

History and Religion of Ancient Israel: Second Temple Period

JUS/NES/RELI/HIST 372b
Spring 2008

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Class Time: Wednesdays 6:00 -8:30

Class Location: Haury 219

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 8:30-10:00 am in Espresso Art (942 E. University) and by appointment

Course Description

This course covers Jewish history from its roots in the Persian period (539-332 B.C.E.) to the rise of Rabbinic Judaism in the second century C.E.—the timeframe known as the “Second Temple Period.” Through vivid lectures and class discussions, we will examine the politics, religion and culture of Judaism as evidenced in literary and archaeological sources. The course will highlight the major trends in ancient Jewish religion and history, particularly the cultural and political contacts with non-Jews (Persians, Greeks, and Romans). The religious developments of Second Temple period Judaism provide the basis and background for both Christianity and Islam, as well as the Judaism of the medieval and modern world. By investigating the changes that took place in this 700-year period in ancient Palestine, we will gain important insight into the religious, cultural, and political affairs of today.

JUS 372b is meant to be an introduction and survey course. Although it is a continuation of JUS 372a, there are *no prerequisites*. Because this class is an overview, we will of course leave out many details and nuances. I encourage those who find the topics we discuss interesting to refer to the Course Reserves below and to consider future courses in Judaic Studies and Religion.

Course Objectives

1. Become familiar with the general historical outline and cultural trends of ancient Judaism in the Second Temple period, as well as the basic geographical features of the region.
2. Allow for intelligent and informed discussion regarding the origin and context of early Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism.
3. Be able to discuss early Jewish literature and its influences.
4. Understand the pivotal role of the historical and religious developments in ancient Palestine for the shaping of Western culture.
5. Begin to realize the complexities regarding the definitions of “Judaism,” “religion,” and “history.”

6. Fulfill major and World Civilization requirements.
7. Exercise and reinforce basic skills common to all Humanities courses, including research, writing, editing, critical reading and active debate.

Textbooks and Materials

1. Lawrence H. Schiffman, *From Text to Tradition: A History of Second Temple and Rabbinic Judaism*. Hoboken, NJ: Ktav, 1991.
2. James VanderKam, *Introduction to Early Judaism*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001.
3. **Bible**: Several of the primary texts (i.e. ancient works) we will be reading are biblical, so you may want to purchase your own copy of a bible. If you do, please make sure that it includes the **Hebrew Bible/Old Testament**, the **Apocrypha** section, as well as the **New Testament**. The best translation for this class is the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV). I have requested that the U of A bookstore stock the *New Oxford Annotated Bible, with the Apocrypha* (NRSV) for your convenience. You may also access the relevant books online at www.earlyjewishwritings.com and www.earlychristianwritings.com.
NOTE: The *Jewish Publication Society Hebrew-English Tanakh* is also a very good edition and translation, especially for those who know some Hebrew, however it does not include the *Apocrypha* or the New Testament, so it is not ideal for this class.
4. Other readings and materials will be available for you on the D2L webpage (www.d2l.arizona.edu), so please make sure you are able to access the site.

Course Requirements and Logistics

Readings: You are expected to complete all reading assignments *prior to coming to class*. The readings will be substantial at times, so do not wait until the night before class to do them.

Response Papers: For the first half of the semester, there will be weekly writing assignments that will be due at the end of each class. These are to be done in conjunction with your readings. Instructions and assignments for the response papers are found below.

Class Attendance: I expect everyone to be in class each week. Because our class meets only once per week, you will miss out on a significant amount of material if you fail to attend. Absenteeism will be reflected in your grade. If you are unable to attend a class, please let me know *in advance*. If you miss a lecture, it is your responsibility to get the notes from a classmate and/or come to office hours to discuss what you missed.

Map Quiz: There will be a short map quiz in the second week of class. Be ready!

Exams: There will be one midterm exam and one final exam. The midterm exam will be on Mar. 12 and will cover everything from the first class up to and including Mar. 5. The final exam is scheduled for May 9, 8:00 – 10:00 pm. It *will* be cumulative.

Formats of the exams will be discussed in class. Students who miss an exam will only be excused by a note from your dean.

Term Paper: Every student is required to write a term paper of 5-10 pages. You are to choose a general area of research from the list provided on the course website, and then a more focused topic after meeting with the instructor. You are *required* to discuss your term paper topic with the instructor. The term paper will be due on the last day of class. See the “Term Paper Assignment” supplement for more details.

