New Testament Backgrounds

***Jordan Evangelical Theological Seminary***

**Rick Griffith**, ThM, PhD

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**Introduction**

**Syllabus**

**I. Catalogue Course Description**

A survey of biblical geography and political, socio-economic, religious, and literary developments of the intertestamental period that prepared for Christ’s coming as well as factors in the first century that influenced the early church and affect us in our world mission today.

**II. Course Objectives**

By the end of the course the student should be able to…

A. Show how the geography of Israel and the Roman world enables a better comprehension of the NT and the modern church’s world mission.

B. Place the NT writings in their historical mould, which includes political, sociological (esp. economic), religious, and linguistic backgrounds for interpreting the NT and present society.

C. Show how cultural values and practices in Roman, Hellenistic, and Jewish societies aid understanding of the NT and find parallels in the church and society today.

**III. Course Requirements**

A. Research Papers (30%) on literature (MA, MCM) or marriage (BTh, DTh, BCM)

1. *Literature Paper*: Explain in one or two paragraphs each how the following passages help interpret the New Testament. Do not simply list *which* NT texts relate to each extra-biblical passage but show *how* the passages below aid the hermeneutical process. Include the specific NT passages addressed with their Scripture references. Consult Craig Evan’s work.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Books on Reserve\* | SBC Library Call # | Notes |
| a. Josephus | *Wars of the Jews* 2.8.1-14 | 933 JOS | 171 |
| b. Josephus | *Jewish Antiquities* 18.1.1-6 | 933 JOS | 171 |
| c. Philo | *Allegorical Interpretation* 3.79-82 | 880.1 PHI I (pp. 352-55) | 168 |
| d. Philo | *De Vita Mos.* 2.134 | 880.1 PHI VI (p. 515) | 168 |
| e. *Mishna* | Order Moed, Tractate Sabbath | Danby, 100-121 | 168-70 |
| f. *Mishna* | Order Nashim, Tract. Nedarim 1.3; 8.7; 9.1, 4-6 | Danby, 264-80 | 168-70 |
| g. *Select Papyri* | 88, 89, 91, 97 | 880 HUN I (pp. 268-75, 282-85) | 185 |
| h. *Select Papyri* | 172-176 | 880 HUN I (pp. 400-403) | 185 |
| i. *Nag Hammadi* | Treatise on Resurrection (1.4) | 299.932 (R) ROB (pp. 52-57) | 185 |
| j. *Nag Hammadi* | Gospel of Thomas (2.2) | 299.932 (R) ROB (pp. 124-38) | 185 |

2. *Marriage Paper*: Show how the order of first century marriage customs paralleled the sequence of these texts about Christ and the Church: 1 Pet. 1:18-19; Luke 22:20; 2 Cor. 11:2; John 14:1-3; 1 Thess. 4:14-18; Eph. 5:26-27; Rev. 19:7-9. Don’t give a biblical view of marriage; show how *intertestamental literature* (not OT backgrounds!) helps us understand the NT theology here (esp. eschatology). Some of these texts may not seem to relate to marriage at first, but further study will show they do. Consult Craig Evan’s work. No papers without interaction with intertestamental sources will receive an “A.”

Make either paper 6-8 pages in length, typed, double-spaced, and written in Turabian style. See Dr. Baldwin’s guidelines in the SBC School of Theology (English) Required Format for Writing Papers (2002 Revised). See also my grade sheets and checklist at the end of this syllabus. Include a title page, table of contents, bottom page footnoting, and bibliography of 6-8 sources (none of these included in page count). You may do both papers for a possible 5 extra points to the final semester grade. The paper has a 10% grade penalty per class day late. Points may be lost for not meeting or exceeding the page limit (no 9-page papers will be an “A”), misspelling my name (!), omitting your box #, and bad grammar or spelling.

Matt. 25:1-13; Luke 14:7-11; 15:8-10; John 3:29b; 14:1-3; 1 Cor. 7:1; Eph. 5:27-32; 1 Pet. 1:18-19; Rev. 19:7-9; 21:2

B. Readings (20%) since the previous quiz will be reported on each quiz. Students will be asked on Quiz 1 if they have purchased Barry Beitzel’s *The Moody Atlas of Bible Lands* and Elwell and Yarbrough’s *Readings from the First-Century World*.

C. Quizzes (20%) over readings since the last quiz will be given at the start of class about every two weeks. Half of the quiz grade will report on the readings since the last quiz (50 points per quiz and 20% of the semester grade) and half will generally comprise five questions (10 points each or 50 points total; also 20% of the semester grade). A bonus question may be included for up to 5 points. The first two quizzes depart from this norm as they cover the Israel map (p. 2) and the Roman Empire map (p. 5). There are no makeup quizzes.

D. The Final Exam (30%) will cover only NT Backgrounds (not NT Survey). It will have multiple choice, fill-in, short answer, and essay questions derived only from the course notes. The class readings (Beitzel, *Readings*, Coleman) and maps will not be addressed as students will have already been tested on these in the quizzes. See the study sheet on page 266.

E. Fun night at my home is required of all diligent students (that’s you :-). We’ll also have the NT Survey class come this night. I’ll pass out maps closer to the date. Spouses and kids can come too for this potluck meal at our place on Saturday, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, 6:30-8:30 PM.

**IV. Course Bibliography**

\* An asterisk indicates books on reserve in the library (this includes those books needed for the literature paper on the previous page)

† The cross designates helpful books for this course in the reference section of the library

A. Recommended Reading

†Aharoni, Yohanan, and Avi-Yonah, Michael. *The Macmillan Bible Atlas.* 3d. ed. New York: Macmillan, 1968, 1977, 1993.

The authors are professors of archaeology at Tel Aviv University and Hebrew University of Jerusalem, respectively. As such they provide a Jewish perspective on geography and Israel’s history. This used to be the best non-evangelical Bible atlas until James Pritchard wrote *The Harper Atlas of the Bible* in 1987.

\*Backhouse, Robert. *The Student Guide to the Temple.* Tim Dowley, ed. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1996. 32 pp. Formerly *The Kregel Pictorial Guide to the Temple.*

Stunning, full-colour. close-up pictures of Herod’s temple from a beautiful model built by Alec Garrard of England. Research is based on the Bible, Talmud, Mishnah and latest archaeological discoveries. Includes many photos and helpful drawings as well.

\*Barrett, C. K. *The New Testament Background: Selected Documents.* New York: Harper Collins, 1989. 361 pp.

Actual sources selected by a noteworthy scholar to aid understanding of the NT.

BAGD: Bauer, Walter. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature.* 5th ed., 1957. Trans. by William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich. Rev. F. Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker, 2d ed. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago, 1979.

The standard Greek lexicon, also known as “BAG”; includes the most up-to-date archaeological findings in determining the meanings of Greek words.

†Beers, V. Gilbert. *The Book of Life.* 24 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980.

A guide for reading through both OT and NT narrative literature, supplemented by numerous photos, application sections, and background articles. Organized into 500 reading units of about 8-10 pages each. Unfortunately, it costs about US$700. Several line drawings used in this course are taken from this work.

\*Benware, Paul N. *Survey of the New Testament.* Chicago: Moody, 1990. 304 pp.

A popular-level, concise, clear, conservative treatment of the NT by a professor at Moody Bible Institute; helpful NT historical and religious background (23 pp.) and brief presentations of the NT books around the New Covenant theme. Contains many helpful charts and maps.

*\*The Bible Visual Resource Book: for Do-It-Yourself Bible Scholars.* By Keith Kaynor (?). [no author given.] Ventura, CA: Regal Books of Gospel Light, 1989. 332 pp.

This contains copyright-free reproducible maps, charts, timelines and graphics for group or individual study. An excellent resource for teaching!

\*Bruce, F. F. *New Testament History.* England: Nelson, 1969; reprint, Garden City, NY: Anchor Books (Doubleday), 1971. 462 pp.

The best evangelical book on NT backgrounds, insightful, but sometimes difficult for those new to the subject and poorly outlined and illustrated.

\*Charlesworth, James H. *Jesus Within Judaism: New Light from Exciting Archaeological Discoveries.* New York, NY: Doubleday, 1988. xvi+265.

Charlesworth teaches NT at Princeton and is an expert on extra-biblical writings. This volume revises his 1985 Gunning (Victoria Jubilee) lectures delivered at New College, the Univ. of Edinburgh, Scotland. It shows the Jewish roots of many of Christ’s sayings and practices recently discovered in archaeological finds.

†\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, ed.  *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha.* 2 vols. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983, 1985. li+995 pp. l+1006 pp.

The standard, annotated work on these extra-biblical writings written from 200 BC to AD 200. These were not included in the Septuagint (Greek translation of the OT ca. 250 BC) or Roman Catholic Bibles (which do include the Apocrypha).

\*Coleman, William L. *Today’s Handbook of Bible Times and Customs.* Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1984. 303 pp.

Many cultural insights on both OT and NT. Content is like Wight’s book. Many photographs but no drawings. Three of his chapters are in these notes.

\*Connolly, Peter. *The Jews in the Time of Jesus: A History.* Previously published under the title *Living in the Time of Jesus of Nazareth.* Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1983, 1994; Bnei Brak, Israel: Steimatsky, 1993. 96 pp. $15.00 hb. Avail. from Blackwell Pub.

Historical summary of Herod the Great, Pontius Pilate, and the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70. Stunning colour drawings of maps, key events and cultural customs.

Cornell, Tim, and Matthews, John. *Atlas of the Roman World.* New York & Oxford: Facts on File, 1982. 240 pp.

A beautifully done atlas of 80,000 words in text and 30,000 in captions to over 500 maps and illustrations (257 in colour!) by experts on the Roman world at Christ’s College, Cambridge and Queen’s College, Oxford (respectively).

\*Danby, Herbert, trans. *The Mishna: Translations from the Hebrew with Introductory and Explanatory Notes.* Oxford, 1933. 876 pp.

The standard translation of this authoritative collection of rabbinic writings in the first three centuries AD with the legal and procedural practices of the intertestamental and first century oral tradition followed by the Pharisees (cf. contents on p. 170).

Deary, Terry. *The Groovy Greeks.* Horrible Histories. New York: Scholastic, 1996. 128 pp.

Humorous cartoons and interesting stories on Greek culture and history.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . *The Rotten Romans.* Horrible Histories. New York: Scholastic, 1996. 128 pp.

Humorous cartoons and interesting stories on Roman culture and history.

\*Elwell, Walter A., and Yarbrough, Robert W. *Encountering the New Testament: A Historical and Theological Survey.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998. 448 pp. US$45.00 hb. w/ CD.

The nicest layout of NT surveys in its use of colour and supplemental CD with more pictures, quizzes, etc. However, it tries to do too much by covering background and survey in a single volume so that neither is treated in enough detail, though it is good at a popular level. This may be compensated, though, by also using the companion volume, *Readings from the First-Century World* (see below).

\*Evans, Craig A. *Noncanonical Writings and New Testament Interpretation.*  Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1992. 281 pp.

The only one-volume (concise) work on the Dead Sea Scrolls, OT and NT Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, OT Versions, Philo, Josephus, Targums, and rabbinic writings, early church fathers, Gnostics, etc. Good bibliographies and indexes of NT parallels. Evans teaches Bible at Trinity Western University in Vancouver, BC.

\*Ferguson, Everett. *Backgrounds of Early Christianity.* 2d ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987; 2d ed. 1993. 612 pp.

A standard text analyzing Greek, Roman, and Jewish political, social, literary, and religious backgrounds to the NT. Detailed treatment of Roman-Hellenistic religions and philosophies (236 pp.) and well documented (bibliographies, footnotes, pictures).

Fleming, Jim. *The World of the Bible Gardens, Ein Karem, Jerusalem: A Journey Through Full-Scale Replicas Which Help Interpret the Scriptures.* Israel & USA: Biblical Resources, 1999. 56 pp.

This extensive brochure of the Archaeological Garden & Biblical Resources site adjacent to Jerusalem has 175 photos and 80 diagrams of the lives of shepherds, farmers, and village people in biblical times. Christ’s era is portrayed in seating for the Last Supper, types of actual crosses used in the Roman era, tombs, etc.

Garrard, Alec. *The Splendour of the Temple: A Pictorial Guide to Herod’s Temple and Its Ceremonies.* Carlisle, England: Candle, 2000. 96 pp. S$21.50 Life Bookstore.

Stunning, colour. close-up pictures of Herod’s temple from Garrard’s beautiful model (expanded from Backhouse’s book). He is a farmer, former builder and lay preacher in Norfolk, England who took 18 years building this model based on the Bible, Talmud, Mishnah and archaeology. Includes both photos and helpful drawings.

\*Gower, Ralph. *The New Manners and Customs of Bible Times.* Chicago: Moody, 1987.

Updates and expands (408 pp.) upon Fred Wight’s similar book published in 1953 (see entry below). Part 1 addresses “The Individual in Family Life” (e.g., family, education, work) and Part 2 concerns “National Institutions and Customs” (e.g., hospitality, travel, leisure, social/political groupings). Excellent colour photographs.

Grassmick, John D. “New Testament Introduction.” Unpublished class notes for the course NT 207: New Testament Introduction, Dallas Theological Seminary, Fall, 1985.

My indebtedness to Prof. Grassmick cannot be overstated. These notes originally expanded upon and summarized his notes, though he is not cited within the notes as quotations would be too extensive.

Hengel, Martin. *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in their Encounter in Palestine during the Early Hellenistic Period.* 2 vols. in 1. 2d ed. Trans. John Bowden. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1973; English ed., Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981.

A scholarly treatment of how the Greek way of life affected the Jews politically, economically, culturally, and hermeneutically, including the clashes between them.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. *The Zealots.* Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1989. 487 pp. 296.8 HEN

Here’s the best work on this sect of Jewish revolutionaries.

Hoehner, Harold W. "A Chronological Table of the Apostolic Age." ThD Dissertation, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1964, rev. 1972.

Provides very exact dates for NT events backed by scholarly research. This course follows his chronology with minor variations (summarized on pages 42-43).

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977.

Shows dates for Christ’s birth, ministry, and crucifixion, plus Daniel 9. His conclusions are summarized on the page “Chronology of the Life of Christ” (p. 40).

Horsley, Richard A., and Hanson, John S. *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs: Popular Movements at the Time of Jesus.* San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985. 271 pp.

A brilliant portrayal of the complex Jewish social culture during Christ’s day. Emphasizes historical background and how bandit forces (incl. Zealots, sicarii), apocalyptic prophets, and false messiahs affected the masses.

\*House, H. Wayne. *Chronological and Background Charts of the New Testament.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981.

Very helpful overhead transparencies used in this course.

Jagersma, H. *A History of Israel from Alexander the Great to Bar Kochba.* Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986. xiv+224 pp. Paper, US$13.95.

Here’s one of the few up-to-date books on the intertestamental period, covering 334 BC—AD135. The text is but 161 pages for a 475-year period (rather skimpy), but good for a basic grasp (though Christ and the early church take up only 7 pages). The translation from the Dutch is also brief, choppy, and repetitive.

\**The Works of Josephus.* 2nd ed. Trans. William Whiston. N.p., 1737; reprint, Lynn, MA: Hendrickson, 1980, 1987. 930 pp.

The traditional, classical, unabridged translation of this 1st century Jewish historian who wrote for the Romans on Jewish history from creation to their revolt (AD 66-70). This edition translates and updates the text type of Josephus’ six works in contrast to Maier’s abridgement of only his two most popular works (see below). The English is old, but E. J. Brill has commissioned Steve Mason of York Univ. (Ontario) to update it and add a commentary on Josephus (see *BAR*, [Sept./Oct 1997], 71; cf. pp. 58-68).

de Lange, Nicholas. *Atlas of the Jewish World.* New York & Oxford: Fact on File [distributed by Thomas Nelson], 1984. 240 pp.

Impressive maps, texts, drawings, and photographs of worldwide Jewish migration in history. Includes historical and cultural background and the Jewish world today.

Langley, Andrew. *The Roman News.* Consultant: Philip de Souza. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 1997. 32 pp. Published and distributed by Scholastic, Inc., 555 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

Roman history and culture in a newspaper format with many colour drawings.

†Lightfoot, J. B., trans. *The Apostolic Fathers.* 2d ed. Ed. Michael W. Holmes. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989. 347 pp.

The standard, annotated translation of these thirteen letters of the late first and early second century AD While these writings appear *after* the time of the NT, they nonetheless help us understand the practices of the early church.

†NBD: Marshall, I. Howard; Millard, A. R.; Packer, J. I.; and Wiseman, D. J., eds. *New Bible Dictionary.* 3d ed. Leicester, England: InterVarsity and Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1962, 1982; Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1996. 1326 pp. US$40 hb.

Many helpful articles for NT backgrounds. A highly acclaimed Bible dictionary originally edited by one of SBC’s former late lecturers, Dr. J. D. Douglas.

McCarter, P. Kyle, Jr. *Ancient Inscriptions: Voices from the Biblical World.* Washington, DC: Biblical Archaeology Society, 1996. 180 pp. US$30 for book alone and US$140 for book and slides. SBC Library 411 (R) McC.

Contains the story of how writing came into being, starting from Mesopotamian cuneiform and ending in the Roman period at the time of Christ by tracing the evolution of the alphabet from pictographs to symbols which each represent a single sound. Includes 97 drawings cross-referenced to 140 separately available slides. McCarter teaches at John Hopkins Univ.

\*Metzger, Bruce M., ed. *A Concordance to the Apocrypha/Deuterocanonical Books of the Revised Standard Version.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans & London: Collins Liturgical, 1983. 479 pp.

Very helpful for looking up verses in the Apocrypha (see entry under required reading) given that most Bible students are unfamiliar with these books.

\*Niswonger, Richard L. *New Testament History.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988. 332 pp.

A sequential history of The land of Israel from the Greek era (332 BC) to the end of the first century. Chronologically addresses Roman, Jewish, and pagan issues and their influence upon Jesus and the early church.

Packer, James I.; Tenney, Merrill C.; and White, William, eds. *The Land of the Bible.* Nashville: Nelson, 1980, 1985. 170 pp.

A small, handy resource for Palestinian geography, minerals and gems, animals and insects, plants and herbs, and agriculture.

Powell, Anton, and Steele, Philip. *The Greek News.* Cambridge, MA: Candlewick, 1997. 32 pp. Pub. and distributed by Scholastic, 555 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

Greek history and culture in a newspaper format with many colour drawings.

†Pritchard, James B., ed. *The Harper Atlas of the Bible.* New York: Harper & Row, 1987. 254 pp. CBD for $34.95.

Most of the 134 maps are two pages and supplemented by smaller maps, charts, diagrams, photographs, drawings and text; comprehensive (10,000 BC to AD 600, though only one map addresses Genesis 1—11); maps and detailed full-colour paintings of terrain have a three dimensional look, appearing as if viewed from the ground or on larger maps taking into account the curvature of the earth’s surface; probably the best atlas for backgrounds (other ancient peoples, pagan temples, writing, commerce, archaeology, practices of everyday life, etc.); indexes have summaries of events in the lives of significant biblical characters and a map index with variant, Arabic, Palestinian Grid Reference numbers, and Modern Hebrew names for cities. However, some maps are difficult to read due to lack of compass directions and excess material; mostly conservative, but the 50 contributors from varied perspectives (Christian, Jewish, liberal, etc.) tend to be moderately critical in the narrative and hold to late date for the Exodus. The book is also difficult to fit upright on most bookshelves due to its enormous size (nearly 11” x 14 1/2” or 27.5 cm. x 37 cm.). Lindsey *BS* 146 (July-Sept. 1989): 344-45.

†Rasmussen, Carl G. *The Zondervan NIV Atlas of the Bible.* Regency Reference Library. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989 and Jerusalem: Carta, 1989. 256 pp.

Similar in features to Beitzel with a comprehensive geographical section (57 pp.) and historical section (131 pp.), so purchasing both Beitzel and Rasmussen will have much overlapping. However, they are not the same. This is better than Beitzel in its topological overview of The land of Israel, extra graphs and diagrams, and its inclusion of excellent regional maps but worse in that the maps throughout are poorly colored and not tied into the text with coordinates as is true of Beitzel; too few color photographs (Beitzel’s weakness too but strengths in Rogerson and Pritchard).

\*Rengstorf, K. H., ed. *A Complete Concordance to Flavius Josephus*. 4 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1973-83.

Extensive treatment of all four books of Josephus by the words he used.

\*Rogers, Jr., Cleon L. *The Topical Josephus.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992. 238 pp.

A summary of historical events told by Josephus (fall of Galilee, Jerusalem, and Masada), important people (Herod the Great, Archelaus, John, Jesus, etc.), and institutions (Jewish sects, Roman army). Helpful insights into the NT and a Scripture index. Rogers is an evangelical missionary teacher in Germany (ThD, Dallas).

†Rogerson, John. *Atlas of the Bible.* New York: Facts on File [distributed by Thomas Nelson], 1986. 237 pp. CBD for US$32.50.

Visually stunning, includes regional maps and many full color photographs (Beitzel’s weaknesses), but weak in physical geography and too-brief summaries of biblical events (Beitzel’s strengths).

†Schürer, Emil. *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 BC-AD 135).* 4 vols. (incl. index) Rev. ed. Geza Vermes, Fergus Millar, and Martin Goodman. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1886-90; rev. 1973-87, reprint of 1st ed., Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995(?). 2144 pp. $239.80 ($155.95 CBD). Orig. ed. $199.95 hb. ($49.95 CBD). SBC call # 933 (R) SCH

The standard and exhaustive work on NT backgrounds, covering history, Jewish sects, messianic movements, and pertinent Greek and Jewish literature. Unfortunately, the revised edition does not have an index yet. Too expensive for most students, but CBD has a bargain in the original edition with an extra index but is more difficult to read and without modern updates in archaeology, language (e.g., Ugaritic) and history.

Walton, John H. *Chronological and Background Charts of the Old Testament.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984.

Very helpful overhead transparencies used in this course.

\*Wight, Fred H. *Manners and Customs of Bible Lands.* Chicago: Moody, 1953. 336 pp.

Older than Coleman’s work but very readable and interesting with short chapters on subjects such as marriage customs, dress, education, music, etc. Helpful line drawings but no photographs.

Wilkinson, Bruce. *Walk Thru the New Testament Bible Survey Seminar Notebook.* Atlanta, GA: Walk Thru The Bible Ministries, 1979.

Very helpful charts and maps. May say “do not reproduce,” but copying approval has been granted as they are not for profit and noted to be by Walk Thru.

Walker, P. W. L. *Jerusalem: Past and Present in the Purposes of God.* See end of file.

Wise, Michael; Abegg, Martin, Jr.; and Cook, Edward. *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation.* New York, NY: HarperCollins (HarperSanFrancisco), 1996. 513 pp. US$20 pb.

All but the most minute of the previously unknown nonbiblical DSS texts. Its 300 texts are 200 more than the previous standard by Geza Vermes. CT Dec 9, 96, p. 78This volume from a new generation of evangelical Dead Sea Scroll scholars is the most comprehensive yet—and at an affordable price. It contains never-before-seen stories about Abraham, Jacob, and Enoch—including one showing why God demanded Abraham to sacrifice Isaac. Also included are twelve texts not included in the Bible that claim Moses as their author and new data on biblical history and the roots of Christianity.

Woodrow, Ralph. *Babylon Mystery Religion: Ancient and Modern.* 2d ed. Riverside, CA 92502: Ralph Woodrow, P.O. Box 124), 1966, 1981. 177 pp.

Traces false religion from Babylon into NT times—especially into Catholicism.

†*The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible.* 5 vols. Ed. Merrill C. Tenney. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975, 1976. Abbreviated *ZPEB.*

Perhaps the best evangelical Bible encyclopedia. Clear, comprehensive articles.

B. Required Reading

\*†Beitzel, Barry J. *The Moody Atlas of Bible Lands.* Chicago: Moody, 1986. xviii+234 pp. CBD for US$27.95.

Probably the best evangelical atlas available. Excellent in both physical geography (70 pp.) and historical geography (119 pp.) with maps superior to Rasmussen’s *NIV Atlas*, maps nicely tied in with an interesting text; weak in that it lacks regional maps, often lacks Scripture references on the maps themselves (though cited in supporting material), and has few full colour photographs. One advantage of this atlas is that 44 of its maps are available as color transparencies available from CBD for US$130.Lindsey BS 144 (Jan-March 1987): 112-13

\*Elwell, Walter A., and Yarbrough, Robert W. *Readings from the First-Century World: Primary Sources for New Testament Study.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998. 223 pp. US$20.00 pb.

The companion volume to their *Encountering the New Testament.* Ancient writings from AD 30-600 illuminate the NT and are arranged parallel to the NT canonical order. Includes Scripture, subject, and readings indices.

\**Josephus: The Essential Writings.* Trans. Paul Maier. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1988. 413 pp.

A new, condensed version of Josephus’ *Jewish Antiquities* and *The Jewish War*. *Much* more readable than Whiston’s translation. Many maps, charts, and drawings.

\*May, Herbert G., and Metzger, Bruce M., eds. *The New Oxford Annotated Apocrypha: New Revised Standard Version.* Expanded ed. with 3-4 Maccabees and Psalm 151. Revised edition of New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1977; also Baker, 1998. 340 pp. + xxii.

An easy-to-read revision of the 1977 RSV translation of the 18 uninspired books (but very helpful for background information) written between 250 BC and AD 100. Includes an excellent but brief (11 page) introduction to the Apocrypha, numerous annotations, and an index to the annotations. This edition may be more easily obtained with the RSV Bible in the RSV *New Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha* (Oxford, 1977) or the more recent NRSV *New Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha.* The NRSV is also distributed by Baker as the *Cambridge Annotated Study Bible and Study Apocrypha* (US$40) or one without annotation used in this course called *The Apocrypha: NRSV* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1992), also available from Baker (247 pp. for US$13). The readings are in these notes on pages 188-98.

\*Vermes, Geza. *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English.* 4th ed. Baltimore: Penguine Books, 1962, 1975, 1987, 1995. 320+ pp.

The standard translation of 42 non-biblical Qumran scrolls with three introductory chapters (57 pp.) explaining the significance of this massive literary discovery that has aided biblical studies; very readable. SBC call #220.93 VER. The readings are in these notes on pages 252-65.

**V.** **Course Schedule (2007)** *Readings* (80) + Beitzel (81) + Coleman (29) + Maier (57)+ Vermes (30) = 277

The above totals 277 pp ÷ 28 sessions. = 10 pp./session or 20 pp./day MADE SOC-ECON ONLY 2 PARTS IN 2004-05

Note: Quizzes are based on the maps (quizzes 1-2 on pp. 2 and 5, respectively), Coleman’s articles in the notes (quizzes 3-4), and the Apocrypha with class readings since quiz 4 (quiz 5). You will not be quizzed on Beitzel. Each session is a double session.

Archaeology is summed in session 14 as part of the session rather than being session 15 due to Milne

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Session** | **Date (Th)** | **Subject** | **Assignment** |
| 1 | 18 Jan | Syllabus; Geography Part 1 (Israel) 2-4,10-12 | No assignments 34-36 |
| 2 | MONDAY  10:10-12:00  22 Jan Make-Up for 11 Jan | Quiz 1; Geography Part 2 (Jerusalem) 34-36 | Study for Quiz  Beitzel, 156-65  *Readings*, 17-23 Palestine  Buy all texts by today (on quiz!) |
| 3 | 25 Jan | Political Context: Part 1 Int. 48-65  /Persia/Greece-skip Daniel | Beitzel, 150-53  *Readings*, 25-30 175-63 BC |
| 4 | 1 Feb | Quiz 2; Political Context: Part 2 Has/Rom Rule: 166-4 BC (66-72) | Study for Quiz  Beitzel, 154-55 Hasm., 166-68 Herod  *Readings*, 30-42 63-4 BC & Show Ben Hur sea battle? |
| 5 | 8 Feb | Political Context: Part 3  Roman IV: 4 BC-A.D 135 (79-95) | Beitzel, 185-87  *Readings*, 42-55 Procurators |
| 6 | 15 Feb\* | “A.D.” Video (Dr. Rick in Thailand) | *Josephus,* 329-56 (notes, 280-94)  Video explanations (notes, 137a-b) War |
|  | **22 Feb** | **Chinese New Year** | **No classes or assignments** |
| 7 | 1 Mar | Quiz 3; Political Context: Part 4 | Study for Quiz  Coleman, 181-91 (notes, 73-78) |
| 8 | 8 Mar | Socio-Economic Context: Part 1 I-IV.C (pp. 97-100, 105) Jer wall picture | *Josephus,* 357-85 (notes, 294-308) War |
|  | **15 Mar** | **Mid-Semester Break** | **No classes or assignments** |
| 9 | 22 Mar | Socio-Economic Context: Part 2 IV.D & Onesimus (106-9) | Coleman, 248-55 (notes, 101-104)  *Readings*, 65-75 Peoples |
| 10 | 29 Mar | Quiz 4; Religious Context: Part 1 Sm. grps on sects, sabbath (124-26) | Study for Quiz  Coleman, 202-11 (notes, 116-20)  *Readings*, 57-65 Sects |
|  | **5 Apr** | **Maundy Thursday** | **No classes or assignments** |
| 11 | 12 Apr | Religious Context: Part 2 feasts, synagogue, ordinances (136-49) | Coleman, 212-29 (notes, 127-35) Feasts, Festivals, & Synagogue  *Readings*, 77-87 Judaism rel. |
| 12 | 19 Apr\* | Religious Context: Part 3 pagan (150-53) | *Readings*, 87-95 Sabbath & circumcision |
| 13 | 26 Apr\* | Literary Context: Part 1 MT, LXX, Apocrypha & Pseudepigrapha (154-67) Literary Context: Part 2 Josephus, Philo, Rabbis (168-73) | Apocrypha: Tobit, Susanna, and Bel & the Dragon (notes, 188-98)  Research paper or PPT translation due |
| 14 | 3 May | Quiz 5; Literary Context: Part 3 Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS), NT Apocrypha (174-87), Archaeology188-92 | Study for Quiz  Vermes, 61-80, 103-27 (DSS *War Scroll, Manual of Discipline*) copied in notes, 252-65 |
| 15 | 8-11 May | Final Exam | Study :-) |

**VI. Other Matters**

A. Contacting Me: You can contact me at SBC by box L19 or by phone (6559-1555 ext. 7130). Also, my home address is 49 Lentor Crescent, Singapore 786716 and home phone number is 6458-6158 (email griffith@sbc.edu.sg). My office hours are from 11:00-1:00 on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Let’s have lunch too!

B. Copying Class Notes: Allowed when you give credit where credit is due (unless it makes you rich). You may also copy the course PPT CD and translate it into other languages.

C. Course Load: For a 2-hour course of 28 sessions work should comprise 56 hours.

* Readings total 305 pp ÷ 28 sessions. = 11 pp./session. 305 x 3 min./pp. = 915 min. ÷ 60 = 16 hours.
* Quiz study should be about 2 hours per quiz x 5 = 10 hours
* The research paper should take about 20 hours.
* The final exam study should be about 10 hours.

**Research Paper Grade Sheet**

Student Topic Paper Grade Box

The first four parts below concern the paper’s *content* (70% of the grade). The Form grade (30%) is based on Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations,* 6th edition (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1996). See also the Research Paper Checklist.

1 2 3 4 5

Poor Minimal Average Good Excellent

***Introduction***

**Purpose** (the paper addresses what issue?)

**Scope** of the issue defined/narrowed down

**Procedure** for addressing the issue introduced

***Body***

**Wide research** (other views, good sources)

**Individual work** (not excessive quotations)

**Key passages/issues** addressed adequately

**Development** (proves points, not just lists verses)

**Interpretation** of passages accurate (exegesis)

***Conclusion***

**Solution** given to issue raised in introduction

**Main points** reviewed and/or restated

**Length** (1/2 to 1 page, w/o unnecessary info.)

***Miscellaneous***

(These can be addressed anywhere in the paper)

**Application** (shows why the topic is important)

**Depth** leaves no key questions unanswered

**Overall** content

***Form***

**Format** (typed, title page, length, pages numbered)

**Spelling** and typographical errors, punctuation

**Grammar** (agreement of subject/verb and tenses)

**Footnoting** (better than endnoting; biblio. incl.)

**Arranged** **logically** (not a collection of thoughts)

**Sections** clearly stated without orphan headings

***Summary***

Number of ticks per column \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Multiplied by point values of the column **x 1 x 2 x 3 x 4 x 5**

Equals the total point value for each column \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Net points \_\_\_\_\_\_ minus 10 points per day late (\_\_\_\_ points) equals % grade of %

**Comments**:

**Research Paper Checklist**

1st ed. 24 April 95; 2d ed. 5 June 1996 3d ed. 21 June 1997

\* Asterisks show the most common mistakes SBC students make on research papers. Give special attention to these areas!

**1. General Format**

1.1 Obtain your own copy of the handout "Why Write Papers?" by Dr. Henry Baldwin.

1.2 The most complete and widely used format guide is Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations,* 6th ed. rev. by John Grossman and Alice Bennett (Chicago & London: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1937, 1955, 1967, 1973, 1987, 1996). 308 pp.

1.3 Questions not answered by Turabian can probably found in *The Chicago Manual of Style.*

1.4 Staple the pages in the upper left corner rather than using report folders or attaching the paper at the top centre.

**2. Preliminaries**

2.1 The title page should follow the typical format in Turabian.

2.1.1 Only “SINGAPORE BIBLE COLLEGE” and the TITLE should be in capital letters.

2.1.2 Please include your mailbox number after your name.

2.1.3 The same size type (and font) should be used throughout the paper.

2.2 The margins should not change (e.g., should not be in outline form) but should be 2.5 cm on all sides.

2.3\* Include a Table of Contents.

2.3.1 The Contents page should include only the first page number of each section.

2.3.2 Subtitles within the Contents page should be indented.

2.3.3 Note this is called a “Table of Contents” and not a “Table of Content.”

2.3.4 “Table of Contents” should not be an entry on the Table of Contents.

2.4 Page numbers should be at the top right in the preliminaries (except no number on Title Page and Table of Contents) and at the bottom centre from the first page to the end.

**3. Body & Style**

3.1\* Provide an introduction that summarizes the problem(s) your paper aims to answer.

3.2\* Check your grammar for confusion of tense, plural, verb/noun, etc. (cf. section 9)

3.3 Use a spell checker if you have one on your computer to avoid careless spelling mistakes.

3.4 Double-space the paper throughout in prose form (not outline form).

3.5\* Write in the third person rather than the first person (“This author…” and not “I” or “we” or “us”).

3.6 Follow these guidelines for headings within the text:

3.6.1 Headings should match your Contents page.

3.6.2 Headings should not have periods (full stops or colons) after them.

3.6.3\* Headings should not be in outline form (no “I,” “II,” “A,” “1,” “a,” “-,” etc.).

3.6.4 Avoid widow headings (at the bottom of a page without the first sentence of a paragraph).

3.6.5 Don’t repeat a heading on the next page even if it covers the same section of the paper.

3.6.6 Each research paper should have at least 2-3 headings or divisions.

3.6.7 As an exception to 3.6 above, in short papers (6-8 pages) which do not have chapters, (1) main headings should be centred capitals, followed by (2) subheadings which are underlined centred small letters, (3) underlined left column small letters, (4) non-underlined left column small letters, and finally (5) underlined small letters which begin an indented paragraph. If only two levels are needed, then (2) above may be skipped.

3.7\* Do not clutter your paper with unnecessary details that do not contribute to your purpose.

3.8\* Make every statement a full sentence within the text (the exception is headings).

3.9 Critically evaluate your sources; do not believe a heresy just because it’s in print!

3.10 Make sure your reasoning is solid and logical.

3.11\* Provide a conclusion which solves/summarizes the problem addressed in the introduction

4. Abbreviations

4.1\* Do not use abbreviations in the text or footnotes (except inside parentheses).

4.2 Cite from 1-3 verses inside parentheses in the text but 4 or more verses in the footnotes.

4.3\* Use proper biblical book abbreviations with a colon between chapter and verse.

4.4 Do not start sentences with an Arabic number. Write “First Kings 3:16…” (not “1 Kings 3:16…”).

4.5 Write out numbers under ten in the text (e.g., “three”); abbreviate those over ten (e.g., “45”).

4.6 “For example” (e.g.) and “that is to say” (i.e.) are abbreviated only within parentheses.

5. Quotations

5.1\* When quoting word-for-word use quotation marks and footnote the source. Do not plagiarise!

5.2 Use proper quotation formats with single quotation marks within double ones.

5.3 Use indented single-spaced block quotations (no quotation marks) when three or more lines.

5.4\* Avoid citing long texts of Scriptures or other sources so the paper mostly reflects your own thinking.

5.5 Provide biblical support for your position rather than simply citing your opinion.

5.6 If your source quotes a more original source, then quote the original in this manner: R. N. Soulen, *Handbook,* 18 (cited by Rick Griffith, *New Testament Backgrounds,* 7th ed. [SBC, 1999], 165).

Research Paper Checklist (2 of 2)

6. Punctuation

6.1 Periods & commas go *before* quote marks and footnote numbers (e.g., “Marriage,” not “Marriage”,)

6.2 Periods & commas go *outside* parentheses (unless a complete sentence is within the parentheses). For example: “Jesus wept” (John 11:35). but never “Jesus wept.” (John 11:35)

6.3 A space should not precede a period, comma, final parenthesis, semicolon, apostrophe or colon.

6.4 A space should not follow a beginning parenthesis or beginning quotation mark.

6.7 A space should always follow a comma, and two spaces always follow a period.

7. Footnotes

7.1\* The first reference to a book includes (in this order) the author's *given* name first then family name, title (in *italics* or underlined but not in quotes), publication data in parentheses (place, colon, publisher, comma, then year), volume (if more than one), and page number. For example: Ralph Gower, *The New Manners and Customs of Bible Times* (Chicago: Moody, 1987), 233. Notice that in footnotes a full stop (period) is used only *once* at the end of the citation. Indent the first line of each footnote entry.

7.2\* Cite later references to the same book but a different page number with only the author's family name (not given name) and new page number. For example: Gower, 166.

7.3 If the next citation has the same book and same page number, then type “Ibid.” (Latin abbreviation for “in the same place”). For example: Ibid. However, if a different page number is referred to, then “Ibid.” should be followed by a period and comma. For example: Ibid., 64.

7.4 If the next citation is by the same author but a different work, type “Idem” (Latin abbreviation for “by the same author”) before the new book. For example: Idem, *Marriage and Family,* 221.

7.5\* Encyclopedia, Bible dictionary, or other books with multiple authors under an editor should first cite the article’s author, then article title within quotes, book, editor, publication data in parentheses, volume, and page. For example: P. Trutza, “Marriage,” *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible,* 5 vols., ed. Merrill C. Tenney (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975, 1976), 4:92-102. (If needed, look up the author’s name after the Contents page by tracing the initials at the end of the article.)

7.6 Footnote numbers are raised with no parentheses and go *after* a quotation’s punctuation (e.g., period).

7.7 Always cite your footnote numbers in sequence rather than using a former number again.

7.8 Use only numbers as footnotes references (don’t use letters or \*#@^% etc.).

7.9 Cite translations in parentheses within the text rather than the footnotes—for example, “trust” (NIV).

7.10 Cite book, chapter, and paragraphs of primary (ancient )sources with Arabic numerals and full stops (e.g., “Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* 18.1.3,” not “Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities,* Book XVIII, Chapter 1, Section 3”).

7.11 Page numbers may be added to primary sources in parentheses. For example: *War* 2.1 (Whiston, 44).

8. Bibliography

8.1 Alphabetize all sources by family name without numbering the sources.

8.2 Make entries single spaced with the second line indented and with a double space between entries.

8.3 Do not cite an author’s title in a footnote or the bibliography (no “Dr.,” “Rev.” etc.).

8.4 Cite book references differently than in the footnotes by including the author's *family* name first (not given name), title (in *italics* or underlined but not in quotes), publication data *without* parentheses (place, colon, publisher, comma, then year), and volume (if more than one). For example: Gower, Ralph. *The New Manners and Customs of Bible Times.* Chicago: Moody, 1987. Use full stops (not commas) after each first name, title, and date; don’t use parentheses (but do use them in footnotes). Indent each line after the first line in an entry.

8.5\* Encyclopedia, Bible dictionary, or other books with multiple authors under an editor should first cite the article’s author, then article title within quotes, book, editor, publication data, volume, and page. Cite these articles as follows: Trutza, P., “Marriage,” *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible.* Ed. Merrill C. Tenney. 5 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975, 1976. 4:92-102. (You may need to find the author’s name after the Contents page by tracing the initials at the end of the article.)

8.6 Put the bibliography on a separate page rather than tagging it on to the conclusion.

8.7 Consult as many sources as you have pages in your paper (e.g., 8 sources for an 8-page paper).

8.8\* Include the bibliography even if the lecturer has assigned the sources.

8.9 Primary sources should be listed under the ancient author’s name, followed by the translator’s name. For example: Josephus. *The Works of Josephus.* Translated by William Whiston…

8.10 Primary sources with several or unknown authors should be listed by editor and/or translator’s name. For example: Danby, Herbert, trans. *The Mishnah.* Oxford: University, 1933.

9. Common Grammatical and Spelling Mistakes

9.1 “Respond” (verb) is used for “response” (noun). “The respond” should be “The response.”

9.2\* Events in biblical times should be noted in the past tense.

9.3 Write “BC” dates *before* “BC” but “AD” dates *after* “AD” (“AD 70” and “70 BC” but never as “70 AD” or “BC 70”).

9.4 Always capitalize the words “Christian,” “Bible,” “Christ,” “Word of God,” and “Scripture(s).”

9.5 The current trend is to *avoid* capitalization, especially in the adjectives “biblical,” “scriptural,” etc.

9.6 Avoid words in all CAPITALS in the text (except acronyms and 3.6.7).

**Key Sources for Both Research Papers**

Primary Sources (Original):

Most, if not all, of these are on reserve in the library (see bibliography for details):

Charlesworth, James H., ed.  *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha.* 2 vols.

Danby, *The Mishna* (296.12 (R) DAN or 296.12 (R) BLA)

Josephus, War of the Jews and Jewish Antiquities (933 JOS)

Philo of Alexandria (880.1 PHI)

May, Herbert G., and Metzger, Bruce M., eds. *The New Oxford Annotated Apocrypha: NRSV*

*Nag Hammadi Codices* (880 HUN I)

*Select Papyri* (299.932 (R) ROB)

Secondary Sources (Modern):

Aune, D. E. “Bride of Christ.” *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*. 4 vols. Ed. G. W. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986. 1:546-47.

Clements, Roland E. *The World of Ancient Israel.* Cambridge: Univ. Press, 1989.

Edersheim, Alfred. *The History of the Jewish Nation.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 1895.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah.* Originally printed 1883; reprint,Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984. 828 pp.

Evans, Craig A. *Noncanonical Writings and New Testament Interpretation*.

Lohse, Eduard. *The New Testament Environment.* USA: Parthenon, 1976.

Metzger, Bruce M., ed. *A Concordance to the Apocrypha/Deuterocanonical Books of the RSV*

Oaks, Linda. “A First Century Wedding,” *Biblical Illustrator* 20 (Winter 1994).

Rops, Daniel. *Daily Life in Bible Times.* London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson LTD, 1962. 447 pp.

