

EAST TEXAS BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

SYLLABUS FOR MINISTRY (MINS) 1116

New Testament 3: Hebrews to Revelation and the New Testament Canon

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION: A study of the epistles of Hebrews, James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2, and 3 John, Jude, the book of Revelation and of the development of the New Testament canon. Attention will be given to the historical, literary, and theological aspects of the biblical literature. This course cannot be applied toward a major or minor, but if taken in association with MINS 1114 and MINS 1115, may be counted as the general education New Testament requirement.

II. COURSE TEXTBOOKS

The Bible

Achtemeier, Paul J., Joel B. Green, and Marianne Meye Thompson. *Introducing the New Testament: Its Literature and Theology*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001.

III. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Chapter 20. Hebrews

1. Students will identify and briefly discuss the issues related to genre, authorship, audience, and date of the Book of Hebrews.
2. Students will outline the use of and attitude toward the OT reflected in Hebrews.
3. Students will indicate how and suggest reasons why the Book of Hebrews stresses Jesus' superiority over angels.
4. Students will compare and contrast the understanding of *pistis* and Habakkuk 2:3-4 by Paul and by the writer of Hebrews.
5. Students will identify and illustrate how Hebrews characterizes Jesus' work as High Priest and how such compares with the High Priest of the Levitical system.

Chapter 21. James

1. Students will identify traditions concerning the person James from the New Testament, Jerome, and Josephus.
2. Students will identify the recipients of the Letter of James and describe their likely ethnic and social identity.
3. Students will evaluate the genre of James in light of Greco-Roman literature, wisdom literature, and the "two-ways" tradition.
4. Students will identify and illustrate ways in which James echoes the teachings of Jesus.
5. Students will summarize James' teaching concerning the rich and material wealth.
6. Students will compare and contrast Paul and James in their respective arguments concerning faith, works, and justification.

Chapter 22. 1 and 2 Peter, Jude

1. Students will identify and describe the recipients of 1 Peter, i.e., explain what is meant by “exiles of the dispersion.”
2. Students will give a brief description of the social setting/historical situation addressed in 1 Peter.
3. Students will identify and illustrate how 1 Peter relies upon and applies pre-existing material and tradition to his readers’ situation.
4. Students will explain how 1 Peter’s adaptation of the household code functions within the setting of conflict and hostility the letter presupposes.
5. Students will identify the genres represented by 2 Peter and briefly discuss the significance of their function for understanding the book.
6. Students will outline the basic features of the false teaching challenged in 2 Peter and how 2 Peter rebuts such teaching.
7. Students will give a description of the false teachers challenged by the Book of Jude and outline how Jude would have its readers counter their influence.

Chapter 23. 1, 2, and 3 John

1. Students will outline the scope and content of the teaching against which 1 and 2 John are directed and compare that teaching to Doceticism and Gnosticism.
2. Students will compare and contrast basic features and emphases of 1 John and the Gospel of John.
3. Students will identify and illustrate how family imagery functions in the letters of John.
4. Students will discuss the importance of “love” and “truth” in connection with the false teachers of 2 John.
5. Students will identify the three main purposes of 3 John.

Chapter 24. Revelation

1. Students will identify the three genres displayed in Revelation and indicate the significance of each for the book’s interpretation.
2. Students will outline what are the general features of the world view of apocalypticism.
3. Students will define “apocalypse” and identify its basic literary characteristics.
4. Students will identify non-canonical examples of early Christian apocalypses.
5. Students will identify and illustrate the various ways in which symbolism functions and is interpreted in the Book of Revelation.
6. Students will discuss and illustrate the role of the Old Testament in understanding the Book of Revelation.
7. Students will discuss the historical context of the Book of Revelation in terms of the interrelationship of Roman imperial military might and *Pax Romana*, economics, and imperial religion.
8. Students will identify Pliny the Younger, Trajan, gematria, and the *Nero redivivus* myth.
9. Students will identify and illustrate John’s goals as he gives voice to Jesus’ words to the seven churches in Rev. 2-3.

10. Students will outline the foundational theological convictions dramatized in Rev. 4-5.
11. Students will identify for what sins Babylon is judged in Rev. 17:1-19:10 and indicate by what means the lamb conquers Babylon.
12. Students will indicate the basic features of the New Jerusalem as described in Rev. 21:1-22:9.

Chapter 25. The Formation of the New Testament Canon

1. Students will identify to what the phrase NT “canon” refers.
2. Students will identify and briefly explain what were the internal forces affecting the shape of the canon.
3. Students will identify and briefly explain what were the external forces affecting the shape of the canon.
4. Students will trace the process of canonical selection from the 2d through the 4th centuries using the three-fold classifications of Origin and Eusebius.
5. Students will identify “Canon Muratorianus” and Athanasius.
6. Students will identify and explain what were the apparent criteria at work in the process of canonization.