Student Conduct:

Cell Phones – Please turn them off when you come into class. They are disruptive to your instructor and classmates.

Computers – I encourage you to use your computer for taking notes, however if you cannot control your impulse to web-browse, check email, chat online, etc., you will be asked to leave.

Plagiarism and Cheating – These are very serious matters, more so than most students realize. Your personal academic honesty should reflect the integrity of the university. I have zero tolerance for plagiarism, cheating, or any other form of academic misconduct. Please note that all work you do in this class should be your own and *for this class only*, unless permission is otherwise given by the instructor. If you are unclear as to what constitutes academic misconduct—especially plagiarism—you should consult the U of A Student Code of Academic Integrity (at <http://dos.web.arizona.edu/uapolicies/>). If you’re still unclear, ask the instructor.

Special Accommodations: In keeping with university policy, the instructor will accommodate any student’s religious beliefs with regard to scheduling of examinations or any other academic requirements. Please consult with the instructor at least two weeks in advance of any such scheduling issues.

Grading

Final Grade is determined by:

Response papers	20 %
Map Quiz	5 %
Class Attendance/Participation	10 %
Term Paper	20 %
Mid-term Exam	20 %
Final Exam	25 %

Grading Scale: Letter grades for all assignments and the course are translated as follows:

- A Congratulations! You deserve a pat on the back for truly going out of your way to get the most out of this class. Your work was impressive and you showed a deep understanding of the course material. (90.00 – 100 %)
- B Good job. You completed all the assignments satisfactorily, and in some cases exceeded the minimum. In addition, you showed a solid interest for the material, however there was more you could have done to show independent thinking. (80.00 – 89.99 %)

- C You completed all the assignments, but you did not go beyond the bare minimum. You did not show any real interest in the material, however made a reasonable attempt to pass the class. (70.00 – 79.99 %)
- D You passed the course, but your performance was unsatisfactory. Little effort was demonstrated in the assignments, and you showed no interest in learning anything useful here. (60.00 – 69.99 %)
- E Congratulations! You deserve a pat on the back for truly going out of your way to get the least out of this class. Your work was virtually non-existent and you showed no interest in the course whatsoever. (59.99 % and below)

NOTE: Each of these grades is earned; no one is entitled to any particular grade. There are no “A students,” “B students,” or “C students” in this class. The work you do in fulfillment of the assignments for *this* course only will be reflected in your grade.

Extra Credit: Extra credit is awarded to students who did not perform as well as they would have liked on the exams. In order to earn extra credit points, you may do any of the following: Extra credit may be turned in as late as the last day of class.

- (1) Write a 2-4 page review of any of the books listed under course reserves. The review should include a brief summary of the work, its major argument or thesis, and its outline. You should evaluate the author’s argument and evidence based on what you have learned in class.
- (2) Attend a lecture presented outside of class on a topic related to course material, and write a 1-2 page response in which you briefly summarize the speaker’s content and give your reaction. Acceptable lectures for this assignment will be announced in class and via email.

Course Reserves and Reference Works

Reference Works

Anchor Bible Dictionary
Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls
Encyclopedia Judaica
Macmillan Bible Atlas
New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land
Oxford Classical Dictionary

Books

Bickerman, *The Jews in the Greek Age*
 Chancy, *The Myth of a Gentile Galilee*
 Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vols. 1-2
 Coogan, ed. *The New Oxford Annotated Bible, with Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books*
 Coogan, ed. *The Oxford History of the Biblical World*
 Cohen, *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah*
 Cohen, *Josephus*
 Crenshaw, *Old Testament Wisdom*
 Goodman, *The Ruling Class of Judaea: The Origins of the Jewish Revolt against Rome*
 Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*

Jones, *The Herods of Judaea*
 Kokkinos, *The Herodian Dynasty: Origins, Role in Society and Eclipse*
 Levine, *Jerusalem: Portrait of a City in the Second Temple Period*
 Levine, *Judaism and Hellenism in Antiquity: Conflict or Confluence?*
 Magness, *The Archaeology of the Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls*
 Murphy, *Early Judaism*
 Neusner, *From Politics to Piety*
 Petersen, *The Prophetic Literature*
 Rajak, *Josephus*
 Richardson, *Herod: King of the Jews, Friend of the Romans*
 Safrai, *Literature of the Sages, first part: Oral Tora, Halakha, Mishna, Tosefta, Talmud, External Tractates*
 Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief*
 Stone, *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period*
 Schiffman, *From Text to Tradition: A History of Second Temple and Rabbinic Judaism*
 Schiffman, *Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls*
 Schürer, *History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*
 Schwartz, *Imperialism in Jewish Society*
 Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews*
 VanderKam, *Introduction to Early Judaism*
 VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today*
 Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls*
 Whiston, *Josephus*
 Yadin, *Masada*
 Yadin, *Bar Kokhba: The Rediscovery of the Legendary Hero of the Second Jewish Revolt*