Thompson, J. A. *Handbook of Life in Bible Times.* IVP, 1986. 384 pp.

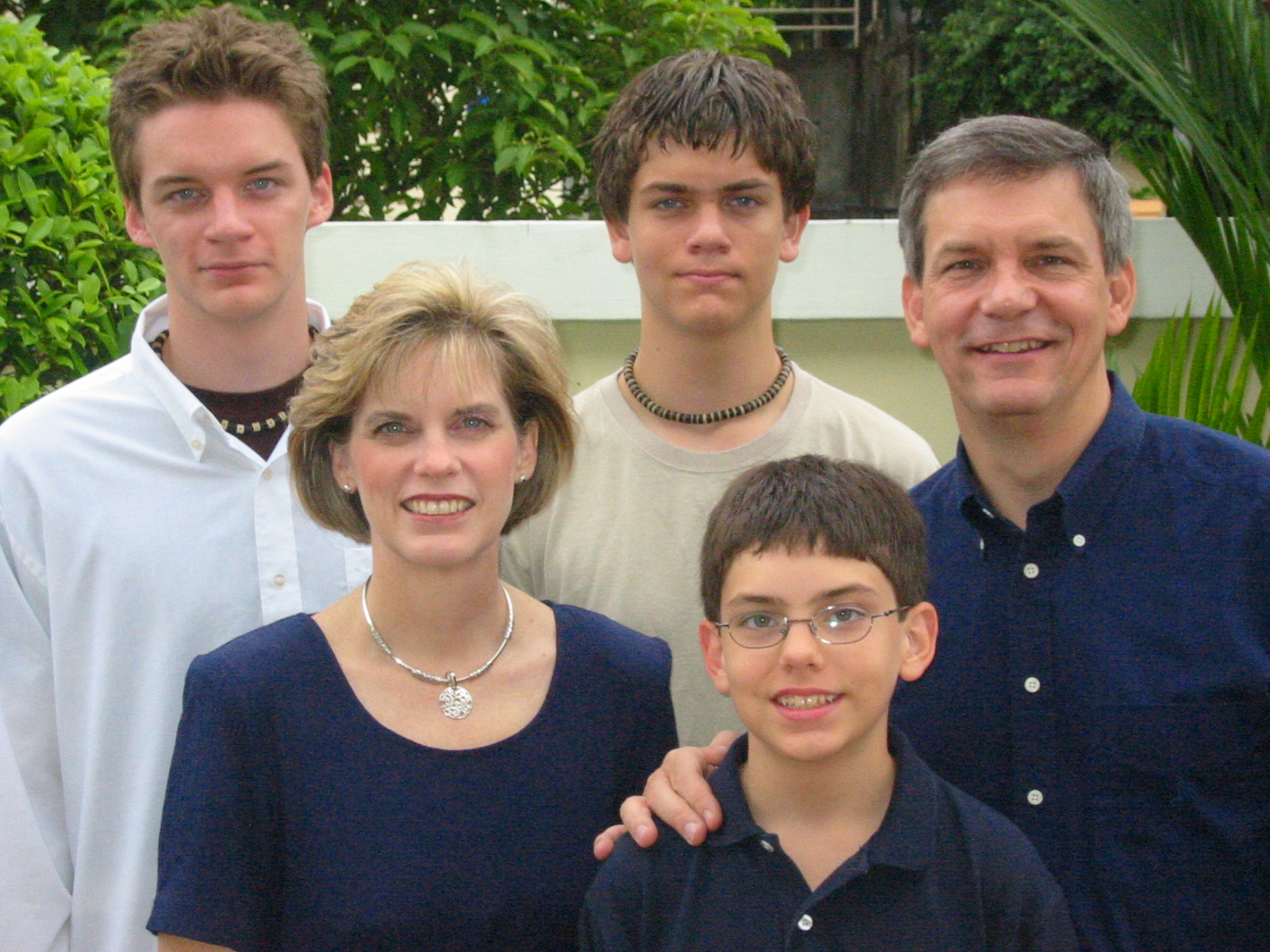
de Vaux, Roland. *Ancient Israel.* Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1965.

Walker, P. W. L., ed. *Jerusalem: Past and Present in the Purposes of God.* Cambridge: Tyndale House, 1992. 210 pp. S$24.00 pb.

A collection of essays by British lecturers who discuss biblical (OT and NT), historical, and contemporary perspectives on Jerusalem. (A theology of its future significance is not offered in any detail, presumably because the contributors see no scriptural support for this.) Interaction with Judaism and Islam offer some impractical suggestions (e.g., Jews should rebuild the third temple next to temple mount, p. 149).

Yamauchi, Edwin. *The World of the First Christians.* Lion, 1981. 128 pp.

**My Biographical Sketch**



**Rick and Susan Griffith**

**Kurt, Stephen, and John**

**Background**

“Never say never.” Rick and Susan Griffith both learned this age-old tip the hard way.

Rick recalls sitting in his elementary school classes thinking, “If there’s one thing I’ll *never* become it’s a *teacher.* Imagine saying the same stuff over and over, year after year!”

Yet after trusting Christ in junior high and acquiring a taste for teaching the Word of God, Rick’s attitude began to change. After his business degree at California State University, Hayward, and Master of Theology degree (Pastoral Ministries) and the Doctor of Philosophy degree (Bible Exposition) from Dallas Theological Seminary in Texas, Dr. Griffith soon found himself on the other end of the classroom—and loving it!

Susan, from Yucaipa, California, also learned not to say “never.” As she earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in piano at Biola University, several friends married and worked to put their husbands through three more years of seminary training. “I’ll never do that!” she exclaimed. Soon afterwards she invested three years (1981-1983) singing together with her future husband in the Crossroads, Campus Crusade's traveling music team in Asia. This nine member Philippines-based group shared Christ in the Philippines, China, Hong Kong, Korea, Japan, Macau, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore.

In December 1983 Susan’s “never” became a reality. She and Rick were married and like Jacob and Rachel of old, Susan also worked for her mate. During these seven seminary years Rick served as a pastor, corporate chaplain, and International Students church consultant. Susan taught women's Bible studies and often ministered through her singing. Their primary church in Texas is Christ Chapel Bible Church in Fort Worth.

The Griffith family now includes three sons: Kurt (18 yrs.), Stephen (16 yrs.), and John (13 yrs.). During home assignment they minister mainly from the First Baptist Church of Yucaipa, California.

**Ministry**

However, since 1991 the Griffiths’ home has been Singapore where Rick serves with 31 other full-time faculty at Singapore Bible College. SBC has 503 full-time students from 23 countries and 25 denominations, as well as over 300 professionals in the non-degree Evening School. During his first term he taught a variety of courses: Old Testament Survey, New Testament Survey, New Testament Backgrounds, Eschatology (the study of future things), Evangelism, Pastoral Epistles, Psalms, Homiletics (preaching), Hebrew Exegesis, and four Old Testament exposition courses. Now he teaches mostly Bible Exposition classes, including OT and NT Backgrounds & Survey, Eschatology (theology of the future), Ecclesiology (theology of the church), and Pneumatology (theology of the Holy Spirit).

Dr. Griffith loves the variety and strategic nature of his teaching. He invests his life into Anglicans from Sri Lanka, Lutherans from Singapore, Presbyterians from Korea, Conservative Baptists from the Philippines, and missionaries from Campus Crusade, OMF, and Operation Mobilization—sometimes all in one class! A survey of one of his courses revealed that 17 of the 20 students were training for ministry outside of Singapore. Nearly all SBC graduates enter pastoral or missionary ministries due to Asia’s shortage of trained leaders.

Ministry opportunities abound. Rick and Susan have conducted premarital counseling for students and their home has an open door to students and guests traveling through Singapore. They have sung in evangelistic thrusts and in 1992 also participated in founding International Community School, an expatriate Christian primary and secondary school in Singapore. The Griffiths are missionaries with WorldVenture (formerly CBInternational) and attend International Baptist Church in Singapore.

**Field**

Singapore Bible College is strategically located at the “ministry hub” of Southeast Asia, the Republic of Singapore. A small island of only 14 by 26 miles, Singapore is a city-nation located on the tip of the Malayan Peninsula in southeast Asia. The population of this multi-cultural society is 75 percent Chinese, 15 percent Malay and 8 percent Indian. Other groups include Filipinos, Thais, Japanese, Americans, and Europeans. This beautiful island nation, with dynamic growth in churches and missionary force, has been called the “Antioch of Asia.” Recently the Singaporean cross-cultural missionary force has grown tremendously from 140 (1988) to 321 (1992) overseas missionaries.

**Differences Between Our Cultures**

**(Classroom etiquette considering our cultural differences)**

**Issue** **Singaporeans** **Americans**

The teacher is… “Pretty close to God” “Just one of the guys”

“Knows all” “Fellow learner”

Perspective of teacher Lofty Lowly

(teacher as respected) (teacher as equal)

Age of Teacher Older are more respected Younger teachers more liked

Age = Wisdom Youthful = Energetic

Losing face is… A big concern Not so big a deal

(for both teacher and student) (but insults are!)

Content concern Pragmatic Theoretical

• What works in life • If it doesn’t apply now it will later

• What’s on the test • What you’ll need for your life

• Short-term • Long-term

Learning style Formal harmony Confrontational

(teacher gives only his view) (teacher responds to other views)

Learning preference Rote memory of facts Correlation between facts

Responsibility for Teacher’s Teacher’s *and student’s*

effectiveness of learning

Disagreeing with teacher Taboo Okay

(shows disrespect) (shows insight)

Speaking up is okay… When called on individually When a general invitation is given

Will speak up in… Small groups only Large and small groups

Communication One way (teacher to student) Two-way dialogue

Asking questions Uncomfortable Comfortable

*American Rule of Thumb: “The only dumb question is the one which is never asked”*

**Implications:**

1. **For Me:** I’ll try my best to teach in a way Singaporeans better learn (column 1), but since I’ve lived almost 30 years in America and only 14 years in Asia I will unavoidably lapse into an American style (column 2). Please forgive my lack of cultural sensitivity!

2. **For You:** You can feel free to be “a bit more American” in this class since I don’t yet feel that column 2 is inappropriate for Asians. Relax, loosen up, and enjoy our differences! But I don’t expect too many of you to follow this principle (thus implication 1 above)!

Mark Dubis, “New Technologies and Theological Research: Web Studies for the Study of New Testament Backgrounds,” *Journal of Religious & Theological Information* 6 (2003): 3-9

(1 of 7)

Mark Dubis, “New Technologies and Theological Research: Web Studies for the Study of New Testament Backgrounds,” *Journal of Religious & Theological Information* 6 (2003): 3-9

(2 of 7)

Mark Dubis, “New Technologies and Theological Research: Web Studies for the Study of New Testament Backgrounds,” *Journal of Religious & Theological Information* 6 (2003): 3-9

(3 of 7)

Mark Dubis, “New Technologies and Theological Research: Web Studies for the Study of New Testament Backgrounds,” *Journal of Religious & Theological Information* 6 (2003): 3-9

(4 of 7)

Mark Dubis, “New Technologies and Theological Research: Web Studies for the Study of New Testament Backgrounds,” *Journal of Religious & Theological Information* 6 (2003): 3-9

(5 of 7)

Mark Dubis, “New Technologies and Theological Research: Web Studies for the Study of New Testament Backgrounds,” *Journal of Religious & Theological Information* 6 (2003): 3-9

(6 of 7)

Mark Dubis, “New Technologies and Theological Research: Web Studies for the Study of New Testament Backgrounds,” *Journal of Religious & Theological Information* 6 (2003): 3-9

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**New Testament Geography**

**Every Geographical Location in the Gospels (Quiz 1)**

**Every Geographical Location in the Gospels (Numbers)**

Geographical Locations in the Gospels (Answer Key)

**Every Geographical Location in Acts/Epistles (Quiz 2)**

**Every Geographical Location in Acts/Epistles (Numbers)**

**Every Geographical Location in Acts/EpistlesAnswer Key**

**Seas**

1 Mediterranean

2 Adriatic

3 Aegean4 Red5 Black6 Tyrrhenian7 Dead8 Galilee**Provinces/Islands**9 Macedonia

10 Achaia11 Thrace12 Asia13 Bithynia 14 Galatia15 Cappadocia16 Syria17 Lycia18 Pontus19 Dalmatia (Illyricum)

20 Sicily21 Italy22 Cilicia23 Pamphylia24 Cyprus25 Egypt

26 Cyrenaica27 Arabia28 Malta29 Moesia30 Crete

31 Phrygia32 Israel33 Midian34 Pisidia35 Cauda (Clauda)

36 Ethiopia37 Libya38 Phoenicia39 Lyconia40 Chios41 Patmos

42 Samos104 Mysia

**Cities**43 Rome 44 Rhegium45 Corinth46 Three Taverns47 Puteoli48 Syracuse49 Berea50 Thessalonica51 Philippi52 Apollonia53 Neapolis54 Troas55 Smyrna56 Hierapolis57 Ephesus

58 Assos59 Adramyttium60 Pergamum61 Thyatira62 Sardis63 Philadelphia

64 Antioch (west)65 Colossae66 Laodicea67 Rhodes68 Paphos69 Myra70 Lystra71 Derbe

72 Tarsus73 Antioch (east)74 Seleucia75 Sidon76 Iconium77 Miletus78 Cos79 Fair Havens

80 Phoenix

81 Salomone82 Cyrene83 Alexandria84 Jerusalem85 Salamis86 Damascus87 Ptolemais

**Cities (cont’d)**

88 Caesarea89 Nicopolis90 Attalia91 Patara92 Cnidus93 Amphipolis94 Tyre95 Forum of Appius

105 Cenchrea

106 Perga

107 Athens

**Rivers**96 Nile97 Euphrates98 Orantes99 Jordan100 Pyramus

101 Holys102 Hebrus

103 Sangarius

**Every Geographical Location in Acts/EpistlesMatching**

**Seas**\_\_ Tyrrhenian\_\_ Adriatic\_\_ Galilee\_\_ Aegean\_\_ Black\_\_ Mediterranean\_\_ Red\_\_ Dead**Provinces/Islands**\_\_ Dalmatia \_\_ Pisidia\_\_ Syria\_\_ Galatia\_\_ Egypt\_\_ Phrygia

\_\_ Phoenicia\_\_ Sicily\_\_ Italy\_\_ Macedonia\_\_ Cilicia\_\_ Pamphylia\_\_ Crete\_\_ Israel\_\_ Cappadocia\_\_ Bithynia \_\_ Midian\_\_ Cauda (Clauda)\_\_ Ethiopia\_\_ Cyprus\_\_ Libya\_\_ Achaia

\_\_ Moesia\_\_ Asia\_\_ Lyconia\_\_ Pontus\_\_ Cyrenaica\_\_ Patmos\_\_ Arabia\_\_ Malta\_\_ Chios\_\_ Samos

\_\_ Lycia

\_\_ Mysia

**Cities**\_\_ Amphipolis

\_\_ Rome\_\_ Tyre

\_\_ Rhegium\_\_ Alexandria

\_\_ Caesarea

\_\_ Salamis

\_\_ Corinth\_\_ Assos\_\_ Derbe

\_\_ Nicopolis

\_\_ Jerusalem

\_\_ Three Taverns\_\_ Syracuse\_\_ Cos

\_\_ Damascus

\_\_ Seleucia

\_\_ Patara

\_\_ Hierapolis\_\_ Ephesus\_\_ Ptolemais

\_\_ Philadelphia

\_\_ Adramyttium\_\_ Pergamum\_\_ Thyatira\_\_ Sardis \_\_ Forum of Appius

\_\_ Troas\_\_ Paphos

\_\_ Phoenix\_\_ Colossae\_\_ Salomone

\_\_ Sidon

\_\_ Cenchrea\_\_ Perga\_\_ Antioch (east)

\_\_ Athens \_\_ Thessalonica\_\_ Apollonia\_\_ Neapolis\_\_ Cyrene \_\_ Antioch (west)\_\_ Thrace

\_\_ Laodicea

**Cities (cont'd)**\_\_ Rhodes\_\_ Myra\_\_ Lystra\_\_ Berea \_\_ Puteoli\_\_ Philippi \_\_ Attalia\_\_ Cnidus\_\_ Miletus\_\_ Fair Havens

\_\_ Smyrna \_\_ Tarsus\_\_ Iconium**Rivers**\_\_ Holys

\_\_ Euphrates\_\_ Orantes\_\_ Sangarius

\_\_ Nile

\_\_ Jordan\_\_ Pyramus\_\_ Hebrus

**Maps of the OT and Modern Mid-East**

Terry Hall, *Bible Panorama*, 49, adapted

**Regions and Elevations of Israel**

LaSor, *Old Testament Survey*, 44, 47, and Hill & Walton, *A Survey of the Old Testament*, 51

**Cross-Sectional Map of Israel**

Barry Beitzel, *Moody Atlas of Bible Lands*, 28-29

**Travel in Ancient Israel**

Marjie Mehlis, *Maps of the Holy Land for Overhead Projection* (Elgin, IL: David C. Cook Pub. Co., 1973)

The Great Trunk Road (or Via Maris, “Way of the Sea”) was the most important international artery of the Fertile Crescent. This dotted line on the map divided Israel into two distinct cultures:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| “Left Stage” | **“Right Stage”** |
| West & North | East & South |
| Fertile Plains | Dry Deserts & Hills |
| Farmers | Herdsmen |
| Land of Honey | Land of Milk |
| 40 Large Cities | 310 Small Towns |
| Gaza, Caesarea, Megiddo, Beth-Shan, Hazor, Dan | Beersheba, Hebron, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Samaria |
| Easy | Exhausting |
| Predictable | Unpredictable |
| Trade, Noisy | Isolation, Quiet |
| International | Nationalism |
| Syncretism | Purity of Religion |
| Paganism (e.g., Dagon, Astarti, Baal) | Judaism, Christianity, Islam |
| Protected own area when strong (only 150 years of Israelite control under David, Solomon) | Conquered “Left Stage” when strong (but stayed 1650 years at “Right Stage”) |
| Sea Peoples | Desert Peoples |
| Nations: Philistines, Phoenicians, Syrians, Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Romans | The “ites”: Israelites, Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites |

Sources: Jim Fleming, “The Geography of the Bible” (Tantur, Israel: Biblical Resources, n.d.); Beitzel, 50, 68

Beitzel and David C. Cook

**Sizes of Israel vs. Singapore**

*Source Unknown* **Road Distances and Temperatures in Israel**

*Israel: A Visitor’s Companion* (Jerusalem: Israel Ministry of Tourism, 1993)

and “Landface Pictorial Four in One Map” (Herzliya: Landface Co. Ltd., 1994)

**The Negev**

**Eilat Mountains Map**

*Sculptured Wilderness: Touring the Negev Desert* (Beersheba: Israel Ministry of Tourism, 1995)**History of the Negev**

*Sculptured Wilderness: Touring the Negev Desert* (Beersheba: Israel Ministry of Tourism, 1995)**Spice Route History**

*Sculptured Wilderness: Touring the Negev Desert* (Beersheba: Israel Ministry of Tourism, 1995)**Spice Route Map**

*Sculptured Wilderness: Touring the Negev Desert* (Beersheba: Israel Ministry of Tourism, 1995)**Judean Desert Map**

*Sculptured Wilderness: Touring the Negev Desert* (Beersheba: Israel Ministry of Tourism, 1995)

*Bible Visual Resource Book,* 191

**Passion Week**

*Bible Visual Resource Book,* 193

**The Old City of Jerusalem**

National Geographical Society (April 1996)

**History of Jerusalem**

The history of Jerusalem is a long and complicated one. Since the city has been one of the most destroyed and rebuilt cities in the world, deciphering the various layers of civilizations has proven a challenge for even the best archaeologists.

Jerusalem is divided into two general sections: the New City (developed largely since 1967) and the Old City (surrounded by a wall built by the Muslim Turks in AD 1530). The eastern part of Jerusalem includes the Mount of Olives and Kidron Valley and has a large Arab population whereas western Jerusalem is entirely Jewish.

Jerusalem means “City of (the god) Salim,” for it originally was a Canaanite city. This Egyptian, West Semitic, and Akkadian “Salim” in Hebrew sounds much like “Shalom,” or “peace.” Thus it has been called the “City of Peace,” but perhaps no other city has been fought over more! The Bible also calls this city Salem, Jebus, Zion, Ariel, and the City. Other names include Aelia Capitolina (Roman name after the AD 132 Jewish revolt to fourth century) and El-Quds (Muslim).

Jerusalem remains the largest populated city in Israel (600,000). Tel Aviv is larger when the outside metropolitan areas are included, and most nations consider Tel Aviv the capital. However, Israel regards Jerusalem the “real” capital. Every foot walks with a sense of history. Just look at the history of the 14 periods of control over this incredible city:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Dates | Period |
| **3150-1006 BC** | Canaanite/Jebusite (not conquered by Joshua) |
| **1006-586 BC** | Israelite (David until Nebuchadnezzar's destruction) |
| **586-538 BC** | Babylonian (Judah’s exile) |
| **538-331 BC** | Persian (Judah’s return) |
| **331-143 BC** | Hellenistic (Greek) |
| **143-63 BC** | Hasmonean (limited Jewish self-rule under Greeks) |
| **63 BC-AD 324** | Roman (time of Christ and early church) |
| **AD 324-638** | Byzantine (“Christian” Roman Empire—i.e., Eastern Orthodox control) |
| **AD 638-1099** | Early Moslem (Dome of Rock built) |
| **AD 1099-1187** | Crusader (“Christian”) |
| **AD 1187-1517** | Mamluk (Moslem) |
| **AD 1517-1917** | Ottoman (Turkish Moslem, built present walls) |
| **AD 1917-1948** | British Rule (under League of Nations mandate) |
| **AD 1948-1967** | State of Israel (but Jordan controlled East Jerusalem) |
| **AD 1967-1993** | East Jerusalem, West Bank, Gaza Strip, Golan controlled by Israel |
| **AD 1993-now** | Gaza Strip, Jericho, Bethlehem conceded to Palestinian self-rule |

**Jerusalem in Various Periods**

Charlesworth, *Jesus Within Judaism,* 113

Note that “BCE.” below means “Before Common Era” which most of us generally refer to as BC (“Before Christ”). It follows, then, that “CE” means “Common Era” or AD (“Anno Domini—the Year of Our Lord”). Many scholars use these alternate abbreviations to show sensitivity to Jewish scholars who take offense at dating based on Jesus’ life.

**Jerusalem in the Time of Christ**

Charlesworth, *Jesus Within Judaism,* 114

**Jerusalem at AD 66**

**Jerusalem’s Water System**

*BAR* (July/August 1994): 23-24 (1 of 2)

Hershel Shanks is now convinced that Warren’s Shaft could not have been used as a water shaft for several reasons. Here are his reasons with my responses.

1. Access: It is difficult to get to without a platform over the top (but why couldn’t there have been an ancient wood platform built over it? And must we assume that since it was difficult for the 69-year-old Shanks to climb with a rope ladder that Joab *couldn’t* have done it? After all, they admit that others in the 20th century have climbed it even without a rope.)
2. Protrusions: The sides down the shaft are uneven (but this presumes that the ancients would have smoothed them out whereas they may have not wanted to take the risk; in fact, these footholds would be just what Joab would have needed to climb it).
3. Lack of Rope Marks: Other wells have marks on the sides where the bucket rope marred the surface of the rock, yet this one does not (but why assume that the rope must have touched the wall? Their picture [*BAR* Nov/Dec 99, p. 33] shows the rope does not need to touch the wall and the caption even says they could “easily lower a rope down Warren’s Shaft.” Besides, they offer no alternate suggestion for the location of the *tsinnor* [“water shaft,” 2 Sam. 5:8]).
4. Water Marks at the Bottom Indicate Only One Foot of Water: Shanks says this is too shallow to lower a bucket and ancients would have dug out the bottom for a greater depth (but these water marks only indicate a one-foot level most of the time—the level could have been much higher at other times).

**Jerusalem’s Water System**

*BAR* (July/August 1994): 23-24 (2 of 2)

**A Revised Jerusalem Wall**

Hershel Shanks, *Biblical Archaeology Review* (Nov-Dec. 1999): 22-23 (1 of 2)

**Jerusalem’s Kidron Wall & Gate**

*Biblical Archaeology Review* (Nov-Dec. 1999): 24, 27 (2 of 2)

**Temple Mount**

*Bible Visual Resource Book,* 205

**Jesus in Galilee**

*Bible Visual Resource Book,* 207

Pentecost Countries & Damascus

*Bible Visual Resource Book,* 215

*Bible Visual Resource Book,* 217

Paul’s First and Second Missionary Journeys

*Bible Visual Resource Book,* 219

Paul’s Third Missionary Journey and Journey to Rome

*Bible Visual Resource Book,* 221

Paul’s Fourth Missionary Journey

*Bible Visual Resource Book,* 259, adapted significantly

Biblical Places

*An Internet Source for Bible Maps (1 of 2)*

**Biblical Places**

*An Internet Source for Bible Maps (2 of 2)*

**Reference Materials**

Stages of God’s Plan in History

Dr. Max Anders

**The** **Intertestamental Era**

**Q: Why should we study NT backgrounds?**

**A: One reason is because so much happened between the testaments that we can’t understand the NT without understanding the intertestamental period. Just look at all the changes that took place in these 400 years…**

**(425 BC—5 BC)**

Issue/Time Period Malachi (end of OT) Intertestamental Advent of Christ

Rulers Over Israel Persia (208 yrs.) Greeks (188 yrs.) Rome (58 yrs.)

Hasmoneans (80 yrs.)

Political Stability Peace/autonomy Many wars Peace (but through

Rome’s “iron hand”!)

Expectation of Messiah Moderate Increasing High

and Restored Kingdom (Zechariah) “Two Messiahs”

Language in Israel Hebrew/Aramaic Greek (Septuagint) Aramaic/Greek/Latin

-Ability to Evangelize Limited Increased Extensive

Road System Very Limited Expanded Extensive & Quality

Places of Worship Temple (Jerusalem) Rise of Synagogues Synagogues/Temple

Synagogues (Babylon) in Israel

Religious Leaders Priests/Levites Rise of Jewish Sects Pharisees/Sadducees

-Achieved office by… Genealogy Fighting illegitimate Bribes/Executions

high priest

-Extent of Power Local Jurisdiction Rise of Sanhedrin Corrupt Sanhedrin

-Hermeneutic Literal Unstable + Apocalyptic Letterism

Authority for Living OT Law Rise of Oral Law Pharisees

**The “Kingdom Stage” is Set!**

**Galatians 4:4-5** “But when the time had fully come, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,

to redeem those under the law, that we might receive the full rights as sons”

**The time was right:**

politically

linguistically

religiously

prophetically (Dan. 9:25-26)

emotionally

transportationally

**Gospel of Matthew** (probably written in the 40s) answers the two questions *all* Jews were asking:

1. Q: Non-Christian Jews asked, “How do we know *Jesus is the Messiah?”* (Matt. 1—10)

A: His advent (1—2) and approvals (3:1—4:11) show Jesus fulfilled OT *Messianic* prophecies

His early ministry (4:12-25) and Sermon on Mount (5—7) reveal He has the *prophetic* office

He shows Messianic *power* by healing (8:1—9:34) and authority by delegation (9:35—11:1)

2. Q: Christian Jews asked, “He’s Messiah, but *where’s the promised kingdom?”*  (Matt. 11—28)

A: Israel rejected Christ as Messiah, so He now has authority over the church (11:2—16:12)

Jesus prepared the disciples for church issues since kingdom is postponed (17:14—20:34)

Israel rejected Him as Messiah, but God sovereignly used this to pay for man’s sin (21—27)

Christ conquers death to prove His messianic authority & ability to bring in the kingdom (28)

Application: So how has God prepared your background for you to minister effectively?

**The Parables of Christ**

J. Dwight Pentecost, *A Harmony of the Words and Works of Jesus Christ*  (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 587-88

**The Miracles of Christ**

J. Dwight Pentecost, *A Harmony of the Words and Works of Jesus Christ*  (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 588-89

**New Testament Chronology**

**Integration of the New Testament****New Testament Chronology**

Adapted from Harold W. Hoehner, “A Chronological Table of the Apostolic Age,” ThD Diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1964, rev. 1972

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Book** | **Date** | **Paul’s Life** | **Church/Jews/Rome** | **Acts** |
|  | 30 BC-AD 14 | Birth of Paul | Augustus emperor in Rome |  |
|  | 25 Dec. 5 BC |  | Birth of Christ |  |
|  | AD 14-37 | Jerusalem Training | Tiberius emperor in Rome |  |
|  | fall 29-3 April 33 | Cilicia Training | Christ’s 3.5 yr. ministry | 1:1 |
|  | Monday, 30 March 33 |  | Triumphal Entry |  |
|  | Friday, 3 April 33 |  | Crucifixion (36 yrs. old) | 1:3a |
|  | Sunday, 5 April 33 |  | Resurrection | 1:3b |
|  | Thursday, 14 May 33 |  | Ascension | 1:4-11 |
|  | Sunday, 24 May 33 |  | Pentecost (Church Born) | 2:1-41 |
|  | 24 May 33-April 35 |  | Evangelize Jews only | 2:1—8:1 |
|  | summer 33 |  | Peter with Sanhedrin #1 | 3:1—4:31 |
|  | 33~34 |  | Ananias & Sapphira die | 4:32—5:11 |
|  | 34~35 |  | Peter with Sanhedrin #2 | 5:12-42 |
|  | late 34~early 35[[1]](#footnote-1) |  | “The Seven” selection | 6:1-7 |
|  | April 35 | Assists Stephen’s death | Stephen martyred | 6:8—7:60 |
|  | **April 35-April 48** |  | **Evangelize Samaritans** | **8:1—12:25** |
|  | April-summer 35 | Persecutes church | Persecution by Paul | 8:1, 3; 9:1a |
|  | summer 35 | Conversion | Church fears Paul | 9:1b-19a; Gal. 1:15 |
|  | summer 35-37 | Damascus[[2]](#footnote-2) & Arabia |  | 9:19b-25; Gal. 1:17 |
|  | summer 37 | Jerusalem visit #1[[3]](#footnote-3) | Barnabas introduces Paul | 9:26-29; Gal. 1:18 |
|  | fall 37-43 | Tarsus, Syria, Cilicia |  | 9:30; Gal. 1:21 |
|  | 37-41 |  | Caligula emperor in Rome |  |
| Matthew | 40’s |  | Church still Jewish |  |
|  | 40~41 |  | Peter & Gentile Cornelius | 10:1—11:18 |
|  | 41 |  | Antioch church planted | 11:19-24 |
|  | 41-54 |  | Claudius emperor in Rome |  |
|  | 43[[4]](#footnote-4) | Antioch | Barnabas recruits Paul | 11:25-26 |
| James | 44~47 |  | Jewish church is carnal |  |
|  | spring 44 |  | Agrippa I kills James | 12:1-2[[5]](#footnote-5) |
|  | spring 44 |  | Peter escapes prison | 12:3-19a |
|  | late 44? |  | God kills Agrippa I | 12:19b-24 |
|  | fall 47[[6]](#footnote-6) | Jerusalem visit #2 | Antioch’s famine relief | 11:27-30; Gal. 2:1 |
|  | Fall 47-April 48 | Antioch |  |  |
|  | **April 48-Sept. 49** | **Missionary journey #1** | **Evangelizes Galatia** | **13:1—14:26** |
|  | Sept. 49-April 50 | Antioch furlough #1 |  | 14:27-28 |
|  | fall 49 | Antioch: rebukes Peter | Still “anti-Gentile” | Gal. 2:11-16 |
| Galatians | fall 49 | Writes from Antioch | Galatian heresy stopped |  |
|  | fall 49 | Jerusalem visit #3 | Jerusalem Council | 15:1-29 |
|  | winter 49-50 | Returns to Antioch | Antioch Gentiles rejoice | 15:30-35 |
|  | April 50 | Barnabas disagrees | Barnabas disciples Mark | 15:36-39 |

**New Testament Chronology**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Book** | **Date** | **Paul’s Life** | **Church/Jews/Rome** | **Acts** |
|  | **April 50-Sept. 52** | **Missionary journey #2** | **Evangelizes west** | **15:40—18:22** |
|  | April 50-May 51 | Antioch to Athens | Macedonia church planted | 15:40—17:34 |
| 1 Thess. | early summer 51 | Writes from Corinth | Corinthian church planted | 18:1-17 |
| 2 Thess. | summer 51 | Writes from Corinth |  | 18:1-17 |
|  | mid Sept. 52 | Cenchrea, Ephesus |  | 18:18-21 |
|  | late Sept. 52 | Jerusalem visit #4 |  | 18:22 |
|  | winter 52-53 | Antioch furlough #2 |  | 18:23a |
|  | **spring 53-May 57** | **Missionary journey #3** | **Evangelizes Asia** | **18:23b—21:16** |
|  | spring-Sept. 53 | Antioch to Ephesus | Apollos at Ephesus | 18:23b-28 |
|  | Sept. 53-May 56 | Ephesus | School of Tyrannus | 19:1-41 |
|  | October 54-June 68 |  | Nero emperor |  |
| 1 Cor. | early spring 56 | Writes from Ephesus | Corinthians divided | 19:1-41 |
|  | May-June 56 | Troas to Macedonia | Corinthian visit #2 | 20:1; 2 Cor. 2:1 |
| 2 Cor. | fall 56 | Writes from Macedonia | Minority unrepentant | 20:2a |
|  | mid-late Nov. 56 | Macedonia to Corinth | Corinthian visit #3 | 20:2b |
| Romans | winter 56~57 | Writes from Corinth |  | 20:3a |
|  | late Feb.-27 May 57 | Corinth to Caesarea |  | 20:3b—21:16 |
|  | 27 May-5 June 57 | Jerusalem visit #5 | Jerusalem Church | 21:17—23:32 |
|  | 28 May 57 | Meets with James | is still ethnocentric | 21:17-25 |
|  | 29 May-1 June 57 | Purification rites done | Church satisfied | 21:26-32 |
|  | **2 June 57-Feb. 60** | **Pre-Rome Imprisonments** |  | **21:33—28:31** |
|  | 2-4 June 57 | Jerusalem Imprisonment |  | 21:33—23:22 |
| Luke | June 57-August 59 | Caesarean Imprisonment | Luke collects data | 23:23—26:32 |
|  | 4-5 June 57 | Jerusalem to Caesarea |  | 23:23-32 |
|  | 5-9 June 57 | Waiting for accusers |  | 23:33-35 |
|  | 9 June 57 | Trial by Felix |  | 24:1-23 |
|  | late June 57 | Trial by Felix and Drusilla |  | 24:24-26 |
|  | June 57-July 59 | Waiting for Felix’s verdict |  | 24:27 |
| For numbers | July 59 | Trial by Festus |  | 25:1-12 |
| below see the | early August 59 | Trial by Agrippa |  | 25:13—26:32 |
| map on p. 142  ↓ | Aug. 59-late Feb. 60 | Voyage to Rome to  evangelize Nero (27:24) |  | 27:1—28:29 |
|  | **Feb. 60-March 62** | **First Rome Imprisonment** |  | **28:30-31** |
| Ephesians | fall 60 | House arrest letter | Jew-Gentile conflict | 28:30-31 |
| Colossians | fall 61 | House arrest letter | Syncretistic heresy | 28:30-31 |
| Philemon | fall 61 | House arrest letter |  | 28:30-31 |
| Philippians | early spring 62 | House arrest letter |  | 28:30-31 |
| Acts | 62 |  | Luke finishes Acts |  |
|  | **spring 62-fall 67** | **Missionary journey #4** | **Evangelizes West** | **After Acts** |
| 1 | spring 62 | Ephesus | James (Lord’s bro.) killed |  |
|  | 62 |  | Peter goes to Rome |  |
| 2 | spring-summer 62 | Ephesus and Colosse | Timothy left at Ephesus | Philem. 22 |
| 3 | summer-winter 62/63 | Macedonia (Philippi) |  | Phil. 2:23-24 |
| 1 Timothy | fall 62 | Writes from Macedonia | False teaching | 1 Tim. 1:3 |
| 4 | spring 63-spring 64 | Asia Minor |  |  |
| 1 Peter | early 64 | Asia Minor | Christians despised in |  |
| 2 Peter | early spring 64 | Asia Minor | Rome for separatism |  |
|  | spring 64 | Asia Minor | Peter crucified in Rome |  |
| 5 | spring 64-spring 66 | Spain with Titus | Church reaches Spain | Rom. 15:24, 28 |

**New Testament Chronology**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Book** | **Date** | **Paul’s Life** | **Church/Jews/Rome** | **Acts** |
| Mark | 19 July 64-9 June 68 |  | Nero burns Rome,  persecutes, dies |  |
|  | 66-73 |  | Jewish revolt in Israel |  |
| 6 | summer-fall 66 | Crete then Asia Minor | Titus left at Crete | Tit. 1:5 |
| Titus 7 | summer 66 | Miletus | False teaching | 2 Tim. 4:20 |
|  | winter 66/67-fall 67 | Macedonia, Nicopolis, Corinth | Tit. 3:12 |  |
|  | **fall 67-spring 68** | **2nd Rome Imprisonment** |  |  |
| 2 Tim. 8-9 | fall 67 | Arrested, prison letter | Heresy/apostasy increasing |  |
| Hebrews | 67~68 |  | Persecution in Israel |  |
|  | spring 68 | Death by beheading |  | 2 Tim. 4:6 |
|  | **68-96** | **After Paul’s life** | **Late First Century Events** |  |
|  | 68-69 |  | Galba, Otho, Vitellius emperors | | |
|  | 69-79 |  | Vespasian emperor (no persecution) | | |
| John | before 2 Sept. 70 | (cf. John 5:2; Jos.*War* 6.10.1) | Jerusalem destroyed & false teaching | | |
|  | April~May 73 |  | Jews commit mass suicide at Masada | | |
| Jude | 75 |  | False teaching intensifies | | |
|  | 79-81 |  | Titus emperor (no persecution) | | |
|  | 81-96 |  | Domitian emperor (persecution later) | | |
| 1-3 John | 85~95 |  | Itinerant teachers amid false teaching | | |
| Revelation | 95~96 |  | External persecution by Domitian;  Internal compromise and heresy | | |
|  | 96-100? |  | John dies a natural death in Ephesus | | |

**Chronology of the Life of Christ**

*Walk Thru the New Testament*

**The New Testament Context**

Historical Background

Dr. Chuck Lowe

**Israel’s Privileges & Responsibilities**

Jonathan Lewis, ed., *World Mission: Part One* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1987)

**Chart of Old Testament Kings and Prophets**

**The New Testament** **Political Context**

**I. Sources for Political History**

A. Primary Sources (Ancient Writings)

1. Old Testament Scriptures: Exilic and Post-exilic historians and prophets

2. Greek Historians: Polybius (ca. 203-120 BC), Strabo (63 BC-AD 21), Plutarch (AD 50-ca. 120), and Cassius (AD 155-ca. 230).

3. Roman Historians: Cicero (160-43 BC), Livy (59 BC-AD 17), Tacitus (AD 55-ca. 120), Suetonius (AD 69-ca. 121), and Pliny the Younger (ca. AD 62-ca. 113).

4. OT Apocryphal Books: 1 Esdras (ca. 200 BC), 1 and 2 Maccabees (ca. 100 BC).

5. Jewish Historian: Josephus (AD 37-ca. 100), *The History of the Jewish War Against the Romans* (AD 77); *The Antiquities of the Jewish People*, 20 vols. (AD 93).

6. New Testament Scriptures: Luke-Acts.

B. Secondary Sources (Modern Writings; see also the bibliography on the course syllabus)

1. Bruce, F. F. *New Testament History.* England: Nelson, 1969; reprint, Garden City, NY: Anchor Books (Doubleday), 1971. 462 pp.

2. Hoehner, Harold W. *Herod Antipas.*  Cambridge: Cambridge Univ., 1972.

3. Jeremias, J. *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus.* Philadelphia: Fortress, 1969.

4. Schürer, E. *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 BC—AD 135).* Revised and edited by G. Vermes, F. Millar, and M. Black. 2 vols. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1973-79.

5. Richard L. Niswonger. *New Testament History.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988.

**II. Prophecies in Daniel**

A. Context: The exile (605-536 BC)

1. *Fall of Israel:* Assyria had conquered the northern kingdom of Israel (capital, Samaria) over 100 years before Daniel’s time due to Israel’s sin (722 BC). These Jews were exiled (transplanted) to Assyria (northern Iraq today) and intermarried with pagan peoples (2 Kings 17:1-6, 24-26). Assyria brought other conquered peoples into Israel who married the few poor Israelites that remained. Their mixed-breed offspring were called Samaritans (cf. p. 59).

The Assyrian Empire (BKC, 1465)



2. *Fall of Judah:* Judah also sinned greatly, and Daniel was taken away from the southern kingdom of Judah (capital, Jerusalem) into exile in 605 BC by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon (southern Iraq today). About 20 years later (586 BC) Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed and most of the population deported to Babylon.

The prophecies Daniel received came to him while waiting in Babylon wondering whether he or his people would ever see the land of Israel again (cf. “Chart of Old Testament Kings and Prophets,” p. 47).

B. Content: Several times in the book Daniel sees revelations of the future kingdoms (cf. “Identification of the Four Kingdoms,” p. 50, and “Between the Testaments,” p. 51).

1. Daniel 2: The multi-material image (Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome)

2. Daniel 7: The four beasts (Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome)

3. Daniel 8: The ram (Medo-Persia) and he-goat (Greece)

4. Daniel 9: The “Seventy Sevens” prophecy predicts Israel’s Millennial Kingdom (v. 24). Also, it includes an incredibly accurate prophecy (vv. 25-27) that 483 years after Artaxerxes’ decree to rebuild Jerusalem (444 BC) the Messiah will die (AD 33). This is perhaps the most remarkable prophecy in the history of mankind as it came true to the very day—whether one uses the Jewish *or* Gregorian calendar! This is shown in Harold Hoehner’s *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ*, 115-39, and on the chart below:

The 483 Years in the Jewish and Gregorian Calendars



Identification of the Four Kingdoms

*Bible Visual Resource Book,* 133

Between the Testaments

*Bible Visual Resource Book,* 167

**Maps of Intertestamental Empires**

Walton

House (1 of 2)

A Chronological History of Palestine (2 of 2)

**III.** **Babylonian Rule over Israel (605—539 BC)**

**A. Three Deportations** (cf. OTS, 370)

Note: Babylon’s philosophy was to *bring* captive peoples to their own land.

1. 605 BC Babylon (Nebuchadnezzar II) defeated Egypt at the Battle of Carchemish (p. 50) at the headwaters of the Euphrates. King Jehoiakim of Judah had been subject to Egypt for its sin, but then became subject to the victor, Babylon. However, then Jehoiakim rebelled.

First Deportation: Nebuchadnezzar plundered the Jerusalem temple treasures and took captive prominent citizens such as Daniel (2 Kings 24:1-7; 2 Chron. 36:5-8; Dan. 1:1-4).

2. 597 BC Jerusalem (under King Jehoiachin) revolted and came under a brief siege again.

Second Deportation: Nebuchadnezzar exiled to Babylon 10,000 captives—all the leading men such as Jehoiachin, Ezekiel, and Mordecai, as well as the skilled craftsmen (2 Kings 24:10-16; Ezek. 1:1-2).

