



The Jewish World in New Testament Times **Religious Studies/History 3DD3**

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Time: Tu, Th, Fr: 9.30–10.20am
Place: ETB 228 on Tu/Fr; ETB 237 on Th

Course Description and Objectives

The writings that make up the New Testament were composed in the first century CE by a number of Jewish followers of Jesus. As a result, in order to fully appreciate these writings one must be deeply familiar with the Jewish world at the time. In this course, students will be introduced to what scholars refer to as early Judaism, a period running from 538 BCE to 70 CE. Students will learn about major historical events during this time period, as well as important figures and movements in Judaism.

Course Textbooks

- James VanderKam, *An Introduction to Early Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000).
- A good translation of the Bible with deuterocanon or Apocrypha, such as the NRSV
- Various readings to which the instructor will provide access

Statement on Academic Dishonesty (University Statement):

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, located at:

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/univ/ec/policy/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty: (1) Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained. (2) Improper collaboration in group work. (3) Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated, and can be easily avoided by simply citing the source of your information whenever there is any doubt. Please be sure to do this – better safe than sorry!

Note on Changes in the Course (University Statement):

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check her/his McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student’s own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Assignments

- *Class Participation:* Students are expected to attend promptly and regularly, having prepared beforehand for each class. They will actively participate in a respectful and knowledgeable manner. Tardiness, absences, and disruptions will result in a lowered grade. (10%)
- *Quizzes:* There will be four quizzes scheduled during the semester (see schedule below). Students will be given **25** testable terms that they must research on their own. The quiz will have **12** randomly selected terms. Students will be able to choose any **6** of these terms, for which they will provide a **3-4** sentence summary. (30%)
- *Bibliography Assignment:* In preparation for the final paper, students will construct a working bibliography of sources that they will use on the topic of their choice. This bibliography should follow the format of the SBL Handbook of Style (Second Edition)

and should be **1 to 2** pages in length. Bibliographies should be emailed to the professor by 5.00pm on Friday, October 28. (5%)

- *Term Paper*: Students will write an essay on a topic that they will choose in consultation with the professor. (Students will need to initiate an appointment in which they will come with 2 or 3 topics that they are interested in pursuing.) Papers should be typed in 12 Time New Roman font, double-spaced, with footnotes (size 10 font), and margins no larger than one inch on all sides. They should be between **6** (full pages) and **8** pages in length followed by a bibliography that improves upon their bibliography assignment. The paper will be due by 9.00pm on Tuesday, November 22, and should be emailed to the professor. (30%)
- *Final Exam*: The final exam will be cumulative and will consist of short-answer questions as in the midterm. It will also contain one or two long answer questions that seek to push students to synthesize the material they have covered throughout the semester (25%)

Tentative Schedule

Week One

September 6: Introduction and Syllabus

September 8: Assyrian and Babylonian Conquests of Israel

Readings: Genesis 12; 2 Kings 24–25; Jeremiah 27

September 9: Persia, Return, and Rebuilding the Temple

Readings: Ezra 1–3, Ezra 9, VanderKam, 1–10

Week Two

September 13: The Land in Jewish Thought

Readings: Genesis 15; Ezekiel 37

September 15: The Temple(s) in Jewish Thought

Readings: VanderKam, 193–210; Exodus 25; 1 Kings 6; Josephus, *Jewish War* 5.184–247 (at <http://penelope.uchicago.edu/josephus/war-5.html>) Chap 5

September 16: The Torah in early Judaism

Readings: VanderKam, 213–216; *Letter of Aristeas* 1–50, 301–311
(<http://www.ccel.org/c/charles/otpseudepig/aristeas.htm>)

Week Three

September 20: The Hellenistic Period and Antiochus IV

Readings: 1 Maccabees 1; 2 Maccabees 1:1–6:17; VanderKam, 11–24

September 22: The Maccabean Revolt

Readings: 2 Maccabees (tutorial discussion)

September 23: The Hasmonean State

Readings: VanderKam, 24–32

QUIZ ONE: first 25 testable terms (1 Enoch – covenantal nomism)

Week Four

September 27: Hellenism and Judaism

Readings: Shaye Cohen, *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah*, second edition, 27–37 (on google books)

September 29: Rewritten Bible: *Jubilees* 1–50 (tutorial discussion;
<http://www.pseudepigrapha.com/jubilees/index.htm>)

September 30: The Major Jewish Groups: The Sadducees

Readings: VanderKam, 189–91; Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.16–17

(<http://penelope.uchicago.edu/josephus/ant-18.html>; chapter 1, section 4); Mark
12:18–27

Week Five

October 4: The Essenes

Readings: VanderKam, 191–192, Josephus *Antiquities* 18.18–22

(<http://penelope.uchicago.edu/josephus/ant-18.html>; chapter 1, section 5)

October 6: The Community Rule (tutorial discussion;