Relevant Journals and Periodicals (there are many more than what is listed here, but these are among the more common)

American Journal of Archaeology
Aufstieg und Niedergang des römischen Welt
Biblical Archaeologist / Near Eastern Archaeology
Biblical Archaeology Review
Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research
Israel Exploration Journal
Jewish Quarterly Review
Journal of Biblical Literature
Journal of Near Eastern Studies
Journal of Jewish Studies
Palestine Exploration Quarterly

Online Resources

Babylonian Talmud (<http://www.come-and-hear.com/tcontents.html>)
Early Jewish Writings (<http://www.earlyjewishwritings.com/>)
PACE (<http://pace.cns.yorku.ca/York/york/index.htm>)
Perseus Digital Library (<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/>)
Scrolls Exhibition (<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/scrolls/>)
Bible and Interpretation (<http://www.bibleinterp.com/>)

Virtual World Project (<http://moses.creighton.edu/vr/com/toc.html>)

Electronic Tools and Ancient Near Eastern Archives (<http://www.etana.org/>)

Class Schedule and Reading Assignments

Jan. 16 – *Introduction*

- (1) **Introduction to Course**
- (2) **The Ancient Near East**
- (3) **The Israelites in the First Temple Period: 1200-586 B.C.E.**

Readings: Schiffman pp. 1-27

Assignments: Map Quiz *next week*.

Jan. 23 – *Judaism (re-)Born (586 – 332 B.C.E.)*

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- (1) **Map Quiz**
 - (2) **Exile: The Babylonian Period**
 - (3) **Return: The Persian Period**
 - (4) **Prophets and Prophecy**

Readings: Schiffman pp. 27-45; VanderKam, 1-11.

Jan. 30 – *The Persian Period in Palestine and Beyond (539 – 332 B.C.E.)*

- (1) **Exclusion in Palestine: The Samaritan Schism**
- (2) **Exclusion in the Diaspora: Elephantine and *Esther***

Readings: Schiffman pp. 45-59; VanderKam 147-50

Feb. 6 – *Hellenes, Hellenism, and the Changing of the Guard (4th c. B.C.E.)*

- (1) **Developing Jewish Identity: *Tobit***
- (2) **Developing Greek Identity: Alexander the Great**
- (3) **The Works of Flavius Josephus as an Historical Source**

Readings: Schiffman pp. 60-79; VanderKam pp. 53-58, 69-71.

Feb. 13 – *Beware of Greeks Bearing Empires (332 – 167 B.C.E.)*

- (1) **The Ptolemies and the Priesthood**
- (2) **Wisdom and Wise Guys**
- (3) **Alexandria and the Septuagint**
- (4) **The Seleucids and the Maccabees**

Readings: Schiffman pp. 80-97; VanderKam pp. 11-24.

Feb. 20 – *King-Priests, Hellenism, and Partisanship (167 – 63 B.C.E.)*

- (1) **The Hasmonean Kingdom**
- (2) **Sectarian Judaism I: Pharisees and Sadducees**

Readings: Schiffman pp. 98-112; VanderKam pp. 24-32, 176-191.

Feb. 27 – *The Dead Sea Scrolls (2nd c. B.C.E. – 1st c. C.E.)*

- (1) **Sectarian Judaism II: Essenes**
- (2) **The Scrolls and the Qumran Sect**
- (3) **Apocalypticism**

Readings: Schiffman pp. 112-38; VanderKam pp. 150-66

Mar. 5 – Pax Romana and Pax Iudaea (63 B.C.E. – 4 B.C.E.)

(1) **The Roman Factor and the Rise of Herod**

(2) **Herod the Great: Public and Private**

Readings: Schiffman pp. 139-46; VanderKam pp. 32-39

Assignments: Midterm Exam next week!

Sources for term paper due next week!

Answers to practice essay questions must be in my mailbox by no later than 4:30 PM on Friday, Mar. 7.