3. 586 BC Jerusalem (under King Zedekiah) revolted again.

Third Deportation: This time Nebuchadnezzar took no chances and began a devastating two-and-a-half-year siege, ending in 586 BC with the destruction of the temple, the walls, and the entire city. All but the poorest people (left under Governor Gedaliah) were exiled to Babylon (2 Kings 25:1-12).

B. After Nebuchadnezzar’s reign (605-562 BC = 43 years!) the Babylonian empire quickly crumbled with five kings in only 23 years. The last was Belshazzar (544-539 BC), whose demise is in Daniel 5:30.

**C. Key Developments** under Babylonian Rule of Israel

1. Preservation of National Heritage: The Babylonian policy of deportation required conquered countries to follow their pagan cult (cf. Dan. 2, 6). In contrast to the ten northern tribes that merged into Assyrian society, the Judean Jews in exile successfully resisted this.

a. Separation: They were forbidden to carry on sacrifices, but they held fast to the *law of God, the Sabbath, and circumcision*—all ways that kept them a distinct people.

b. Rise of the Synagogue: With the Jerusalem temple destroyed, local Jewish places of worship sprung up throughout Babylon.

c. Elimination of Idolatry: The people finally learned the lesson that idols are abhorred by God (Exod. 20:3-6) and that idolatry had caused the devastation of Jerusalem.

2. Prophets such as Ezekiel and Daniel ministered in exile. They anticipated and prayed for the restoration of Jerusalem (cf. Ezek. 34:13; 36:38; Dan. 6:10; 9:16, 25). Previously Jeremiah had limited the time of captivity to 70 years (Jer. 25:11-12; 29:10).

All this prepared the people intellectually and spiritually for a new beginning in Israel.

**IV.** **Persian Rule over Palestine (539—331 BC)**

Note: Persia’s philosophy was to *return* captive peoples to their own land.

**A. Cyrus** the Great of Persia (559-530 BC) conquered Babylon (Belshazzar) in 539 BC and became ruler over Israel (cf. Isa. 13:14; 21:1-10; 44:48; 45:1; 47:1-5; Jer. 50—51; Dan. 8:1-4; Herodotus 1.190ff.).

**B. Three Returns** (see “Returns from Exile” chart on the following page)

Walton

Walton

**C. Key Developments** under Persian Rule of Israel

1. Restoration of Temple Worship (first return under Zerubbabel): Initially only the sacrifices were reestablished, but following the completion of the temple rebuilding came the reinstitution of the entire temple system.

2. Law of Moses Reestablished as the Law of the Land (second return under Ezra): Ezra the priest and scribe (1 Chron. 6:3-15; Ezra 7:6-7) taught the law and enforced it by order of the king (Ezra 7:14, 25-26), especially in respect to prohibiting intermarriage (Ezra 9—10; Neh. 10:30; 13:23-31). This led to copying scrolls of the OT used even in the time of Jesus.

3. Economic and Spiritual Life Revived (third return under Nehemiah): The restoration of the walls, repopulating of Jerusalem, reinstitution of the sabbath, spiritual revival among the people, and renewal of the intermarriage prohibition under Nehemiah all contributed to the placing of Israel more firmly in the land.

4. Rise of the Temple State: Though Judah was still a vassal state, Persia allowed the people a great deal of local autonomy (especially in cultural and religious matters) to win their allegiance. This resulted in peace, prosperity, and security. Eventually the Persian governor was replaced by a council of elders closely allied with the leading priestly families and directly accountable to the Persian king. The *Temple* was the place of power, the *Mosaic Law* was “the constitution,” and the *High Priest* (from the ancient line of Zadok) was the highest official. However, there still was no Jewish king on the throne of Israel.

5. Aramaic Language: This became the official language of the empire so that Hebrew began to die out as the everyday language of the Jews. By the time of Christ few Jews knew Hebrew and Aramaic was the common language of Palestinian Jews.

6. Jewish Diaspora: Although Persian policy allowed the Jews to return to Israel and reestablish their religion and customs, very few did so. Those remaining in foreign lands became known as the Diaspora so that many Jewish settlements could be found around the empire. Paul later used the synagogues of these groups as points of contact in evangelizing the Roman world.

7. Samaritans, the inhabitants of Samaria to the north of Jerusalem, had earlier resulted from intermarriage with pagan peoples who occupied the land during Israel’s Assyrian exile. Jews would not recognize them as true Israelites due to their “mixed blood” (2 Kings 17). Therefore, the Jerusalem community separated from them (Ezra 4:1-2) and this alienation and rivalry finally led to two political provinces (Samaria and Judea) and two sanctuaries of worship (Mt. Gerizim and Jerusalem) later under Alexander the Great. Years later the Samaritan woman spoke with Jesus at the well about these two sanctuaries (John 4:20).

8. Purim was added to the feasts of Israel during the reign (486-465 BC) of the Persian monarch Xerxes I (Ahasuerus). The story is recorded in the Book of Esther how Haman, Xerxes’s prime minister and an enemy of the Jews, sought to annihilate all Jews on a certain day (14th of Adar), but his plot was foiled by the courage and intervention of Queen Esther, a Jewess. Xerxes reversed Haman’s diabolical scheme and permitted the Jews to defend themselves on that day and the day after. Because Haman had selected the day by the throwing of *purim* (“lots”), the 14th and 15th of Adar (Feb./March) was chosen for a memorial festival called the Feast of Purim (cf. also 2 Maccabees 15:36; Josephus, *Antiquities*, 11.6.13).

9. Close of the OT Canon: The prophet Malachi preached during the Persian rule (ca. 432—425 BC). Being the last of the OT prophets, the conclusion of his ministry began what is now known as the “400 silent years” (425—5 BC) when no prophets spoke until the time of John the Baptist.

10. Judaism became the term depicting the Jewish way of life in both its cultural and religious aspects from the post-exilic period onward. Orthodox Judaism strictly resisted outside influences that would seek to absorb or change it.

**V. Greek Rule over Israel (331—143 BC)**

A. Alexander the Great (356-323 BC)

1. Birth: 356 BC into a royal family that was

Macedonian but heavily influenced by Greeks

2. Education: by Aristotle (a Greek) from age 13

3. Succession to the Throne (336 BC): At age 20 he succeeded his father, Philip II, king of the Macedonians—a people closely related to but distinct from the Greeks (they adopted many cultural developments of the Greeks).

4. Colonization (336-335 BC): Alexander consolidated the politically divided Greek city-states by crushing the rebellious city of Thebes. By assuming political leadership of Greece (south of his homeland), he and his followers became heirs of the Greek way of life and took responsibility for sharing it with the world. This imposing of Greek values, worldview, or way of life was called Hellenization. See *MacMillan Bible Atlas,*110-13; Niswonger, 20-21

5. Conquest (334-325 BC): In only 12 years he conquered the entire Persian Empire from Asia Minor to modern Pakistan! These conquests with only 35,000 soldiers included Israel, which capitulated to him with the exceptions of Tyre and Gaza while Alexander was en route to conquer Egypt (332-331 BC). One tradition says Jerusalem surrendered without a fight as he was shown by the high priest that he was fulfilling Daniel’s prophecies about him (Dan. 8:5-7; Jos. *Ant.* 11.325-339; cf. Niswonger, 20-21). Before he could reach the Ganges River, his army forced him to turn back (cf. “The Route of Alexander’s Conquests,” p. 61).

6. Consolidation (325-323 BC): The task then came to reorganize his immense empire, but this failed due to Alexander’s personal excesses (self-indulgence, unpredictability) and poor policies (e.g., placing Greeks and Macedonians in the old Persian administration).

1. Death (323 BC): His final years seem to involve the beginnings of desiring worship by his subjects, which is consistent with the Greek notion that divinity rests in extraordinary persons. Finally Alexander, only 32 years old, fell ill and died in Babylon, the chosen capital of his new empire (Dan. 8:8a). He left no heir and/or successor.
2. Significance: Politically, Alexander’s empire lasted only 11 years (334-323 BC), yet culturally, it endured nearly 1000 years until the rise of Islam and the Arab conquests of the seventh century AD (cf. p. 62 Hellenization and Greek language).

B. Struggle for Supremacy (323-301 BC)

1. After unsuccessful attempts to preserve the vast empire by the Diadochi (first generation of Alexander’s successors), a coalition of four of Alexander’s generals crushed their opposition at the Battle of Ipsus, Phrygia (301 BC).

2. The four generals then fulfilled Daniel by breaking the empire into four parts (8:8, 21-22; 11:4): Ptolemy (Egypt), Seleucus (East Asia Minor & Syria to India), Lysimachus (West Asia Minor), and Cassander (Macedonia). See “The Greek and Roman Empires,” p. 64).

3. During this unstable period (323-301 BC) Israel changed hands six times! (It was in the middle of the action at the crossroads between Asia, Europe, and Africa.) In the following years (301-143 BC) the Ptolemaic and Seleucid empires exercised the greatest control over Israel so only they will be addressed in the following discussion.

**The Route of Alexander’s Conquests**

C. The Hellenistic Empires (301-143 BC)

1. Ptolemaic Rule (301-198 BC) was a long Period of Peace lasting over a century. Key developments during this time including the following:

a. Non-Interference Religiously: The Ptolemies refrained from meddling in internal affairs, following the example of the Persians and Alexander the Great. Jerusalem remained a “temple state” with the high priest ruling under the consent of the Ptolemies.

b. Rise of the Sanhedrin: Ruling with the high priest over both secular and spiritual affairs was the Sanhedrin, which apparently came into being at this time and comprised priests and leading men (elders) in Jerusalem.

c. Peaceful Hellenization: Greek communities sprang up in parts of Israel (e.g., the Decapolis, *deca* “ten” + *polis* “city”). This brought with it Greek influences such as manner of life, culture (theatre, art, science, sports), intellectual ideas, religion, and trade. However, traditional Jewish practices and thinking was jealously preserved.

d. Greek Language: Alexander also encouraged his soldiers to marry local women and have their children speak Greek. Jews in Israel interested in profiting financially from Greek influences learned Greek, the trade language (anyone unable to do so was regarded as barbarian!), and Jews adopted some appealing Greek customs. This adoption of the Greek language paved the way for the New Testament to be written in a much more precise language than Hebrew.

e. Septuagint: Many Jews moved to Alexandria, Egypt, where they learned Greek and gained appreciation for Greek literature (Alexandria had a large, famous library). They were accorded civil rights with Greeks. It was here during the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus (285-247 BC) that the OT was translated into Greek and called the Septuagint or LXX, owing to its translation by 70 scholars.

Note: This period is predicted with amazing accuracy by Daniel, containing over 100 prophecies about the Ptolemies (Greek rulers of Egypt) and Seleucids (Greek rulers of Syria), who continually exchanged power over the land of Palestine:

The Ptolemies and the Seleucids in Daniel 11:5-35



*Bible Visual Resource Book,* 135

**The Greek and Roman Empires**

2. Seleucid Rule (198-143 BC) was a shorter Period of War that began with the victory of Antiochus III (the Great) over Ptolemy V at Caesarea Philippi in 198 BC, which transferred Palestine from Ptolemaic to Seleucid rule. This turbulent time prepared the way for a clash that led to the following period of self-rule by Jews (the Hasmonean era).

a. Onias III, a legitimate high priest (i.e., a Zadokite), lost his position to his Hellenized brother Joshua (who took the Greek name Jason) when Jason offered Antiochus IV Epiphanes (“manifestation of Zeus”) a large sum of money to pay Rome (175 BC).

b. Jason pledged to turn Jerusalem into a Greek city with a city council, voting privileges for citizens, a gymnasium, and Greek educational system. Most significantly, he intended to include some Hellenization of the Jewish religion (Bruce, 3).

c. Menelaus (a non-Zadokite, 2 Macc. 4:23; 3:4), replaced Jason as high priest by bribing Antiochus with an even larger sum of money (171 BC). Thus the high priesthood became a power position secured by bribery rather than priestly lineage.

d. Hasidim, meaning “pious” adherents to the Law, organized themselves in opposition to the abuses of the priestly aristocracy and the encroachments of Hellenism on their religious life. The family of the Maccabees belonged to this group and their later adherents included both Pharisees and Essenes (to be discussed later).

e. Antiochus IV led two campaigns against Egypt in 170-168 BC (Dan. 8:9-14, 23-25; 11:21-35). While returning from the first campaign he replenished his own treasury by looting the Jerusalem temple treasury. Twice (ca. 173 and 169 BC) he minted on coins his full title, “King Antiochus, God Manifest.” These two actions outraged Jews who up to this point had not resisted the Hellenistic emperor cult (Hengel, 285).

f. Hasidim members put Menelaus in prison after Antiochus left and they took over the city. This action signaled the beginning of a revolt.

g. Antiochus IV took revenge after the Romans humiliated him on his second Egyptian campaign by requiring him to relinquish all his Egyptian conquests (Dan. 11:29-30):

1) He captured Jerusalem, destroyed its walls, and made it a Greek city (167 BC).

2) By royal edict he abolished the Temple constitution (the “laws of the fathers”).

3) He banned Jewish practices such as Sabbath observance, circumcision, and sacrifices. Josephus (*Ant.* 12.242) notes that those who resisted “were mutilated, strangled, or crucified, with their children hung from their necks” (Maier, 210).

4) He destroyed copies of the Torah.

5) He turned the Jerusalem temple into a place of worship for the Hellenized Syrian god, Zeus Baal Shamayin, and his consorts “Athena” and “Dionysus.” He even polluted the altar by offering a swine on it (Dan. 11:31).

6) He also persecuted faithful, devout Jews. The eating of pork became the test of loyalty to Antiochus (Dan. 11:32). Those who refused were killed (Dan. 11:33-35).

Jews abhorred this enforcement of Hellenization from Kislev (Dec.) 167 to Kislev (Dec.) 164. Many saw these appalling events as signs of the last days. Others fled to the Judean hills to join guerrilla bands for armed resistance. All this set the stage for the Maccabean revolt.

Daniel amazing predicted these events 500 years earlier (Dan. 11:29-35). Many scholars believe that Daniel 9:27 also refers to this period but only *as history after it occurred*, as they deny predictive prophecy and date Daniel’s book centuries later after 164 BC.

3. The Maccabean Revolt (166-143 BC)

Note: Periods of control in parentheses (cf. Beitzel, 154-55)

a. Mattathias (166 BC) was an old priest and head of a family called the Hasmoneans (named after their ancestor Hasmon). He had five sons: Simon, Judas, Jonathan, Eleazar, and John (see genealogical chart, p. 68).

Mattathias, angry with Antiochus’ Hellenization efforts, killed a Jew who was about to offer a pagan sacrifice on their local altar and killed the royal official who demanded this to be done. This incident sparked open revolt and guerrilla warfare.

The Hasidim (“pious”) Jews supported Mattathias and his sons in the revolt. Guerrilla bands destroyed pagan altars, punished apostate Jews (Hellenistic reformers), and exhorted faithful Jews to join their crusade. But Mattathias soon became ill and died.

b. Judas (166-160 BC), Mattathias’ son, took the leadership of the revolt. He acquired the surname Maccabeus, which means “hammer-like one.” Thus Mattathias’ sons became known as “the Maccabees” within the Hasmonean family line.

While Antiochus IV was preoccupied fighting the Parthians in the East, Judas found success in large-scale attacks on Syrians who had controlled Jerusalem. He recaptured Jerusalem (except the Syrian occupied citadel), reestablished the worship of Yahweh, and in December 164 BC reconsecrated the altar. Since then Jews have celebrated this event annually in the Feast of Dedication (Hebrew Hanukkah) or Lights. Tradition says that while only one day’s purified oil was available for the temple, it miraculously lasted eight days until new oil could be pressed. For this reason, Jews light an eight-branched menorah (hanukkiah) each evening until all eight are lit. It was at this feast that Christ proclaimed Himself to be the light of the world (John 10:22-23; cf. p. 131).

The Hasidim rejoiced to see religious freedom restored and chose Alcimus as the new, legitimate high priest (a member of the Aaronic family but not a Zadokite). These Hasidim became a key Jewish party known as Pharisees. They despised politics.

Yet Judas and his followers also wanted political freedom—even without support from the Hasidim. After many battles Judas was defeated and killed (160 BC), but supporters of the Maccabean priest-princes became a very political, second party called Sadducees.

c. Jonathan (160-143 BC), Judas’ brother, became the leader of the freedom fighters. He exploited the Syrian power disputes and when Alcimus died (160 BC) the high priest’s office was unfilled until Jonathan finally obtained Syrian approval to assume this office himself (153 BC). He reigned until he was tricked and killed by Trypho in 143 BC.

Thus Jonathan was the military, civil, and religious leader of the Jews. This combination of offices in a single individual set the stage for the Hasmonean state.

Jews at this time were both religiously and politically divided. Religiously, some were willing to make concessions with the Greeks (pro-Hellenic party) while others remained strictly Jewish (anti-Hellenic party). Politically, some accepted political overlording (Pharisees) while others sought total political freedom (Sadducees).

**VI.** **Hasmonean Rule over Palestine (143-63 BC)**

A. Simon (143-135 BC), the second oldest and last surviving son of Mattathias, made a treaty with the Seleucid ruler Demetrius II which resulted in Jewish independent rule for the first time since before the exile (586 BC). Demetrius recognized him as independent ruler of Judea, exempted the Jews from taxes, and permitted the expulsion of Syrian forces from the citadel (Acra) in Jerusalem (142-141 BC). Simon gained access to the Mediterranean coast, minted his own Jewish coins, and established diplomatic ties with Rome which ruled the western empire, including the Aegean area where it had beaten the Seleucids in 190 BC (Bruce, 3). Thus the Hasmonean dynasty was founded (1 Macc. 14).

Despite this note of optimism, some ultra-conservative Jews were unhappy that Simon, a non-Zadokite, ruled as high priest. These strict Jews, the Essenes, went into exile at this time and established a religious community in the desert near the shores of the Dead Sea (Khirbet Qumran). Their leader was a Zadokite known as the “Teacher of Righteousness” in contrast to Simon, the “evil priest.”

B. John Hyrcanus (135-104 BC), Simon’s son and successor, went beyond his father’s ambitions. He had three **Key Developments** (goals) under Hasmonean Rule of Palestine:

1. *Expansion:* He conquered the areas around Palestine. This included the coast from the Greeks, Idumea (ancient Edom), and he destroyed the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim.

2. *Alliance with Rome:* The Seleucid empire had lost its military power and was no longer a threat, so he renewed his father’s alliance with Rome.

3. *Enforced Judaism:* Greeks (e.g., in Decapolis) had to emigrate or convert to Judaism. This effort was supported by the priestly aristocracy called the Sadducees but found opposition by the Pharisees, who felt Hasmonean leaders did not qualify for the high priesthood.

C. Aristobulus I (104-103 BC), Hyrcanus’ eldest son, seized power after his father’s death and was the first Jewish ruler to be called king. However, he died suddenly.

D. Alexander Janneus (103-76 BC), Hyrcanus’ third son, continued the policies of expansion and enforced Judaism. In his lust for power he finally gained control over an area nearly the size of that which Solomon ruled (ca. 950 BC). This was the golden age of post-exilic Judaism (cf. p. 69 boundaries and Beitzel, 155), although a six-year revolt (94-86 BC) was supported by the Pharisees and others tired of enforced Judaism. Janneus crucified 800 of these defeated leaders near Jerusalem. His unprincipled manners also wiped out entire Greek cities and exhausted the nation’s wealth.

E. Alexandra Salome (76-67 BC), Janneus’ wife, took control after his death and continued Israel’s golden age. As queen she directed the land with wisdom and appointed her eldest son, Hyrcanus II, as high priest. Although up to this time only Sadducees were members of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish ruling council, she also allowed the Pharisees to become members as well, and thus created rivalry between the two groups.

F. Aristobulus II vs. Hyrcanus II (67-63 BC). After Alexandra died, Hyrcanus II, the rightful king and high priest, was forced outside of Palestine by his younger brother, Aristobulus, so that Hyrcanus had to seek refuge from the Nabateans in Petra (ancient Moab).

Hyrcanus II soon returned to besiege Jerusalem. Both sides appealed to the Roman general Pompey who was approaching from the north. Aristobulus wanted to defend the city, but Hyrcanus and most of the people opened the gates to the Romans (63 BC). In his arrogance, Pompey even entered the holy of holies. His assassination 15 years later was seen by the Jews as God’s judgment for this unlawful act (Bruce, 12).

Thus Judea became formally subject to Rome. Heavy tribute was imposed. Hyrcanus II was reinstated as high priest (63-40 BC), but the era of Jewish national independence was over.

(Maier, 390)

(Grassmick)

**VII.** **Roman Rule over Palestine (63 BC—AD 330)**

A. Roman Emperors (over the entire empire) See p. 72. Evil ones in *italics.*

1. Julius Caesar (64-44 BC) was appointed *pontifex maximus* in 64 BC, a life-long office which gave him supervision of all aspects of religion in the Roman state. With Crassus (the wealthiest man in Rome) and Pompey (the general who conquered much of the empire, including Palestine), these three formed an alliance called the *First Triumvirate.*

However, the Parthians killed Crassus (53 BC), and Caesar killed Pompey in the Roman civil war (48 BC), leaving Caesar master of the world. Key developments included these:

a. His generosity and pardon towards conquered foes followed the ideal of the Hellenistic “divine” ruler, which paved the way for later emperors to claim divinity.

b. The conquered lands used many different calendars, so he adopted the Julian calendar—a solar year of 365 days including leap year every four years. July was named after him.

c. He desired to make the Roman empire into an ideal international commonwealth of nations, but this met opposition by traditional Roman society (led by Brutus and Cassius), leading to their assassination of Julius Caesar on 15 March 44 BC.

d. The years 43-31 BC were turbulent years mostly ruled by the *Second Triumvirate*—Mark Antony, Octavian, and Lepidus (Cornell & Matthews, *Atlas of Roman World*, 73).

2. Augustus (31 BC—AD 14), grandson of Caesar’s sister Julia, was named heir in his will. Augustus was Rome’s first real emperor and began with the name Octavius (Octavian). He was initially supported by Antony, who became Augustus’ brother-in-law by marrying Octavia (Octavian’s sister). However, Antony divorced her and married Cleopatra of Egypt and the two traveled the eastern provinces as the New Dionysus (Greek god) who had been united with the New Isis, or Aphrodite (Egyptian goddess). Octavian saw this as an attempt to split up the empire and defeated them in war (31 BC). Key developments included these:

a. Shortly after his victory the Senate conferred on Octavian the title Augustus (27 BC), an ancient sacral title attributing to him *felicitas*, the manifestation of supernatural ability. Thereafter he was known as *Imperator Caesar divi filius Augustus.*

b. Augustus brought peace to the empire and enjoyed a long rule lasting half-way through Christ’s life (27 BC—AD 14). The month of August was named after him.

c. God used his census to enable the Nazareth-grown Messiah to be born in Bethlehem (Luke 2:1). Though venerated, Augustus refused worship as a deity (Niswonger, 86).

3. *Tiberius* (AD 14-37) was Augustus’ adopted son of his third wife’s previous marriage. (Augustus, although “God,” couldn’t bear a son of his own!) Interestingly, he did not permit divine honors to be given to him and Jesus Christ conducted and completed His entire earthly mission during Tiberius’ reign (Luke 3:1). However, he was a student of the occult, and his death was generally welcomed as a great relief (cf. picture on p. 92).Cornell78

4. *Gaius* (*“Caligula,”* AD 37-41), Tiberius’ grandnephew, claimed divinity as an incarnation of the Roman high-god Jupiter. He demanded that his statue be set up to receive divine worship—even in the temple of Jerusalem! Imperial guard officers assassinated him.

5. Claudius (AD 41-54), Caligula’s uncle, conducted the state well as a learned historian and able administrator until his wife and niece (Agrippina) poisoned him. Key developments:

a. An empire-wide famine during his reign gave Gentile believers the chance to help Jewish Christians in Jerusalem to show their unity in Christ (Acts 11:27-30).

b. Claudius exercised religious tolerance. This allowed Paul to embark upon his first two missionary journeys during his reign (Acts 13:1–18:23; AD 48-52; cf. p. 30).

c. He expelled all Jews from Rome, bringing Aquila and Priscilla to Corinth (Acts 18:2).

6. *Nero* (AD 54-68), Claudius’ stepson, began well by leaving state affairs to the poet and Stoic philosopher, Seneca, and to his financial expert Burrus. However, later many horrible incidents took place:

a. Insanity: Moral corruption of the Roman nobility and Nero himself changed his policies. He became jealous of any rival to power. So he poisoned his stepbrother Britannicus (Claudius’ son), murdered his own mother (Agrippina), divorced his wife for a friend’s wife and then killed her when she was pregnant by kicking her in the stomach, and finally murdered all the remaining members of the imperial family and forced many old friends (e.g., Seneca) to commit suicide.

b. Hypocrisy: In public Nero appeared quite the opposite from the above. He gave performances as a singer, poet, and athlete. He promoted outlandish games to increase his popularity among the people.

c. Persecution of Christians: In AD 64 , while Nero was away from Rome, a terrible, week-long fire burned much of Rome—especially the old city and Nero’s old palace. He soon rebuilt the city lavishly, but rumors circulated that he himself was the arsonist. Looking for a scapegoat, he settled upon the Christians who were martyred in horrendous ways.

d. Palestinian Jewish Revolt (AD 66-70) began during his reign and eventually resulted in the fall of Jerusalem (AD 70) and the fortress of Masada (AD 73).

e. Death: Within four years of the fire Nero had spent all the state’s finances on rebuilding Rome and a vacation in Greece. He fled from Rome and committed suicide.

At Nero’s death no possible successor was left among the descendants of Augustus. Three men (Galba, Otho, and Vitellius) unsuccessfully sought to be emperor from AD 68-69.

7. Vespasian (AD 69-79) had been the Roman general fighting the Jewish uprising in Palestine since AD 66. Upon a summons to become emperor he made calculated moves (e.g., he left the siege of Jerusalem to his son Titus) and successfully overthrew Vitellius. He was a thrifty, competent administrator and soon ended the Jewish war (AD 70).

8. Titus (AD 79-81) had conquered Jerusalem and proved an exemplary ruler. During his reign Mt. Vesuvius erupted and buried the cities of Pompeii and Herculanenum (AD 79) as well as another major fire in Rome and a plague which decimated its population.

9. *Domitian* (AD 81-96), Titus’ brother, initially had many accomplishments. But his demand to be called “Lord and God” and severe paranoia led to a reign of terror—rivals were executed, philosophers expelled from Rome, and Christians suffered martyrdom. John wrote the Book of Revelation near the end of his reign while in exile on the Island of Patmos. Finally Domitian was assassinated. Thus ends the NT era of Roman emperors.

\* Observations

a. The emperors were immoral, power-hungry men. Someone has calculated that 13 of the 16 emperors were homosexuals (although I have not been able to verify this as true or not). To such men Scripture admonishes believers to be subject (Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-17).

b. Although the emperors from Augustus to Nero were all related, never once did a direct succession from father to son ever occur.

c. God sovereignly allowed the rule from Rome to alternate from bad to good and then back to bad to good again. This allowed the early church to be purified under persecution, then expand under freedom, and see the cycle occur again and again.

**Charts of Roman Emperors**

Top chart: source unknown; Bottom chart: *New Bible Dictionary*, 2d ed., 826

“The Roman Occupation”

*Today’s Handbook of Bible Times and Customs*, Coleman (1 of 6)

“The Roman Occupation” in *Today’s Handbook of Bible Times and Customs*, Coleman (2 of 6)

“The Roman Occupation” in *Today’s Handbook of Bible Times and Customs*, Coleman (3 of 6)

“The Roman Occupation” in *Today’s Handbook of Bible Times and Customs*, Coleman (4 of 6)

“The Roman Occupation” in *Today’s Handbook of Bible Times and Customs*, Coleman (5 of 6)

“The Roman Occupation” in *Today’s Handbook of Bible Times and Customs*, Coleman (6 of 6)

B. The Herodian Dynasty (ruling only Palestine)

1. First Generation: Herod the Great (37-4 BC)

a. Herod’s first years of consolidation of his rule (37-25 BC) were involved in gaining the throne by overcoming three problems:

1) Rome: He aligned himself with the more powerful ruler in Rome (he wisely selected Augustus who defeated Antony and conferred upon Herod the title of king).

2) Hasmoneans: He executed the remaining Hasmonean aristocracy (including his wife Mariamme, her two sons, and Hyrcanus II, the last Hasmonean claimant to the throne).

3) Jews: He needed popular support from the Pharisees and common people (which he never really got) and so supported the institutions of the Jewish religion. However, the Jews never forgot that he was an Idumean (people forcibly “converted” to Judaism by the Hasmoneans) and that his rule relied upon the support of the hated Romans.

b. Herod’s middle years of prosperity (25-14 BC) saw:

1) the “tight rope” promotion of both Greco-Roman culture and Jewish demands

2) extensive building projects, such as rebuilding Samaria (renamed “Sebaste” to honor of Augustus), Caesarea, the Masada palace/fortress (pp. 82-84), a mountain (p. 86), and the Jerusalem temple (20 BC—AD 63 only to be destroyed seven years later in AD 70; see p. 85). He also built pagan temples outside Palestine (Bruce, 21).

3) trade promoted (Caesarea artificial harbor) and commerce over a vast kingdom (p. 81)

4) a raised level of public education

c. Herod’s last years of decline (14-4 BC) were those of a madman:

1) His ten wives and seven sons lead to incredible domestic suspicion, intrigue, and violence. He murdered Mariamne (29 BC) and her sons (7 BC; p. 90).

2) The people increasingly resisted his cruel, arbitrary rule. After Jewish youths tore down the offensive Roman golden eagle over the Temple door he had these burned alive.

3) As he approached 70 years old he was in poor physical and mental health, leading to virtual insanity. His order to massacre all Bethlehem infants (Matt. 2:1-16) is completely consistent with the paranoia and pain of his final months (cf. p. 86).

4) Five days before his death (April, 4 BC) he altered his will a *sixth* time by appointing three of his sons (each who had a different mother) as rulers over various parts of his kingdom. See p. 89 (column 2).

d. Key Developments under Herod the Great:

1) Internal peace and economic prosperity due to his diplomatic skills

2) Fortified the country and made many social improvements

3) Began restoration of the Temple

4) Alienated his dynasty from the Pharisees and masses by arbitrary policies

2. Second Generation: Herod’s Sons (4 BC—ca. AD 69) See pp. 88-90.

a. Archelaus the ethnarch (4 BC—AD 6) ruled Judea, Samaria, and Idumea and was promised by Caesar Augustus that he would be king if he ruled well. However, his gross misrule provoked the Jews to have Augustus remove him within ten years. He was banished to Gaul (France). His significance for NT studies:

1) Archelaus is the “king” whom Joseph feared when he, Mary, and Jesus came back from Egypt (Matt. 2:22). See p. 87.

2) The tribute census (AD 6) caused an uprising under Judas the Galilean which gave birth to a radical Jewish nationalistic movement which was probably the origin of the Zealot movement of later years (Acts 5:37).

\* Non-Herodian Interlude: After Archelaus his areas were put under the jurisdiction of a prefect (procurator) ruling from Caesarea—not Jerusalem. Most notable of these were:

1) Pontius Pilate (AD 26-36) had Jesus crucified (AD 33)

2) M. Antonius Felix (AD 52-59) tried Paul (Acts 23–24)

3) Porcius Festus (AD 59-61) also tried Paul (Acts 25–26)

b. Philip the tetrarch (4 BC—AD 34) ruled over the northern regions of Iturea, Gaulanitis, Trachonitis, Batanea, and Auranitis. Most of his subjects were Gentile, he was well liked, and he built two cities: Caesarea Philippi (his residence) and Julias (a rebuilt Bethsaida). He had no children and thus after his death in AD 34 his territory was ruled by Roman governors (Syrians) until Herod Agrippa I received it from Caligula in AD 37.

c. Herod Antipas the tetrarch (4 BC—AD 39) ruled over Galilee and Perea but retained the dynastic title “Herod.”

1) The people of Palestine called him “king” (which he liked!). He was cunning and cruel like his father but not as great. Jesus called him “this fox” (Luke 13:32).

2) He had John the Baptist imprisoned and murdered (Matt. 14:3-12; Mark 6:17-29; Luke 3:19-20) at the instigation of his second wife, Herodias (cf. Josephus *Ant.* 18.116-119).

3) His actions in relation to Christ were on three occasions:

a) He heard reports of Jesus’ ministry (Mark 6:14-16)

b) He allegedly threatened to kill Jesus (Luke 13:31-33)

c) Jesus appeared before him at His trial (Luke 23:6-12)

4) He wanted the title of “king” from Caligula himself so went there personally (AD 39). However, Agrippa I (Antipas’ nephew) accused him of misrule resulting in Antipas’ banishment to Gaul (France). Thus Agrippa I received Antipas’ territories.

3. Third Generation: Herod Agrippa I (AD 37-44)

a. In three stages he acquired the territory of Philip (AD 37), Antipas (AD 39), and the procurators (AD 41) so that he *ruled all of Palestine* until his death.

b. Agrippa I *persecuted the early church* (including killing James and imprisoning Peter) to curry favor with the Jews (AD 44; Acts 12:1-19).

c. At his *death by worms* in AD 44 (Acts 12:20-23), his son, Agrippa II, was still a minor, so Roman governors ruled temporarily (AD 44-50).

4. Fourth Generation: Herod Agrippa II (AD 48-70 or 53-66?) was consulted by Festus during the trial of Paul in Caesarea (Acts 25:13—26:32).

*Bible Visual Resource Book,* 197

**Herod’s Masada Palace/Fortress**

Charlesworth, *Jesus Within Judaism*, 110

Herod the Great ruled all Palestine from 37-4 BC and his tyrannical rule incurred the hatred of nearly all the people. To guard against a public revolt which might overthrow him, he built several fortresses throughout the land. These included the western Jerusalem palace/fortress, the artificial hill just south of Bethlehem called the Herodium, another fortress on the east side of the Dead Sea (where John the Baptist was executed), and the Masada palace/fortress on the western side of the Dead Sea which is partially pictured below.

One advantage of the Masada fortress was its great height above the otherwise flat Dead Sea. (In fact, “Masada” means “fortress.”) Steep walls provide a natural barrier to attack. Ironically, even the top of this huge desert plateau still lies below sea level. Another advantage was that it possessed a tremendous system for capturing and retaining water in a large cistern. This provided more water for those in the fortress than for anyone below, for any invaders needed to travel 16 kilometers north to obtain fresh water in the desert oasis of En Gedi. The food storage capacity was incredible as well, providing defenders ten years of food while their attackers below had to bring in supplies!

In AD 66 at the beginning of the Jewish revolt, Jews wondered how to capture the fortress until they saw a Roman soldier at the top accidentally drop his helmet. They carefully noted the path by which he descended and ascended the steep wall, then they soon used this same path to conquer the fortress in a surprise attack. Jews held Masada for seven years until the Romans completed a siege ramp up the side with battering rams. Although Jews had built another (wood) wall inside, this was soon destroyed by fire. By the time the Romans penetrated the wall in AD 73 the nearly 1000 Jews (including many women and children) committed mass suicide rather than fall into the hands of the Romans. Only five persons (two women and three children) hid themselves and lived to tell the tale.

**Masada Map**

*Source Unknown***Great Bath House at Masada**

Peter Connolly, *Living in the Time of Jesus of Nazareth* (Bnei Brak: Steimatzky, 1983), 27

**Herod’s Temple and Temple Mount**

*Bible Visual Resource Book,* 185 and Charlesworth, *Jesus Within Judaism*, 110

**Herod’s Final Illness and Death**

Maier, *Josephus*, 252-53**Jesus’ Infant Journeys, Baptism & Temptation**

*Bible Visual Resource Book,* 184

**Chronology of the Herodian Dynasty**

**(37 BC-AD 70)**

John Grassmick, Dallas Seminary

Maier’s chart not in notes**Geography of the House of Herod**

*Bible Visual Resource Book,* 181

**Genealogical Chart of the Herodian Dynasty**

H. Wayne House**Roman and Jewish Leaders**

Horsley & Hanson, *Bandits, Prophets, & Messiahs*, 260-61

**Emperors, High Priests & Local Rulers**

X. Léon-Dufour, *Dictionary of NT*, 31

C. **The Fall of Jerusalem** (Bruce, *NT History*, 377-83 and Josephus, *War of the Jews*, in Maier, 329-85).

1. In Caesarea in the mid-60s Gentiles sacrificed a bird in front of the Jewish synagogue.

2. The Jews appealed to Florus, the procurator of Palestine at this time (AD 64-70). Knowing he was unscrupulous, they added eight talents of silver to their appeal.

3. Florus gladly took the money, ignored the appeal, then raided the temple in Jerusalem and took 16 more talents, saying it was owed by the Jewish community in “back taxes.”

4. When the Jews revolted at this desecration, Florus crucified several leading Jews in the community, and then handed over part of Jerusalem to his troops to plunder.

5. Jews then broke down the colonnades that connected the Roman headquarters (Antonia fortress) and the Temple. Eleazar, captain of the temple guard, persuaded the priests to stop offering the daily sacrifice for Nero’s welfare. This was seen as a declaration of revolt against Rome.

6. Nero in Rome acted quickly by sending Vespasian, the commander-in-chief of the entire Roman guard, to bring order to Jerusalem.

7. However, the Jews felt that God was on their side, and they fought at great odds and with tremendous bravery. They believed that victory was assured by OT prophecies and that God was using them to bring in the kingdom.

8. Nero died on 9 June AD 68 and civil war broke out in Rome. Vespasian suspended operations against Jerusalem for a year to see the result. When Rome was won in his honor he left immediately for Rome, giving his son Titus authority to siege Jerusalem.

9. In April AD 70 the siege began and lasted five months. After terrible atrocities and even cannibalism to survive the famine, on 2 September the Temple itself fell to the Romans.

10. Jewish Zealots fled to the fortress plateau of Masada near the Dead Sea and fought the Roman army for almost three more years. In April-May AD 73, with all hopes of victory shattered, they committed mass suicide rather than fall into the hands of the Romans.

D. **Key Developments** Under Roman Rule of Palestine

1. **Judaism** after the destruction of Jerusalem centred on the Law rather than the Temple.

a. Lack of Sources: Very little information is known of late first century and all of second century Judaism until the oral tradition was written down in the Mishna (ca. AD 200). Even Josephus, a Pharisee himself, provides little information.

b. Rabbis before the fall of Jerusalem: Two rabbis were prominent:

1) The most influential rabbi of NT times was R. Hillel (60 BC—AD 20), who is regarded as the father of rabbinic Judaism. He lived in Babylon and practiced legal OT interpretation (*halachah*, “rules of conduct”) in the Babylonian synagogue.

2) While Hillel was very liberal in his interpretations, his oft-quoted opponent was R. Shammai, who represented a branch of the Pharisees closely related to the Jerusalem temple. Shammai was aristocratic, strict, and nationalistic.

\* The differences between these two men is seen in the Pharisees’ testing of Jesus’ views on divorce. They asked Christ if He held to the prevailing Hillel view of divorce for any cause (Matt. 19:3ff.). Shammai said that divorce was allowable only for adultery. Hillel also argued against the Song of Songs in the canon while Shammai argued for it.

c. Rabbis after the fall of Jerusalem: Three rabbis were prominent:

1) Judaism owed its new start to R. Yohanan ben Zakkai, a young student of Hillel and colleague of Gamaliel’s son, Simeon. He risked his life in the Jewish War (AD 68) by entering Vespasian’s camp to ask to settle peacefully in Jamnia near the Mediterranean coast. There he began a new rabbinic school founded upon Hillel’s interpretation and rules of conduct (*halachah*). The Synod of Jamnia (ca. AD 100) discussed the OT canon there.

2) R. Aqiba ben Joseph, a literalist, was another of the most important rabbis of this time from the death of Hillel (AD 20) to the redaction of the *Mishnah* (AD 200) which is called the time of the Tannaites (the Tannaim), meaning “transmitters” or “teachers” of oral tradition. His time saw Bar Kochba’s rebellion against Rome (AD 132-133).

3) R. Ishmael ben Elisha modified and expanded Hillel’s rules into the vernacular.

2. **Roman Empire Unity**: Rome’ genius for law and governmental administration achieved what previous empires had failed to fully accomplish—the fusion of many nationalities and peoples into a unified whole. This was accomplished through several means:

a. The Emperor was the dominant force in the Roman Empire. He was the political, military, judicial, and religious leader. The republican government that had ruled via the Senate in earlier days was replaced by a dictator (Julius Caesar) and finally evolved into an absolute monarchy (under Augustus). This was efficient and brought much peace. The problem was when emperors overstepped their bounds there was no constitutional way to remove them—so assassination became the practical means used!

b. The provinces were organized into two types to support Rome—the political centre:

1) *Imperial* provinces required troops as they were newer, unruly areas. Smaller ones (e.g., Judea) were governed by a prefect or procurator and larger ones (e.g., Egypt, Syria) were governed by a legate or military governor.

2) *Senatorial* provinces were older, richer, peaceful territories (e.g., Asia, Achaia) ruled by a governor (proconsul) attended by tax collectors (quaestors), which were also in the imperial provinces as well.

\* *Semi-independent kingdoms* were annexed territories (e.g., Galilee) ruled whenever possible by their own native rulers (tetrarch, ethnarch, king) who reported to Rome.

\*\* *Roman colonies* governed by two principal magistrates (*duouiri*, better known as praetors) characterized certain cities (e.g., Philippi, Corinth, Ephesus). Such cities were modeled after Rome and had settlements of Roman citizens (e.g., retired soldiers). In fact, all free inhabitants of the colonies had citizenship (Acts 16:12, 20ff.). These cities generally lay on principal roads to guard Rome’s interests and paid no taxes. See F. F. Bruce, 17-18.

c. Roman citizenship became a prized possession. Only 4 million (7%) of the empire’s 55 million inhabitants were Roman citizens in NT times, but it was granted to all free inhabitants in AD 212. It was either purchased or inherited at birth (Acts 22:28) and made one exempt from corporal punishment (Acts 16:37) and forced labor (Matt. 5:41).

d. Roman law contributed to the advance of civilization (and the gospel too, as it protected Paul and Silas; cf. Acts 16:38-40). The law was clear, brief, impartially interpreted and enforced, supported by the Emperor, and widely circulated (people knew their rights).

e. Roman roads made transportation much easier than previously. Many of these roads are still used today. The Romans built excellent roads for the apostles to use!

f. Roman peace (*Pax Romana*), began a new era of stability in the Mediterranean world. The socio-economic progress of this peace is discussed in the next section of these notes.

g. The Julian calendar was established which eventually became the world standard.

3. **Jesus Christ** bore the sin of the world upon himself and established the early church.

**Roman Achievements**

While the Phoenicians ruled the seas before the Romans and they invented the phonetic alphabet, it was the Romans who adapted it into the alphabet that western countries use today. Latin became the base language of modern languages called Romance languages as they stem from Rome (e.g., Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, French, Romanian, etc.).

However, we owe our numeric system (1, 2, 3, etc.) to the Arabs since the Roman numbering system is too complicated and long (try reading the page numbers of the syllabus with ease in these notes).

