including consideration of the most suitable readership, the scope of the book (comprehensive? or lacking in major areas), the viewpoints presented (multiple viewpoints when pertinent, or only one), and your overall evaluation of the book. The reviews are due at the first meeting of the class in Israel. The time will be announced. (15% per review = 30% total)
3. Each student will keep a **journal** with notes on the sites, the lectures, and personal impressions of the trip. This journal (or a copy) is to be submitted at the end of the trip. (20%)
4. Students will be part of a small group and make presentations on one of the topics listed below during the trip, with the presentation schedule to be communicated to the group by the professor during the trip. The presentation should be creative, communicating the information in an attention-keeping manner. The time frame for each presentation is about 5 minutes. (10%)
5. Each student will prepare either a teaching guide for the Letter of James **or** a series of five sentence sermon outlines from James for future use in teaching or preaching James. The teaching guide should include methodology for teaching the Letter and notes for communicating the message. The sermon outlines should include a full introduction, statements of the main points and at least two sub points for each main pointed, and a full conclusion calling for action. The main points and sub points should be complete sentences. The material for the sermon or Bible study must come from the text of James. **The teaching guides and the sermon outlines are due on Feb. 5, 2020 and should be emailed to jimdukes@mac.com. (30%)**
6. The student will be required to prepare a 3-5 page paper reflecting on the trip, the reading, and the study of James. The paper is not a research paper, but should demonstrate serious thinking about the sites and experiences on the trip and serious reflection on the message of the Letter of James

The seminary is emphasizing the core value of doctrinal integrity in this academic year.

COURSE EVALUATION:

Class Participation	10%
Travel Journal	20%
Teaching guide or sermon outline	20%
Book Reviews	30% (3 @ 10% each)
Group Presentation	10%
Reflective paper	10%

CLASS SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS:

FIRST MEETING OF THE CLASS: First evening in Israel, time TBA

TOPICS	MAJOR ASSIGNMENT	turn in of REVIEWS OF TEXTBOOKS
Introduction to James		
Discussion of the book reviews		

ISRAEL TRIP: NIGHTLY LECTURES FROM JAMES AND GROUP PRESENTATIONS ON SELECTED TOPICS

POST-TRAVEL MEETING:, TBA. Purpose: Turn in Reflection Papers, Reflections on the Israel Trip, Evaluation of the Trip and Course

TOPICS FOR PRESENTATIONS:

1. An enactment of the meaning of James 1: 5-8
2. An enactment of the meaning of James 1:19-25
3. An enactment of the meaning of James 2:1-9
4. An enactment of the meaning of James 2:14-24

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."