<http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/gopher/other/courses/rels/225/Texts/1QS>)

October 7: The Major Jewish Groups: The Priests

Readings: VanderKam, 175–186

QUIZ TWO: Second set of 25 terms (Cyrus the Great - Judith)

MID-TERM RECESS: October 10–16

Week Six

October 18: The Pharisees

Readings: VanderKam, 187–89; Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.12–15

(<http://penelope.uchicago.edu/josephus/ant-18.html>; chapter 1, section 3)

October 20: The Zealots

Readings: VanderKam, 192–93; Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.23–25

(<http://penelope.uchicago.edu/josephus/ant-18.html>, chapter 1, section 6)

October 21: The Samaritans

Readings: John 4; Luke 10:29–37

Week Seven

October 25: Philo of Alexandria, Interpreter of Judaism and Hellenism

Readings: VanderKam, 138–42; skim read Philo, *On the Creation*

(<http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/yonge/book1.html>)

October 27: 4 Maccabees (tutorial discussion)

October 28: Wisdom Literature

Readings: Wisdom of Solomon; VanderKam, 115–28

QUIZ THREE: Third set of 25 terms (Kosher Food Laws to Ritual Impurity)

Bibliography Due by 5.00pm (via email)

Week Eight

November 1: Apocalyptic Literature

Readings: VanderKam, 102–115; The Animal Apocalypse (1 Enoch 85–90;

<http://wesley.nnu.edu/index.php?id=2126>)

November 3: The Testament of Moses (tutorial discussion;
<http://wesley.nnu.edu/index.php?id=2124>)

November 4: Messianic Thought

Readings: Psalms of Solomon, Hymn 17 (<http://wesley.nnu.edu/sermons-essays-books/noncanonical-literature/noncanonical-literature-ot-pseudepigrapha/the-psalms-of-solomon/>)

Week Nine

November 8: Purity Concerns in Judea

November 10: 4QMMT (<http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/rak/courses/427/texts/4QMMT.htm>)

November 11: The Synagogue

Readings: Susan Haber, "Common Judaism, Common Synagogue?" 63–77
(google books: *Common Judaism*, by Adele Reinhartz and Wayne McCready)

QUIZ FOUR: Fourth set of 25 terms (Roman Empire to Zealots)

Week Ten

November 15: The Jewish Jesus

Readings: The Gospel of Mark

November 17: The Gospel of Matthew (tutorial discussion)

November 18: NO CLASS (Conference)

Week Eleven

November 22: NO CLASS (Conference); paper due by 9.30pm via email

November 24: Paul the Jew: Romans and Galatians (tutorial discussion)

November 25: Early Christ Followers according to Luke-Acts

Readings: Acts of the Apostles

Week Twelve

November 29: The Destruction of the Temple

Readings, VanderKam, 42–49

December 1: The Development of Rabbinic Judaism

Readings: Mishnah, tractate Avot (<http://www.angelfire.com/mt/talmud/avot.html>)

December 2: The Development of Christianity

Week Thirteen

December 6: Review

Final Exam to be held between December 9 and December 22

1 Enoch
1 Maccabees
2 Baruch
2 Maccabees
3 Maccabees
4 Ezra
4 Maccabees
4QMMT
Abraham
Acts of the Apostles
Alexander the Great
Alexandria
Angels
Animal Apocalypse
Antiochus IV
Epiphanes
Apocalyptic literature
Aqedah
Babylonian Exile
Bar Kochba/Kosiba
Belial
Caligula
Caesarea Maritima
Circumcision
Community Rule
Covenantal nomism
Cyrus the Great
Dead Sea Scrolls
Decapolis
Diaspora
Elephantine
Eschatology
Essenes
Ezra

Gentile
gymnasium
Hasmoneans
Hellenism
Herod Agrippa I
Herod Antipas
Herod the Great
High priest
Hillel
Idumea
Jerusalem
Jerusalem Temple
Jesus
John the Baptist
Joseph and Aseneth
Josephus
Jubilees
Judith
Kosher Food laws
Letter of Aristeas
Maccabees
Masada
Messiah
Miqvaot
Mishnah
Monotheism (Ancient)
Moses
Nicolaus of Damascus
Ossuaries
Parting of the Ways
Paul
Pentateuch
Pharisees
Phylacteries/Tefillin

Philo
Pilate
Pompey the Great
Psalms of Solomon
Pseudepigrapha
Qumran
Rabbis
Ritual Impurity
Roman Empire
Sabbath
Sadducees
Samaritans
Sanhedrin
Sepphoris
Septuagint
Shammai
Sirach
Son of God
Son of Man
Stone vessels
Talmud
Targumim
Temple Scroll
Tiberias
Titus
Tobit
Tosefta
Vespasian
War Scroll
Wisdom of Solomon
Yavneh (Jamnia)
Yohanan ben Zakkai
Zealots