**Roman Calendar & Religion**

Cornell & Matthews, *Atlas of the Roman World,* 94-95

**Roman Territories**

Adapted from Robert G. Clouse, Richard V. Pierard, and Edwin M. Yamauchi, *Two Kingdoms* (Chicago: Moody, 1993), 25

**Roman Territories (50 BC–AD 100)**

Roman territory by the time of Julius Caesar (died 44 BC)

Roman territory by the time of Augustus Caesar (died AD 14)

Roman territory by the time of Emperor Trajan (died AD 117)

Roman territory controlled

only temporarily

Extent of the Roman Empire

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |

**Early Churches**

Adapted from Robert G. Clouse, Richard V. Pierard, and Edwin M. Yamauchi, *Two Kingdoms* (Chicago: Moody, 1993), 31

Thessalonica

Corinth

Caesarea

Jerusalem

**Summary of the Political Rule Over Palestine**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Powers** | **Dates** | **Key Rulers** | **Key Developments** |
| **Assyrians** | 722-605 | Tiglath-Pileser III  Shalmaneser V  Sargon II  Sennacherib | Tribute paid to Assyria  Fall of Samaria (722 BC)  Rise of Samaritans |
| **Babylonians** | 605-539 | Nebuchadnezzar  Belshazzar | Destroyed temple (586 BC) - Synagogues  Separation (law, sabbath, circumcision)  Idolatry eliminated |
| **Persians** | 539-331 | Cyrus  Darius the Mede  Xerxes  Artaxerxes I | Restoration of Law of Moses/spiritual life  Rebuilt temple (516 BC) Diaspora  Aramaic popularized Purim  Rise of temple state “Judaism” term  Separation from Samaritans  Close of OT canon |
| **Greeks** | 331-143 | Alexander the Great  Seleucus I Nicator  Ptolemy I Soter  Antiochus III the Great  Antiochus IV Epiphanes | Ptolemies (301-198) Seleucids (198-143)  Religious freedom High priest bartered  Rise of Sanhedrin Temple desecration  Hellenization Rise of Hasidim  Alexandria migration Maccabean Revolt  Greek language/LXX Rise of Sadducees |
| **Hasmoneans** | 143-63 | Simon Maccabeus  John Hyrcanus I  Alexander Janneus | Political independence Rise of Essenes  Religious independence Enforced Judaism  Expansion of borders Alliance w/ Rome  Priest/king in one person |
| **Romans** | 63 BC-  AD 330 | Emperors Local Leaders  Julius Herod the Great  Augustus Philip  Tiberius Archelaus  Caligula Antipas  Claudius Pilate  Nero Felix  Vespasian Festus  Titus Agrippa I  Domitian Agrippa II | Temple destroyed (AD 70)  Judaism based on law—not temple  -Rise of rabbinic schools (Hillel/Shammai)  -Synod of Jamnia (OT canon, ca. AD 100)  Unity of Empire:  -Emperor -Peace  -Administration -Law  -Citizenship -Transportation  -Julian calendar -Language  -Building |

(Walk Thru)

**The New Testament** **Socio-Economic Context**

**I. Introduction**

A. The NT world was basically agrarian (agricultural).

B. This affected its social structure, economy, and (though to a lesser extent) religious life.

**II. Population**

A. Probably the total population of the Roman world was about 55 million. This was broken down into the following sub-groupings:

Group Population % of the Empire % of Palestine

*Entire Empire*

Gentiles 51,000,000 93

Jews 4,000,000 7

100

Roman Citizens 4,000,000 7

Slaves 27,500,000 50

*Palestine* (Jews & Gentiles) 1,750,000 3

Palestine Gentiles 1,050,000 2 60

Palestine Jews 700,000 1 40

Jerusalem Jews 25,000-95,000

B. Jews lived in pockets throughout the empire. Most Palestinian Jews lived in Judea while Galilee was predominantly Gentile.

**III.** **Languages**

A. Palestine was a cosmopolitan country where several languages were spoken due to several factors (e.g., location, foreign powers).

1. Latin was the common language of the West. It served as the official, legal language of the Roman Empire though it was the least used language in Palestine. Mostly only governors and soldiers of the occupation forces spoke Latin. Few Palestinian Jews knew more than the most common Latin words (e.g., *legion, centurion,* and *denarius*). Jesus’ trial before Pilate probably required the use of an interpreter unless they both could speak Greek.

2. Greek was the common language of the East. Most Palestinians understood it as a second language like how Chinese Singaporeans understand either English or Mandarin (or a Chinese dialect). The Gentiles in Galilee of course spoke most of the Greek in Palestine.

3. Aramaic was the main language of Israel and most first century Jews—even Jews in the Diaspora.

a. This language had replaced Hebrew as the mother tongue after the exile in Babylon six centuries before the NT era since Persian had become the language of trade.

b. At least two dialects of Aramaic existed in Palestine. Peter’s northern (Galilean) dialect was distinct from other Jews living in Judea who spoke with a “southern accent” (cf. Matt. 26:73).

c. In the synagogues the OT was read not only in Hebrew but also in an Aramaic paraphrase called a targum.

4. Hebrew probably was spoken and read only by rabbis (teachers) and scribes (copyists of OT Scriptures), just as only full-time Christian workers today read Greek and Hebrew. However, recent studies challenge this and say most NT Jews spoke Hebrew.

B. Jesus was probably trilingual. He taught the common people (Jews) in Aramaic, spoke with the Gentiles in Greek, and read in the synagogue and debated with the scribes in Hebrew (?).

**IV. Social Life**

A. Social Classes: Roman society was roughly divided into four groups:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Equestrians**  **(Patricians)** | **Plebians** | **Freedman** | **Slaves**  Ferguson, 56-58 |
| Class | Upper | Middle | Middle-lower | Lowest |
| Nature | Aristocracy | Freeborn  common people | Former slaves  (a new class) also called “Friends” | Property  -no rights  (not even marriage) |
| How attained | Inheritance | Birth | Religious ransom  Freed by master | Prisoners of war  Debtors  Criminals |
| Roman  Occupations | Administrators  Businessmen  Landowners  High gov. officials | Merchants  Craftsmen  Lawyers  Low gov. officials  Educators  Orators | Same as patricians and plebians (e.g., Felix; cf. Jos. *Wars* 2.247; cf. Bruce, 343) | Varied: some were  Doctors  Teachers  Accountants  (many were more educated and skilled than their masters) |
|  | Publicans (taxes) fit between Romans & Jews |  |  |  |
| Jewish Occupations | Chief priests  Pharisees  Sadducees  Herodians | Ordinary priests  Small businessmen  Artisans  Farmers | Same as plebians | Few Jews owned slaves: they were to free them every 7th year (Ex. 21:2-11) |
| How many? | Very few | 90% of Palestine  “people of the land” or “the multitudes” | Some | 50% of Empire as Romans declined in  birthrate and death through wars |
| Scripture | Matt. 26:57  Matt. 23  Heb. 4:14-16 | Matt. 9:36 | Acts 6:9  John 15:13-15 | Gal. 4:1-7; Eph. 6:5; Col. 3:22-25; Letter to Philemon |

B. Roman Social Institutions

1. Voluntary associations (*koinonia*) were clubs which one could join at will. This term *koinonia* has become a word used of Christian fellowships which are also voluntary in nature, and which imply a common purpose.

2. The city community (*politeia*) means the “citizenship,” “political activity,” “constitution,” “the state,” and “conduct” (*TDNTabr.*, 907). It occurs only twice in the NT: Paul’s appeal to his Roman status to avoid scourging (Acts 22:28) and membership in the Jewish state (Eph. 2:12).

3. The household community (*oikonomia*) functioned as the primary social institution of the Roman Empire. (To study households see Floyd Filson, “The Significance of the Early House Churches,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 58 [1939]: 105-112; Ronald D. Runyon, “Principles and Methods of Household Evangelism,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 142 [January-March 1985]: 64-74).

a. Characteristics of the household community

1) This was a community composed mostly of extended families (and some singles) of the *same biological source* who lived on the *same estate.*

2) A *hierarchy of authority* under the father of the key family (and his eldest son) provided order as “head of the house” (Matt. 10:25; Luke 8:3). If he had no son he would adopt one. Paul drew upon this adoption concept for illustrative purposes (Eph. 1:5; Rom. 8:23; 9:4).

3) In addition to the biological family were *freedmen* and *slaves.* The first group (also called “friends” or “clients”) were former slaves who had been set free but committed themselves to the master of the household in personal loyalty. Slaves in the household were not trusted as much as friends nor shared the more intimate matters of the community (cf. John 15:13-15; Matt. 24:45f.).

4) The binding factor among these many classes in the household community was their *common religion*  (Matt. 10:25, 36; 12:25; Acts 10:2).

b. Implications of the household community for NT studies

1) This united religious structure enabled the *conversion of the entire households* such as those of the official whose son Jesus healed (John 4:53), Cornelius (Acts 11:14), Lydia (Acts 16:15), the Philippian jailer (Acts 16:31), Crispus—the Corinthian synagogue ruler (Acts 18:8), Aristobulus (Rom. 16:10), Narcissus (Rom. 16:11), Chloe (1 Cor. 1:11), Stephanus (1 Cor. 1:16; 16:15), and Onesiphorus (2 Tim. 1:16; 4:19). An exception would be Caesar’s household (Phil. 4:22), which was obviously not all Christian!

2) Paul drew upon the household analogy to point out the unity of the body of Christ despite its diverse members (Eph. 2:19; 1 Tim. 3:15). Similarly, this household unity could be misled as a group (Titus 1:11).

3) Household structures allowed Christians to meet in a community structure (house churches) from the beginning, bringing about differing methods of meeting, worship, etc. This argues against one, specific “Christian” ecclesiastical structure.

4) The household community explains the NT emphasis on husband-wife, master-slave, and other relationships (Eph. 5:21—6:9; Col. 3:18—4:1).

5) Few churches could all meet in one place in a city (Rom. 16:23; 1 Cor. 1:11-13; 3:4f.; 1 Thess. 5:27) so the household community provided larger meeting places than would be possible in single family dwellings.

6) The structure shows how early Christians crossed social barriers. Each household had people of various social classes who functioned as one body. However, the socialism of Acts 2, 4 & 5 was a failed experiment (Niswonger, 189-90).

7) It implies that church leadership was provided by the homeowners (Philemon 1-2). This structure gave a training and testing ground to develop leaders (1 Tim. 3:12).

8) Household evangelism was the most common form of NT lay evangelism. “With only two exceptions (Philip and Stephen), the primary target of New Testament laymen was their *oikos* (people in their sphere of influence)” (Runyon, 65).

c. Diagram of spheres of influence in both NT and modern times (Runyon, 67):



d. Applications of the household community for evangelism today (cf. Runyon, 67-71)

How can we be as effective in evangelism and discipleship as the early church?

1) Share a transformed life: just tell others how Jesus has changed you

2) Pray for those within your sphere of influence

3) Proclaim the Word

4) Use a variety of methods to reach your natural contacts:

a) Simple presentation for prepared people

b) Repeated exposures for secularized people

c) Share Christ especially to those in *life transitions* as they are more open

5) Use your home as a centre for evangelism with activities in two arenas:

a) Individual: meals; attending, sports, recreation, and neighborhood events together

b) Group activities: evangelistic home Bible study, entertainment, dinners, high tea, seasonal parties (Christmas), videos, and discussion groups

“Social Conflicts and Prejudice”

Coleman (1 of 4)

Social Conflicts and Prejudice (Coleman 2 of 4)

Social Conflicts and Prejudice (Coleman 3 of 4)

Social Conflicts and Prejudice (Coleman 4 of 4)

C. Ethnic Groups

1. These ethnic groups, in their most basic sense, fell into two groups: Jews and Gentiles.

2. In your small groups explore what you think would be some of the differences between how these two groups viewed each other, how they varied in perspectives, what their religious, cultural, political, monetary, and other values were, etc.

These verses may help to start you thinking: Acts 10 (Cornelius and diet differences); Rom. 14:1-5; 1 Cor. 8; Gal. 3:28; Eph. 2:11-22 (Jew-Gentile unity in the church).

Put your contrasts between these groups on the following chart below and think through what would have been some of the *first century* implications and some *modern* parallels. For example, what may have happened in the early church when Gentiles joined a Jewish church (or vice versa) and what happens today in ethnically mixed churches? The first few contrasts are provided as examples, but you should be able to add several other areas of difference on your own as well.

**Areas in Difference Jews Gentiles Implications/Parallels**

Religious viewpoint One God Many gods New believing Gentiles

before salvation needed much more nurture

than new Jewish Christians

Number of taboos Many Few Believers today need to be

(Sensitivities) understanding of Christians

from different backgrounds

Language spoken Aramaic Greek

Open-mindedness Narrow Broad

Eating Habits Narrow Broad

Worship style Narrow Broad

Temple ties Tight None

Niswonger, 190

Acts 5:12

Attitude to Law Allegiance Freedom (Acts 18:15; 1 Cor. 9)

Sabbath Yes No

Circumcision Yes No

View of Self Superior Superior

to Gentiles to Jews

D. Racial Prejudice

Points 1-7 are adapted from William L. Coleman, *Today’s Handbook of Bible Times and Customs*, 248-55 (copied on class notes, 101-4). cf. quiz #4.

This section for people graphic

Prejudice and bigotry were commonplace:

1. *Gentiles hated Jews*

a. Gentiles were repulsed by Jewish bigotry, pride, and superiority that prevented Jews from viewing Gentiles as equals (p. 254).

b. The “Gentile tradition” inherited from other Gentiles was to despise Jews (p. 255).

c. Even Gentiles who converted to Judaism did not receive equal treatment (p. 251).

d. Jews rejected polytheism which characterized the Gentile religions (p. 250).

e. Gentiles did not understand the Jewish ways or moral value system (p. 250).

f. Gentiles resented the nationalistic spirit of Jews who had sometimes revolted against Roman rule (p. 252; cf. Judas the Galilean in Acts 5:37).

g. Gentiles did not appreciate the narrow, exclusive traditions of Jews.

h. Haman typifies the anti-Semitism of all ages (Esther 3:5).

2. *Jews hated Gentiles*

a. Gentiles were polytheistic (p. 250).

b. Gentile rulers were the occupying powers (e.g., Romans) who had repeatedly offended Jewish sensitivities—especially through military force (p. 251).

c. In OT times Jews had wiped out many Gentile peoples (p. 249).

d. “Many Jews felt that they were not only God’s *chosen* people but God’s *only* people” (p. 248).

e. Gentiles hated them, and the feeling was reciprocated (p. 250).

f. Gentiles ate food prohibited by the OT law (cf. Acts 10:9f.).

g. Jewish law prohibited Jews from associating or visiting a Gentile (Acts 10:28).

h. Gentiles freely intermarried without concern for purity of race (a high Jewish priority).

3. *Judean Jews hated Galilean Jews* (p. 252)

a. Judean Jews saw Galileans as independent and strong-willed (e.g., Zealots).

b. Judean Jews despised the different accent of Galileans (Matt. 26:73).

c. Judean Jews considered Galilean habits as ignorant, uncultured, earthly, and rude.

d. Jesus and his Galilean disciples may have been discriminated against for their regional affiliation as much as for their message. These Galilean disciples (Acts 1:11) included both a Zealot (Luke 6:15) and a tax man (Matt. 9:9-10). Jesus was even from Nazareth, “the worst of the worst” (John 1:46) place in Galilee as it housed the Roman garrison.

4. *Galilean Jews hated Judean Jews.*

a. Galileans fought against long-held Judean traditions (e.g., on the use of olive oil, dietary habits, and celebration of festivals).

b. Galileans despised Pharisees, who had the favor of the Judean Jews.

c. Galileans resented the collaboration of the Herodians (in Jerusalem) with the Romans.

d. God sovereignly had Christ mostly minister in the north (Galilee), but the church began in the south (Jerusalem). These two areas clashed when Hebrew-speaking widows were favored over Hellenistic ones, causing the Galileans to complain (Acts 6:1).

5. *Jews hated Samaritans*

a. Samaritans had come about through intermarriage of Israelites and pagans (2 Kings 17:24) contrary to OT law (Exod. 34:16; Ezra 9; Neh. 10).

b. Samaritans had opposed the rebuilding of the Jewish nation under Ezra (Ezra 4).

c. They set up idols in the Jewish places of worship after Samaria’s fall (2 Kings 17:29-41).

d. Samaritans often attacked Jews traveling in Samaria (but see Jesus’ action in John 4:4).

e. When some Jews destroyed the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim (ca. 100 BC), Samaritans retaliated by strewing human bones over the porch of the Jerusalem temple.

f. Pharisees called Christ a “Samaritan and demon-possessed man” (John 8:48).

6. *Does God allow intermarriage* of Jews or Christians with those of different races (p. 249)? Why or why not?

a. It is allowed. Moses married a Cushite (probably a black woman). His sister Miriam and brother Aaron disapproved, but God judged their racial prejudice (cf. Num. 12).

b. What Scripture prohibits is not *interracial* marriages but marriages with those of other *religions* (cf. Ezra 9; Neh. 10; cf. 2 Cor. 6:14). Ethnically, in the church there exists no difference between Jew and Gentile (Gal. 3:28). By implication, distinctions between *types* of Jews or *types* of Gentiles also are of no account.

7. *Jesus did not follow the prejudices of the times.*

a. He used Samaritans as examples of piety (cf. Luke 10:30-37; p. 250).

b. He traveled through Samaria rather than go around the region, thus risking his reputation and life by associating with them (John 4:4-9; p. 250).

c. He spoke to a Samaritan woman (John 4).

d. He accepted Gentiles and praised their faith (Luke 7:9).

e. He wouldn’t let James & John call down fire on unbelieving Samaritans (Luke 9:52-54).

f. He selected Simon the Zealot as one of His disciples (Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13; p. 252).

g. He selected Matthew the tax collector as one of His disciples (Luke 6:15).

h. He ate with tax collectors and prostitutes (Luke 15:1-2).

i. He did not show favoritism towards the rich (Matt. 19:21, 23; p. 253).

8. Despite Jesse’s positive example, the early church struggled with the issue of prejudice.

a. The Church at Jerusalem was composed almost entirely of racially biased Jews.

1) Peter was a church leader (Acts 2–6) but still characterized by the traditional Jewish exclusiveness (Acts 10:9-15, AD 40).

2) Nevertheless, God chose Peter to be given the “keys” (authority, opportunity; cf. Matt. 16:18-19) to introduce the gospel to all three major groups of new believers (*World Mission I*, Wm. Carey Library):

Peter’s Keys of the Kingdom (Wm. Carey Library)



3) After Gentiles came to Christ, the Jerusalem Church was suspicious and sent Peter and John, but the Spirit came on these Gentiles so that Peter had to defend his actions (Acts 11:1-18, AD 41). That God would accept Gentiles amazed these Jewish Christians, but they finally accepted it (v. 18)!

4) However, eight years later the first Gentile church at Antioch was established. Here Paul still had to publicly rebuke Peter for his prejudice (Gal. 2:11-16, AD 49).

5) Worse than this, the issue of whether Gentile converts needed to “become Jews” (i.e., be circumcised) was hotly debated at the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15, AD 49). Once again, orthodoxy and fairness prevailed (vv. 23-29).

6) In addition to racial prejudice, the Jerusalem church also favored the rich with special attention and places to sit (James 2:1-13).

7) To balance the picture, when the Jerusalem Church had its first prejudice problems (AD 34-35), it wisely selected Greek speaking Jews to handle the matter (Acts 6:1-7). Notice that all the names in verse 6 are Greek.

b. The Church at Antioch was composed mostly of non-prejudiced Gentile believers.

1) It readily accepted Barnabas, a Jew (Acts 11:19-24), and these believers even welcomed the former persecutor of the church called Paul (Acts 11:25). This stands in stark contrast to Paul’s rejection by the Jerusalem church (Acts 9:26f.). How odd—Paul the Jew was rejected by the Jews but accepted by the Gentiles!

2) Not surprisingly the Antioch Christians were the first to show a missionary concern that reached both Jews and Gentiles outside of their area (Acts 13). Notice the multi-racial mix of their prophets and teachers (v. 1)!

c. The Church at Rome had several Jew-Gentile conflicts which Paul addressed: God’s choice of Israel and Gentiles (Rom. 9–11), matters of diet (Rom. 14:1-4, 6, 14-16), celebration of special days (Rom. 14:5), etc.

"The Jew-versus-Gentile issue looms large in this letter. Paul did not take sides, but he carefully set forth both sides of the question. On the one hand he emphasized the historical and chronological priority of the Jews—'first for the Jew, then for the Gentile' (Rom. 1:16; cf. 2:9-10). He also stressed the 'advantage . . . in being a Jew' (3:1-2; 9:4-5). On the other hand he pointed out that 'since there is only one God' (3:30), He is the God of the Gentiles as well as the God of the Jews (3:29). As a result 'Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin' (3:9) and alike are saved by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ…" (John Witmer, *BKC*, 2:437).

For a full analysis of the Jew-Gentile conflicts in the church at Rome, see this journal article: Walter B. Russell III, “An Alternative Suggestion for the Purpose of Romans,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 145 (April-June 1988): 174-84.

d. The Church at Colosse was composed of Gentile believers with another problem: a key leader of the church named Philemon was a slave owner whose runaway slave named Onesimus had been won to Christ through Paul (cf. Letter to Philemon).

9. How is the church in Singapore (and *you* specifically) doing in this area of racial prejudice? Some thought questions:

a. Do you treat Filipina, Thai, Indonesian, Sri Lankan, Burmese, and other maids with the same dignity as you treat Christians of your own social standing and race?

b. Should the various churches be ethnically mixed or separate as is the present case?

c. How evangelistic is the predominantly middle to upper class Singaporean church to groups that are lower in class structure and not English speaking? What should be done about it? (Note that 40% of Singaporean professionals claim to be Christians but only 4% of Mandarin-speaking factory workers are believers.)

d. When was the last time you ate a meal with somewhat or a different ethnic group? or even someone who is of your ethnicity, but a non-Christian?

Length and Distance

H. Wayne House

Liquid and Dry Measures

H. Wayne House

Money

H. Wayne House

**Testimony of Onesimus**

Thomas L. Constable (1 of 3)Testimony of Onesimus (Thomas L. Constable) 2 of 3

Testimony of Onesimus (Thomas L. Constable) 3 of 3

**The New Testament Religious Context**

**Issue:** What is spirituality? (i.e., What makes a person godly? Is it internal or external?)

**I. Jewish Religious Life**

A. Judaism in Israel

Judaism was not a unified, theologically homogeneous religion during NT times. There were many diverse spiritual movements and religious parties. The following religious groups stemmed mainly from the loss of Solomon’s temple for 70 years nearly six centuries previously (586-516 BC), which gave rise to different interpretations of the Torah (the OT law and prophets in its wider meaning than “law”) and to different synagogues.

1. **Samaritans** constituted the only religious group within Judaism that was considered heretical and repudiated by Jews.

a. They had a *mixed ancestry* through intermarriage with the surrounding nationalities.

b. They *withdrew from Yahweh worship* at Jerusalem in favor of a patriarchal shrine on Mt. Gerizim in Samaria (cf. John 4:20-22).

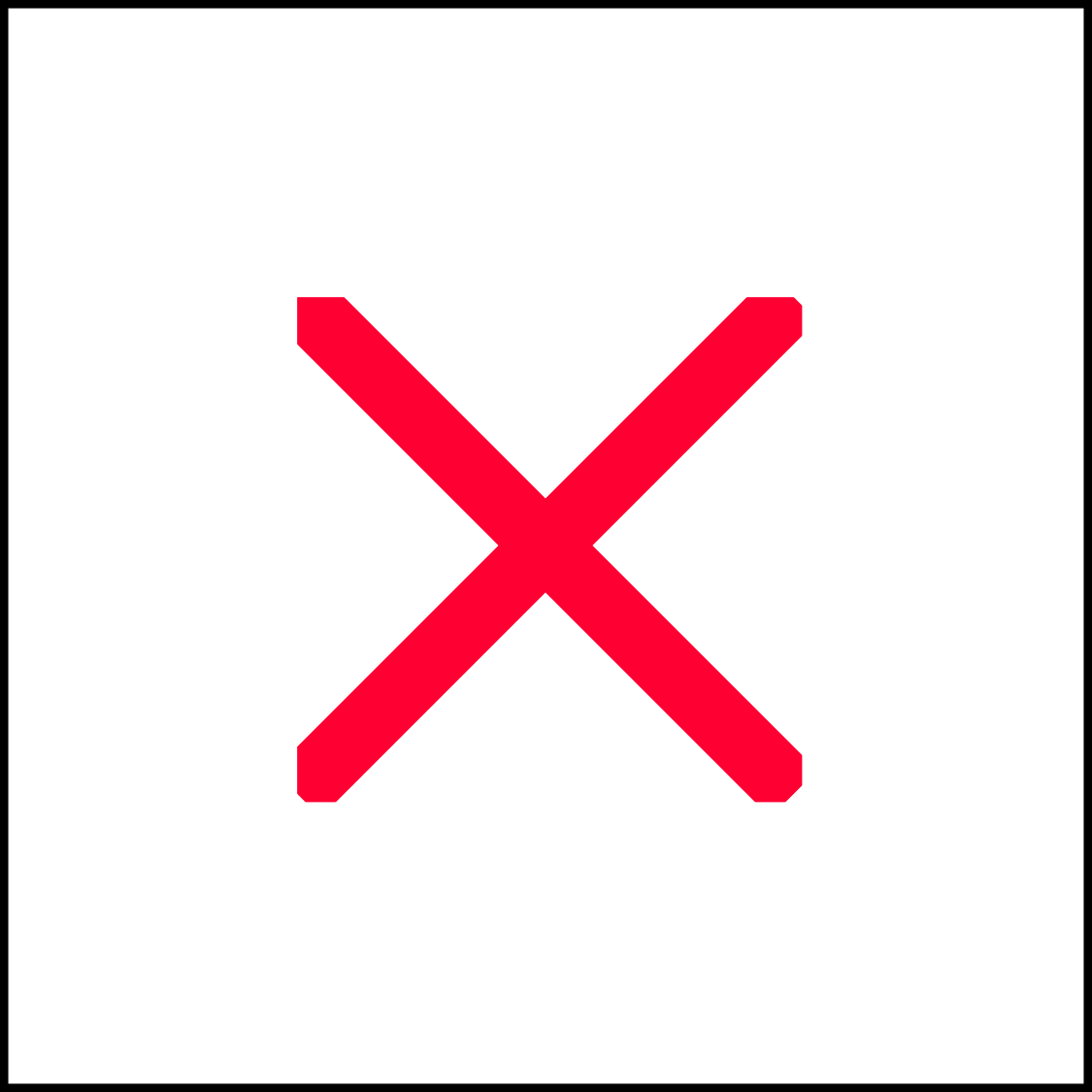
c. They regarded *only the Pentateuch* as authoritative Scripture.

2. **Jewish Sects**

Note: Only about 1 person in 20 was an active member of a sect.

(For characteristics of each sect see the charts on pages 121-23.)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | ***Key Traits*** | ***Christian Parallels Today*** |
| **a. Pharisees**  (Matt. 22–23) |  |  |
| **b. Sadducees** |  |  |
| **c. Essenes** |  |  |
| **d. Zealots** |  |  |



The four Jewish sects of the first century AD fell into two broad divisions: political and religious. Each lay on opposite poles of their respective spectrum.

Religiously, the Pharisees integrated with the common people in almost every dimension. Yet at the other end of the religious spectrum were the Essenes, who were aloof and separate.

The political arena also had their diametrically opposing groups. Sadducees could hardly be farther away from the political views of the radical Zealots—except for two very small political extremists (Herodians and Sicarii).

In contrast to the four major sects, Samaritans lay outside the mainstream. They were rejected by all the above groups.

**Religious and Political Groups**

(Coleman 1 of 5)

Religious and Political Groups (Coleman 2 of 5)

Religious and Political Groups (Coleman 3 of 5)

Religious and Political Groups (Coleman 4 of 5)

Religious and Political Groups (Coleman 5 of 5)

**Jewish Sects in the Time of Jesus**

**Jewish Sects in the Time of Jesus (continued)**

Jewish Sects (*Bible Visual Resource Book,* 185)

**Chinese Pharisees**

Tan Huay Peng, cartoonist, *Fun with Chinese Characters: The Straits Times Collection 2* (Singapore: Federal Pub., 1982), 121

3. **Jewish Political Parties** (these are not major “sects”)

**Sicarii Herodians**

Nature: Zealot extremists who Wealthy Jews with political

carried concealed daggers influence who supported

(Gr. “scar” = “dagger-men”) the Herods

Origin: AD 50-70: bands of these 37 BC—AD 66: during

“assassins” terrorized Judea the Herodian dynasty

Political Stance: Hated Rome, terrorists: Liked Rome, collaborators:

would stalk a Roman or accepted foreign domination

Roman sympathizer in a and promoted Hellenization

crowd, stab him, melt back

into the crowd and escape

Beliefs: Orthodox like Pharisees Not a religious party; beliefs

but militant like Zealots, probably crossed party lines

apocalyptic (*ZPEB*, 3:145c)

Stance towards Unknown, though one of Opposed Him with Pharisees

Jesus: His disciples was still called by trying to kill Him (Mark

“Simon the Zealot” even after 3:6) and trap Him regarding

following Jesus paying taxes (Matt. 22:16;

Mark 12:13)

B. Diaspora Judaism

1. Population: About 83% of all Jews in the Roman world lived outside of Palestine (p. 97).

2. Hellenization: Diaspora Jews had much greater contact with Greek culture and language, so they were more receptive to it than Palestinian Jews.

3. Influence: Diaspora Judaism exercised a strong influence on its environment.

a. Their emphasis on monotheism, divine revelation, opposition to idolatry, and high morality made Judaism attractive to many Gentiles. God used this to pave the way for the gospel since the apostles initially went to the synagogue in Gentile cities and many of the first Christians were Jewish. They in turn shared Christ with the God-fearing Gentiles who also came to Christ (Acts 10:2, 22; 13:26, 50; 17:4, 17).

b. Judaism gained the status of an approved religion throughout the Roman Empire and the rights granted to Jews favored the expansion of Judaism and Christianity as well—at least initially when the Romans thought that it was a sect of Judaism.

4. Persecution: However, the separatist practices of the Jews fostered persecution from their alien environment from time to time. Nevertheless, God used even this (e.g., Acts 18:2).

5. Alterations: Diaspora Jews maintained their ethnic and religious identity though modified:

*Palestinian* *Diaspora*

a. The temple was replaced by the synagogue.

b. Sacrifices were replaced by instruction and observance of the Law.

c. Religious rituals were replaced by ethical rules.

d. The priest was replaced by the rabbi.

C. Judaism in Israel and the Diaspora

1. Rabbinic Discipleship: Jesus often assumed roles of the rabbis (teaching in the synagogue, Mark 6:2; reading the Torah, Luke 4:16; sitting while teaching, Matt. 5:1) and was even called “Rabbi” (e.g., Matt. 26:25; Mark 10:51). However, there were some distinct differences between the methodologies of the two:

*Rabbis* *Jesus*

a. Were *sought out* by disciples *Looked for* disciples & called them

—passive discipleship —active discipleship (John 15:16, 19)

b. Bound disciples to *the Law* Bound disciples to *Himself*

c. *Quoted other rabbis* for authority *Taught with authority*: quoted only the OT

d. Taught to *impress* Taught in simple terms and stories to *inspire*

e. Taught the original language, Hebrew Didn’t teach Hebrew (as far as we know)

f. More impersonal More personal

2. The Sabbath: From sunset Friday to sunset Saturday Jews rested (“Sabbath” means “cease”) from their work and worshipped in the home and synagogue.

a. Importance: Since this was the most “portable” of the institutions and since the Pharisees legislated this institution more than any other (cf. Mishna), the Sabbath became *the most important* of the various institutions in Israel.

b. Purposes:

1) Memorial of creation (Exod. 20:8-11) and redemption from Egypt (Deut. 5:12-15)

2) Sign of the Mosaic Law (Exod. 31:17; Ezek. 20:12, 20)

3) Humanitarian Rest Provision (Exod. 16:30; 20:9; 23:12; Deut. 5:14)

4) Worship (it appears in the feasts summary in Lev. 23:1-3)

c. The Sabbath Dilemma:

1) The Deficiency of Specific Sabbath Laws (The Issue: What is work?)

2) Divergent Opinions (cf. rabbinic options in the Mishna)

d. Christian Adaptations

1) Early Jewish Christians still observed the Sabbath. However, Paul said this should not be enforced on people (Col. 2:16-17; cf. Rom. 14:5; Gal. 4:10).

2) Even though it was still a workday, Sunday became the weekly day of worship for believers in celebration of Christ’s Sunday resurrection (Acts 20:7; Rev. 1:10).

3) Sunday did not become a rest day until Constantine’s reign (fourth century AD).

3. Special Days (see the charts and article on the following pages)

Feasts, Festivals, and the Synagogue

(Coleman 1 of 9)

Feasts, Festivals, and the Synagogue (Coleman 2 of 9)

Feasts, Festivals, and the Synagogue (Coleman 3 of 9)

Feasts, Festivals, and the Synagogue (Coleman 4 of 9)

Feasts, Festivals, and the Synagogue (Coleman 5 of 9)

Feasts, Festivals, and the Synagogue (Coleman 6 of 9)

**SIMCHAT TORAH**

Jews in Israel and everywhere also celebrate the holiday of Simchat Torah ("Rejoicing in the Torah"), also known as Shemini Atzeret ("The Eighth Day of Assembly").

Simchat Torah immediately follows the last day of Succot (the Feast of Tabernacles). Its observance is mandated by Leviticus 23:36.

The day's prayer services at synagogues include special memorial prayers for the deceased, as well as a prayer for plentiful rainfall during the coming winter.

The day centres around special scriptural readings: the yearly cycle of weekly Torah (Genesis to Deuteronomy) reading is completed and begins again. This is accompanied by dancing and singing which—in religious neighborhoods—often spill out into the streets.

Although Leviticus 23:36 commands an offering on this day, since no temple is present, such a command is not possible. Therefore, the reading of the Torah is substituted instead.

—From ICEJ News (October 22, 1997)

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Feasts, Festivals, and the Synagogue (Coleman 7 of 9)

Feasts, Festivals, and the Synagogue (Coleman 8 of 9)

Feasts, Festivals, and the Synagogue (Coleman 9 of 9)

**Major Jewish Holidays: Discussions & Recipes**

Dallas, TX: Dallas Jewish Society, n.d. (approx. 1985), pp. 51-56 (1 of 6)



**Synchronized Jewish Calendar**

*NIV Study Bible*, 101; J. Lilly, “Calendar,” *ZBPE*, 1:687-92; Nicholas de Lange, *Atlas of the Jewish World*, 89

We all use different calendars today—the civil calendar begins in January, the school calendar begins at SBC in July, the fiscal calendar begins when company books are cleared, and the lunar calendar begins at Chinese New Year in late January or February.

In like manner, the Israelites had three systems of naming months.

1. **Civil**—Abib, Bul, etc. were Canaanite names designating the secular calendar beginning in our present September-October. This was likely the calendar the patriarchs used.
2. **Sacred**—At the Exodus a new, sacred calendar was employed identifying months by number (beginning at Passover in March-April). Later Nisan, Tishri, Kislev, etc. became adapted Babylonian names attached to these religious months. These names are still used today though the modern Jews begin the new year according to the civil reckoning (September-October).
3. **Numbered**—First, second, third, etc. designated months of the sacred calendar (Lev. 23:5, 24)

Each calendar had twelve months of 30 days each. Thus they were all approximate to the actual solar (astronomical) calendar of 365.24219879 days (see the extra month needed below for accuracy).

**Eschatology of Israel’s Feasts (Leviticus 23)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Date** | **Length** | | **Feast** | **Significance (Past)** | **Typology (Future)** |
| 1. | Weekly | 1 day | | Sabbath\*  (Shabbat) | • Creation rest of God  • Deliverance from Egypt  • Sign of Mosaic Covenant  (Exod. 20, 31; Deut 5) | Millennial rest  (Heb. 4:1-11) |
| 2. | 1-14  (Nisan) | 1 day  (Read Song  of Songs) | | Passover\*†  (Pesach) | Redemption from Egypt by blood of the sacrificial lamb (Exod. 12) | Redemption from sin by Christ's death as Lamb  (1 Cor. 5:7b) |
| 3. | 1-15  to 1-21  (Nisan) | 7 days | | Unleavened  Bread\*† | Separation/break from dependence upon Egypt to dependence upon God | Separated life of the redeemed for God  (1 Cor. 5:7a, 8) |
| 4. | 1-16  (Day after Harvest Sabbath) | 1 day | | Firstfruits  (barley sheaf ceremony) | Anticipation of God's *future* material provisions  -begins grain harvest | Resurrection of Christ  (1 Cor. 15:20) |
| 5. | 3-6  (Sivan) | 1 day  (Read Ruth) | | Pentecost†  (Shavuoth)  (Weeks)  (Harvest) | Thanksgiving for God's *past* material provisions  -ends grain harvest (Deut. 16:9-12) | Coming of the Holy Spirit to complete Christ's resurrection (Acts 2) |
| — | Spring-Summer | no feasts | | — | Enjoyment of the harvest | Church Age |
| 6. | 7-1  (Tishri) | 1 day | | Trumpets  (New Year)  (Rosh Hashanah) | Preparation for national redemption and cleansing on Day of Atonement | Rapture (1 Thess. 4:13f.) Revelation (Matt. 24:31)  —Kingdom preparation |
| 7. | 7-10  (Tishri) | 1 day | | Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) | National repentance and cleansing from sins of the people (Lev. 16) | National repentance of Israel in the Tribulation (Rom. 11:26-27; Zech. 12) |
| 8. | 7-15  to 7-21  (Tishri) | 7 days  (Read  Eccles.) | Tabernacles\*†  (Booths/Tents)  (Succot/Shelters)  (the Lord)  (Ingathering) | | Remembered wilderness wanderings in tents (Lev. 23:42-43; Neh. 8:13-18) & celebrated final harvest of the year (Deut. 16:13) | Fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant in Millennium  —Judgment (Matt. 13:30,  39; Rev. 14:15)  —Kingdom (Matt. 17:4) |
| 9. | 7-22  (Tishri) | 1 day | Shemini Atzeret  (Simchat Torah) | | “Eighth Day of Assembly” “Rejoicing in the Torah” |  |
| The following days are not commanded in Scripture and probably have no eschatological significance: | | | | | | | |
| 10. | 5-9  (Ab) | 1 day  (Read Lam.) | | 9th of Ab  (Tish’ah be’ab) | Destructions of Jerusalem:  586 BC & AD 70 | **↑** |
| 11. | 9-25  (Kislev) | 1 day  + 7 more days of candle lighting | | Hanukkah  (Dedication)  (Lights)  (Illumination)  (Maccabees) | Saving of the nation  under Judas Maccabeus  in 164 BC  (cf. John 10:22) | *This Typology column shows that the order of Israel’s annual feasts prophetically parallels her experience as a nation throughout history!* |
| 12. | 12-14/15  (Adar) | 2 days  (Read Esther) | | Purim  (Lots) | Saving of the nation  under Esther (9:21) | **Note: 10% of the year was for celebrations!** |

\* Feasts celebrated in the Millennium (Isa. 66:23; Ezek. 45:21; 46:1; Zech. 14:16-19; Luke 22:16)

† Feasts celebrated in three annual Jerusalem pilgrimages by all male Israelites (Exod. 23:14-17)

**Key Characters in the A.D. Video**

Religious life was complex during the time Paul wrote his epistles. Probably the most extreme differences came in the contrast between Roman religion and Judaism (and those Jews who had embraced Christ as Messiah). The conflicts are well portrayed in the film viewed in class entitled “A.D.” This 12-hour Vincenzo LaBella production cost US$30 million to produce and was filmed on location in Tunisia, Pompeii, Herculeneum, and Rome. It was broadcast in the USA during the 1984-85 television season. Gospel Films, Inc. (PO Box 455; Muskegon, Michigan 49443-0455) edited the version seen in class to a 6-hour series that I purchased from Christian Book Distributors ([www.christianbook.com)](http://www.christianbook.com)). The following characterizations are taken from the study guide that accompanies this 3-tape set on pages 7-9.

**Key Characters in the A.D. Video (2 of 2)**

**Thought Questions:**

1—Contrast the reactions of Nero and his advisor with that of the senators and common people on the burning of Rome.

2—What are your feelings and thoughts about the Christians dying in the arena?

3—Valerius states after seeing the slaughter of Christians, “I am not a Roman soldier anymore. I will not serve a butcher and a pack of wolves… I renounce my rank. I renege my service to the Emperor, this city!” How did hearing this strike you? Have you ever heard something similar in your own experience or that of others?

C. Judaism in Palestine and the Diaspora (continued from p. 126)

4. Synagogue (from Coleman, 212-17; Bruce, 143-48; Pritchard, *Harper Atlas*, 152)

a. Definition: the center of Jewish religious education in which Jews gathered on Sabbaths and other days for worship, prayer, and instruction from the Old Testament. The Greek *syn* “together” with *agoge* “way of life, conduct” has the idea of bringing together for a common way of life (BAGD 14) and literally refers to a “gathering-place” or “place where something collects” (BAGD 782).

b. Origin: During the Jewish exile in Babylon six centuries before Christ (605-538 BC) the first synagogues were established—probably to teach Hebrew children to maintain their distinct (e.g., monotheistic) religion amidst pagan (polytheistic) surroundings.

c. Diversity: No typical synagogue existed. Since only ten Jewish men were required to establish one, this ease of “synagogue planting” led to great variety. Synagogues had differing architecture, political views, and congregations (e.g., the Synagogue of the Libertines or Freedman in Acts 6:9, found in the City of David—cf. p. 206 #14).

d. Furniture: While there was great diversity, still four basic items of furniture were standard in all synagogues:

1) *Chest*: This “Torah shrine,” as it was often called, held the sacred scriptural scrolls.

2) *Bema*: Scriptures were read from this elevated platform with a reading stand (“pulpit”) as a sign of respect for the Word of God and so that all could see the reader. Sometimes the bema had a wooden canopy and rails.

3) *Benches* lined two or three walls around the edge of the room with mats for many to sit in the center (cf. James 2:1). Chairs were added at times and the Pharisees or important (“rich?”) guests took the more important seats (Matt. 23:6). Men and women were separated.

4) *Lamps of menorah*: Lights provided light and symbolized the presence of God.

e. Leadership: Three types of leaders were common:

1) *Elders*: Ten were required to begin the synagogue and it is presumed that they had a continuing influence.

2) *Ruler of the synagogue*: This general overseer maintained order in the services by assigning men to read the Scripture, pray, or speak (Acts 13:15). A synagogue ruler objected to Christ healing on a Sabbath (Luke 13:14), likely because it caused a disturbance! The ruler Crispus in Corinth trusted in Christ (Acts 18:8; cf. Luke 8:41).