Mar. 12 – *Midterm Exam*

*** (1) **MIDTERM** will cover everything up *through* Mar. 5.

Assignments: In addition to studying, don't forget your 5 sources for your term paper (see below, under "Response Paper Assignments" and the "Term Paper Assignment")

Mar. 19 – *No Class: Spring Break!*

Mar. 26 – *Discontent and Religion in the Herodian Period (1st c. B.C.E. – 1st c. C.E.)*

(1) **Herod's Successors**

(2) **The Priesthood, the Temple, and Pilgrimage Festivals**

Readings: Schiffman pp. 146-49; VanderKam pp. 39-41, 194-211; Josephus, *Antiquities* 15.11.1-7 (380-425) on D2L.

Apr. 2 – *Early Jesus-followers and Other Jewish Movements (1st c. C.E.)*

(1) **Galilee in the 1st c. and the Synagogue**

(2) **Yeshu'a to Christ**

(3) **Saul to Paul**

(4) **Build-up to Revolt**

Readings: Schiffman pp. 149-56; Murphy, "Jesus the Jew" and "Jewish Foundations of New Testament Views of Christ," from *Early Judaism* (D2L), Acts 9.1-31; 13.1-15.35.

Apr. 9 – *The Great Jewish Revolt (66 – 74 C.E.)*

(1) **The Causes of the Revolt**

(2) **The Key Figures of the Revolt**

(3) **The End of the Revolt**

(4) **Josephus: Priest, General, Nationalist, Traitor, Historian?**

Readings: Schiffman pp. 157-61; VanderKam pp. 41-48; 166-73; Josephus *War* 3.8.1-9 (340-408) on D2L.

Apr. 16 – *Marginal and Muted Voices (2nd c. B.C.E. – 1st c. C.E.)*

(1) **Philo of Alexandria**

(2) **Death and Burial in the Second Temple Period**

Readings: Schiffman pp. 94-96; VanderKam pp. 138-42; Philo, *Allegories on the Sacred Laws*, book 1, *Embassy to Gaius* 184-90 on D2L.

** Assignments: Optional – Last day to turn in rough drafts for term paper!

Apr. 23 – *Life after the Great Revolt* (1st – 2nd c. C.E.)

(1) **Consequences of the Great Revolt**

(2) **The Bar Kokhba Revolt and Its Aftermath**

Readings: Schiffman pp. 161-76; VanderKam pp. 48-49; Yadin, “Behind the legend,” from *Bar Kokhba* (D2L)

Apr. 30 – *From Formative to Normative* (2nd c. C.E. – 6th c. C.E.)

(1) **The Rabbinic Point-of-View**

(2) **Early Jewish Mysticism**

(3) **Jewish Art during and after the Second Temple Period**

Readings: Schiffman pp. 177-219; selection from *Sepher ha-Razim*.

Assignments: Last day to turn in practice essay questions is Friday at 4:30 PM.

May 7 – *Jews and the Other*

(1) **Jewish Identity in the Second Temple Period and Beyond**

(2) **Review for Final**

*** Assignments: TERM PAPER DUE!!

Response Paper Assignments

Instructions:

Response papers are to be *typed*, in 12-point font, standard margin. They should be no less than one page and no more than two. (Points will be taken off for both.) No email attachments will be accepted—paper only.

The purpose of the response paper is to compel you to consider the issues raised by the assigned readings and prepare you for the class discussions. Therefore the papers you turn in do not need to be finished and polished. Having said that, I expect the papers will be reasonably well-written and thoughtful. (You should re-read and briefly edit your work.) The response papers will be graded with “S” (= Satisfactory) if you have completed the assignment adequately, or “U” (= Unsatisfactory) if you have not. Any assignment turned in late will automatically be marked “U” (barring an acceptable excuse) Assignments not turned in at all will receive a zero (significantly worse than a “U”).

If you cannot come to class, you need to get your paper in beforehand, or give it to someone else to turn in for you. I will make every effort to return your response papers the following week. Please keep a copy on your computer, just in case.

Jan. 23 *Prophesizing Prophets*

The phenomenon of prophecy has been identified in varying forms among countless cultures and peoples. Before you begin this week’s reading, jot down some notes about what you think a prophet is—what role does a prophet play in society? What sorts of people, situations, or events come to your mind when you think of prophets? (Include your thoughts in your response paper.)

Now read through the following: 1 Samuel 8; 2 Samuel 7; Isaiah 2-4; Jeremiah 21; Ezekiel 1-2; and Haggai 1-2. For each, identify the prophet. What is his role? What is he doing? How would you describe the function of the prophet in each case? Does this agree or disagree with what you thought a prophet was?