IV. COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE[‡]

INT = *Introducing the New Testament*, Achtemeier, Green, and Thompson

Week 1:

- Hour One: Registration
- Hour Two: Hebrews
[INT Chapter 20. Hebrews]
- Hour Three: Hebrews (*continued*)

Week 2:

- Hour One: James
[INT Chapter 21. James]
- Hour Two: 1 Peter
[INT Chapter 22. 1 and 2 Peter, Jude]
- Hour Three: 2 Peter and Jude
[INT Chapter 22. 1 and 2 Peter, Jude (*continued*)]

Week 3:

- Hour One: 1, 2, and 3 John
[INT Chapter 23. 1, 2, and 3 John]
- Hour Two: Revelation
[INT Chapter 24. Revelation]
- Hour Three: Revelation (*continued*)

Week 4:

- Hour One: Revelation (*continued*)
- Hour Two: The New Testament Canon
[INT Chapter 25. The Formation of the New Testament Canon]

Hour Three: The New Testament Canon (*continued*)
Week 5
Final Exam

‡ **The course schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the professor.**

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- A. Students should overview the pertinent biblical material and read the assigned pages in the textbook prior to each class session.
- B. Students will complete one examination.

VI. COURSE ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES:

- Students are expected to attend all class sessions. Please be in class and be on time. An automatic failing grade will be given if the allowed percentage of absences set by East Texas Baptist University is exceeded. According to school policy, to be eligible to earn credit in a course, the student must attend at least 75% of all class meetings. Students **must attend a minimum of twelve** of the fifteen one-hour class sessions in order to be eligible to receive credit.
- Please turn off all electronic equipment that makes a sound during class (e.g., cell phones, PDA alarms, and beepers). **If you are seen using your cell phone for any purpose (calling, text messaging, etc.) and/or if you are seen listing to an ipod or any other electronic devise that does not pertain to the day's subject matter, you will be asked to leave the class, and you will be counted as absent for the day.**
- Students who must leave early are asked to give notification to the professor in advance.
- Constant tardiness as well as constant early departures will incur a semester grade percentage reduction of five (5)%, at the discretion of the professor.
- Although I do understand that a state of sleepiness can attack anyone at anytime, especially in a classroom, please do not make it a habit in class, and certainly, please do not lay your head on the desk and sleep, because you will be asked to leave the class and encouraged to go home to rest; **you will also be counted as absent for the day.**
- Please do not spend class time working on assignments for another class. If it becomes known that you have done so, **you will be counted as absent for the day.**

VII. COURSE GRADING

The grade for the course will be determined by the grade on the Final Examination. The grading scale is:

90 – 100	A
80 – 89	B
70 – 79	C
60 – 69	D
0 – 59	F

VIII. SUGGESTED READING

Aland, Kurt. The Problem of the New Testament Canon. London: A. R. Mowbray & Company, 1962.

- Barrett, C. K. The New Testament Background: Selected Documents. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1961.
- Bauckham, Richard. The Climax of Prophecy: Studies on the Book of Revelation. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993.
- Beasley-Murray, G. R., Herschel H. Hobbs, and Ray Frank Robbins. Revelation: Three Viewpoints. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1977.
- Boren, H. C. The Ancient World: An Historical Perspective. 2d ed. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1986.
- Bruce, F. F. Are the New Testament Documents Reliable? Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1954.
- _____. The Books and the Parchments. Revised ed. Westwood: New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1953.
- _____. The Canon of Scripture. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1988.
- Carson, Donald A. From Triumphalism to Maturity. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984.
- Collins, Adela Yarboro. Christ and Catharsis. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1984.
- Finkelstein, Louis. The Pharisees. Vols. 1 & 2. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1962.
- Fox, R. L. Pagans and Christians. New York: Knopf, 1987.
- Gamble, Harry Y. The Anchor Bible Dictionary, David N. Freedman, ed. New York: Doubleday, 1992. S.v. "Canon, New Testament."
- _____. The New Testament Canon: Its Making and Meaning. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985.
- Hobbs, Herschel H. Studies in Hebrews. Nashville: The Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1954.
- _____. Hebrews: Challenges to Bold Discipleship. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1971.
- Johnson, Luke Timothy. Religious Experience in Earliest Christianity: A Missing Dimension in New Testament Studies. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998.

- Johnson, Richard W. Going Outside the Camp: The Sociological Function of the Levitical Critique in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 209. Sheffield, U.K.: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001.
- Ladd, G. E. The Blessed Hope. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1956.
- Lohse, Eduard. The New Testament Environment. Translated by J. E. Steely. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1976.
- Malina, Bruce J. *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*, 3rd ed. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001.
- Manson, William. The Epistle to the Hebrews: An Historical and Theological Reconsideration, The Baird Lecture, 1949. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1951.
- Metzger, Bruce M. The Canon of the New Testament. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987.
- O'Leary, Stephen D. Arguing the Apocalypse: A Theory of Millennial Rhetoric. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- Pfeiffer, Charles F. Between the Testaments. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1959.
- Pfeiffer, Robert H. History of New Testament Times. New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1949.
- Reicke, Bo. The New Testament Era: The World of the Bible from 500 B.C. to A.D. 100. Translated by David E. Green. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964.
- Russell, D. S. Between the Testaments. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965.
- Tenney, Merrill C. New Testament Survey. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1961.
- _____. New Testament Times. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1965.
- Wainwright, Arthur W. *Mysterious Apocalypse: Interpreting the Book of Revelation*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993.
- Walvoord, J. F. The Rapture Question. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing Company, 1979.
- _____. The Revelation of Jesus Christ. Chicago: Moody Press, 1966.
- Wright, N. T. Christian Origins and the People of God. Vol. 1, The New Testament and the People of God. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992.