3) *Attendant of the synagogue*: He was the “religious professional” who received a salary for taking care of the scrolls (Luke 4:20), teaching the children, blowing the trumpet to start and end the Sabbath, presiding over funerals and mourning feasts, and administering punishments—even beatings (Mark 13:9). He often lived at the synagogue and sometimes was not godly.

f. Celebrations: Feasts and festivals were celebrated in the same building where prayers and sermons were delivered. Some celebrations corresponded to those at the Jerusalem temple whereas others were in line with local culture and interests.

g. Contrasting the Synagogue and Early Church

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Synagogue | Church |
|  |  |  |
| *Membership* | Jews & proselytes | Christians (Jews & Gentiles together) |
|  |  |  |
| *Separation* | Gentiles & women apart | Men and women together (1 Cor. 11–14) |
|  |  |  |
| *Meeting Place* | Building | Homes/Household communities |
|  |  |  |
| *Spontaneity* | Structured (book prayers) | Spontaneous (non-memorized prayers) |
|  |  |  |
| *Political Use* | Yes | Probably not |
|  |  |  |
| *Discipline* | Beatings (Mark 13:9) | Expelling towards restoration (1 Cor. 5:13) |
|  |  |  |
| *Worship Day* | Sabbath (Friday night) | Lord’s Day (Sunday PM or early AM) |
|  |  | —Sabbath too for early Jewish believers |
|  |  |  |
| *Miniature of…* | Jerusalem temple  (except sacrifices) | Heaven  (except angels and many other things!) |

h. Comparing the Synagogue and Church

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Synagogue | Church |
|  |  |  |
| *Distribution* | One per town (though Jerusalem had seven!) | One per town (though in house churches) |
|  |  |  |
| *Leadership* | 10 elders | Multiple elders (Acts 11:30; 14:23; 20:17f.) —sometimes deacons too (Phil. 1:1) |
|  |  |  |
| *Furniture* | Chest, bema,  benches, lamps | Probably none initially (in house churches)  Later a pulpit and benches (in buildings)?  Lamps (Acts 20:7-8) |
|  |  |  |
| *Order of Service* | Call to worship | Call to worship (invocation) |
|  | Shema (Deut. 6:4-5) | Creed (Phil. 2:6-11) |
|  | Prayers and amens | Prayers |
|  | Scripture reading | Scripture reading |
|  | —Torah and Prophets | —OT plus NT gospels and letters |
|  | Exposition/exhortation | Preaching |
|  | Blessing (Num. 6:22-27) | Benediction (Jude 24-25) |
|  |  |  |
| *Open Meetings* | Jews and Gentiles | Believers and unbelievers |
|  | (Acts 18:4) | (1 Cor. 14:22-25) |

i. Lessons & Questions

1) The first Christians were Jews, so the early church adopted many synagogue patterns. The NT records (describes) these, but does it require (prescribe) them? How can we know if a NT practice is described or prescribed—issues like the plurality of elders, foot washing, head coverings, and orders of service? (By the way, Jewish men didn’t cover their heads in synagogue worship until the fourth century AD as a response to Christianity.)

2) We should adopt amoral patterns (cultural, without moral overtones) like those of new believers in an area. For example, if recent converts from Islam, Buddhism, or Hinduism do not feel comfortable worshipping sitting in chairs, these should be removed from the room! The same can be said for a pulpit and amoral items.

5. Christian Ordinance Backgrounds

a. Baptism has *identification* as its basic meaning. Through baptism persons became identified as belonging to a particular religious community.

1) Old Testament

a) Baptism was not practiced in OT times as far as we can tell at present.

b) Although the word for “ritual washing” (*baptismos*) sounds like that for “baptism” (*baptisma*), they are very different. These ceremonial hand washings were common in Christ’s day (Mark 7:3f.) but technically cannot be deemed baptism since: (1) they took place repeatedly and (2) they had no meaning of identification attached. Thus a different word is used to describe a different practice with a different meaning.

2) Intertestamental Era

a) Jewish self-immersion proselyte baptism began at some time between OT washings and the NT practice (Bruce, 156). This enabled Gentiles to publicly identify with the Jewish community as converts to Judaism.

b) The new member of the community would baptize himself/herself.

c) Besides baptism, proselytes to Judaism also needed to be circumcised and offer sacrifices. Baptism may have especially been employed for women since they could not be circumcised (“*bapto, baptizo*” by A. Oepke, *TDNT*, 1:535-36).

3) John the Baptist

a) John broke with the prevailing (intertestamental) self-immersion by immersing others as a sign of what God does for us when we repent (i.e., forgives us).

b) Thus John’s baptism was called a baptism of repentance, teaching that a person must first repent before being immersed (Matt. 3:2, 6, 8, 11).

4) Early Church

a) The first Christians continued the practice of baptizing believers only, signifying their identification with the church as their new community. This is why the Greek noun *baptisma* (“baptism”) is specifically Christian, never used in other Greek literature before its NT occurrences (noted by Anglican vicar David Watson, *I Believe in the Church*, 227).

1] All subjects of baptism in the NT are clearly believers; one must have very good reason to deviate from this norm (Acts 2:38, 41; 8:12, 36-38; 9:18; 10:47; 16:14-15, 33; 18:8; 19:5). These texts show that repentance preceded baptism in a sequence of “hearing...believing...being baptized.”

2] Some have claimed that entire households were baptized in the NT, which almost certainly included infants (Acts 10:47-48; 16:15; 18:8; 1 Cor. 1:16). However, each of these household texts declare that the households believed before baptism; that infants were baptized is an assumption that is counter to the stated fact that people believed before baptism.

3] The earliest non-scriptural baptism instructions (early 2nd century) requires fasting of 1-2 days prior to baptism, thus implying only adult baptism (*Didache* 7:4 in J. B. Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 153).

4] The Great Commission order is first to make disciples, *then* to baptize them (Matt. 28:19-20). So only believers were baptized, which excludes infants.

5] Baptism is a sign of the believer’s salvation (Rom. 6:1f.). It is not a sign of the covenant (contra infant view), for the Lord’s Supper is the sign of the new covenant (Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25).

b) NT baptism also seems to have been performed by immersion, in line with the practice inherited from John the Baptizer.

1] The lexical meaning of the only verb used for NT baptism (*baptizo*) means “dip, immerse…wash, plunge, sink, drench, overwhelm…soak” (BAGD 131c). Besides baptism, other literal uses include “to dip” (Luke 16:24; cf. LXX Jud. 2:14; Josh. 3:15; Lev. 4:6; 11:32) and “to dye” (Rev. 19:13). Also, baptism is likened to the Flood (1 Pet. 3:21). From the lexical data even Luther and Calvin both admitted immersion to be the biblical mode.

2] Immersion best signifies:

• identification with Christ’s death and resurrection by going under the water and out again (Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12)

• subjection to Christ’s authority (Matt. 28:18-19; Acts 19:3-5; 22:16)

• obedience and a good conscience before God (1 Pet. 3:2)

3] Some claim that some NT verses teach baptism by *pouring* (e.g., 1 Cor. 6:11; Eph. 5:26; Heb. 9:10; 10:22; Tit. 3:5). However, none of these texts refer to baptism and none refer to pouring. They refer in each case to *spiritual* cleansing from sin by faith in Christ (“washing”) or to *Jewish* ceremonial washings that were performed numerous times on the same persons (cf. Heb. 9:10). Hebrews 10:22 refers not to baptism but to “having our *hearts sprinkled* to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.” Pouring is first stated in the early second century—and only as an exception when immersion in running water or cold water should/could not be used (*Didache* 7:1-3 in J. B. Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*, 153).

4] It is also claimed that baptism by *sprinkling* is mentioned often in the Bible (Exod. 24:6-8; Num. 8:7; Ezek. 36:24-26; Heb. 9:13-14; 10:22). Yet none of these verses refer to baptism. They refer to purifying priests with sprinkled water (Num. 8:7), sprinkling vessels with blood (Exod. 24:6-8; Heb. 9:13-14), or the saving work of the Spirit (Ezek. 36:24-26; Heb. 10:22).

5] All NT examples of baptism best allow for immersion: “plenty of water” (John 3:23), “coming up out of the water” (Mark 1:10), “went down into the water” (Acts 8:38). This Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8 could have easily been baptized by pouring or sprinkling on the journey by using water in the caravan.

5) Questions About Baptism

a. Must those who take the Lord’s Supper be baptized?

Response: The issue here is whether a person can take the Lord’s Supper in a “worthy manner” (cf. 1 Cor. 11:27-32) without baptism. Since baptism is one of the first signs of obedience after salvation, one who resists baptism also resists Christ. Baptism was required of those partaking the Lord’s Supper as early as the second century (*Didache* 10:5 in J. B. Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 154).

b. Should those who were baptized *as infants* later be rebaptized after confession of salvation?

Response: The difference between infant baptism and adult baptism relates to more than simply the *time* of baptism. The whole *purpose* of baptism differs significantly in these two types of baptism. Infant baptism signifies the recipient’s initiation into the community of God (Presbyterian view) and even serves as a means of saving grace in the Catholic and Lutheran views. However, as Scripture relates to baptism a symbolic purpose of looking back at one’s salvation, one who has been saved would welcome the opportunity to testify to his or her salvation through a rebaptism.

c. Should those baptized by sprinkling *as believing adults* be rebaptized by immersion once they see the biblical support for immersion?

Response: Many Baptist churches will not admit persons for membership who have not been immersed after placing their faith in Christ, even if they have been sprinkled following salvation. This is not as serious of an issue as question #2 above, but it is more difficult to answer!

Perhaps Acts 19:1-7 can be instructive here. In this passage Paul visited Ephesus and found twelve “disciples” (v. 1) of Jesus, though only through John the Baptist. John had baptized these believers because of their repentance from their sin in anticipation of the Messiah. However, for whatever reason, these people were unlike most John’s disciples who eventually met and followed Christ. Since they had a baptism under John that was incomplete in picturing their faith in Christ, Paul rebaptized them in the Christian manner (presumably immersion). Paul felt it important that their baptism accurately picture their faith in Christ.

The Acts 19 situation did not concern *sprinkling* supplemented by immersion as in question “c” above. It is not presumptuous to think that John’s baptisms were by immersion since he performed them in the Jordan River and since the Jewish proselyte baptism that preceded him was also by immersion. Certainly if Paul felt it necessary to supplement one form of immersion (John’s baptism of repentance) with another form of immersion (Christian baptism), it would be appropriate to supplement post-conversion sprinkling with post-conversion immersion. As in question “b” above, this ceremony gives believers another opportunity and privilege to testify of their faith in Christ.

**Summary of Early Church Baptism vs. Baptisms Preceding It**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Contrasts**  (Preceding vs. NT/Christian) | **Comparisons**  (Points in Common) |
| No formula vs. “Father, Son, & Holy Spirit” | Signified identification with a religious community |
| Self-immersion vs. performed by another | Practised only on believers |
| Circumcision prerequisite vs. none | Immersion only in both cases (BC & 1st century) |
| To Judaism/John vs. to Christianity | Common in both instances |
| Immersion vs. mode varied (in 2nd century) | Water used |

b. The Lord’s Supper

1) Jewish Passover (OT and NT)

a) There exist over 1200 versions of this celebration, making it difficult to explain fully! But in its basic form, the meal reminded Jews annually of their release (exodus) from Egyptian bondage by the death angel who “passed over” (thus the name) the houses of Jews who applied their lamb’s blood on the doors of their homes. Those who did not suffered the death of their firstborn son (Exod. 12).

b) Passover is not a community (synagogue or temple) commemoration but a family one (in contrast to the Christian Lord’s Supper). However, associated with Passover is the Feast of Unleavened Bread which was communal as the men went up to Jerusalem (Exod. 23:14-15).

c) Passover also has a future element, for it looks forward to the messianic age in which Messiah has returned and rules the world from Jerusalem. This is reflected in the close of each celebration with a statement such as…

“This year we are here. Next year in Jerusalem (or ‘in the land of Israel’)!

This year we are slaves. Next year free men!”

2) The Agape (Love) Feast was referred to as the “breaking of bread” among the early Jewish believers in Jerusalem (Acts 2:42). This was essentially a church pot-luck in which each family brings food to share with others (1 Cor. 11:17-22, 33-34). The Lord’s Supper would then be separate and possibly added on at the end (vv. 23-32; cf. David Watson, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, 237).

3) New Testament Lord’s Supper

a) Christ initiated the Lord’s Supper the night before His death as the sign of the new covenant (Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25) noted often in the OT (Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 16:60-62). This covenant promises Israel and Judah (v. 31) a still future national and spiritual redemption (when “they will all know me,” v. 34), but certain elements have present application to the church as well:

1] indwelling of the Holy Spirit (Jer. 31:33 with Ezek. 36:27)

2] new nature, heart, and mind (Jer. 31:33; Isa. 59:21)

3] forgiveness of sins (Jer. 31:34b)

b) The Lord’s Supper shares much in common with the Passover celebration as well. After all, it was during this celebration that Christ announced the Lord’s Supper for the first time. Both commemorations call participants to look in four directions (adapted from David Watson, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*):

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | ***Passover (Jewish)*** | ***Lord’s Supper (Christian)*** |
| **Look outward** | **Whole family involved**  **(Exod. 12:3-4, 16)** | **Fellowship and unity**  **(1 Cor. 11:17-22; 10:16-17)** |
| **Look back** | **Deliverance from Egypt**  **(Exod. 12:31-42)** | **Deliverance from sin**  **(1 Cor. 11:23-25)** |
| **Look forward** | **Wait for messianic age**  **(Ezek. 45:21)** | **Anticipate return of Christ**  **(1 Cor. 11:26; Mark 14:25)** |
| **Look inward** | **Purify house of leaven/evil**  **(Exod. 12:8, 15)** | **Examine sin in yourself**  **(1 Cor. 11:27-32; cf. 5:6-8)** |

c) Other parallels between the Lord’s Supper and the Passover continue…

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | ***Passover (Jewish)*** | ***Lord’s Supper (Christian)*** |
| Sorrow under… | Pharaoh | Sin (1 Cor. 11:27-32) |
| Symbols of sinlessness | Unleavened bread symbolizes breaking from the evil in Egypt | Bread symbolizes our freedom from sin in a unified community (1 Cor. 5:6-8; 10:16) |
| Redemption in… | Passover lamb | Christ’s death (1 Cor. 5:7b) |

d) The order of the two celebrations themselves has many similarities:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Passover** | **Lord’s Supper** |
| Light candles | Assumed (not recorded) |
| **1st Cup**: Blessing/Sanctification, saying, “I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians” (1st of 4 “I wills” of Exod. 6:6-7) | “Take this and divide it among yourselves… I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes” (Luke 22:17b-18) |
| Washing of one’s *own hands* | Washed *disciples feet* during meal (John 13:2, 4) |
| Parsley dipped in salt water (bitterness), middle matzah (bread) made visible and broken and 1/2 called “afikomen” (Gr. “he who comes later”) wrapped with napkin and hidden | Son of God (second member of the Trinity) made visible, broken, body wrapped, and buried in a tomb (this tradition was added to the Passover by first century AD Jewish believers) |
| Passover story read (Exod. 12:1-13),  4 Questions, 4 sons, 10 Plagues | Assumed (not recorded) |
| **2nd Cup**: Plagues/Judgment, saying, “I will rid you of their bondage” |  |
| Washing hands, eat upper and 1/2 middle matzah and bitter herbs with bottom matzah (bondage) |  |
| Passover Supper begins |  |
| Eat bitter herbs with *charoseth* of dates, honey, & almonds (sweetness of life with God’s redemption), roasted egg (temple offerings & destruction, grief and new life), shank bone | Jesus dips the sop with Judas and Judas leaves (?) |
| Eat afikomen—“This is the bread of affliction…” | “This is my body…” (Luke 22:19) |
| **3rd Cup**: Redemption, saying, “I will redeem you with an outstretched arm” | “This is my blood…” (Luke 22:20)  Jesus dips the sop with Judas and Judas leaves (?) |
| **4th Cup**: Praise/Regathering, saying, “I will take you to me for a people” & read Pss. 113–118 | “For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes” |
| Declaration (“Next year in Jerusalem!”), hymn (Ps. 118), poem, or national anthem | Sang hymn & went to Mt. of Olives (Matt. 26:30) |
| **Cup of Elijah**: Filled but untouched; symbolizes his return before Messiah (Mal. 4:5-6; Matt. 11:13-14; 17:11-12; Rev. 11:3-12; 19:11-21), youngest child opens front door “for Elijah” | Assumed (not recorded) |

**Passover Excerpts**

Harold A. Sevener, ed., *Passover Haggadah: for Biblical Jews and Christians*, Orangeburg, NY: Beth Sar Shalom, 1980

Passover Excerpts (2 of 5)

Passover Excerpts (3 of 5)

Passover Excerpts (4 of 5)

Passover Excerpts (5 of 5)

**II. Pag****an Religion**

Introduction: The earliest followers of Christ were Jews in Israel. However, after 15 years (AD 33-48) of establishing the church within the context of Judaism, Paul took the gospel to the Gentiles in his missionary journeys (cf. p. 41). In the many cities and towns of the Mediterranean world he encountered a broad spectrum of pagan philosophies (cf. Acts 17:18; 19:23-41).

A. **Traditional Pagan Religion**

1. Basis: gods and goddesses of classical Greek and Roman mythology, some named in the NT:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Greek Name** | **Roman Name** | **Responsibility** | **Reference in Acts** | **City** | **Event** |
| Hermes | Mercury | god of heralds | 14:12 | Lystra | Paul healed cripple, called Hermes |
| Zeus | Jupiter | ruler of the gods (high god of every nation), god of sky (thunderbolt) | 14:12-13 | Lystra | Barnabas called Zeus as he was the leader |
| Ares | Mars | god of war and thunder | 17:22 | Athens | Paul’s evangelistic Mar’s hill message (Aeropagus means “hill of Ares”) |
| Artemis | Diana | goddess of fertility/childbirth | 19:24, 27-28, 35 | Ephesus | Riot instigated by Demetrius’ greed & “concern for Diana” |

2. The quest of pagan man was fourfold:

a. Health

b. Prosperity

c. Protection

d. Victory in battle

3. The promise of pagan salvation was that it would…

a. fulfill man’s quest

b. give a sense of community

c. provide some hope for immortality

4. The failure of pagan deities became obvious:

a. They repeatedly failed to fulfill their claims (e.g., Artemis revered as a profit maker).

b. The gods were not viewed as superior to man in morality (they were all too human).

c. Deities became a civil religion in one’s locality with no sense of personal involvement and expression for the people (like Dagon vs. YHWH in the OT).

d. Detachment through migration resulted—moving to a new town meant adjustments to the new localized deity (the “you can’t bring your god with you” problem).

5. The result of these repeated failures was few adherents except in certain cities (Lystra, Athens, Ephesus, etc.).

B. **Schools of Philosophical Thought**

1. General Characteristics (Distinction from Traditional Pagan Religion)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Traditional Pagan Religion (vertical) | Philosophical Schools (horizontal) |
| polytheistic | monotheistic (though inconsistent) |
| corporate and local | individualistic and universalistic |
| strategies of appeasement (theological) | philosophies of conduct (behavioral) |
| akin to a religion (like Buddhism) | akin to a philosophy (like Confucianism) |

2. The Various Philosophical Schools

*(The order below is in historical development—not in influence)*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **School** | **Founder and date** | **Development of perspective** | **Reality is…** | **Basic Viewpoint** |
| Pythagorean-ism | Pythagoras of Samos; latter 6th cent. BC | Material and spiritual worlds are antithetical (he was both a philosopher & mathematician!) | Dualistic (what you can’t see) | Influenced Gnostics in their dualism (spiritual = good, material = bad) |
| Platonism | Plato  429-380 | Learned the dialectical method (challenge assumptions) from Socrates; ethical goodness in life; spirit is all important | Mental ideas (what you think) | Reality is not in tangible objects but in the mental ideas behind them |
| Cynicism | Antisthenes; Diogenes of Sinope  412-323 | Anti-establishment, simple lifestyle (e.g., Diogenes lived in a bathtub and talked back to Alexander the Great who visited him!) | Asceticism (what you deny) | Virtue consists in living according to nature (don’t let any philosophy influence you) |
| Aristotelianism | Aristotle  384-322 | Proof by syllogism; deductive logic as the means for sound reasoning and the standard for measuring truth | Material world (what you can touch) | Reality corresponds to the material world and vice versa |
| Epicureanism  Acts 17:18 | Epicurus  341-271 | Distrusted Plato’s dialectical method; the gods have nothing to do with us and there is no afterlife (“eat, drink, & be merry, for tomorrow we die”) | Physical sensations (what you enjoy) | Happiness is gained by the pursuit of pleasure since this life is all there is |
| Stoicism  Acts 17:18, 28 | Zeno of Citium  336-264  upper class  (Seneca) | Rejected Epicureanism because he felt it fostered atheism and self-indulgence; neither the universe nor man is meaningless; strong ethical teachings/moral maxims | Natural reason (what you reason)  Lead to materialism | Cause & effect pervade all so man must adjust himself for tranquility = Buddhism, Hindu- ism, Confucianism?  (Niswonger, 81) |
| Skepticism | Pyrro of Elis  365-275 | No-one is good and all are contradictory so just “go with the flow” in life | Not  attainable (impossible) | Knowledge is unattainable |
| Eclectics |  | No philosophy has all the answers, so we’ll take the best of each (like new age thought or “free thinkers”) | Partly seen by all (what you invent) | Hard to determine or summarize (too varied) |

C. **The Emperor Cult** (cf. *ZPEB*, 2:301; Niswonger, 86-88)

1. Ruler veneration originally began from the east (e.g., Asia Minor, Syria). Egyptians venerated Pharaohs, which was adopted by Ptolemies, and then was adopted by Rome after the death of Caesar Augustus (30 BC-AD 14). However, soon some emperors (Caligula, Nero, Domitian) claimed deity for themselves while still alive—Domitian demanded public worship as “Lord and God” (cf. p. 71). Trajan also demanded worship (cf. p. 160a).

2. The purpose of this veneration was to establish political unity (patriotism) and accountability or loyalty to Rome, especially on the frontiers of the empire. It filled no religious need, but only provided flattery, gratitude, and subjection to Rome (cf. Ben Hur vs. Masala).

3. This public, state religion posed a threat to Christians, who could not acknowledge any human as a god (especially deifying depraved humans such as the emperors, most of whom were homosexuals). This was particularly true of Pergamum, the Asian centre of emperor worship, “where Satan has his throne” (Rev. 2:13)—a city which by the second century had three pagan temples, including one to Emperor Hadrian. During Domitian’s reign the book of Revelation was written, clearly showing Jesus as superior (Rev. 1, 4—5).

D. **Mystery Religions**

1. These local and imported religions from the east had secret, strange rites that promised:

a. Direct revelation from the deity

b. Personal approach through rites across racial or cultural lines

c. Symbolic identification with the deity led to an elimination of fallenness (immortality)

2. The chief mystery cults

a. The Eleusinian cult from Eleusis (a small Greek town near Athens) worshipped Demeter (the Greek goddess of grain). This agrarian fertility cult taught that nature symbolized the death and life (resurrection) of the body.

b. The Mithraic cult venerated Mithra, a *Persian* god, during the first four centuries AD. Only *men* were admitted, so this cult was popular among soldiers. Similarities between Mithraism and Christianity made it one of Christianity’s chief rivals in the Roman era:

1) Both appealed to the masses instead of an intellectual elite

2) Both had a kind of baptism

3) Both had a practice like the Lord’s Supper

4) Both practiced abstinence & self-discipline (freedom from sex frenzies of other cults)

5) Both taught a cosmic struggle with good over evil, an early deluge, immortality, resurrection, a final conflagration, heaven, hell, and (later) a December 25 observance.

c. The Isiac cult focused on Osiris and Isis, an *Egyptian* god and goddess. It identified with the sorrows of motherhood and thus attracted women.

d. The Dionysiac cult, after Dionysus (Greek god of wine and animals), was a forerunner of the New Age movement. It taught “orphic” doctrine—the soul as the divine element of man trapped in the body. This teaching appealed to many influential Greeks (e.g., Plato).

e. The Cybele cult, named after Cybele, goddess of Asia Minor, was officially recognized by Rome (200 BC).

1) Its rites included sacred prostitution. Perhaps a form of this cult lowered the scruples of the Corinthian believers by leading them into temple prostitution (1 Cor. 6:12-20).

2) This cult practiced bizarre forms of ecstasy, including many hollow sounds of musical instruments (cf. 1 Cor. 13:1; Gordon Fee, *1 Corinthians*, NICNT, 632, n. 30).

E. **Astrology and Superstition** (cf. *ZPEB*, 1:393)

1. Astrologers thought external forces (not self) caused success and failure. Thus divination became the means of predicting future events. They even greeted one another by saying *tyche* (“fortune, chance”). They also resorted to magic as an attempt to win release.

2. Paul fought astrology in Ephesus, resulting in the burning of many magic books (Acts 19:19).

F. **Gnosticism**

1. Gnostics taught that saving truth is in knowledge. Disillusioned with rationalism and philosophy, it was more concerned with salvation of the body than with ethics.

2. Gnosticism had a syncretistic nature. By the second century AD it had blended Christian ideas (esp. redemption) with speculations from Judaism, Hellenism (belief that the body and matter is evil while the spirit is good), and eastern oriental religions.

3. Although not fully developed until the 2nd century, an incipient (beginning) form of Gnosticism is evident in 1 John (Gnosticism was popular in Ephesus where John lived in AD 90). Gnosticism had two basic heresies: the exaltation of intellect (*gnosis*) and the belief that matter is inherently evil. John combats these two Gnostic teachings in his first epistle:

a. “Matter is Evil”: Docetic Gnosticism couldn’t believe that a sinless man could have a body, and thus denied the *humanity* of Christ (4:2-3), saying that he only *seemed* to be human (cf. *dokeo*, "to seem"), so John wrote that he touched Jesus (1:1).

b. “Exaltation of Intellect”: Cerinthian Gnosticism denied the *deity* of Christ. Cerinthus, who lived near John in Asia Minor, claimed special knowledge that Jesus was only a man upon whom "the Christ" descended at His baptism but left before His crucifixion. John replied that Jesus Christ came both by water (His baptism) *and* by blood (His death), thus refuting Cerinthus (5:6).

4. The practical outworking of Gnosticism also fell into two camps:

a. Some Gnostics reasoned that since matter is evil, one should avoid it at all costs, resulting in asceticism. (Asceticism is the attempt to remove oneself from all possible temptations to sin by withdrawing from society—some forms are called monasticism.) Paul fought this type of heresy in Colosse (Col. 2:20-23).

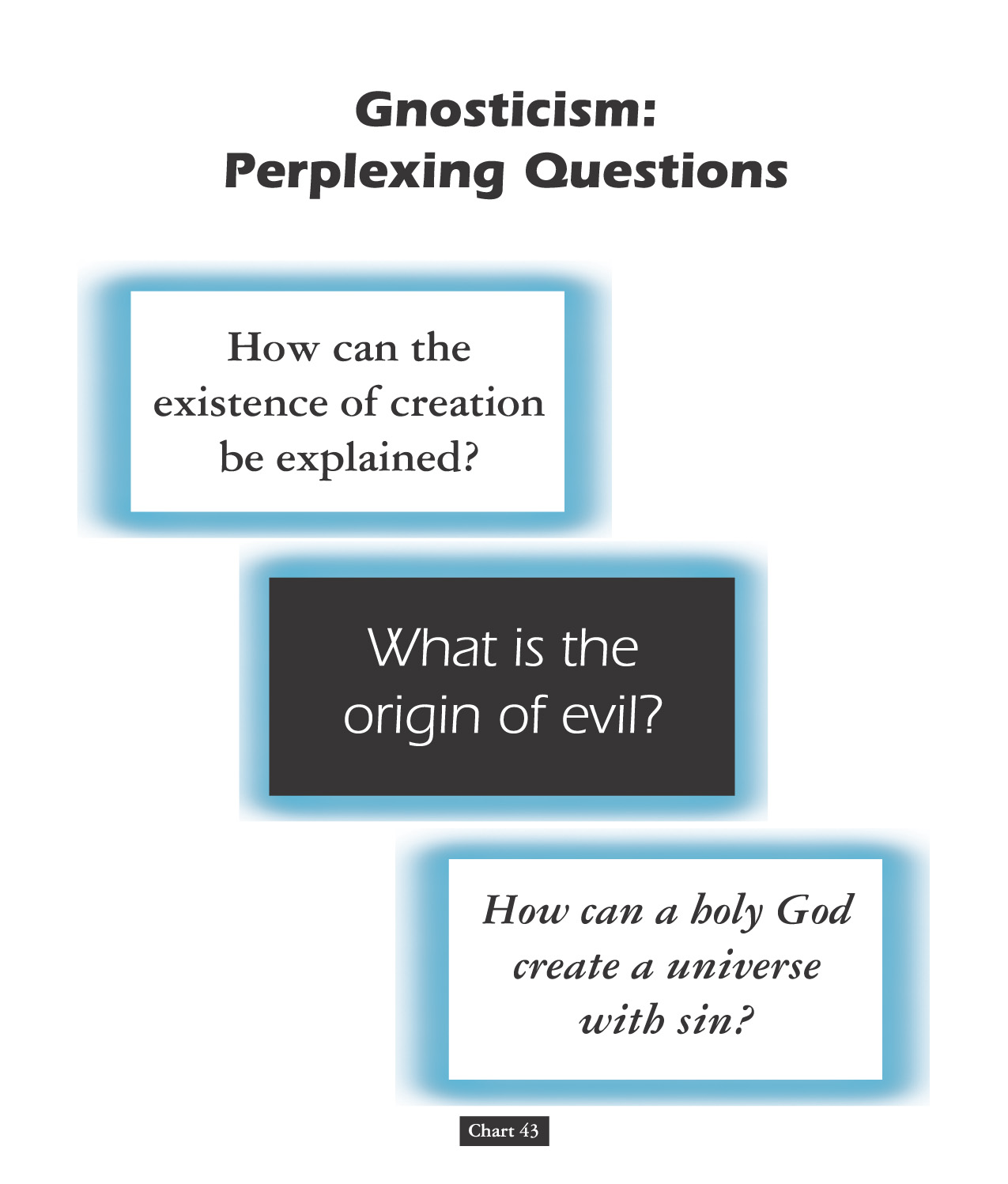
b. Other Gnostics took a more fatalistic attitude and thought that since one cannot change the fact that matter is evil, any type of immoral aberration is acceptable. John specifically responded to this latter philosophy (1:6, 8, 10; 3:4-10). His letter shows that obedience to God's commands, especially through loving others, is the best rebuttal to the practices of Gnosticism. Another refutation of Gnosticism was the Apostle’s Creed (cf. p. 153a).

In his letter John attempts to defeat asceticism by encouraging fellowship among believers (1:7) and to defeat immorality by exhorting obedience and righteousness (2:28-29).

G. **The Challenge of Pagan Beliefs**

1. The many pagan ideas throughout the Roman Empire posed a challenge to Christianity: how to minister effectively to these various religious groups while maintaining a godly lifestyle and proper theology. Corinth failed both in lifestyle and theology. Ephesus (Epistles of John) and Colosse faced severe opposition theologically from these groups.

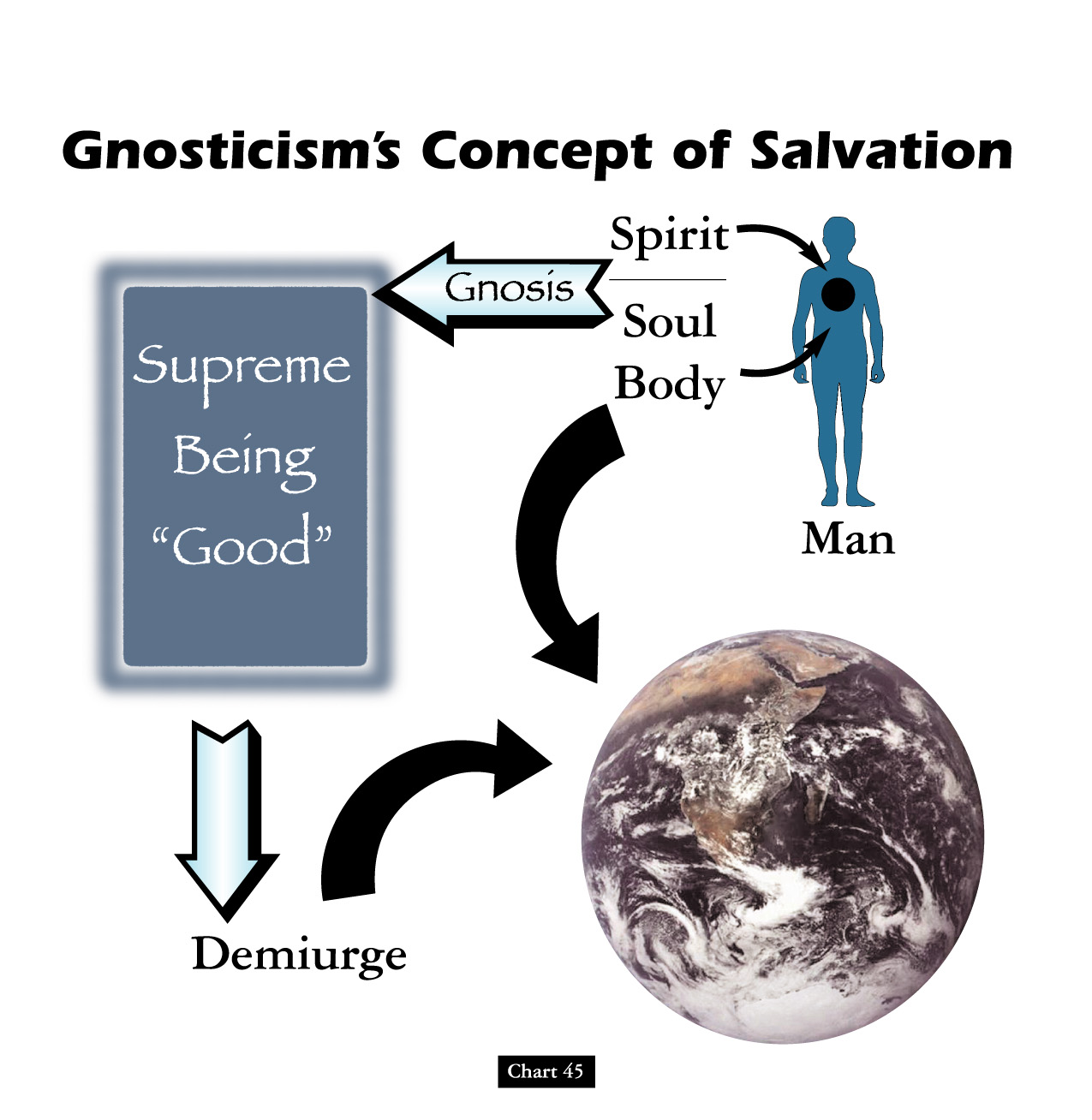
2. Believers today face similar obstacles in this pluralistic society. In Singapore paganism abounds—much like it did in the early church. We must face the task in the power and wisdom of the Spirit of God, with our feet anchored to His unchangeable, inerrant Word.



"The Christian faith was opposed by numerous adversaries––threats from the state, ominous false religions, and heretics within its own borders. The most imposing religious threat came from Gnosticism, which was particularly dangerous because of its intellectual coherency. While Gnosticism seemed to provide answers to perplexing questions, it succeeded only in mixing a snippet of biblical truth with error" (John D. Hannah, *Charts of Ancient & Medieval Church History* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001], 43).



"Gnosticism taught (1) that there is a radical **dualism** of the spiritual in opposition to the material (God, who is Spirit, is the supreme good, while matter is evil); (2) that God could not have created matter because it is contrary to his nature; rather, the world, which is material and evil, was created by the Demiurge (an **emanation** from God), and man is a material being with an entrapped spirit; and (3) that through a "secret **knowledge**," salvation becomes the life of escape from the material confines of the body" (John D. Hannah, *Charts of Ancient & Medieval Church History* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001], 44).



"Gnosticism's concept of salvation is as follows: God did not create the world, [1] but a lesser yet powerful being (the Demiurge) made this evil world and [2] mankind––though within man is a spark of good. [3] Salvation results from enlarging the capacity of that nature while minimizing the hold of materialism, [4] and it is accomplished by means of the secret teachings of Gnostic teachers. In resisting this teaching, Christian writers adopted a worldview that embraced the God of the Bible as the divine creator, affirmed the creation as good though marred by a subsequent devastation, and espoused the salvation of the body as well as the soul" (John D. Hannah, *Charts of Ancient & Medieval Church History* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001], 45).

**Two Types of Gnosticism**

Gnosticism did not fully develop until the second and third centuries. However, certain books of the NT show signs of beginning elements—especially Colossians and 1 John.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Docetic Gnosticism** | **Cerinthian Gnosticism** |
| **From dokeo, “to seem”  (Christ only seemed to be a man)** | **From Cerinthus, founder in Asia (Christ only seemed to be God)** |
| **Matter is Evil** | **Spirit is Good** |
| **Depreciated Materialism** | **Exalted Knowledge (gnosis)** |
| **Denied Christ's Humanity** | **Denied Christ's Deity** |
| **Touched Jesus (1 John 1:1)** | **Water & Blood (1 John 5:6)** |
| **Led to Asceticism** | **Led to Pride** |
| **Immorality exalted** | **Education exalted** |

**1 John 1:1** We proclaim to you the one who existed from the beginning, whom we have heard and seen. We saw him with our own eyes and touched him with our own hands. He is the Word of life (NLT).

**1John 5:6** This is the One who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood. It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth (NAU).

**1 John 5:6**   And Jesus Christ was revealed as God’s Son by his baptism in water and by shedding his blood on the cross—not by water only, but by water and blood. And the Spirit, who is truth, confirms it with his testimony (NLT).

**The Apostle’s Creed vs. Gnosticism**

As Christians we often recite the Apostle’s Creed, which is the earliest Christian statement of faith outside of the New Testament. This creed dates from the first or second century and is a response mostly to the early heresy called Gnosticism.

Notice how the creed begin

*I believe in God the Father Almighty,*

*maker of Heaven and Earth.*

Why does it affirm God as Creator? Because Gnostics said everything that’s spiritual is good but all that’s material is evil, so the physical universe is evil, and God didn’t make it. Perhaps today as we recite this we can remind ourselves that we believe in creation—not evolution.

Gnostics also denied the humanity of Christ, saying he just *appeared* to be human, so early Christians affirmed that He really was born a man…

*And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord,*

*who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,*

*born of the Virgin Mary,*

You see, Gnostics then and now distinguish between the “divine Christ” and the “human Jesus,” saying that Jesus didn’t become “the Christ” and receive the Spirit until His baptism. No, we affirm that the Spirit conceived Jesus *before He was born*!

We also affirm that Jesus Christ died and rose again in this next section…

*suffered under Pontius Pilate,*

*was crucified, dead and buried;*

*he descended into Hades.*

*The third day he rose from the dead,*

*he ascended into heaven,*

*and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.*

*From thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead.*

Gnostics then, and many people now, say the story about Christ’s death is false—that he really didn’t die—and that his resurrection was only a myth symbolic of the coming of spring after the dead of winter. No, we affirm, Jesus died when Pontius Pilate ruled over Judea (AD 26-36).

*I believe in the Holy Spirit,*

*the holy Christian church.*

“Gnostic” means “knowledge.” They held that the key Christian doctrines were reserved for the select few with this knowledge. In contrast, orthodox belief is that the entire church holds truth.

*the communion of saints,*

*the forgiveness of sins,*

Gnostics, like New Agers, say we need *enlightenment*—not forgiveness. No, we affirm that our problem is not *ignorance* that needs to be enlightened but *sin* that needs to be forgiven.

Gnosticism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and other “isms” say only our spirits can be with God after death. They deny heaven as a physical place, but we teach physical bodies there through…

*the resurrection of the body*

*and the life everlasting. Amen.*

**The New Testament Literary Context**

**I. Inspire****d Writings**

A. Old Testament

1. Hebrew: The Masoretic Text (MT)

a. The Hebrew Bible has the same books as our OT but in a different order & classification:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Hebrew** | **Bible** | **Christian** | **Old Testament** |
| **The Law** | Genesis | Genesis | **The Law** |
| (Pentateuch) | Exodus | Exodus | (Pentateuch) |
|  | Leviticus | Leviticus |  |
|  | Numbers | Numbers |  |
|  | Deuteronomy | Deuteronomy |  |
| **The Prophets** | *Joshua* | Joshua | **Historical Books** |
|  | *Judges* | Judges |  |
|  | *Samuel* | Ruth |  |
|  | *Kings* | Samuel (1 & 2) |  |
|  | Isaiah | Kings (1 & 2) |  |
|  | Jeremiah | Chronicles (1 & 2) |  |
|  | Ezekiel | Ezra |  |
|  | Hosea | Nehemiah |  |
|  | Joel | Esther |  |
|  | Amos | Job | **Poetical Books** |
|  | Obadiah | Psalms | (Wisdom Literature) |
|  | Jonah | Proverbs |  |
|  | Micah | Ecclesiastes |  |
|  | Nahum | Song of Solomon |  |
|  | Habakkuk | Isaiah | **Prophets** |
|  | Zephaniah | Jeremiah |  |
|  | Haggai | Lamentations |  |
|  | Zechariah | Ezekiel |  |
|  | Malachi | Daniel |  |
| **The Writings** | **Psalms** | Hosea |  |
| (Hagiographa) | **Proverbs** | Joel |  |
|  | **Job** | Amos |  |
|  | **Song of Solomon** | Obadiah |  |
|  | *Ruth* | Jonah |  |
|  | **Lamentations** | Micah |  |
|  | **Ecclesiastes** | Nahum |  |
|  | *Esther* | Habakkuk |  |
|  | Daniel | Zephaniah |  |
|  | *Ezra* | Haggai |  |
|  | *Nehemiah* | Zechariah |  |
|  | *Chronicles* | Malachi |  |

Note differences in the Hebrew Bible column that designates those classified by Christians as historical writings (*italics*) and wisdom writings (**bold**).

The twofold designation of “Law and the Prophets” (Matt. 5:17; 7:12; 22:40) was used in NT times, probably referring to the whole OT. At one resurrection appearance (Luke 24:44) Jesus used this threefold designation: “Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms” (this first book of the Writings was representative of the whole section)

b. The Hebrew text circulated for over 1000 years with only the consonants, but about AD 600-1000 a family of Hebrew scholars (the Masoretes) copied the text in both Babylon and Tiberias (the latter became the standard). They also added the vowels (actually, vowel pointing), accents, and masora (notations), leaving us the Masoretic Text (MT). Thus ancient Hebrew texts look different from present Hebrew Bibles as they lack vowel points under each letter. Modern Hebrew also contains no vowels.

c. The Hebrew Scriptures were revered by Jews in NT times. Even though most Jews did not have their own copy of the scrolls due to their size and expense, one wonders whether Jews then knew it better from hearing it read than Christians do today from having their own copy to collect dust on their shelves!

2. Greek: The Septuagint (LXX)

a. *History*: The LXX (Roman numeral 70) was a translation of the Hebrew OT into Greek by 72 scholars in Alexandria, Egypt (c. 250 BC) for Ptolemy II (285-247 BC). This provided an OT for many diaspora Jews who couldn’t read Hebrew or Aramaic.

b. *Content*: 39 OT books and added 15 Apocryphal books later (all but 2 Esdras and Additions to Esther), including differences in the text and the order of the books.

c. *Value*: Why does the LXX merit study? (from Melvin K. H. Peters, “Why Study the Septuagint?” *Biblical Archaeologist* 49 [September 1986]: 174-81; cf. review of this article by Walter R. Bodine in *Bibliotheca Sacra* 144 [April-June 1987]: 219-220):

1) It is the earliest translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. Since each translation is an interpretation, this earliest interpretation of the text helps us better understand the meaning attached to texts by very early scholars (pp. 235-36).

2) It was valued highly by most Hellenistic Jews & Jewish converts to Christianity.

3) In some form it constitutes the parent text from which several early Bible versions derive (Coptic, Ethiopic, Arabic, Armenian, etc.).

4) It provides the Jewish intertestamental history since it includes the Apocrypha.

3. OT Canonicity: The term “canon” comes from the Greek *kanon*, for “rule” or “standard.” Thus “canonicity” refers to the authoritative list of books in the OT or NT. Our present list of 39 OT books formalized in AD 90-100 in the city of Jamnia, where these books were identified as the inspired OT. This may seem to be a late date given that the final book (Malachi) was completed almost 500 years previously.

1) Why did it take until the first century AD to record the official list of OT books?

a) Apocrypha: Until the emergence of the Apocrypha in the intertestamental era, no other Jewish writings besides the MT had received widespread circulation. In fact, no extant Jewish documents exist from before the Apocryphal books! It is easy to see from this vast and recent literature that the orthodox Jews would see the need to list those books that had long been considered sacred.

b) Many LXX manuscripts mixed Apocryphal books among the canonical, confusing the issue as to which books were indeed authoritative.

c) Antilegomena (“spoken against”) designate the five disputed books below which may have encouraged the compilers at Jamnia to officially affirm them as inspired. It was not that these books were *added* to the canon then; more probable was that the synod met to discuss if these should be removed or not. “The ‘Council’ was confirming public opinion, not forming it” (R. K. Harrison, “The Canon of Scripture,” in *Young’s Analytical Concordance*).

1] Ezekiel was thought to contradict Solomon’s temple (cf. Ezek. 40–43)

¯¯

2] Esther did not mention God’s name, prayer, or anything religious

3] Ecclesiastes appeared Epicurean (advocating indulgence of the flesh)

4] Proverbs had supposed contradictions (e.g., 26:4-5)

5] Song of Songs was disputed due to its sensuality

d) Samaritans considered only the five books of Moses as inspired, so perhaps the rabbis felt they must distinguish themselves from this limited tradition.

e) Pharisaical tradition had become equal in authority to many, so perhaps the Jamnia council sought to clarify the non-authoritative nature of these rabbinical writings.

2) What criteria was used to determine which OT books were inspired?

a) History of Authoritative & Enduring Usage: Note that these rabbis did not *decide* which books were scriptural. They only put into an official list the OT writings that had been revered as Scripture by Jews for centuries.

b) Doctrinal Suitability: The 39 OT books teach no doctrinal inconsistencies (truthfulness and harmony with progressive revelation). While Apocryphal and Pseudepigraphal writings were considered valuable as historical literature, they did not read like Scripture due to doctrinal inconsistencies.

c) Prophetic Authorship (Samuel, David, etc.)

d) Claim to be the Word of God (“The word of the Lord came to me…”)

e) Dynamic Character (Heb. 4:12): God’s Word is alive and changes lives. This cannot be said of other so-called inspired writings.

The NT often refers to the OT as inspired. Jesus called OT books as the word of God (e.g., Luke 18:31-33; 24:25-27; John 10:35; etc.), as did Peter (Acts 1:16), Stephen (Acts 7:38), Paul (Rom. 3:2), and James (Jas. 4:5). While this was not influential at Jamnia as this was a rabbinic (non-Christian) council, it does confirm for Christians the authority of the 39 OT books. In contrast, the NT quotes only one Pseudepigraphal book (1 Enoch 1:9 in Jude 14-15), and this quote does not imply inspiration.

B. New Testament

1. Dates: For the purposes of this class, NT writings were composed between the AD 40s (James) to AD 94-95 (Revelation). For details, please see pages 41-43.

2. Canonicity: How did the early church identify which letters were inspired?

a. *Apostolic* Authority: Each NT book was either written by an apostle or else under the guidance of one (Luke under Paul, Mark under Peter).

b. Early & Widespread *Acceptance*: The Apostle Peter noted in about AD 64 that this literature was considered inspired very early (2 Pet. 3:15-16).

c. Consistency of *Doctrine*: Nothing in the NT writings contradicts the OT corpus.

\* These books were not all recognized at the same time. Some took longer to establish such credibility due to problems (e.g., the authorship of Hebrews and 2 Peter, the supposed discrepancy between James and Paul’s doctrine of justification by faith, etc.). The next page shows that by Irenaeus’ time (AD 130-202) most were already accepted, and at the Council of Hippo (AD 393) all 27 were accepted.

The New Testament Canon During the First Four Centuries

H. Wayne House

**Chronological** **Literature** **Chart**

**(Biblical and Extrabiblical)**

Dates below relate to the time of writing (not birth to death)

Names of works appear in *italics*

400 300 200 100 BC/AD 100 200 300 400 500 600 700

GREEK *LXX*

(Greek OT)

Polybius

Diodorus

Strabo

Plutarch

-------- Hermetica -------

Philo

JEWISH (Jewish/Greek)

*OT* (“Council” *MT*

(completed) at Jamnia) 600-1000

----------OT Apocrypha----------

------------- Pseudepigrapha -----------(some extended to 7th century)

-------- Dead Sea Scrolls -------

--------------------- Rabbinic Literature -------------------

-------------- Midrash (oral tradition) -----------

*Talmud* = *Mishnah* 200 + *Gemara* 500

-------- Tosefta --------

Josephus 77-94

ROMAN (Jew writing for Rome)

Cicero

Livy

Pliny 113

Tacitus 115

CHRISTIAN

*New Testament* 40s-95

Apostolic Fathers 95-150

Most notable:

• *Didache* 95-120

• *Epistle of Barnabas* 70-132

----------------- NT Apocrypha ----------------

• *Nag Hammadi Codices* (Gnostic)

• *Gospel of Thomas*

MISCELLANEOUS

------------------------------- *Select Papyri* --------------------------------------------

**II.** **Uninspired Writings**

A. Pagan Literature



\*Only those with helpful background to the NT are noted, and even these are selected. This section is adapted from John D. Grassmick, NTI Class notes, DTS, 1985.

1. **Greek Historians**

a. Herodotus (484-420 BC) wrote the first surviving Greek prose history (5 works). His story of the Greek victory over Persia shows how Greek became the key NT tongue.

b. Polybius (ca. 203-120 BC) went to Rome in 167 BC and wrote a 40 volume history of Rome’s development and destiny (only 5 extant)

c. Diodorus of Sicily (died ca. 21 BC), a contemporary of Julius Caesar, wrote a treatise on the career of Antiochus IV Epiphanes.

d. Strabo (63 BC—AD 21), a Greek historian and geographer, wrote 47 volumes of history (none extant) and 17 volumes of geography in which he describes Palestine. Josephus used him as a source.

e. Plutarch (AD 50—ca. 120) wrote *Vita* (The Parallel Lives) that paired biographies of Greeks and Romans. Sir Thomas North's translation (AD 1579) greatly affected English literature by supplying the material for Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* and *Antony and Cleopatra*.

2. **Roman Historians**

a. Cicero (106—43 BC) wrote a history of Syria.

b. Livy (59 BC—AD 17) wrote a complete Roman history in 35 volumes (all extant), which is particularly helpful for the early Maccabean Era (cf. p. 160 #10).

c. Pliny the Younger (ca. AD 62—ca. 113), is not technically a historian. However, as governor of Bithynia in Asia Minor, his letters to Emperor Trajan provide many historical insights (cf. pp. 160 #14). In one letter he asks advice on how to treat Christians who had been growing in his province (p. 160a):

1) He notes that the believers gathered regularly on a certain day (Sunday?) “to sing responsively a hymn to Christ as if to a god” (*Epistle* 10.96).

2) This is *the earliest Roman (Latin) reference to Jesus Christ* (AD 113)*.* The Jewish historian Josephus is the earliest reference from all sources (AD 93-94; cf. p. 172).

d. Tacitus (AD 55—ca. 120) was one of the most reliable Roman historians.

1) His histories are *The Annals* (AD 115; cf. p. 160 #13) on emperors Tiberius (AD 14) to Nero (AD 68) and *A History* that finishes the narrative until Domitian (AD 96).

2) Tacitus makes the second earliest Roman reference to Christ (AD 115) concerning the persecutions of Christians under Nero: “Their name comes from Christus, who, in the reign of Tiberius as emperor was condemned to death by the procurator Pontius Pilate” (*Annals* 15.44).

e. Suetonius (AD 69—ca. 121) served as beneficiary to Emperor Trajan and secretary to Hadrian, which provided him access to official archives (cf. p. 160 #15).

1) His *Lives of the Caesars* (AD 120) traces the Roman emperors from Julius Caesar (44 BC) to Domitian (AD 96), including history, customs, and chronology.

2) In chapter 25 gives the third earliest Latin reference to Jesus (AD 120), noting (inaccurately) Claudius' expulsion of Jews from Rome “who had been continually stirring up trouble under the influence of Chrestus [sic]” (cf. Acts 18:2).

3. **Extant Copies of Pagan Writings**

How reliable are the NT manuscripts in comparison to other ancient sources? Compare the following secular manuscript dates to the time of their original autographs, as well as the few copies available. This stands in stark contrast to the NT writings which number 24,772 manuscripts (5,488 Greek and 19,284 other). Some of these Greek manuscripts are within 100-200 years of the original autographs! One fragment from John’s gospel even dates from AD 135, which is only 40 years after the original (assuming the most held AD 95 date for John)! (For more information, see Josh McDowell, *Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, 40).



**Pliny and Trajan**

Pliny the Younger was governor of Pontus/Bithynia from AD 111-113. We have a whole set of exchanges of his letters with the emperor Trajan on a variety of administrative and political matters. These two letters are the most famous, in which Pliny encounters Christianity for the first time.

Pliny, Letters 10.96-97

Pliny to the Emperor Trajan.

It is my practice, my lord, to refer to you all matters concerning which I am in doubt. For who can better give guidance to my hesitation or inform my ignorance? I have never participated in trials of Christians. I therefore do not know what offenses it is the practice to punish or investigate, and to what extent. And I have been not a little hesitant as to whether there should be any distinction on account of age or no difference between the very young and the more mature; whether pardon is to be granted for repentance, or, if a man has once been a Christian, it does him no good to have ceased to be one; whether the name itself, even without offenses, or only the offenses associated with the name are to be punished.

Meanwhile, in the case of those who were denounced to me as Christians, I have observed the following procedure: I interrogated these as to whether they were Christians; those who confessed I interrogated a second and a third time, threatening them with punishment; those who persisted I ordered executed. For I had no doubt that, whatever the nature of their creed, stubbornness and inflexible obstinacy surely deserve to be punished. There were others possessed of the same folly; but because they were Roman citizens, I signed an order for them to be transferred to Rome.

Soon accusations spread, as usually happens, because of the proceedings going on, and several incidents occurred. An anonymous document was published containing the names of many persons. Those who denied that they were or had been Christians, when they invoked the gods in words dictated by me, offered prayer with incense and wine to your image, which I had ordered to be brought for this purpose together with statues of the gods, and moreover cursed Christ—none of which those who are really Christians, it is said, can be forced to do—these I thought should be discharged. Others named by the informer declared that they were Christians, but then denied it, asserting that they had been but had ceased to be, some three years before, others many years, some as much as twenty-five years. They all worshipped your image and the statues of the gods, and cursed Christ.

They asserted, however, that the sum and substance of their fault or error had been that they were accustomed to meet on a fixed day before dawn and sing responsively a hymn to Christ as to a god, and to bind themselves by oath, not to some crime, but not to commit fraud, theft, or adultery, not falsify their trust, nor to refuse to return a trust when called upon to do so. When this was over, it was their custom to depart and to assemble again to partake of food—but ordinary and innocent food. Even this, they affirmed, they had ceased to do after my edict by which, in accordance with your instructions, I had forbidden political associations. Accordingly, I judged it even more necessary to find out what the truth was by torturing two female slaves who were called deaconesses. But I discovered nothing else but depraved, excessive superstition.

I therefore postponed the investigation and hastened to consult you. For the matter seemed to me to warrant consulting you, especially because of the number involved. For many persons of every age, every rank, and of both sexes are and will be endangered. For the contagion of this superstition has spread not only to the cities but also to the villages and farms. But it seems possible to check and cure it. It is certainly quite clear that the temples, which had been almost deserted, have begun to be frequented, that the established religious rites, long neglected, are being resumed, and that from everywhere sacrificial animals are coming, for which until now very few purchasers could be found. Hence it is easy to imagine what a multitude of people can be reformed if an opportunity for repentance is afforded.

Trajan to Pliny

You observed proper procedure, my dear Pliny, in sifting the cases of those who had been denounced to you as Christians. For it is not possible to lay down any general rule to serve as a kind of fixed standard. They are not to be sought out; if they are denounced and proved guilty, they are to be punished, with this reservation, that whoever denies that he is a Christian and really proves it—that is, by worshiping our gods—even though he was under suspicion in the past, shall obtain pardon through repentance. But anonymously posted accusations ought to have no place in any prosecution. For this is both a dangerous kind of precedent and out of keeping with the spirit of our age.

B. Jewish Literature

(This section is also adapted from John D. Grassmick, NTI Class notes, DTS, 1985.)

1. **OT** **Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha**

a. ***Definitions***

1) The OT Apocrypha (“hidden, secret”) is a collection of 15 extrabiblical Jewish writings mostly composed from 250 BC—AD 100 (cf. list on p. 164).

a) *Acceptance:* None of these 15 were included in the Hebrew Masoretic Text (MT) though all but 2 Esdras were appended to the Septuagint (LXX). The Catholic Church has accepted 12 of these as Scripture since the Council of Trent (1546) and called them the “deuterocanonical” books (“second canon”).

b) *Terms:* Don’t confuse *apocrypha* with the similar-sounding *apocalypse* (“revelation, disclosure”) with the opposite meaning! Apocalyptic denotes a writing style with symbolic imagery about future events like Revelation, Daniel, and Zechariah. To further confuse things, two books of the Apocrypha are apocalyptic in style (p. 162)! Also, note that there exists a huge body of literature called the NT Apocrypha that was penned in the centuries following NT times (cf. pp. 186-87).

2) The Pseudepigrapha (“falsely ascribed”) is 63+ extrabiblical Jewish writings mostly composed from 200 BC—AD 200. Some were written in Hebrew/Aramaic (Palestinian origin) and others in Greek (non-Palestinian, most from Alexandria, Egypt).

a) *Acceptance:* None of these 63 are included in the MT, LXX, or Catholic Bibles. They are used simply as background literature to better understand Scripture.

b) *Names:* Some Pseudepigraphal writings bear the names of key OT persons such as Enoch, Moses, etc. These books were not written by these men (thus the name meaning “falsely ascribed”), but these names were used to add authenticity to the books (yet some make no such claim and are anonymous). Catholics call the Apocrypha “Deuterocanonical” writings, and the Pseudepigrapha “the Apocrypha”!

b. ***Literary Categories***

(Only 14 of the 78 Apocryphal and Pseudepigraphal writings are listed here. Each is in the Apocrypha unless otherwise noted.)

1) History

These works provide invaluable information on the intertestamental period.

a) 1 Esdras (ca. 150 BC) contains portions of Ezra-Nehemiah and 2 Chronicles (“Esdras” is Greek for the Hebrew “Ezra”). Josephus referred to 1 Esdras.

b) 1 Maccabees (ca. 100 BC) is the best historical source between the testaments as it provides very accurate information on the Sabbath, wars, etc.—especially the discussion of Antiochus IV and the Maccabean Revolt (167-164 BC).

c) 2 Maccabees (ca. 100 BC) is a theological, less historically accurate work.

2) Fiction (romances or novels or apologies)

These works extol the virtues of the Jews and their way of life. They contend that God blesses and rewards His people who are faithful to Him.

a) Tobit (ca. 200 BC) chronicles the story of how God rewards the faith of the man Tobit who is dedicated to the Torah during Babylonian idolatry.

b) Judith (ca. 150 BC) is a historical romance of how Judith, the heroine, delivers Judah from the Babylonians by beheading the commander of Babylon.

c) Letter of Aristeas (ca. 150 BC) is a Pseudepigraphal work about how the 72 scholars came together to translate the LXX in Alexandria for Ptolemy II’s library. Unfortunately, only one verse describes the actual translation process.

d) Susanna (ca. 100 BC) records how this virtuous wife of a Babylonian Jew is accused of adultery but vindicated by Daniel’s wisdom. He questions her accusers separately, showing their conspiracy and leading to their deaths.

e) Bel & the Dragon (ca. 100 BC) provides two stories as an addition to the book of Daniel. In the first account Daniel proves that the Babylonian idol “Bel” does not actually eat food and in the second Daniel refuses to worship a dragon, kills it, then is rescued from the lions’ den—both stories depicting how God sustains those who worship Him in the face of idolatry.

f) 3 Maccabees (ca. late first cent. BC) has a misleading name as it records struggles of Alexandrian Jews who suffered under Ptolemy IV Philopator (221-204 BC), events which occurred a half century before the Maccabees. Both 3 & 4 Maccabees are noncanonical to Catholics and Protestants, though they are accepted as canonical by Eastern Orthodox churches.

g) Sibylline Oracles (300 BC to AD 700) depict aged women (Sibyls) uttering ecstatic prophecies. These did not have reliable or factual data as they were continually changed and used for political propaganda. Some contain allusions to Christianity as well as paganism (Charlesworth, 1: vi, 317).

3) Wisdom literature (didactic)

These books read very much like the book of Proverbs. Jewish sages (wise men) were held almost in as high regard as the priest and prophet.

a) Ecclesiasticus—also called Sirach (ca. 190 BC) contains two-line proverbs and is very helpful in providing Greek parallels to NT Greek constructions.

b) Wisdom of Solomon (ca. 50 BC) is deemed the “Gem of the Apocrypha” due to its emphasis on encouraging Jews to live wisely to please the LORD. It is written in Greek by a Hellenistic Jew who tried to impersonate Solomon.

4) Apocalyptic literature

This highly symbolic literature claims to reveal the future. It views human history in two ages: the “present evil age” that will grow worse until God brings in the “age to come” (Messianic age). Such writings served to encourage Jews to endure persecution with the promise of the soon coming of the Messiah and the kingdom. It was extremely popular during Israel’s period of foreign domination (intertestamental and NT era) but quickly faded after Jerusalem’s destruction revealed that the kingdom was not indeed at hand.

a) 1 Enoch or Ethiopic Enoch (ca. 150 BC) is a Pseudepigraphal work which seeks to answer riddles such as why the angels fell (due to cohabiting with women in Genesis 6:1-4), the meaning of “son of man” (a preexistent heavenly Messiah), and especially eschatological themes such as the coming of Messiah and the kingdom, which is quoted in Jude 14-15. This book was well-known in NT times and likely influenced NT theology (Charlesworth, 1:10).

b) 2 Esdras (ca. AD 90) is a theodicy, or explanation of some of the great mysteries of the moral world (how a good God can be reconciled with a sinful world), including why Jerusalem fell to the Romans. This apocalyptic apocryphal writing provided hope for salvation and restoration for the Jews.

c. ***Canonicity: Why was the Apocrypha/Pseudepigrapha rejected as inspired?***

1) Not Recognized as Authoritative by the Early Church: The Apocrypha was added to the LXX, but various LXX editions contain different books and most do not claim inspiration for them. Both Jews and Christians limited the OT canon to the present 39 books (e.g., Josephus *Against Apion* 1.8)

2) False Theology: Teachings incompatible with Scripture are numerous, such as…

a) *Purgatory* is taught in the Apocrypha. Judas Maccabeus in 2 Maccabees 12:41-46 discovered that some of his men killed in battle were wearing pagan amulets. Judas took up a collection from his surviving soldiers and sent it to Jerusalem as an “expiatory sacrifice,” with the result, “And thus he made atonement for the dead that they might be freed from their sin” (v. 46).

b) *Salvation by works* is taught in the Pseudepigrapha. Two angels each record sins and good deeds, respectively, then place these records on a balance to see if a person goes to heaven or hell (Testament of Abraham 13:9-14 in Charlesworth, 1:890).

3) Lack of Claim to be the Word of God: Since it never makes a “thus saith the Lord” claim, why should we make such a claim on its behalf?

4) Lack of Dynamic Character: It does not read like an inspired writing.

5) Suspicious History of Acceptance by the Roman Catholic Church: Catholics did not affirm inspiration for the Apocrypha until the Council of Trent (AD 1546) in a counter-offensive to Protestant claims (that faith alone is sufficient for salvation and prayers for the dead are meaningless). While Pope Gregory I developed the purgatory idea much earlier (AD 593), indulgences were added to reduce purgatory time (AD 1190), and purgatory was elevated from doctrine to dogma in AD 1438 (Council of Florence), the Catholic Church obtained the “best” support for purgatory by canonizing the Apocrypha in AD 1546 so that 2 Maccabees 12:41-46 (above) would be considered authoritative.

d. ***Value of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha***

How has the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha helped interpret the NT? They provide…

1) History of the Jewish intertestamental era—the dashed hopes and disillusionments of the returning from the exile

2) Origins of Jewish sects and institutions—the shift from a covenant nation to a mix of conflicting religious communities

3) Development of theological beliefs—God shifts from direct revelation to intermediaries (angels), and emphasizes resurrection and salvation by obeying the Torah

4) Lexical background to many NT terms (e.g. “son of man”), images (e.g. apocalyptic imagery), and ideas (e.g., doctrine of the two ages)

5) Backdrop for new literary forms (e.g. letters)

6) Balance to rabbinical writings in understanding Judaism

e. List of Apocrypha Books and Acceptance by Various Groups...

**Terminology of Authoritative Writings**

Jews and those claiming to be Christians differ widely on which books are considered Scripture, as well as what to call them. Below is a summary to try to clear up some of the confusion.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | ***Jews*** | ***Protestants & Anglicans*** | ***Catholics*** | ***Eastern Orthodox*** |
| 39 OT Books | Bible | Old Testament | Old Testament | Old Testament |
| 27 NT Books | New Testament (uninspired) | New Testament  (inspired) | New Testament  (inspired) | New Testament  (inspired) |
| 4 Apocryphal Books (Tobit, Judith, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus) | Apocrypha  (uninspired; not in MT but in LXX) | Apocrypha  (uninspired) | Deuterocanonical  (confirmed as canonical in 1546) | Apocrypha  (confirmed as canonical in 1673) |
| 8 Apocryphal Books (Baruch, Letter of Jeremiah, Additions to Esther, Song of Three Young Men, Susanna, Bel & the Dragon, 1-2 Maccabees) | Apocrypha  (uninspired; not in MT but in LXX except Additions to Esther) | Apocrypha  (uninspired) | Deuterocanonical  (confirmed as canonical in 1546) | Apocrypha  (not confirmed as canonical in 1673 but generally accepted as authoritative now) |
| 3 Apocryphal Books (1-2 Esdras, Prayer of Manasseh) | Apocrypha  (uninspired; not in MT but in LXX except 2 Esdras) | Apocrypha  (uninspired) | Non-canonical  (but often in the appendix since 1592, except Jerusalem Bible) | Apocrypha  (not confirmed as canonical in 1673 but generally accepted as authoritative now) |
| 3 Pseudepigraphal Books (Psalm 151,  3-4 Maccabees) | Pseudepigrapha  (3-4 Maccabees only in LXX?) | Pseudepigrapha  (uninspired) | Apocrypha  (but in the appendix of the NRSV New Oxford Annotated Bible, 1977) | Apocrypha  (not confirmed as canonical in 1673 but generally accepted as authoritative now) |
| 60+ Pseudepigraphal Books (1 Enoch is the largest and most influential work) | Pseudepigrapha  (uninspired, not in any OT editions) | Pseudepigrapha  (uninspired, not in any Bible editions) | Apocrypha  (uninspired, not in any Bible editions) | Pseudepigrapha  (uninspired,  not in any Bible editions) |

Save the rest of this page for the chart in the Canon file

f. “Apocrypha” in Soulen’s *Handbook* (from John D. Grassmick, DTS, 1985)

Grassmick’s handout

g. “Pseudepigrapha” in Soulen’s *Handbook* (from John D. Grassmick, DTS, 1985)

Grassmick’s handout

h. List of Pseudepigraphal Writings (Charlesworth inside flap)

Paste in the flap here

i. Sources

1) Apocrypha

Anchor Bible Series (a volume of text and commentary on each Apocryphal book)

Brockington, L. H. *A Critical Introduction to the Apocrypha*

May, Herbert G. and Metzger, Bruce M. eds., *The New Oxford Annotated Apocrypha: New Revised Standard Edition* (text and commentary expanded from the 1977 ed. of the RSV) distributed by Baker, 1998

Mays, James L. ed., *Harper’s Bible Commentary* (commentary only)

Metzger, Bruce M. *An Introduction to the Apocrypha* (commentary only)

Nickelsburg, George W. E. *Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishnah* (London: SCM, & USA: Fortress, 1981) covers Apocrypha & Pseudepigrapha

Harrison, R. K. *Introduction to the Old Testament*, pp. 1175-1278 (commentary)

2) Pseudepigrapha

Charlesworth, James H., ed.  *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha.* 2 vols. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983, 1985. li+995 pp. l+1006 pp.

Nickelsburg, George W. E. *Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishnah* (London: SCM, & USA: Fortress, 1981) covers Apocrypha & Pseudepigrapha

2. **Philo of Alexandria** (20 BC—AD 45) or “Philo Judeus” was a diaspora Jew in Egypt who followed Alexandria’s allegorical method of interpretation in his commentaries. Although some claim Christian interpretations in his writings and he was contemporary to the early NT era, he probably never heard of Jesus or was influenced by Christian writings (G. H. Clark, “Philo Judeus,” *ZPEB*, 4:773). He sought to convince the Greco-Roman world of the superiority of Judaism’s world-view (Evans, 81).

a. *Allegorical Method:* Philo’s OT commentaries borrow heavily from Greek philosophy and the spiritualizing hermeneutic, so his exegesis was horrible. For example, he notes that the Jews left Egypt in the Exodus with some of Egypt’s jewels means that Jews may make use of Greek philosophy (Egyptians = Greeks, jewels = philosophy)!

b. *Influence:* Unfortunately, Philo’s type of OT eisegesis (where there exists no logical or necessary relation between the text and the interpretation) was borrowed by Christian interpreters for centuries. Christian scholars who followed his allegorical method include Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Ambrose. Philo also fed the minds of Gnostics such as Basilides and Valentinus as well as the pagan philosophers such as the Neoplatonists.

3. **Rabbinic Literature** (ca. 100 BC—AD 500)

a. *Dates*: Most of the writings of the Jewish rabbis came *after* the NT era. However, they reflect oral traditions that were certainly in effect at the time of Christ and earlier. Thus we can find much background information to the NT on subjects such as history, Sabbath practices, and Jewish customs to aid our understanding of the NT.

b. *Sources:*

1) See the next four pages for a helpful outline of this material and abbreviations which you may come about in your readings.

2) The most helpful rabbinic writing for purchase and consultation is the Mishna. This authoritative collection of the rabbis’ writings contains the Pharisees’ practices of the intertestamental period up until about AD 200, providing extremely helpful material for preaching and teaching concerning the Sabbath and other Jewish practices. The standard translation of the Mishna is by Herbert Danby (cf. p. 170).

Rabbinic Literature Handout (Soulen in Grassmick)

**Rabbinic Writings**

John H. Walton, *Chronological & Background Charts of the Old Testament*, 2d ed., 118

(Please correlate this chart with the explanations on the previous page)

**Mishnah & Talmud**

Cleon Rogers, *The Topical Josephus*, 71

***Mishna Contents Page***

Translated from the Hebrew by Herbert Danby (Oxford, 1933)

4. **Josephus**  (AD 37—ca. 100) is the key Jewish historian and apologist of the NT era

a. **Life**

1) Josephus’ father was a Jewish priest (Mattathias) and his mother a Hasmonean descendant. He joined the Pharisee party at age 19 but remained a nominal member.

2) At age 27 he visited Rome (AD 64), but upon returning to Judea he reluctantly led a Jewish force in Galilee against the Romans. This lasted only six months during the first part of the Jewish Revolt against Rome (AD 66-73), but at his capture he prophesied that the Roman general Vespasian would become emperor. After this episode he saw the war from the Roman ranks, acting as a translator and mediator to convince Jews to lay down their arms in view of Rome’s military superiority. When his prophecy came true he was freed from his chains. His eyewitness account of Jerusalem’s fall was seen from outside the walls.

3) After Jerusalem’s fall he joined the Emperor Vespasian in Rome as a friend under lifetime pension of the Empire (he took on the emperor’s family name, “Flavius”). This gave him the time and money to write as a historian and apologist of the Jews. However, most Jews continued to view him as a traitor living in luxury (in the late Vespasian’s mansion) with the victorious enemy until his death soon after AD 100.

b. **Writings** (all from Rome)

1) *The History of the Jewish War Against the Romans* (AD 77) is often abbreviated as *Jewish War* or simply *War.* This work chronicles the bravery of both the Jews and the Romans in the Jewish Revolt (AD 66-73).

2) *The Antiquities of the Jewish People* (AD 93-94) records the history of the Jewish people from creation to AD 66 in a massive 20 volumes. Josephus intended to complete the missing history (AD 73-93) but died before he could do so.

3) *Vita* means *Life*, as it is his own autobiography. This seeks to rebut accusations by rival historian Justus of Tiberias that he encouraged the Jewish rebellion. It emphasizes his six months as commander in Galilee.

4) *Against Apion* is a two-volume defense of the Jews against the scholarly accusations of the Gentile critic Apion. Volume 1 is mistitled *Against Apion* for it defends *Antiquities* against Greeks and Egyptians who disbelieved it while only volume 2 addresses Apion.

Sources: The standard English version of Josephus has been William Whiston’s since AD 1737. Whiston believed Josephus became a Christian (even Bishop of Jerusalem!) at the end of his life, but few if any hold this to be true. The Loeb Classical Library (10 vols. with Greek text, 1926-65) has re-translated Josephus into more modern English, but this is too expensive for most people. Paul Maier abridged and updated the language of *Wars* and *Antiquities* in the edition assigned in this course and E. J. Brill has commissioned Steve Mason of York Univ. (Ontario) to update Whiston and even include a commentary on Josephus (see bibliography). See also the standard concordance by K. H. Rengstorf, ed., *A Complete Concordance to Flavius Josephus* (4 vols., Leiden: Brill, 1973-83) and a brief historical introduction to Josephus by Cleon L. Rogers, Jr., *The Topical Josephus* (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1992).

c. **Evaluation**—Josephus was a reliable historian with some exceptions:

1) Roman bias: He paints the Zealots as insurrectionists while the Romans enjoyed God’s favor due to the Zealot apostasy.

2) Exaggerations: His accounting of numbers is unreliable. (Yet this is typical of ancient works; some think he didn’t want Romans to look small in comparison!)

3) Egotism: He ends his *Antiquities* saying, “No one else, either Jew or gentile, would have been equal to this task” (*Ant.* 20.11.2 in Maier, 277; cf. Whiston, 4:148).

4) Digressions from a theme plague his writings but provide valuable backgrounds.

d. Significance

1) Josephus gives the earliest non-Christian witnesses to the historicity of Jesus Christ (AD 93-94) in two separate statements, one short and one long:

a) Short: His account of how James, the brother of Jesus, was killed by the high priest Ananus (Annas) mentions Jesus: “Convening the judges of the Sanhedrin, he [Annas] brought before them a man named James, the brother of Jesus who was called the Christ, and certain others. He accused them of having transgressed the law and condemned them to be stoned to death” (*Ant.* 20.9.1 in Maier, 276; cf. Whiston, 4:140). Josephus inaccurately refers to James as the brother of Jesus (cf. Acts 12:1-2).

b) Long: This statement has two versions, the later Christian one due to interpolation (*Ant.* 18.3.3 in Maier, 264; cf. Whiston, 4:11):

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Jewish Version**  Likely the original based on 10th cent. Arabic MSS of the Melkite historian Agapius, for Josephus almost certainly did not become a Christian (*contra* Whiston, 4:427) | **Christian Version**  Likely interpolated in the *italic* statements by a well-meaning Christian before the time of Eusebius (AD 324) |
| “At this time there was a wise man called Jesus, and his conduct was good, and he was known to be virtuous. Many people among the Jews and the other nations became his disciples. Pilate condemned him to be crucified and to die. But those who had become his disciples did not abandon his discipleship. They reported that he appeared to them three days after his crucifixion and that he was alive. Accordingly, he was perhaps the Messiah, concerning whom the prophets have reported wonders. And the tribe of the Christians, so named after him, has not disappeared to this day.” | “About this time lived Jesus, a wise man, *if indeed one ought to call him a man.* For he was the achiever of extraordinary deeds and was a teacher of those who accept the truth gladly. He won over many Jews and many of the Greeks. *He was the Messiah.* When he was indicted by the principal men among us and Pilate condemned him to be crucified, those who had come to love him originally did not cease to do so; for *he appeared to them* on the third day restored to life, as the prophets of the Deity had foretold these and countless other marvelous things about him. And the tribe of Christians, so named after him, has not disappeared to this day.” |

So don’t let anyone convince you that the NT is the only ancient source which speaks of Jesus! Our faith is built on solid historical evidence.

2) Josephus is the most important background source for the New Testament:

Apart from the Bible itself, Flavius Josephus is by far the most important historical source illuminating the entire biblical era, and for some New Testament personalities, he is an even more comprehensive source. In terms of sheer quantity of data, Josephus provides probably 300 times as much information about Herod the Great as does the Gospel of Matthew, for example, or ten times as much about Pontius Pilate. He also furnishes fascinating perspectives on such other biblical figures as Archelaus, Herod Antipas, the two Agrippas, Felix, and Festus, as well as intriguing sidelights on John the Baptist, Jesus’ half-brother James, and Jesus himself (Maier, 9).

3) Josephus highlights the best of Jewish life in contrast to the NT emphasis on the decadence of the Pharisees. This apologetic for the Jews thus balances the picture one could obtain from the NT alone.

**The Capture of Josephus**

Paul Maier, *Josephus: The Essential Writings*, 305-6

5. Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS)

a. History

1) The Discovery

a) In 1947 some Bedouin shepherds looked for a lost sheep in the Wadi Qumran (seasonal stream) in the arid, deserted NW shoreline of the Dead Sea. One threw a stone into a cave hoping to scare a sheep out, but then heard shattered pottery. Climbing into this cave the next day, they discovered seven ancient scrolls, which they took to Bethlehem. The scrolls went through a series of episodes until finally they came into the hands of a distinguished team of scholars (none Jews by Arab edict) who published most of them.

b) Second century letters of Bar Kochba revolt (AD 132-35) were also found in caves at Wadi Murabaat (excavated in 1952) and Nahal Hever (1960-61). These are on display at the Shrine of the Book museum in Jerusalem.

c) From 1947-1956 numerous scrolls were discovered in ten other caves in the area, each one being labeled by number. Cave 4 had the largest find —over 15,000 fragments from over 500 different documents! These had to be brought out, however, from 2000 years of bat dung and dust two meters deep! The most significant of the 11 caves were caves 1, 4, and 11.

d) Only about ten of the hundreds of documents are well preserved (e.g. two Isaiah scrolls). Most are fragments that have had to be put together like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. The complexity of the task and the desire of the DSS team to publish them first caused the team to have a very tight grip on the material. This brought much criticism in recent years. Hundreds of scholars waited nearly a half-century for their release. Critical articles from *BAR* (*Biblical Archaeology Review*) particularly exposed and embarrassed the team led by John Strugnell. Problems with Strugnell climaxed in November 1990 when he denounced Judaism and the State of Israel in an interview. He was sacked after this.

e) Finally, in August 1991, Jewish scholar Ben Zion Wacholder at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, Ohio and especially his evangelical graduate student named Martin Abegg constructed the remaining unpublished fragments on a Macintosh (yeah!) computer. The Huntington Library of San Marino, California then released these to all qualified scholars in September. The “cat was out of the bag,” breaking a 40-year monopoly in only two weeks. Since then access has been granted to the documents (see the whole story in Edward M. Cook, *Solving the Mysteries of the Dead Sea Scrolls,* 71-76).

f) However, an unpublished letter yet remained called MMT (Hebrew abbreviation usually translated “some rulings pertaining to the Torah”). Strugnell had this document in his possession for 25 years but never let anyone know about it. What makes this unique is that none of the DSS documents is a letter, so MMT is the only one. In fact, it is so important that at least six copies of it were kept at Qumran and have survived at least in part. Strugnell enlisted help from Elisha Qimron to write a 600 page commentary on this 120-line text, but Strugnell has since died. Finally, *BAR* caused quite a storm by printing the entire letter with the title “For This You Waited 35 Years” (November/December 1994, 56-61). With lawsuits following, the end of the story hasn’t yet been told…

g) One significant victory for evangelicals recently emerged due to MMT. Although Paul insisted that salvation is not by “works of the law” (*ergon nomou*; Rom. 3:20, 28; Gal. 2:16; 3:2, 5, 10), the “works of the law” for salvation concept has never appeared in any rabbinic writings. For years liberals have accused Paul of either misunderstanding Jewish teachings of his day or else inventing opponents who taught works-righteousness to bolster his claim of justification by faith. But now Abegg suggests a better translation of MMT (*Miqsat Ma’ase Ha-Torah*) is “pertinent works of the law.” The letter thus contains practices Qumran thought necessary for salvation.[[7]](#footnote-7) This is the first evidence of salvation by law in NT times, showing Paul to be responding to a genuine belief of his day. Abegg includes this picture (note that the MMT clause appears in the box):

**The Story of the Dead Sea Scrolls**

(Source Unknown)**Debate over the Dead Sea Scrolls**

*The Sunday Times*, 3 January 1993 (1 of 2)**Debate over the Dead Sea Scrolls**

*The Sunday Times*, 3 January 1993 (2 of 2)**Map of the Qumran Community**

R. K. Harrison, “Dead Sea Scrolls,” *Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, 2:60

2) The Qumran Community: The findings of the scrolls motivated the excavation of the ruins next to the caves by Roland de Vaux, a Dominican monk in Jerusalem. But who were the people who lived in this remote place?

a) Essenes were a Jewish monastic group in this area during the time of the scrolls (200 BC—AD 68). Most scholars have held that Essenes copied the scrolls at Qumran and then deposited them into the caves when the Jewish revolt against Rome began in AD 66 (e.g., James VanderKam, E. L. Sukenik, John Allegro, André Dupont-Sommer). Within two years the Essene community itself was wiped out. Several lines of evidence support this theory:

1] *Pliny the Elder* was a Roman scholar who apparently had visited this area and described the Essenes in these words (*The Dead Sea Scrolls After 40 Years*, 21):

On the west side of the Dead Sea, but out of the range of the noxious exhalation of the coast, is the solitary tribe of the Essenes, which is remarkable beyond all the other tribes in the whole world, as it has no women and has renounced all sexual desire, has no money, and has only palm trees for company. Day by day the throng of refugees is recruited to an equal number by numerous [additions] of persons tired of life and driven thither by the waves of fortune to adopt their manners. Thus through thousands of ages (incredible to relate), a race in which no one is born lives on forever; so prolific for their advantage is other men’s weariness of life! Lying below them [Essenes] was formerly the town of Engedi (Pliny, *Natural History* 2, trans. H. Rackham, Loeb Classical Library [London: Heinemann/Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 1969], 5.15, 73).

Thus Pliny describes Essenes in this spot and with the same characteristics depicted in the ruins (see below). Qumran is the only archaeological site in this area north of Engedi with buildings large enough for a community.

2] *Josephus* says the Essenes did not marry (*Ant.* 18.1.5; *War* 2.8.2), which is consistent with the burial findings in the area. All corpses dug up were of men, except two women and one child. (Some believe the women were cooks.) In any event, if marriage was practiced in the community, the ratio of women to men would certainly have been much higher and the skeletons of more children would seem to be more prominent in the burial plots.

3] *Excavations* of the site revealed a long room that the excavators dubbed the “scriptorium,” believing that the long tables there enabled Essene scribes to copy manuscripts. In fact, two ink wells were dug up in this room.

4] *Sectarian writings* at the site indicate a religious community. These include the Manual of Discipline (describing their strict beliefs, initiation practices, and rules of daily life) and a newly discovered deed from a new community member who gave his property to the sect (*BAR* [Mar/Apr 98]: 48-53, 69).

b) Sadducees have also been thought to occupy the ruins. Dr. Pauline Donceel-Voute, an archaeologist at the Catholic University of Louvin in Belgium, holds this view. She teaches that the long room known as the “Scriptorium” where scrolls were copied was a banqueting table! Dr. Lawrence Schiffman, professor of Judaic Studies at New York University, says that a close reading of MMT showed “beyond question that either the sect was not Essene, but was Sadducean, or that the Essene movement must be totally redefined as having emerged out of Sadducean beginnings.” Clearly there are some parallels between the Sadducees and those at Qumran, but since Sadducees did not believe in angels or predestination, these major emphases in the ruins are convincingly against this hypothesis.

c) Pharisees are also suggested to have lived at Qumran by scholars such as Saul Lieberman, Louis Ginzberg, and Chaim Rabin (cf. Edward M. Cook, *Solving the Mysteries of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 124, n. 1). This is a minority view.

d) The Roman fortress hypothesis has been advanced with little following.

e) Zealots also have been supported as Qumran’s inhabitants. This terrorist, fringe group of Jews who sought to overthrow Rome’s rule has some similarities to the *War Scroll* contents found within the ruins. Arrowheads found within the ash layer of Qumran indicate a fiery end to the settlement. Would the peace-loving Essenes have fought the Romans with such fury? Scholars like Cecil Roth and G. R. Driver believe that the ruins resulted from a Roman attack of Qumran as a Zealot outpost. This view that attaches monastic tendencies to Zealots has convinced few.

f) The Christian hypothesis is also held. This focuses on James the brother of Jesus as the Qumran sect’s leader. This more radical theory, proposed by Dr. Robert Eisenman of California State University at Long Beach, has few adherents. That Christians wrote the scrolls is ludicrous in that the entire library makes not one mention of Jesus!

g) The Jerusalem theory says that the Qumran writings cannot be attributed entirely to one sect. Dr. Norman Golb, professor of Near East Languages at the Univ. of Chicago, believes that Qumran was not a monastery but a fortress. His view claims that the scrolls came from the libraries at Jerusalem and were deposited in these caves in anticipation of the fall of Jerusalem between AD 66-70.

h) Conclusion: While the identity of the sect remains a mystery, it seems to me that the Essene view has not been sufficiently defeated to change from this traditional view. Therefore, I continue to hold to the Essene theory, especially considering the evidence of Pliny and Josephus.

**b. Contents of the Qumran Library (DSS manuscripts)**

The 870 different scrolls and 100,000 fragments comprise many types of documents:

1) OT Books (220 scrolls, as opposed to the 650 non-biblical scrolls)

a) At least a fragment has been found of every OT book except Esther (which only later was considered authoritative). The most common were Deuteronomy, Psalms, and Isaiah (two entire scrolls of Isaiah were discovered).

b) Finds have been labeled by the cave number and name of book. For example, 11QPs denotes the Psalms scroll in cave 11 at Qumran and 1QIsaa designates the first Isaiah scroll found in cave 1.

c) The DSS even include Targum fragments (Aramaic paraphrases of the OT; Evans, 98; cf. p. 97 of these notes).

2) Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha texts

a) Finds include Wisdom of Solomon, Tobit, 1 Enoch, Jubilees, Testimony of the Twelve Patriarchs.

b) The abbreviation for these is like that of OT books: 4QTobit means the Tobit scroll found in Qumran cave 4.

3) Commentaries on OT books

a) The most complete commentary is on Habakkuk, with Genesis, 2 Samuel, Isaiah, Hosea, Nahum, and Zechariah also prominent.

b) A small letter “p” for *pesher* (“commentary”) identifies these manuscripts. So 1QpHab designates the commentary on Habakkuk found in cave 1.

4) Collections of OT passages on a theme

a) Messianic passages were collected by Essenes in a volume called “Testimonia.”

b) The sect struggled to reconcile seemingly contradictory OT messianic texts on the Messiah’s lineage. Was he a priest (Ps. 110:4) who descended from Levi, or a king who descended from Judah via David (Ps. 89:3-4, 35-37)? The result was an expectation of *two* messiahs: a priestly Messiah and a Davidic Messiah.

5) Sectarian writings of the Qumran Community (designated with “S”)

a) The Manual of Discipline (1QS), Community Rule (1QSa), and Damascus Document (CD) outline very strict rules of behaviour for the monastic community, including death for Sabbath breaking. (As an example of referring to this scroll, 1QS3.5-7 indicates column 3, lines 5-7 of the scroll.)

b) The Temple Scroll (11QTemple) contains an elaborate plan how to make a new temple, anticipating that Herod’s temple would soon be judged by God. (They were right, but little did they realize that they too would be destroyed.)

c) The War Scroll (1QM) was originally published as “The War of the Sons of Light with the Sons of Darkness.” It is an eschatological text depicting the community’s instructions and prayers for different times in battle. It is unknown whether the community had in mind an actual military battle or an apocalyptic Armageddon.

6) Note that no NT manuscripts or fragments have been found in Qumran (nor does the NT ever mention Qumran or the Essenes). Some articles try to connect Jesus (or Christianity) with Qumran, but this is very speculative; these were contemporaneous yet independent movements with similar goals at some points.

**c. Beliefs and Characteristics of the Qumran (Essene) Community**

1) Commitment to intense study of the Torah and a devout life: extensive water cisterns and baths were used for ritual cleansing

2) Sovereignty of God: strict predestinarian views like Pharisees

3) Eschatological Emphases: believed they were living in the end times and held strong messianic expectations that God would judge the impure priesthood

4) Communal life: Josephus is probably right that Qumran inhabitants were all men (except possibly a few women cooks?)

5) Legalism: possible given that Essenes separated from the normal pressures of everyday life (e.g., *War* 2.8.2 says no defecation was allowed on the Sabbath!)

**d. Significance of the DSS**

1) Information on the life, customs, history, and beliefs of the Qumran community.

2) Knowledge the Pseudepigrapha (Jewish writings from 200 BC to AD 100) has been enhanced significantly. This has aided our understanding of Jewish history, religion, and culture in the NT era and afterwards.

3) Greatly advanced the study of Hebrew manuscripts, script, and orthography (system of spelling correctly) from the 3rd century BC to the 2nd century AD. Prior to this discovery these years were represented by only one scrap of papyrus!

4) Extended our knowledge of the Masoretic (Hebrew) text back by 1000 years: 4QSam dates to 225 BC, but before this discovery the oldest extant Hebrew MSS of an OT book was from the AD 800’s.

Before 1948, the earliest complete extant copies of the Hebrew Bible were dated around AD 1000! Finding copies of books of the Hebrew Bible in whole or in part, to be dated around the time of Christ, was indeed phenomenal. In addition new light was cast on the religious situation of this time, since the Scrolls contain much extrabiblical material related to the beliefs and conduct of a Jewish sect (Homer Heater, *Bibliotheca Sacra* 145 [Oct.-Dec. 1988]: 454).

5) Proves the accuracy of conservative dating of OT books: Liberals have long held that Daniel was written in Babylon around 164 BC whereas conservatives date it in Daniel’s lifetime (c. 560 BC). The discovery of a second century BC Daniel scroll at Qumran defeats this erroneous liberal teaching, for copies of Daniel would not have traveled to a fringe sect in the desert of Palestine so quickly.

6) Proves the accuracy of transmission of the OT text: Comparing the DSS Isaiah scroll with one copied in AD 800’s shows minimal differences. The Jewish scribes over the centuries showed extreme care to produce reliable copies of their sources.

7) MMT shows that Paul’s opponents who taught salvation by the law were indeed real people (Rom. 3:20, 28; Gal. 2:16; 3:2, 5, 10; see page 175).

e. Sources

1) The best older introductions to Qumran are Frank Moore Cross, Jr., *The Ancient Library of Qumran and Biblical Studies* (New York: Doubleday, 1961; reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980) and especially the standard DSS text: Geza Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (Baltimore: Penguine, 1962, 4th ed. 1995). But recently Martin Abegg, Edward Cook, and Michael Wise edited *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation* (HarperCollins, 1996) which includes all but the most minute of the previously unknown nonbiblical DSS texts. Its 300 texts are 200 more than the previous standard by Geza Vermes.

2) See also an older but brief symposium at the Smithsonian Institute by Hershel Shanks, James C. VanderKam, P. Kyle McCarter, Jr., and James A. Sanders, *The Dead Sea Scrolls After Forty Years* (Washington: Biblical Archaeology Society, 1991 in SBC library 220.93 SHA). Also see Edward M. Cook, *Solving the Mysteries of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994).

3) The best way to stay current on the DSS is in *BAR* (*Biblical Archaeology Review*), a magazine published since 1975. It is edited by Hershel Shanks, a Harvard Law School graduate who turned his interest in Israel into a new profession (though the “BAR” acronym and controversial nature of the publication which continues to get sued for publishing sensitive material shows that Shanks hasn’t yet given up law!).

**Were John and Jesus with the Essenes at Qumran?**

Craig A. Evans, *Noncanonical Writings and New Testament Interpretation*, 67-68

**Similarities Between Essenes and Christianity**

1. Communal life (at least early in the church in Acts 2:42)
2. Messianic expectation
3. Emphasis on purity
4. Orthodox beliefs

**Differences Between Essenes and Christianity**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Essenes** | **Christianity** |
| Monastic | In Society |
| Jewish | Jew and Gentile |
| Anti-temple | No position |
| Men only | Men and women |
| Washings (repeated) | Baptism (one-time) |
| Copied scrolls | Not an emphasis |

The Dead Sea Scrolls

Grassmick Handout 3 used as p. 184b

Hermetic Literature (Greek)

Papyri (Miscellaneous)

Christian and Quasi-Christian Literature

Nag Hammadi Texts

Grassmick, Pink 4

NT Apocrypha

Apostolic Fathers

The Didache

Grassmick, Pink 5

***The Infancy Gospel of Thomas***

***(Greek Text B)***

Grassmick, Pink 6

**Apocrypha Readings**

**Apocrypha Readings (2 of 11)**

**Apocrypha Readings (3 of 11)**

**Apocrypha Readings (4 of 11)**

**Apocrypha Readings (5 of 11)**

**Apocrypha Readings (6 of 11)**

**Apocrypha Readings (7 of 11)**

**Apocrypha Readings (8 of 11)**

**Apocrypha Readings (9 of 11)**

**Apocrypha Readings (10 of 11)**

**Apocrypha Readings (11 of 11)**

**New Testament** **Archaeology**

**I. Definitions**

A. Archaeology

1. “The science or study of history from the remains of early human cultures as discovered chiefly by systematic excavations” (*Funk & Wagnalls*)

2. “The scientific study of material remains (as fossil relics, artifacts, monuments) of past human life and activities” (*Webster’s*)

B. Biblical Archaeology

1. “‘Biblical Archaeology’ selects those material remains of Palestine and its neighboring countries which relate to the biblical period and narrative. These include the remains of buildings, art, inscriptions and every artifact which helps the understanding of the history, life and customs of the Hebrews and those peoples who, like the Egyptians, Phoenicians, Syrians, Assyrians and Babylonians, came into contact and influenced them” (D.J. Wiseman, “Archaeology,” *New Bible Dictionary*, 2d ed.[Wheaton: Tyndale, 1982], 70).

2. Notice that none of the three definitions above specifically include literature.

**II. Periods of Biblical Archaeology**

A. Most biblical archaeological sites appear on levels (strata) on a tell (mound of successive layers of destruction and rebuilding). Here’s a typical example summarizing the various periods (Wiseman, 72-73):



*Schematic drawing of an ancient Palestinian site showing methods of excavation and levels (strata) of occupation*

B. How can archaeologists tell the age of a tell?

1. Biblical archaeology perhaps began in 1799 with the discovery of the Rosetta Stone in Egypt (a trilingual inscription which unlocked Egyptian hieroglyphics), but this was an accidental discovery during Napoleon’s conquests.

2. Americans Edward Robinson and Eli Smith were the first to explore the surface of Palestine (1838), but the first excavations took place by the Frenchman De Saulcy near Jerusalem in 1863. Yet for nearly a century no-one could decipher the dates of any artifacts or strata.

3. Finally in 1890 Flinders Petrie discovered at Tell el-Hesi that pottery changed over the years but had a distinctive style for each age. By comparing styles with those of Egypt (for which dates are certain) the ages can be determined. Now pottery within strata is the chief means of determining dates all the way back to about 4000 BC (Wiseman, 71).

1. Note the various pottery types in each age (William S. LaSor, “Archaeology,” *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* rev. ed. [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979], 1:241):

**Pottery Types in Various Biblical Ages**



**III. Dangers and Limits of Biblical Archaeology**

A. Supremacy of Archaeology over Scripture: Too often archaeologists pit their own findings against the Bible to “prove the Bible wrong.” But we must make a choice: an inerrant Bible, and inerrant archaeologist, or neither!

B. Many Biblical Accounts cannot be Proven by Archaeology. Of course, they can’t be disproved either (e.g., miracles)! Since we will always have insufficient proof, everyone must choose whether to believe the Bible until disproved or to believe archaeologists until disproved.

C. Biblical Archaeology is the Oldest Archaeology in the World: This makes it the most complicated, with more strata than any other branch of archaeology and with the least amount of supporting literary sources.

**IV. Value of Biblical Archaeology**

A. Confirmation of Biblical History

B. Insight into Interpretation of Scripture

C. Source of Revenue for Israel and Neighbor Nations

D. Evangelistic Results: Sometimes people with an interest in archaeology in general volunteer on digs and end up coming to know the God of the soil!

**V. Archaeological Periods**

John H. Walton, *Chronological & Background Charts of the Old Testament*, 2d ed., 78

**VI. Major Finds in NT Archaeology**

*NIV Study Bible*, 10th ann. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 1642

**VII. Major Sites of Palestinian Archaeology**

E. M. Yamauchi, “Archeology of Palestine and Syria,” *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 1:271

**VIII. Other Archaeological Finds Illuminating the NT**

A. Caesarea: Pilate Inscription

B. Galilee: The Jesus Boat

C. Jerusalem

1. Western Wall & Arches
2. Holy of Holies Etching
3. Cave of Gethsemane
4. Pavement
5. Garden Tomb

**The Archaeology of Jerusalem from David to Jesus** (1 of 2)

Hershel Shanks, narrator (two video series, Washington D.C.: Biblical Archaeology Society, 1995)

###### Part 1: From the Beginning to the Babylonian Destruction

1. Introduction
2. Jerusalem topography (cf. NTB [New Testament Backgrounds], 21-24a)
3. Jerusalem’s water source (cf. NTB, 21, 24b-c)
4. The Jebusite (Canaanite) wall built about 1800 BC
5. Israel’s emergence in Canaan: Shanks says in 1200 BC but see my OT Survey, 99-100, 108-110
6. David’s capture of Jerusalem & renaming it the City of David about 1000 BC (cf. NTB, 23 #1)
7. Solomon’s expansion to the north (cf. NTB, 23 #2)
8. Jerusalem in the Divided Kingdom (cf. NTB, 23 #3)
9. Hezekiah’s reign and Sennacherib’s invasion of Judah (cf. NTB, 23 #3)
10. Hezekiah’s Tunnel (cf. NTB, 24 lower right)
11. The Siloam Inscription (cf. NTB, 24 lower right)
12. Hezekiah’s Tunnel, again (cf. NTB, 24 lower right)
13. Warren’s Shaft and its relation to David’s conquest of Jerusalem (cf. NTB, 24c)
14. The Stepped-Stone Structure
15. The returning exiles build a new eastern wall (cf. NTB, 23 #4)
16. Israelite houses of the 8th-7th centuries BC
17. Tombs in the City of David
18. The Ivory Pomegranate from Solomon’s Temple
19. The Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem—the tower and arrowheads
20. Tombs at the Shoulder of Hinnom and contents (cf. NTB, 21 far left)
21. Silver amulet with oldest biblical quotation (cf. NTB, 216)
22. Evidence that Jewish life in Jerusalem continued during Babylonian Exile

**The Archaeology of Jerusalem from David to Jesus** (2 of 2)

Hershel Shanks, narrator (two video series, Washington D.C.: Biblical Archaeology Society, 1995)

**Part 2: From the Return of the Exiles to the World of Jesus**

1. Introduction
2. The wall built by returnees from the Babylonian exile
3. Hellenistic tombs in the Kidron Valley include Absalom’s Tomb (built 1000 yrs. after his birth)
4. Mattathias Tomb Inscription
5. Herod the Great (cf. NTB, 79, 81-85)
6. Herod’s Temple Mount (cf. NTB, 85)
7. Herodian masonry
8. Eastern wall of Herod’s Temple Mount, including the Straight Joint (cf. NTB, 24) and the southeast corner tower which divides Solomon’s Temple Mount from Herod’s extension of it.
9. Solomon’s Stables is the area built by Herod the Great under his southern extension of temple mount but named after Solomon by Crusaders who used them as horse stables (AD 1000).
10. “Keep Off” inscription warned Gentiles not to enter the temple courts
11. Southern wall of Herod’s Temple Mount included Double Gate and Triple Gate (cf. Hulda’s gates of NTB, 21, 24, 25)
12. Robinson’s Arch (cf. NTB, 25 lower left) was named after American scholar who thought it was a bridge; now we know it was a huge staircase (cf. NTB, 21, 24a).
13. Tower at the southwestern corner of the Temple Mount includes Trumpeting Inscription (cf. NTB, 25 lower left, 204 bottom).
14. Theodotus Inscription inscribed in Greek shows evidence of a Jerusalem synagogue (cf. Acts 6:9 synagogue of the freedmen).
15. Wilson’s Arch supported a bridge from the western wall (cf. NTB, 25); it was named after Charles Wilson (British explorer).
16. Herodian mansion and artifacts
17. Earliest depiction of menorah is 7 branched
18. Roman destruction of Herodian temple and Jerusalem (AD 70)
19. Gethsemane—this was a cave within a garden (cf. my “Bible Geography,” 115-16)
20. Golden Gate and gate beneath the Golden Gate discovered by Jim Fleming
21. “Lithostratus” disproved—couldn’t be the Roman soldiers’ game board since the stones were not laid until AD 41.
22. Site of Jesus’ burial: Holy Sepulcher Church or Garden Tomb (cf. NTB, 24)? The tradition surrounding the Church goes back to the 4th century AD, it was a cemetery in Jesus’ time, and it was outside the city wall in AD 33.
23. Pilgrim Ship in the Holy Sepulcher Church
24. Roman emperor Hadrian (ca. AD 132) renamed Jerusalem as Aelia Capitolina to remove any Jewish influence; Aelia was his second name and Capitolina reflected the three gods of Capitolina Hill in Rome.
25. The Roman Gate below the Damascus Gate
26. The Jerusalem Cardo (Roman main street in Byzantine era) is depicted on the Madaba map in a church in Jordan (cf. NTB, 218).
27. Isaiah Inscription: In the 6th century AD Julian the Apostate began rebuilding the temple but died and the work stopped.
28. The Dome of the Rock (cf. NTB, 25) was built by Muslims over the Holy of Holies (ca. AD 690) to “outshine” the dark Holy Sepulcher dome; King Hussein of Jordan covered the aluminum bronze alloy with gold in 1994.

**Cleopatra Isle Ship**

**Biblical Archaeology’s “10 Great Finds”**

Michael D. Coogan, *Biblical Archaeology Review* 21 (May/June 1995): 36-47 (1 of 12)

Michael D. Coogan, “10 Great Finds,” *BAR* 21 (May/June 1995): 36-47 (2 of 12)

Michael D. Coogan, “10 Great Finds,” *BAR* 21 (May/June 1995): 36-47 (3 of 12)

Michael D. Coogan, “10 Great Finds,” *BAR* 21 (May/June 1995): 36-47 (4 of 12)

Michael D. Coogan, “10 Great Finds,” *BAR* 21 (May/June 1995): 36-47 (5 of 12)

Michael D. Coogan, “10 Great Finds,” *BAR* 21 (May/June 1995): 36-47 (6 of 12)

Michael D. Coogan, “10 Great Finds,” *BAR* 21 (May/June 1995): 36-47 (7 of 12)

Michael D. Coogan, “10 Great Finds,” *BAR* 21 (May/June 1995): 36-47 (8 of 12)

Michael D. Coogan, “10 Great Finds,” *BAR* 21 (May/June 1995): 36-47 (9 of 12)

Michael D. Coogan, “10 Great Finds,” *BAR* 21 (May/June 1995): 36-47 (10 of 12)

Michael D. Coogan, “10 Great Finds,” *BAR* 21 (May/June 1995): 36-47 (11 of 12)

Michael D. Coogan, “10 Great Finds,” *BAR* 21 (May/June 1995): 36-47 (12 of 12)

**Recent Jerusalem Tomb Discoveries**

**Jerusalem Street & Caesarea Police Finds**

**OT Quotes in the NT**

**OT Quotes in the NT (2 of 21)**

**OT Quotes in the NT (3 of 21)**

**OT Quotes in the NT (4 of 21)**

**OT Quotes in the NT (5 of 21)**

**OT Quotes in the NT (6 of 21)**

**OT Quotes in the NT (7 of 21)**

**OT Quotes in the NT (8 of 21)**

**OT Quotes in the NT (9 of 21)**

**OT Quotes in the NT (10 of 21)**

**OT Quotes in the NT (11 of 21)**

**OT Quotes in the NT (12 of 21)**

**OT Quotes in the NT (13 of 21)**

I have edited the chart above where Hebrews quotes Psalms since the preceding study (notes, 225-26) notes that Hebrews quotes Psalms 41 times. Furthermore, Hebrews never quotes the book of Job.

**OT Quotes in the NT (14 of 21)**

**OT Quotes in the NT (15 of 21)**

**OT Quotes in the NT (16 of 21)**

**OT Quotes in the NT (17 of 21)**

**OT Quotes in the NT (18 of 21)**

**OT Quotes in the NT (19 of 21)**

**OT Quotes in the NT (20 of 21)**

**OT Quotes in the NT (21 of 21)**

***The Community Rule***

***The Community Rule* (**2 of 11) ***The Community Rule* (**3 of 11)

***The Community Rule* (**4 of 11) ***The Community Rule* (**5 of 11) ***The Community Rule* (**6 of 11) ***The Community Rule* (**7 of 11) ***The Community Rule* (**8 of 11) ***The Community Rule* (**9 of 11) ***The Community Rule* (**10 of 11) ***The Community Rule* (**11 of 11)

***The War Scroll***

***The War Scroll (***2 of 13)

***The War Scroll (***3 of 13)

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***The War Scroll (***11 of 13)

***The War Scroll (***12 of 13)

***The War Scroll (***13 of 13)

**Final Exam Study Guide**

**Description** (cf. page viii of the syllabus)

The Final Exam (20%) will have multiple choice, fill-in, short answer, and essay questions derived only from the course notes. The class readings (Beitzel, Niswonger, Coleman) and maps will not be addressed as students have already been tested on these in the quizzes.

**Content** (numbers denote pages in class notes)

1. Discuss developments in the intertestamental era which made life different in NT times compared to OT times (35).

2. Know the order, dates, key rulers, and key developments (goals and achievements) of the foreign powers over Palestine (48-95, especially 95).

3. Know when and how the Roman emperors ruled, especially in relation to NT events (70-72).

4. Be familiar with the Herodian dynasty and these rulers’ relationship to NT events (79-80, 88-90).

5. Show knowledge of the social and economic life of Palestine in the NT era, including the population, languages, classes, key institutions, ethnic groupings and prejudices (97-99, 104-7).

6. Describe the basic characteristics of the various Jewish sects, including the religious group which was repudiated by Jews (115-115a, 121-24).

7. Differentiate Palestinian and Diaspora Judaism (125).

8. Understand the uniqueness of Jesus’ method of discipleship (126).

9. Show familiarity with Israel’s feasts and how they affect NT understanding (137).

10. Compare and contrast the synagogue with the church (138-39).

11. Be able to draw upon OT parallels to understand NT ordinances (140-43).

12. Address the background to the NT provided by pagan religions (150-53).

13. List key contributions of pertinent background literature such as the LXX, Roman historians, Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Philo, rabbinic literature, and Josephus (156-63, 168-72).

14. Be familiar with the contents and contributions of the Qumran (DSS) discoveries (180-83).

**Index**

**Title**

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Term III 1992 NT Backgrounds Course

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Session | Date (Day) | Subject | Assignment |
| 1 | 5 Jan (W) | Introduction pp. 4-7, 20-22 |  |
| 2 | 7 Jan (F) | Geography Project | Beitzel, 1-23 |
| 3 | 12 Jan (W) | Quiz 1; Geography Project | Beitzel, 24-48 |
| 4 | 14 Jan (F) | Geography Project | Beitzel, 49-69 |
| 5 | 19 Jan (W) | Quiz 2; Geography Project | Finish project; 3 x 5 card due indicating purchase of texts |
| 6 | 21 Jan (F) | No Quiz; Political Context: Part 1  Intertestamental overview (p. 37f.), Daniel, Babylon slides | Bruce, 1-40 |
| 7 | 26 Jan (W) | Political Context: Part 2  Persia/Greece | Bruce, 247-64; 291-304  Beitzel, 150-53; 3 x 5 card giving research paper topic (Prep) |
| 8 | 28 Jan (F) | Quiz 3; Political Context: Part 3  Hasmon/Roman Rule: 166-4 BC | Bruce, 337-49; 368-92; Beitzel, 154-55, 166-68; Coleman, 181-91 |
| 9 | 2 Feb (W) | Political Context: Part 4  Roman Rule IV: 4 BC | Bruce, 393-430; Beitzel, 185-87 |
| 10 | 4 Feb (F) | “Ben-Hur” Video | Maier, *Josephus*, 329-85  Research paper due (Prep) |
| 11 | 16 Feb (W) | Socio-Economic Context: Part 1 I-IV.C | Bruce, 152-204 |
| 12 | 18 Feb (F) | Quiz 4; Socio-Economic Context: Part 2 IV.D & Onesimus | Bruce, 205-46  Coleman, 248-55 |
| 13 | 23 Feb (W) | Religious Context: Part 1 Sm. grp. | Bruce, 41-81 |
| 14 | 25 Feb (F) | Quiz 5; Religious Context: Part 2 | Bruce, 82-121; Coleman, 202-11 |
| 15 | 2 Mar (W) | Religious Context: Part 3 | Bruce, 122-51 |
| 16 | 4 Mar (F) | Quiz 6; Literary Context: Part 1 | Bruce, 305-36 |
| 17 | 9 Mar (W) | Literary Context: Part 2 | Bruce, 350-67 |
| 18 | 11 Mar (F) | Midterm Exam |  |

**Course Evaluation**

O.K., it’s time for you to honestly tell me what you think of this course! Please be as specific as you can and think of what you hope others in the future can learn from the course that you didn’t.

1. **Workload**: Was it too little or too much for a 4 unit course? (Since this was your heaviest course unit-wise it should have taken the most time—except for perhaps Greek.)

2. **Readings**: Should these two books be repeated in future courses? What do you think of them?

Beitzel

Bruce

How about some readings from Josephus or some other first century writer?

3. **Quizzes**: Did you feel that 6 quizzes with one grade dropped was fair?

4. **Teaching Methods**: Please comment briefly on the various teaching methods used. Any ideas?

Geography project

Babylon slide show

Onesimus monologue

Small group interaction

“Jesus” video

5. **Regrets**: What aspect of NT backgrounds did you *wish* we had covered but did *not* do so? (Circle any of the following which you feel should have been addressed or add your own: home life, clothing and cosmetics, marriage, women, education, vocations, slavery, sexual practices, prostitution, music, superstition, magic, crime and punishment, athletics).

6. **Next Term**: Finally, you probably heard that we’ll be together next term for Homiletics I. Your answers to these questions will be invaluable to me in planning the course to best meet your needs (skip this section if you are *not* going to take the course):

a. How many times have you preached a sermon in your life? (never? once? 100? 500?)

b. Do you regularly hear sermons which explain a portion of Scripture (vs. topical sermons)?

c. How many times in the course do you think you should say something to the class (not just a sermon, but a testimony or devotional or 1-2 minute talk, etc.)?

d. What books have you read on preaching before?

e. What do you hope to realistically gain from a 10 week preaching course that has 20 students?

21 December 1993

Dear David:

Greetings from your future home. It’s an incredibly cold day here in southern California with an expected foot of snow to fall on the mountains behind us tonight—a bit different from Singapore! I long for that hotter temperature. I guess my blood never has thickened yet even after being here for almost six months.

Chuck wrote me and said that your family has been held up for a few more months. Sorry to hear about that, but I know the Lord has His plans. Besides, you’ll never regret taking care of these family concerns first in the long run. Last year I canceled a planned teaching trip to India because of John’s birth in October. Chuck also mentioned that SBC is going to continue to put you to work on my courses! So, I felt that I should give you some directions.

This letter will address the NT Backgrounds/Survey course. This is easier to get off to you quickly since I’ve taught it a few times. I’ll try to have the Theology III course done in a few more days. Sorry I’m getting this stuff to you so late. I had planned on having this stuff done weeks ago, but Susan and I ended up getting involved in three Christmas musicals this year, plus Susan speaking at a Christmas ladies luncheon, me teaching and preaching every week, on and on.

How to Print the Class Notes

Please stop by my house and get the course originals in my file cabinet in my office. Tom Horn is living there now (tel. 469-3027), or if he is not then the Poulson’s have the key (tel. 469-8655). I told Chuck the same thing so maybe only one of you will need to go there and you can get what’s needed for both NTBS and Homiletics.

I did give my course notes to Ola before leaving the country. Perhaps he already passed them to you. The rest of the stuff is up in my office at my home. Here’s some things to get while in my office:

1. The transparencies for the course are filed in the second file cabinet from the left, top drawer labeled “BIBLE” in the “Backgrounds” file folder(s).

2. Maier’s *Josephus* volume is on my shelf behind the desk (eye level far left or far right). Add this to the one on reserve so the students have two volumes from which to read.

3. Quizzes originals (in the transparencies folder?)

4. You can use my copy of Beitzel’s atlas (but I’d recommend that you buy your own—it’s a great atlas!). My copy is on the left side of the bottom shelf of the small bookshelf next to my desk in my office at home. Next to it are overhead transparencies from the atlas (though I have about 3-5 of them here with me).

Chuck asked how I spend class time since my notes are printed in full. Well, I don’t stand there and read the notes word for word, but I do read those statements which are more difficult. I’m constantly revising the notes so that ambiguous sentences are worded more clearly, so perhaps you can help me here by “tagging” those statements. In class I go through the notes and add illustrations here and there. Sometimes the students will be required to read the notes before class, but I’m not requiring this until the Survey part of the course after I return. My philosophy is to “lay all the cards on the table” in the notes. I have found that students appreciate not having to frantically copy what I think is important. What’s vital is already on the page.

Prepare the originals by substituting the title page and the syllabus (enclosed). Everything else is the same.

Bring the notes to the Bukit Timah Copy Service (tel. 466-0893, open M-F 930-8, Sat 930-6) on the B1-44/48 spaces (the far end of the floor). Mrs. Yeo there has printed all my class notes thus far. She charges me only 2.7 cents per page, plus about $2.00 to bind each set. I think there’s 174 pages of notes, so you’ll have to pay her about $7.46 for each set of notes (173 pp. @ .027 = 4.67 + [1 pink colored cover page @ .06 = .06] + $2.00 binding = $7.46). Print 30 copies ($6.73 x 30 = $201.90) even though the class numbers 25. Of course, keep an entire set for yourself gratis. The extra 4 copies give to June Huang to sell on consignment in the Book Centre. If the money is a problem, ask Mrs. Yeo to give you the whole thing on faith and then use the money collected from the students to pay her later.

Mrs. Yeo will need about 3 days to print up the notes. I think she’ll even deliver them to SBC for no extra charge. Tell her you know me! I have given her several thousands of dollars of business.

On the first day of class, sell the notes to the class for $15.00 each and keep the change to take your wife out to dinner (put the 4 extra copies in your own name with June and when she sells them you can have your payoff for all your hard work, minus $2.00 a copy for June’s work). Otherwise, I’ll just reimburse you when I return. And don’t worry about making a little profit off the notes. The workman is worthy of his hire. I always the excess to pay for computer and copier repairs, paper, ink, print cartridges, etc. No one has ever expressed concern that the notes are too expensive as students pay only about 5¢ a page.

Quizzes

1. Each quiz is to be given at the beginning of the Friday class sessions. The reading to be reported includes that for the previous Wednesday and for the day of the quiz (a Friday). I always give them about 10 minutes to take the quiz, then have them either use another colour pen to grade it or else have a friend grade it. This way I can tell what marks were made during the actual quiz time. Then we grade them as a class, and they pass them in.

2. Grade each of the five quizzes with a percentage grade.

3. The maps in quizzes 1-2 will need to be pasted onto the new originals (enclosed). These maps can be found in my transparency notes or an adjacent file.

Schedule

I’ve designed the course mostly as a content-oriented as opposed to skills-oriented course. This means that the students will mostly be responsible for learning the information and reporting it back on quizzes and exams. Here’s a “teacher’s edition” copy of the schedule. I have added things in italics which are not in the student’s copies.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Session | Date (Day) | Subject | Assignment |
| 1 | 5 Jan (W) | Introduction; Geography: Part 1 *Remember that each of these is listed as a class session but consists of double sessions. After explaining the syllabus in the first hour, cover pp. 4-7, 20-22 in the second hour and explain some of the basics of Palestinian geography—e.g., p. 22. (Rasmussen’s atlas is wonderful here.) Show the great variety of contour and provide examples of how the size compares to SE Asia. Use the projects from previous years which should be on the walls.* | No assignments  *For this session you might also want to briefly go over pp 14-37 as introduction. Tell them that pp. 15-21 are included to help them study for the first two quizzes.*  *Note that pp. 34-37 are simply extra helps for making their own maps if they wish to do so someday. (The class used these the last two times I taught.)* |
| 2 | 7 Jan (F) | Quiz 1; Geography: Part 2 *Here*  *Start off with the quiz, which should be easy.*  *I’m thinking that you should finish the geography of Israel and then discuss that of the Roman Empire as a whole. Break them up in small groups and have each groups study an area and present it to the class if you want.* | Beitzel, 1-12 *Geography*  *They will have read these pages, so perhaps discussing them might be helpful as well.*  *Another possibility: cover whatever in pp. 14-37 you didn’t cover on Wednesday.* |
| 3 | 12 Jan (W) | Political Context: Part 1  *Here’s an intertestamental overview (pp. 38-41) and OT background in Daniel (pp. 50-54, 58). I have some Babylon slides with script which you can show too (in the slide tray between my office copier and desk, with script in my transparency file).* | Beitzel, 13-23 *Geography*  *There’s too much physical geography reading for a single sitting (69 pages), so I’ve broken it up into several assignments. (Last year they did it all in three sessions and it about killed them.)*  *Warn them that Quiz 2 is much more difficult than Quiz 1!* |
| 4 | 14 Jan (F) | Quiz 2; Political Context: Part 2  *Persia/Greece section of the notes (pp. 58-67). Especially emphasize how these empires affected the NT.* | Beitzel, 150-53; 3 x 5 card due indicating purchase of texts  *Just mark on the grade sheet if they purchased them. Some will ask if they can just borrow the texts, but I want them to have their own for future ministry.* |
| 5 | 19 Jan (W) | Political Context: Part 3  *Covers Hasmonean/Roman Rule: 166-4 BC up to Herod’s death (pp. 68-71, 78-81). Try to give a feel for the hatred the Jews had of the Romans. Make sure they understand the difference between an emperor, king, and procurator (p. 80).* | Beitzel, 154-55, 166-68, 24-34 *Geography (pp. 24-34, that is). The other pages relate to intertestamental issues, as do pp. 150-53 for the previous class session.*  *Remind them that they will be tested on Coleman on Friday.* |
| 6 | 21 Jan (F) | Quiz 3; Political Context: Part 4  *Roman Rule IV: 4 BC-AD 135 (pp. 82-94). Read out loud p. 89 in conjunction with the bottom of p. 81 (point c 3). Conclude with the p. 95 political summary.* | Beitzel, 185-87;  Coleman, 181-91  *Warn them that the next reading assignment is 57 pages and only two books are available.* |
| 7 | 26 Jan (W) | Socio-Economic Context: Part 1 *Cover I-IV.C (pp. 103-6). P. 106 is more open-ended to divide the class into small groups at the end and explore Jew-Gentile differences and some of the challenges this would bring to the local church mixed with both. Language, broad-mindedness, eating habits & worship style would be other areas to discuss differences.* | Maier, *Josephus*, 329-85  Research paper due  *This reading assignment is powerful and moving! It discusses the Jewish-Roman war (AD 66-73), showing the heroism of the Jewish side. Read it if you can.*  *Save the research papers for me to grade when I return, if you wish.* |
| 8 | 28 Jan (F) | Quiz 4; Socio-Economic Context: *Part 2 IV.D (pp. 107-110). I generally do a monologue on “Onesimus” here (pp. 115-17), but I’ll do this later when we study Philemon.* | Coleman, 248-55  *The class notes follow the quiz questions exactly, so the quiz can be graded as you go through the class session.* |
| 9 | 2 Feb (W) | Religious Context: Part 1 *Begin with small groups addressing the question at the top of p. 126 & write answers on the board or OHP. Transition into how the question was answered in the NT times in Judaism, esp. with the 4 sects. Have the class draw modern parallels (see my transparencies for results from other year’s classes). Cover top of p. 127.* | Beitzel, 35-48 *Geography* |
| 10 | 4 Feb (F) | Quiz 5; Religious Context: Part 2  *Diaspora Judaism (pp. 127-30, 140-42)* | Coleman, 202-11 |
|  | 7-12 Feb | Chinese New Year Break | No class or assignments |
| 11 | 16 Feb (W) | Religious Context: Part 3  *Pagan religion (pp. 148-51)*  *I’ll finish these last few weeks of the Backgrounds part of the course* | Beitzel, 49-59 Geography |

David, you’re so special to do all this for me! And I assure you, this should be the last time. My mission board is about to change this crazy policy of us having our conference in the Chicago area in January which always puts missionaries back in their countries of service after the school year starts. Thanks for serving so well.

One last item. Please make a photocopy of the bibliography section of the syllabus for the library reserve list and pass it on to Estella. I’ve marked each reserve book with an asterisk.

I’ll try to get the Theology notes to you in a few days. I warn you, though. They will include only a syllabus, so most of the work here will be your own as I have never taught pneumatology or ecclesiology at SBC. I’ll schedule it so you handle pneumatology in the first few weeks of the course up to Chinese New Year.

Blessings on you!

**VII. Course Schedule (Evening School)**

Note: Quiz questions are derived only from the notes for that week. Sometimes a bonus question may come from previous weeks, so reviewing your notes periodically may be helpful.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Session*** | ***Date (Day)*** | ***Subject*** | ***Assignment*** |
| 1 | 6 Jan | Syllabus  Geography 2-4,10-12 | No assignments 34-65 |
|  |  | Political Context: Part 1 Int. 48-65  /Persia/Greece-skip Dan., Babe. slides |  |
| 2 | 13 Jan | Quiz 1  Political Context: Part 2 Has/Rom Rule: 166-4 BC (pp. 66-72) | Notes, 60-95 |
|  |  | Political Context: Part 3  Roman Rule IV: 4 BC-A.D 135 (79-95) |  |
| 3 | 20 Jan | Quiz 2  Socio-Economic Context: Part 1 I-IV.C (pp. 97-100, 105) Jer wall picture | Notes, 96-112, 116-23 |
|  |  | Socio-Economic Context: Part 2 IV.D & Onesimus (106-9) |  |
|  | 26 Jan-2 Feb | Chinese New Year | No classes or assignments |
| 4 | 3 Feb | Quiz 3  Religious Context: Part 1 Sm. grps. on sects, sabbath (124-26) | Notes, 124-42 |
|  |  | Religious Context: Part 2 feasts, synagogue, ordinances (136-49) |  |
| 5 | 10 Feb | Quiz 4  Religious Context: Part 3 pagan (150-53) | Notes, 143-53 |
| 6 | 17 Feb | Quiz 5  Literary Context: Part 1 MT, LXX, Apocrypha & Pseudepigrapha (154-67) | Notes, 154-73 |
|  |  | Literary Context: Part 2 Josephus, Philo, Rabbis (168-73) |  |
| 7 | 24 Feb | Quiz 6  Literary Context: Part 3 Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS), NT Apocrypha (174-87) | Notes, 174-98 |
| 8 | 3 Mar | Quiz 7  Biblical Archaeology  188-92 | Notes, 199-220 |

**V. Course Content (Jan-May 1994)**

Add Beitzel Babylon/ The above totals 634 pp ÷ 60 sessions. = 10.56

Note: Quiz questions are derived from the notes (quizzes 1-2), Coleman’s articles in the notes (quizzes 3-5), and Benware (quizzes 6-13). You will not be quizzed on Beitzel.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Session | Date (Day) | Subject | Assignment |
| 1 | 5 Jan (T) | Introduction; Geography: Part 1 pp. 4-7, 20-22 | No assignments |
| 2 | 7 Jan (F) | Quiz 1; Geography: Part 2 | Beitzel, 1-12 Geography |
| 3 | 12 Jan (T) | Political Context: Part 1 Intertest. (p. 37f.), Dan., Babylon. slides | Beitzel, 13-23 Geography |
| 4 | 14 Jan (F) | Quiz 2; Political Context: Part 2  Persia/Greece | Beitzel, 150-53; 3 x 5 card due indicating purchase of texts |
| 5 | 19 Jan (T) | Political Context: Part 3 Has/Rom Rule: 166-4 BC | Beitzel, 154-55, 166-68, 24-34 Geography |
| 6 | 21 Jan (F) | Quiz 3; Political Context: Part 4  Roman Rule IV: 4 BC-A.D 135 | Beitzel, 185-87;  Coleman, 181-91 |
| 7 | 26 Jan (T) | Socio-Economic Context: Part 1 I-IV.C | Maier, *Josephus*, 329-85  Research paper due |
| 8 | 28 Jan (F) | Quiz 4; Socio-Economic Context: Part 2 IV.D & Onesimus | Coleman, 248-55 |
| 9 | 2 Feb (T) | Religious Context: Part 1 Sm. grp. | Beitzel, 35-48 Geography |
| 10 | 4 Feb (F) | Quiz 5; Religious Context: Part 2 | Coleman, 202-11 |
|  | 7-12 Feb | Chinese New Year Break | No class or assignments |
| 11 | 16 Feb (T) | Religious Context: Part 3 | Beitzel, 49-59 Geography |
| 12 | 18 Feb (F) | Quiz 6; Literary Context: Part 1 | Benware, 1-23 backgrounds |
| 13 | 23 Feb (T) | Literary Context: Part 2 | Beitzel, 60-69 Geography |
| 14 | 25 Feb (F) | Midterm Exam | No assignments—just study! |
| 15 | 2 Mar (T) | Synoptic Problem, Matthew | Benware & Class Notes |
| 16 | 4 Mar (F) | Quiz 7; James, Galatians | Benware & Class Notes |
| 17 | 9 Mar (T) | 1 & 2 Thessalonians | Benware & Class Notes |
| 18 | 11 Mar (F) | Quiz 8; 1 & 2 Corinthians | Benware & Class Notes |
|  | 14-20 Mar | Mid-Semester Break | “Ben-Hur” at My Home |
| 19 | 23 Mar (T) | Romans | Benware & Class Notes |
| 20 | 25 Mar (F) | Quiz 9; Luke, Acts | Benware & Class Notes |
| 21 | 30 Mar (T) | Ephesians, Colossians | Benware & Class Notes |
|  | 1 Apr (F) | Good Friday Holiday | No class or assignments |
| 22 | 6 Apr (T) | Philemon, Philippians | Benware & Class Notes |
| 23 | 8 Apr (F) | Quiz 10; 1 Timothy, Mark | Benware & Class Notes |
| 24 | 13 Apr (T) | 1 & 2 Peter | Benware & Class Notes |
| 25 | 15 Apr (F) | Quiz 11; Titus, 2 Timothy | Benware & Class Notes |
| 26 | 20 Apr (T) | Hebrews | Benware & Class Notes |
| 27 | 22 Apr (F) | Quiz 12; John, Jude | Benware & Class Notes |
| 28 | 27 Apr (T) | 1-3 John | Benware & Class Notes |
| 29 | 29 Apr (F) | Quiz 13; Revelation | Benware & Class Notes |
| 30 | 3-7 May | Final Exam |  |

NTS (163) + Benware (304) + Beitzel (81) + Coleman (29) + Maier (57) = 634 pp

**V. Course Schedule (Jan-May 1995)**

Add Beitzel Babylon? The above totals 634 pp ÷ 60 session. = 10.56

Note: Quiz questions are derived from the notes (quizzes 1-2), Coleman’s articles in the notes (quizzes 3-5), and Benware/Niswonger (quizzes 6-13). You will not be quizzed on Beitzel.

This 1995 schedule loses 2 sessions from 1994: Session 1 on Convocation & Hari Raya so I cut out the second geography session and the first political one

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Session* | *Date (Day)* | *Subject* | *Assignment* |
| 1 | 6 Jan (F) | Introduction; Geography pp. 4-7, 20-22 | No assignments |
| 2 | 10 Jan (T) | Quiz 1; Political Context: Part 1 Intertest. (p. 37f.)/Persia/Greece  Skip Old Part 1: Dan., Babylon slides | Beitzel, 150-53  Niswonger, 15-27 Greeks |
| 3 | 13 Jan (F) | Quiz 2; Political Context: Part 2 Has/Rom Rule: 166-4 BC (pp. 66-78) | Beitzel, 154-55 Hasm, 166-68 Hrd  Niswonger, 28-41 Hasm to 4 B |
| 4 | 17 Jan (T) | Quiz 3; Political Context: Part 3  Roman Rule IV: 4 BC-A.D 135 (notes, 79-93 incl. 5 pp. text) | Beitzel, 185-87; Niswonger, 42-52  Coleman, 181-91 (notes, 70-75) |
| 5 | 20 Jan (F) | Socio-Economic Context: Part 1 I-IV.C (pp. 101-4) | Maier on *Josephus,* 329-85 |
| 6 | 24 Jan (T) | Quiz 4; Socio-Economic Context: Part 2 IV.D & Onesimus | Coleman, 248-55 (notes, 97-100)  Buy all texts by today (on quiz!) |
| 7 | 27 Jan (F) | Religious Context: Part 1 Sm. grps on sects, sabbath | Niswonger, 53-78 sects/syn/DSS |
|  | 31 Jan-3 Feb | Chinese New Year Break | No class or assignments |
| 8 | 7 Feb (T) | Quiz 5; Religious Context: Part 2 feasts, synagogue, ordinances | Coleman, 212-29 (notes, 129-37) Feasts, Festivals, & Synagogue |
| 9 | 10 Feb (F) | Religious Context: Part 3 pagan | Niswonger, 79-95 |
| 10 | 14 Feb (T) | Quiz 6; Literary Context: Part 1 Apocrypha & Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) | May/Metzger (Apocryphal books of Tobit, Susanna, and Bel & the Dragon); Vermes (DSS War Scroll, Manual of Discipline) |
| 11 | 17 Feb (F) | Literary Context: Part 2 Josephus | Notes, 165-72  Research paper due |
| 12 | 21 Feb (T) | Midterm Exam | No assignments—just study! |
| 13 | 24 Feb (F) | NT Overview, Synoptics, Matthew | Niswonger, 97-117 Criticism, Syn. Prob., John  Benware, 12-19NTS, 74-92 Mat. |
| 14 | 28 Feb (T) | Quiz 7; James, Galatians | Benware, 245-49, 152-66Eps/Gal  Niswonger, 181-204 Acts 1-12 |
|  | 3 Mar (F) | Hari Raya Puasa Holiday | No class or assignments |
| 15 | 7 Mar (T) | 1 & 2 Thessalonians | Group 1 Presentation: 1 Thess.  Benware, 167-76 Thess  Niswonger, 205-20 Acts 13-14 |
| 16 | 10 Mar (F) | Quiz 8; 1 & 2 Corinthians | Benware, 177-92 Cor.  Niswonger, 221-38 Acts 15-21 |
|  | 13-17 Mar | Mid-Semester Break | “Ben-Hur” at My Home |
| 17 | 21 Mar (T) | Romans | Group 2 Presentation: Romans  Benware, 193-204 Rom., 44-73 Gospels; incl. 54-73 Life of Christ |
| 18 | 24 Mar (F) | Quiz 9; Luke, Acts | Benware, 102-15Lk, 128-50Acts  Niswonger, 119-35 Luke/Herods |
| 19 | 28 Mar (T) | Ephesians, Colossians | Group 3 Presentation: Colossians  Benware, 205-17PrsnEps/Eph/Col  Niswonger, 239-246 Acts 22-28 |
| 20 | 31 Mar (F) | Philemon, Philippians | Benware, 218-25 PP, 292-4J  Niswonger, 246-50 Prison Eps. |
| 21 | 4 Apr (T) | Quiz 10; 1 Timothy, Mark | Benware, 93-101, 227-34PE1Tm  Niswonger, 137-57 Jesus Ministry |
| 22 | 7 Apr (F) | 1 & 2 Peter | Group 4 Presentation: 1 Peter  Benware, 256-63 1-2 Pet  Niswonger, 251-61 AD 60s |
| 23 | 11 Apr (T) | Quiz 11; Titus, 2 Timothy | Benware, 235-43 Tit/2 Tim  Benware, 295-7Apostles |
|  | 14 Apr (F) | Good Friday Holiday | No class or assignments |
| 24 | 18 Apr (T) | Hebrews | Group 5 Presentation: Hebrews  Benware, 250-55 Heb, 298-302Tg  Niswonger, 263-69 AD 68-81 |
| 25 | 21 Apr (F) | Quiz 12; John, Jude | Niswonger, 159-79 Passion/Res.  Benware, 116-26John, 264-65Jude |
| 26 | 25 Apr (T) | 1-3 John | Benware, 266-72 1-3 John  Niswonger, 269-78 AD 81-96 |
| 27 | 28 Apr (F) | Quiz 13; Revelation | Benware, 274-89 Rev  Niswonger, 279-83 Conclusion |
|  | 3-7 May | Final Exam | Review midterm and NT Survey notes for exam |

**Syllabus (Jan-May 1997)**

**I. Catalogue Course Description**

A general survey of biblical geography and the political, socio-economic, religious, and literary developments of the intertestamental period which prepared for the Messiah’s incarnation as well as factors in the first century which influenced the life and ministry of the early church. This is followed by a survey of the message of each of the 27 New Testament books, their relationships to each other, and pertinent introductory issues (author, date, occasion, uniqueness, etc.).

**II. Course Objectives**

By the end of the course the student should be able to…

A. Explain NT Backgrounds…

1. Demonstrate a knowledge of how the basic *geography* of Palestine and the Roman world enables a better comprehension of the NT.

2. Place the NT writings in their *historical* mould, which includes political, sociological (esp. economic), religious, and linguistic *backgrounds* for interpreting the NT.

3. Show how *cultural values and practices* in Roman, Hellenistic, and Jewish societies aid understanding of the NT and find parallels in the church and society today.

B. Explain NT Survey…

1. State the author, date, origin, recipients, occasion, characteristics, and basic argument of each of the *NT books.*

2. Place the NT books in *chronological* order in conjunction with the Book of Acts.

3. Show the *relevance* of each NT book to Asian culture and world mission.

**III. Course Requirements**

A. A Research Paper (20%) on literature (MCS, MCM) or marriage (BTh, DTh, BCM) is required:

1. *Literature Paper*: Explain in one or two paragraphs how the following passages help interpret the New Testament. Do not simply list *which* NT passages relate to each extra-biblical passage but show *how* the passages below aid the hermeneutical process. Include the specific NT passages addressed with their Scripture references. Consult Craig Evan’s work.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Books on Reserve\* | SBC Library Call # | Notes |
| a. Josephus | *Wars of the Jews* 2.8.1-14 | 933 JOS (Whiston, p. 376) | 171 |
| b. Josephus | *Jewish Antiquities* 18.1.1-6 | 933 JOS (Whiston, p. 476) | 171 |
| c. Philo | *Allegorical Interpretation* 3.79-82 | 880.1 PHI I (pp. 352-55) | 168 |
| d. Philo | *De Vita Mos.* 2.134 | 880.1 PHI VI (p. 515) | 168 |
| e. *Mishna* | Order Moed, Tractate Sabbath | 296.12 (R) BLA or Danby trans. | 168-70 |
| f. *Mishna* | Order Nashim, Tract. Nedarim 1.3; 8.7; 9.1, 4-6 | 296.12 (R) BLA or Danby trans. | 168-70 |
| g. *Select Papyri* | 88, 89, 91, 97 | 880 HUN I (pp. 268-75, 282-85) | 185 |
| h. *Select Papyri* | 172-176 | 880 HUN I (pp. 400-403) | 185 |
| i. *Nag Hammadi* | Treatise on Resurrection (1.4) | 299.932 (R) ROB (pp. 52-57) | 185 |
| j. *Nag Hammadi* | Gospel of Thomas (2.2) | 299.932 (R) ROB (pp. 124-38) | 185 |

2. *Marriage Paper*: Demonstrate how the procedures in first century marriage customs were parallel to the sequence of these passages about Christ and the Church: 1 Pet. 1:18-19; Luke 22:20; 2 Cor. 11:2; John 14:1-3; 1 Thess. 4:14-18; Eph. 5:26-27; Rev. 19:7-9. Don’t give a biblical view of marriage; show how *intertestamental literature* (not OT backgrounds!) helps us understand the NT theology here (esp. eschatology). Some of these texts may not seem to relate to marriage at first, but further study will show they do. Consult Craig Evan’s work.

Either paper should be 6-8 pages in length, typed, double-spaced, and written according to Campbell’s guidelines. (See Dr. Ng’s study and sample paper in the library, my Term Paper Grade Sheet, and my Research Paper Checklist.) Include a title page, table of contents, bottom page footnoting, and bibliography of 6-8 sources (none of these included in page count). Students may do both papers for a possible 5 extra points to the final semester grade. The paper has a 10% grade penalty per class day late. Points may be lost for not meeting or exceeding the page limit, misspelling my name (!), omitting your box #, and bad grammar or spelling.

Matt. 25:1-13; Luke 14:7-11; 15:8-10; John 3:29b; 14:1-3; 1 Cor. 7:1; Eph. 5:27-32; 1 Pet. 1:18-19; Rev. 19:7-9; 21:2

B. Readings (10%) since the previous quiz will be reported on each quiz. Students will be asked on Quiz 4 if they have purchased Barry Beitzel’s *The Moody Atlas of Bible Lands*, Richard Niswonger’s *New Testament History*,and Paul Benware’s *Survey of the New Testament.*

C. Quizzes (10%) over readings since the last quiz will be given at the beginning of class about every two weeks. Half of the quiz grade will report on the readings since the last quiz (50 points per quiz and 10% of the semester grade) and half will generally comprise five questions (10 points each or 50 points total; also 10% of the semester grade). A bonus question may be included for up to 5 points. The first two quizzes depart from this norm as they cover the Israel map (p. 2) and the Roman Empire map (p. 5). There are no makeup quizzes.

D. The Midterm Exam (20%) will cover the New Testament Backgrounds portion of the course. This exam will have multiple choice, fill-in, short answer, and essay questions which will be derived only from the course notes. The class readings (Beitzel, Niswonger, Coleman) and maps will not be addressed as students will have already been tested on these in the quizzes.

E. The Final Exam (20%) will cover the class notes for the entire course but emphasize the NT Survey section and NT backgrounds questions on the midterm. Again, only class notes will be tested. The format will be like the midterm.

F. The Group Project (20%) should be of the NT book and small groups designated at the end of this syllabus. They will be graded according to the Group Project Grade Sheet after the list of groups. Your task is to present the content and main idea of the NT book you’re assigned in the most memorable and interesting way possible. Use music, slides, charts, games, handouts, jokes, drama/skits, costumes—whatever it takes to help us learn the book and apply its message to our lives. Make sure it has good teaching content—not just entertainment!

G. Fun night at my home from 6:30-8:30 PM on Saturday, 13 January is required of all diligent students (that means you). Maps will be provided later to guide you to my promised land. Spouses and kids are required if available.

**IV. Course Bibliography skipped here--insert updated one later**

Niswonger (283) + Benware (304) + Beitzel (81) + Coleman (29) + Maier (57)+ Vermes (30) = 784 pp

**V. Course Schedule (Jan-May 1997)**

The above totals 784 pp ÷ 58 sessions = 13.5 pp./session or 27 pp./day

Note: Quiz questions are derived from the notes (quizzes 1-2), Coleman’s articles in the notes (quizzes 3-4), and Benware/Niswonger (quizzes 5-8). You will not be quizzed on Beitzel. Each session below is a double session.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Session* | *Date (Day)* | *Subject* | *Assignment* |
| 1 | 4 Jan (S)  Dead Sea water | Syllabus;  Geography Part 1 2-4,10-12 | No assignments 34-36 |
| 2 | 8 Jan (W)  Jer maps/lamp | Quiz 1; Geography Part 2 34-36  Archaeology of Jerusalem Video | Study for Quiz  Beitzel, 156-65 |
| 3 | 11 Jan (S)  Atlases | Political Context: Part 1 Int. 48-65  /Persia/Greece-skip Dan., Babylon slides | Beitzel, 150-53  Niswonger, 15-27 Greeks |
| 4 | 15 Jan (W)  Ferguson, Turkish del.  Ben Hur | Quiz 2; Political Context: Part 2 Has/Rom Rule: 166-4 BC (pp. 66-72) | Beitzel, 154-55 Hasm, 166-68 Hrd  Niswonger, 28-41 Hasm to 4 BC  Show Ben Hur sea battle? |
| 5 | 18 Jan (S)  Cornell atlas  Connolly | Political Context: Part 3  Roman Rule IV: 4 BC-A.D 135 (79-95) | Beitzel, 185-87; Niswonger, 42-52  Coleman, 181-91 (notes, 73-78) |
| 6 | 22 Jan (W)  olive wood hands | Socio-Economic Context: Part 1 I-IV.C (pp. 97-100, 105) Jer wall picture | Maier on *Josephus,* 329-85 War |
| 7 | 25 Jan (S)  Onesimus | Socio-Economic Context: Part 2 IV.D & Onesimus (106-9) | Coleman, 248-55 (notes, 100-103) |
| 8 | 29 Jan (W)  mezusa, skull cap, Mishnah, dissertation | Quiz 3; Religious Context: Part 1 Sm. grps on sects, sabbath (124-26) | Niswonger, 53-78 sects/syn/DSS  Buy all texts by today (on quiz!) |
| 9 | 1 Feb (S)  menorah, cup | Religious Context: Part 2 feasts, synagogue, ordinances (136-49) | Coleman, 212-29 (notes, 127-35)  Feasts, Festivals, & Synagogue |
|  | 5-11 Feb | Chinese New Year Break | No class or assignments |
| 10 | 12 Feb (W) | Religious Context: Part 3 pagan (150-53) | Niswonger, 79-95 |
| 11 | 15 Feb (S)  Charlesworth  LXX | Quiz 4; Literary Context: Part 1 MT, LXX, Apocrypha & Pseudepigrapha (154-67) | May/Metzger (Apocrypha: Tobit, Susanna, and Bel & the Dragon) |
| 12 | 19 Feb (W)  4 vols. | Literary Context: Part 2 Josephus, Philo, Rabbis (168-73 | Research paper due |
| 13 | 22 Feb (S)  scroll box  Video | Literary Context: Part 3 Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS), NT Apocrypha (174-87), Archaeology 188-92 | Vermes, 61-80, 103-27 (DSS War Scroll, Manual of Discipline) |
| 14 | 26 Feb (W) | Midterm Exam | No assignments—just study! |
| 15 | 1 Mar (S) | NT Overview, Synoptics, Matthew | Niswonger, 97-117 Criticism, Syn. Prob., John  Benware, 12-19NTS, 74-92 Mat.  Beitzel, 169-75Jesus min  Bring $20 for NTS notes |
| 16 | 5 Mar (W) | James, Galatians | Benware, 245-49, 152-66Eps/Gal  Niswonger, 181-204 Acts 1-12  Beitzel, 176-79 1mj |
| 17 | 8 Mar (S) | 1 & 2 Thessalonians | Group 1 Presentation: 1 Thess.  Benware, 167-76 Thess  Niswonger, 205-20 Acts 13-14  Beitzel, 179-80 2mj |
| 18 | 12 Mar (W) | Quiz 5; 1 & 2 Corinthians | Benware, 177-92 Cor.  Niswonger, 221-38 Acts 15-21  Beitzel, 181-82 |
| 19 | 15 Mar (S) | Romans | Group 2 Presentation: Romans  Benware, 193-204Rom, 44-73Gospels, incl. 54-73 Life of Christ |
|  | 16-22 Mar | Mid-Semester Break | “AD” at My Home |
| 20 | 26 Mar (W) | Luke, Acts | Benware, 102-15Lk, 128-50Acts  Niswonger, 119-35 Luke/Herods |
| 21 | 29 Mar (S) | Ephesians, Colossians | Group 3 Presentation: Colossians  Benware, 205-17PrsnEps/Eph/Col  Niswonger, 239-246 Acts 22-28  Beitzel, 182-85 |
| 22 | 2 Apr (W) | Quiz 6; Philemon, Philippians | Benware, 218-25 PP, 292-94  Niswonger, 246-50 Prison Eps.. |
| 23 | 5 Apr (S) | 1 Timothy, Mark | Benware, 93-101, 227-34PE1Tm  Niswonger, 137-57 Jesus Ministry |
| 24 | 9 Apr (W) | 1 & 2 Peter | Group 4 Presentation: 1 Peter  Benware, 256-63 1-2 Pet  Niswonger, 251-61 AD 60s |
| 25 | 12 Apr (S) | Quiz 7; Titus, 2 Timothy | Benware, 235-43 Tit/2 Tim  Benware, 295-7Apostles |
| 26 | 16 Apr (W) | Hebrews | Group 5 Presentation: Hebrews  Benware, 250-55 Heb, 298-302Tg  Niswonger, 263-69 AD 68-81 |
| 27 | 19 Apr (S) | John, Jude | Niswonger, 159-79 Passion/Res.  Benware, 116-26John, 264-65Jude |
| 28 | 23 Apr (W) | 1-3 John | Benware, 266-72 1-3 John  Niswonger, 269-78 AD 81-96 |
| 29 | 26 Apr (S) | Quiz 8; Revelation | Benware, 274-89 Rev  Niswonger, 279-83 Conclusion |
|  | 29 Apr-  3 May | Final Exam | Review NT Survey notes for exam |

**VI. Other Matters**

A. Contacting Me: You can contact me at SBC by box L7 or by phone (466-8769 ext. 220, 466-4677, 466-4834). Also, my home address is 90 Rifle Range Road, Singapore 588391 and home phone number is 469-3027 (home fax 466-5517).My office hours when I can talk are Tuesdays to Fridays (11:55-12:45) or 1:30-2:30 on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. Let’s have lunch too!

B. Copying Class Notes: This is allowed if you give credit where credit is due and until you become rich from doing it.

**V. Course Schedule (Day School) 1999**

The above totals 784 pp ÷ 58 sessions = 13.5 pp./session or 27 pp./day

Note: Quizzes are based on the maps (quizzes 1-2 on pp. 2 and 5, respectively), Coleman’s article in the notes (quiz 3), and the Apocrypha with class readings since quiz 3 (quiz 4). You will not be quizzed on Beitzel. Each session below is a double session.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Session*** | ***Date (Day)*** | ***Subject*** | ***Assignment*** |
| 1 | 6 Jan (W) | Syllabus; Geography Part 1  2-4,10-12 | No assignments 34-36 |
| 2 | 8 Jan (F) | Quiz 1; Geography Part 2 34-36  Archaeology of Jerusalem Video | Study for Quiz  Beitzel, 156-65  Buy all texts by today (on quiz!) |
|  | 13 Jan (W) | Sports Day | No classes or assignments |
| 3 | 15 Jan (F) | Political Context: Part 1 Int. 48-65  /Persia/Greece-skip Dan., Babylon slides | Beitzel, 150-53  Niswonger, 15-27  Greeks |
| 4 | 20 Jan (W) | Quiz 2; Political Context: Part 2 Has/Rom Rule: 166-4 BC (pp. 66-72) | Study for Quiz  Beitzel, 154-55 Hasm, 166-68 Hrd  Niswonger, 28-41 Hasm to 4 BC  Show Ben Hur sea battle? |
| 5 | 22 Jan (F) | Political Context: Part 3  Roman Rule IV: 4 BC-A.D 135 (79-95) | Beitzel, 185-87; Niswonger, 42-52  Coleman, 181-91 (notes, 73-78) |
| 6 | 27 Jan (W) | Socio-Economic Context: Part 1 I-IV.C (pp. 97-100, 105) Jer wall picture | Maier on *Josephus,* 329-85 War |
| 7 | 29 Jan (F) | Socio-Economic Context: Part 2 IV.D & Onesimus (106-9) | Coleman, 248-55 (notes, 101-104) |
| 8 | 3 Feb (W) | Quiz 3; Religious Context: Part 1 Sm. grps on sects, sabbath (124-26) | Niswonger, 53-78 sects/syn/DSS |
| 9 | 5 Feb (F) | Religious Context: Part 2 feasts, synagogue, ordinances (136-49) | Coleman, 212-29 (notes, 127-35)  Feasts, Festivals, & Synagogue |
| 10 | 10 Feb (W) | Religious Context: Part 3 pagan (150-53) | Niswonger, 79-95 |
| 11 | 12 Feb (F) | Quiz 4; Literary Context: Part 1 MT, LXX, Apocrypha & Pseudepigrapha (154-67) | May/Metzger (Apocrypha: Tobit, Susanna, and Bel & the Dragon) found in notes, 188-98 |
|  | 15-20 Feb | Chinese New Year | No classes or assignments |
| 12 | 24 Feb (W) | Literary Context: Part 2 Josephus, Philo, Rabbis (168-73 | Research paper due |
| 13 | 26 Feb (F) | Literary Context: Part 3 Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS), NT Apocrypha (174-87), Archaeology188-92 | Vermes, 61-80, 103-27 (DSS *War Scroll, Manual of Discipline*) |
|  | 3 Mar (W) | Church Staff Retreat | No class—study during class time |
|  | 5 Mar (F) | Midterm Exam | Study :-) |

**V. Course Schedule (Day School)** 2002 Niswonger (108) + Beitzel (81) + Coleman (29) + Maier (57)+ Vermes (30) = 305 pp

The above totals 305 pp ÷ 28 sessions. = 11 pp./session or 22 pp./day

Note: Quizzes are based on the maps (quizzes 1-2 on pp. 2 and 5, respectively), Coleman’s article in the notes (quiz 3), and the Apocrypha with class readings since quiz 3 (quiz 4). You will not be quizzed on Beitzel. Each session is a double session.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Session*** | ***Date (W)*** | ***Subject*** | ***Assignment*** |
| 1 | 3 Jan | Syllabus; Geography Part 1 2-4,10-12 | No assignments 34-36 |
| 2 | 10 Jan | Quiz 1; Geography Part 2 34-36  Archaeology of Jerusalem Video | Study for Quiz  Beitzel, 156-65  Buy all texts by today (on quiz!) |
| 3 | 17 Jan | Political Context: Part 1 Int. 48-65  /Persia/Greece-skip Daniel | Beitzel, 150-53  Niswonger, 15-27 Greeks |
| 4 | 24 Jan | Quiz 2; Political Context: Part 2 Has/Rom Rule: 166-4 BC (pp. 66-72) | Study for Quiz  Beitzel, 154-55 Hasm., 166-68 Herod  Niswonger, 28-41 Hasm to 4 BCShow Ben Hur sea battle? |
| 5 | 31 Jan | Political Context: Part 3  Roman IV: 4 BC-A.D 135 (79-95) | Beitzel, 185-87;  Niswonger, 42-52 |
| 6 | 7 Feb | Political Context: Part 4 | Coleman, 181-91 (notes, 73-78) |
|  | 14 Feb | Chinese New Year | No classes or assignments |
| 7 | 21 Feb | Socio-Economic Context: Part 1 I-IV.C (pp. 97-100, 105) Jer wall picture | Maier on *Josephus,* 329-85 War |
| 8 | 28 Feb | Socio-Economic Context: Part 2 IV.D & Onesimus (106-9) | Coleman, 248-55 (notes, 101-104) |
| 9 | 7 Mar | Socio-Economic Context: Part 3 | No assignments |
|  | 14 March | Mid-Semester Break | No classes or assignments |
| 10 | 21 Mar | Quiz 3; Religious Context: Part 1 Sm. grps on sects, sabbath (124-26) | Niswonger, 53-78 sects/syn/DSS |
|  | 28 March | Maundy Thursday | No classes or assignments |
| 11 | 4 Apr | Religious Context: Part 2 feasts, synagogue, ordinances (136-49) | Coleman, 212-29 (notes, 127-35)  Feasts, Festivals, & Synagogue |
| 12 | 11 Apr | Religious Context: Part 3 pagan (150-53) | Niswonger, 79-95 |
|  | 18 March | Late-Semester Break | No classes or assignments |
| 13 | 25 Apr | Quiz 4; Literary Context: Part 1 MT, LXX, Apocrypha & Pseudepigrapha (154-67) Literary Context: Part 2 Josephus, Philo, Rabbis (168-73) | May/Metzger (Apocrypha: Tobit, Susanna, and Bel & the Dragon) found in notes, 188-98  Research paper due |
| 14 | 2 May | Literary Context: Part 3 Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS), NT Apocrypha (174-87), Archaeology188-92 | Vermes, 61-80, 103-27 (DSS *War Scroll, Manual of Discipline*) |
| 15 | 6-11 May | Midterm Exam | Study :-) |

**V. Course Schedule (Day School)** 2003 *Readings* (80) + Beitzel (81) + Coleman (29) + Maier (57)+ Vermes (30) = 277 pp

The above totals 277 pp ÷ 28 sessions. = 10 pp./session or 20 pp./day

Note: Quizzes are based on the maps (quizzes 1-2 on pp. 2 and 5, respectively), Coleman’s article in the notes (quiz 4), and the Apocrypha with class readings since quiz 4 (quiz 5). You will not be quizzed on Beitzel. Each session is a double session.

Archaeology is summed in session 14 as session

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Session** | **Date (W)** | **Subject** | **Assignment** |
| 1 | 8 Jan | Syllabus; Geography Part 1 2-4,10-12 | No assignments 34-36 |
| 2 | 15 Jan | Quiz 1; Geography Part 2 34-36  Archaeology of Jerusalem Video | Study for Quiz  Beitzel, 156-65  *Readings*, 17-23 Palestine  Buy all texts by today (on quiz!) |
| 3 | 22 Jan | Political Context: Part 1 Int. 48-65  /Persia/Greece-skip Daniel | Beitzel, 150-53  *Readings*, 25-30 175-63 BC |
| 4 | 29 Jan | Quiz 2; Political Context: Part 2 Has/Rom Rule: 166-4 BC (66-72) | Study for Quiz  Beitzel, 154-55 Hasm., 166-68 Herod  *Readings*, 30-42 63-4 BC & Show Ben Hur sea battle? |
|  | **5 Feb** | **Chinese New Year** | **No classes or assignments** |
|  | **12 Feb** | **Hari Raya Haji** | **No classes or assignments** |
| 5 | 19 Feb | Political Context: Part 3  Roman IV: 4 BC-A.D 135 (79-95) | Beitzel, 185-87  *Readings*, 42-55 Procurators |
| 6 | 26 Feb | Quiz 3; Political Context: Part 4 | Coleman, 181-91 (notes, 73-78) |
| 7 | 5 Mar | Socio-Economic Context: Part 1 I-IV.C (pp. 97-100, 105) Jer wall picture | Maier on *Josephus,* 329-85 War  Note: This is your longest reading! |
| 8 | 12 Mar | Socio-Economic Context: Part 2 IV.D & Onesimus (106-9) | Coleman, 248-55 (notes, 101-104) |
|  | **19 Mar** | **Mid-Semester Break** | **No classes or assignments** |
| 9 | 26 Mar | Socio-Economic Context: Part 3 AD video | *Readings*, 65-75- People Grps; Notes, 137a-b |
| 10 | 2 Apr | Quiz 4; Religious Context: Part 1 Sm. grps on sects, sabbath (124-26) | *Readings*, 57-65 Sects |
| 11 | 9 Apr | Religious Context: Part 2 feasts, synagogue, ordinances (136-49) | Coleman, 212-29 (notes, 127-35) Feasts, Festivals, & Synagogue  *Readings*, 77-87 Judaism rel. |
| 12 | 16 Apr | Religious Context: Part 3 pagan (150-53) | *Readings*, 87-95 Sabbath & circumcision |
| 13 | 23 Apr | Quiz 5; Literary Context: Part 1 MT, LXX, Apocrypha & Pseudepigrapha (154-67) Literary Context: Part 2 Josephus, Philo, Rabbis (168-73) | May/Metzger (Apocrypha: Tobit, Susanna, and Bel & the Dragon) found in notes, 188-98  Research paper due |
| 14 | 30 Apr | Literary Context: Part 3 Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS), NT Apocrypha (174-87), Archaeology188-92 | Vermes, 61-80, 103-27 (DSS *War Scroll, Manual of Discipline*) copied in notes, 252-65 |
| 15 | 6-9 May | Final Exam | Study :-) |

**V. Course Schedule (Day School)** 2003 *Readings* (80) + Beitzel (81) + Coleman (29) + Maier (57)+ Vermes (30) = 277 pp

The above totals 277 pp ÷ 28 sessions. = 10 pp./session or 20 pp./day

Note: Quizzes are based on the maps (quizzes 1-2 on pp. 2 and 5, respectively), Coleman’s article in the notes (quiz 4), and the Apocrypha with class readings since quiz 4 (quiz 5). You will not be quizzed on Beitzel. Each session is a double session.

Archaeology is summed in session 14 as session

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Session** | **Date (W)** | **Subject** | **Assignment** |
| 1 | 8 Jan | Syllabus; Geography Part 1 2-4,10-12 | No assignments 34-36 |
| 2 | 15 Jan | Quiz 1; Geography Part 2 34-36  Archaeology of Jerusalem Video | Study for Quiz  Beitzel, 156-65  *Readings*, 17-23 Palestine  Buy all texts by today (on quiz!) |
| 3 | 22 Jan | Political Context: Part 1 Int. 48-65  /Persia/Greece-skip Daniel | Beitzel, 150-53  *Readings*, 25-30 175-63 BC |
| 4 | 29 Jan | Quiz 2; Political Context: Part 2 Has/Rom Rule: 166-4 BC (66-72) | Study for Quiz  Beitzel, 154-55 Hasm., 166-68 Herod  *Readings*, 30-42 63-4 BC & Show Ben Hur sea battle? |
|  | **5 Feb** | **Chinese New Year** | **No classes or assignments** |
|  | **12 Feb** | **Hari Raya Haji** | **No classes or assignments** |
| 5 | 19 Feb | Political Context: Part 3  Roman IV: 4 BC-A.D 135 (79-95) | Beitzel, 185-87  *Readings*, 42-55 Procurators |
| 6 | 26 Feb | Quiz 3; Political Context: Part 4 | Coleman, 181-91 (notes, 73-78) |
| 7 | 5 Mar | Socio-Economic Context: Part 1 I-IV.C (pp. 97-100, 105) Jer wall picture | Maier on *Josephus,* 329-85 War  Note: This is your longest reading! |
| 8 | 12 Mar | Socio-Economic Context: Part 2 IV.D & Onesimus (106-9) | Coleman, 248-55 (notes, 101-104) |
|  | **19 Mar** | **Mid-Semester Break** | **No classes or assignments** |
| 9 | 26 Mar | Socio-Economic Context: Part 3 AD video | *Readings*, 65-75- People Grps; Notes, 137a-b |
| 10 | 2 Apr | Quiz 4; Religious Context: Part 1 Sm. grps on sects, sabbath (124-26) | *Readings*, 57-65 Sects |
| 11 | 9 Apr | Religious Context: Part 2 feasts, synagogue, ordinances (136-49) | Coleman, 212-29 (notes, 127-35) Feasts, Festivals, & Synagogue  *Readings*, 77-87 Judaism rel. |
| 12 | 16 Apr | Religious Context: Part 3 pagan (150-53) | *Readings*, 87-95 Sabbath & circumcision |
| 13 | 23 Apr | Quiz 5; Literary Context: Part 1 MT, LXX, Apocrypha & Pseudepigrapha (154-67) Literary Context: Part 2 Josephus, Philo, Rabbis (168-73) | May/Metzger (Apocrypha: Tobit, Susanna, and Bel & the Dragon) found in notes, 188-98  Research paper due |
| 14 | 30 Apr | Literary Context: Part 3 Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS), NT Apocrypha (174-87), Archaeology188-92 | Vermes, 61-80, 103-27 (DSS *War Scroll, Manual of Discipline*) copied in notes, 252-65 |
| 15 | 6-9 May | Final Exam | Study :-) |

**V. Course Schedule (2005)** 2005 *Readings* (80) + Beitzel (81) + Coleman (29) + Maier (57)+ Vermes (30) = 277

The above totals 277 pp ÷ 28 sessions. = 10 pp./session or 20 pp./day MADE SOC-ECON ONLY 2 PARTS IN 2004-05

Note: Quizzes are based on the maps (quizzes 1-2 on pp. 2 and 5, respectively), Coleman’s article in the notes (quiz 4), and the Apocrypha with class readings since quiz 4 (quiz 5). You will not be quizzed on Beitzel. Each session is a double session.

Archaeology is summed in session 14 as session

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Session** | **Date (Tue)** | **Subject** | **Assignment** |
| 1 | 4 Jan | Syllabus; Geography Part 1 (Israel) 2-4,10-12 | No assignments 34-36 |
| 2 | 11 Jan | Quiz 1; Geography Part 2 (Jerusalem)34-36 | Study for Quiz  Beitzel, 156-65  *Readings*, 17-23 Palestine  Buy all texts by today (on quiz!) |
| 3 | 18 Jan | Political Context: Part 1 Int. 48-65  /Persia/Greece-skip Daniel | Beitzel, 150-53  *Readings*, 25-30 175-63 BC |
|  | **25 Jan** | **Lecturer teaching in Myanmar** | **No classes or assignments** |
| 4 | 1 Feb | Quiz 2; Political Context: Part 2 Has/Rom Rule: 166-4 BC (66-72) | Study for Quiz  Beitzel, 154-55 Hasm., 166-68 Herod  *Readings*, 30-42 63-4 BC & Show Ben Hur sea battle? |
|  | **8 Jan** | **Chinese New Year** | **No classes or assignments** |
| 5 | 15 Feb | Political Context: Part 3  Roman IV: 4 BC-A.D 135 (79-95) | Beitzel, 185-87  *Readings*, 42-55 Procurators |
| 6 | 22 Feb | Quiz 3; Political Context: Part 4 | Coleman, 181-91 (notes, 73-78) |
| 7 | 1 Mar | “A.D.” Video | No assignments |
| 8 | 8 Mar | Socio-Economic Context: Part 1 I-IV.C (pp. 97-100, 105) Jer wall picture | *Josephus,* 329-85 (notes, 280-308) War  Note: This is your longest reading! |
|  | **15 Mar** | **Mid-Semester Break** | **No classes or assignments** |
| 9 | 22 Mar | Socio-Economic Context: Part 2 IV.D & Onesimus (106-9) | Coleman, 248-55 (notes, 101-104)  *Readings*, 65-75 Peoples; Notes, 137a-b |
| 10 | 29 Mar | Quiz 4; Religious Context: Part 1 Sm. grps on sects, sabbath (124-26) | *Readings*, 57-65 Sects |
| 11 | 5 Apr | Religious Context: Part 2 feasts, synagogue, ordinances (136-49) | Coleman, 212-29 (notes, 127-35) Feasts, Festivals, & Synagogue  *Readings*, 77-87 Judaism rel. |
| 12 | 12 Apr | Religious Context: Part 3 pagan (150-53) | *Readings*, 87-95 Sabbath & circumcision |
| 13 | 19 Apr | Quiz 5; Literary Context: Part 1 MT, LXX, Apocrypha & Pseudepigrapha (154-67) Literary Context: Part 2 Josephus, Philo, Rabbis (168-73) | May/Metzger (Apocrypha: Tobit, Susanna, and Bel & the Dragon) found in notes, 188-98  Research paper due |
| 14 | 26 Apr | Literary Context: Part 3 Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS), NT Apocrypha (174-87), Archaeology188-92 | Vermes, 61-80, 103-27 (DSS *War Scroll, Manual of Discipline*) copied in notes, 252-65 |
| 15 | 3-6 May | Final Exam | Study :-) |

**Group Project Teams**

The following groups have roughly even numbers of students in the different degree programmes (B = bachelors, G = graduate), men (M), and woman (W). Each presentation should be 30-50 minutes long. Take careful note of the criteria on the next page to do an effective job. Be sure to come to me if you have any questions.

|  |
| --- |
| Group 1: 1 Thessalonians (8 Mar) |
| Athena To (WB) |
| Anna Gan (WB) |
| Ndaru Darsono (MB) |
| N. Satchithanandakumar (MG) |
| Judy Chiu (WG) |
| Bau Chian Hui (MG) |
|  |
| Group 2: Romans (15 Mar) |
| Wesley Sng (MB) |
| Keiko Kuroda (WB) |
| Joanna Lau (WB) |
| Lorna Wu (WG) |
| Johny Benjamin (MG) |
| Veersamy Marimuthu (MB) |
|  |
| Group 3: Colossians (29 Mar) |
| Lukito Kango (MB) |
| Stephan Smithdorff (MB) |
| Angeline Lee (WB) |
| Elaine Tan (WG) |
| Toh Wai Yee (WB) |
|  |
| Group 4: 1 Peter (9 Apr) |
| Emily Loo (WB) |
| Winnie Tay (WB) |
| Gimin Husin (MB) |
| Eugene Lee (MG) |
| Khai Za Dal (MG) |
|  |
| Group 5: Hebrews (16 Apr) |
| Timothy Loo (MB) |
| Phebe Setiawati (WB) |
| William Wong (MG) |
| Yeo Hwee Lin (WG) |
|  |

**Group Project Grade Sheet**

Class Date

Topic/Project

Group Members

1 2 3 4 5

Poor Minimal Average Good Excellent

**Creativity (25%)**

Project idea well-conceived     

Use of audiovisuals     

Communicated in a “fresh” manner     

Handouts page layout/scripting attractive     

Appropriately illustrated (vs. theoretical)     

Creativity Grade \_\_\_\_\_

**Expositional (Teaching) Value (25%)**

True to the text of Scripture (interpretation)     

Reflects intent of original author (history)     

Exposes and solves controversial texts     

Exposure to Scripture (quantity)     

Applies text to life (relevant exposition)     

Expositional Grade \_\_\_\_\_

**Teamwork (25%)**

Appeared to involve the whole group     

Coordination between parts of the project     

Depth (for a group project of 20% of final grade)     

Copies of project distributed to class members     

Use of time (not too long or too short)     

Teamwork Grade \_\_\_\_\_

**Interesting Presentation (25%)**

Kept the interest of the class     

Provided the right mood for the content     

Clear & appropriate introduction     

Appropriate conclusion     

Overall impression     

Interest Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Final Grade \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

**Title**

Author

**V. Economics**

A.

1.

a.

1)

a)

**VI. Transportation and Communication**

**Public Services**

**Education**

**Morality**

**Home and Family** Marriage Customs

**Food and Clothing**

A.

1.

a.

1)

a)

1]

a]

**V. Course Schedule (2006)** *Readings* (80) + Beitzel (81) + Coleman (29) + Maier (57)+ Vermes (30) = 277

The above totals 277 pp ÷ 28 sessions. = 10 pp./session or 20 pp./day MADE SOC-ECON ONLY 2 PARTS IN 2004-05

Note: Quizzes are based on the maps (quizzes 1-2 on pp. 2 and 5, respectively), Coleman’s article in the notes (quiz 4), and the Apocrypha with class readings since quiz 4 (quiz 5). You will not be quizzed on Beitzel. Each session is a double session.

Archaeology is summed in session 14 as part of the session rather than being session 15 due to Milne

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Session** | **Date (Wed)** | **Subject** | **Assignment** |
| 1 | 4 Jan | Syllabus; Geography Part 1 (Israel) 2-4,10-12 | No assignments 34-36 |
| 2 | 11 Jan | Quiz 1; Geography Part 2 (Jerusalem)34-36 | Study for Quiz  Beitzel, 156-65  *Readings*, 17-23 Palestine  Buy all texts by today (on quiz!) |
| 3 | 18 Jan | Political Context: Part 1 Int. 48-65  /Persia/Greece-skip Daniel | Beitzel, 150-53  *Readings*, 25-30 175-63 BC |
| 4 | 25 Jan | Quiz 2; Political Context: Part 2 Has/Rom Rule: 166-4 BC (66-72) | Study for Quiz  Beitzel, 154-55 Hasm., 166-68 Herod  *Readings*, 30-42 63-4 BC & Show Ben Hur sea battle? |
|  | **1 Feb** | **Chinese New Year** | **No classes or assignments** |
| 5 | 8 Feb | Political Context: Part 3  Roman IV: 4 BC-A.D 135 (79-95) | Beitzel, 185-87  *Readings*, 42-55 Procurators |
| 6 | 15 Feb | “A.D.” Video (Dr. Rick in Thailand) | *Josephus,* 329-56 (notes, 280-94) War |
| 7 | 22 Feb | Quiz 3; Political Context: Part 4 | Study for Quiz  Coleman, 181-91 (notes, 73-78) |
| 8 | 1 Mar | Socio-Economic Context: Part 1 I-IV.C (pp. 97-100, 105) Jer wall picture | *Josephus,* 357-85 (notes, 294-308) War |
| 9 | 8 Mar | Socio-Economic Context: Part 2 IV.D & Onesimus (106-9) | Coleman, 248-55 (notes, 101-104)  *Readings*, 65-75 Peoples; Notes, 137a-b |
|  | **15 Mar** | **Mid-Semester Break** | **No classes or assignments** |
| 10 | 22 Mar | Quiz 4; Religious Context: Part 1 Sm. grps on sects, sabbath (124-26) | Study for Quiz  *Readings*, 57-65 Sects |
| 11 | 29 Mar | Religious Context: Part 2 feasts, synagogue, ordinances (136-49) | Coleman, 212-29 (notes, 127-35) Feasts, Festivals, & Synagogue  *Readings*, 77-87 Judaism rel. |
| 12 | 5 Apr | Religious Context: Part 3 pagan (150-53) | *Readings*, 87-95 Sabbath & circumcision |
|  | **12 Apr** | **Dr. Bruce Milne Seminar** | **No classes or assignments** |
| 13 | 19 Apr | Literary Context: Part 1 MT, LXX, Apocrypha & Pseudepigrapha (154-67) Literary Context: Part 2 Josephus, Philo, Rabbis (168-73) | May/Metzger (Apocrypha: Tobit, Susanna, and Bel & the Dragon) found in notes, 188-98  Research paper or PPT translation due |
| 14 | 26 Apr | Quiz 5; Literary Context: Part 3 Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS), NT Apocrypha (174-87), Archaeology188-92 | Study for Quiz  Vermes, 61-80, 103-27 (DSS *War Scroll, Manual of Discipline*) copied in notes, 252-65 |
| 15 | 2-5 May | Final Exam | Study :-) |

1. A tilda (~) means *one* point within a range of dates, but a hyphen (-) means *all* the dates between dates noted. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Galatians 1:17 implies that the Arabia visit was brief so most of this time Paul ministered in Damascus. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. This first Jerusalem visit was to establish contact with Peter and lasted only 15 days (Gal. 1:18-19). However, a problem exists here: did he see only Peter and James (Gal. 1:18-19) or all the apostles (Acts 9:27)? [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Paul was ministering in Antioch for an entire year (Acts 11:25-26) prior to the famine visit (vv. 27-30). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Luke uses the general statement “It was about this time…” (12:1) as he does not follow a strict chronology here. Chronologically, Acts 12 (in Jerusalem) actually precedes Acts 11 (the famine visit from Antioch to Jerusalem). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. A problem with this chronology is reconciling Paul’s 14-year lapse from visiting Jerusalem a second time (Gal. 2:1). If this second visit is the famine visit (Acts 11:27-30), this would be either: (a) 13 years since his conversion in AD 35 (more likely) or (b) 10 years since his first post-conversion Jerusalem visit in AD 37. Neither case adds up to 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Martin Abegg, “Paul, ‘Works of the Law’ and MMT” *Biblical Archaeology Review* 20 [Nov/Dec 1994]: 52-55. Abegg later changed his view to practices enabling Qumranites to remain in the covenant (“4QMMT C 27, 31 and ‘Work’s Righteousness,’” *Dead Sea Discoveries* 6 [1999]: 139-47; reviewed in *BibSac* [Jan-Mar 2000]: 101). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)