Jan. 30 *Ezra versus Jonah*

After you’ve done the readings in Schiffman and VanderKam for this week, I’d like you to read the book of Ezra and the book of Jonah. Both were written in the post-exilic period, that is, the period after the Babylonian Exile. Ezra is an historical work that deals with the new leader’s commission by the king of Persia, and his actions when he returned to Judah. Jonah is a prophetic book of dubious historicity. It does, however, give us some insight into the theological and social views of the period.

While reading Ezra, I'd like you to consider the following questions.:

- (a) What is the major concern of the book? What are the people trying to get done?
- (b) What did Cyrus decree? Why didn't it happen?
- (c) What did Darius decree in ch. 6?
- (d) Why does the book list all the families and priests in chapters 2, 8, and 10? Why is Ezra's full lineage listed in 7.1-5?
- (e) Who do you think are the "adversaries" in 4.1?
- (f) Why is Ezra so upset in chapter 9?
- (g) What did Shecaniah and the people do in ch. 10, and why?
- (h) How does the Persian view toward other's religions compare to the Babylonian view? Are the policies of Ezra and the other Judeans consistent with the Persian policy?

While reading Jonah, I'd like you to consider the following questions:

- (a) Why does God have Jonah go to Ninevah?
- (b) Why does Jonah say he didn't want to go, in ch. 4?
- (c) What is the message of the book regarding God's view toward foreign nations?

Now that you've read both and considered the above questions, please write a response paper in which you discuss the messages of the two books. Explain what the message and concerns of each book are. How do they compare? Consider the notion that the book of Ezra is historical (i.e. based on actual events), while the book of Jonah is not historical though it represents a particular theological view.

Feb. 6 ***The Book of Tobit***

The *Book of Tobit* is a folkloric story about a family living in the Diaspora. It didn't make it into the Jewish canon of the Hebrew Bible, however it is included in the Apocrypha/Deuterocanonical texts, and is therefore revered as a sacred text by the Catholic and Eastern churches today.

For your response paper, please address the following questions:

- (a) How would you describe the genre of the book of Tobit (e.g. history, biography, fairy tale, historical fiction, etc.), and why?
- (b) What main idea(s) do you think the author is trying to convey? What are the book's themes?
- (c) Who do you think are the hero and the villain in the book of Tobit, and why?
- (d) Who do you think is the intended audience for the book of Tobit?

Feb. 13 ***What Kind of War?***

The military battles that took place between Jews and Seleucid Greeks between 167 and 164 are sometimes referred to as the Maccabean Revolt. Who was revolting against whom? In this week's assignment, I'd like you to consider how causes and results of war are often complicated and rarely neat.

First, read 1 Maccabees 1-4 and 2 Maccabees 3-7 . (Please note that "2 Macc." is *not* a sequel to "1 Macc."—the titles are later inventions.). Think about the following questions as you read: Who are Matthias, Judas, Onias, Simon, Jason, Heliodorus, and Antiochus Epiphanes? What were the causes for revolt? What did Matthias and his sons want (or not want)? Who were they fighting? What does "Hellenization" mean in 2 Macc. 4.13? Whose side were Jason and Menelaus on?

Now consider the works themselves. Who do you think wrote the books? Greeks? Jews? Who was the intended reader? What sort of emotions do you think the author meant to instill in the reader? Think of examples to support your answer.

For your response paper, I want you to begin by thinking about wars in American history (past and present). Give a brief example or two of how these wars are viewed today, and how they might have been viewed then. Then, using examples from the reading, write about what may have been complicated in the Maccabean Revolt.

Feb. 20 ***Josephus on the Sects***

Josephus describes several different sects within Judaism of his day. I'd like you start by reading Josephus' descriptions of the sects, found in *War* 2..8.2-14 (119-66) and *Antiquities* 18.1.2-6 (11-25). Write an essay in which you address the following questions:

- (a) How many and what are the major sects according to Josephus?
- (b) Which sect does Josephus spend the most time describing? Why do you think that might be? (Consider his audience.)
- (c) What are the major differences between the sects?
- (d) If you were going to put these three sects on a spectrum of strict to lenient, where would you put each? Why?
- (e) If you were going to be in one of these sects, which would you be in, and why?

Feb. 27 ***Worldviews of Jewish Sectarianism***

What do you think of when you hear the word "Apocalyptic"? What sorts of images come to mind when you hear the phrase "End of Days"? With what sorts of people and what types of religion do you associate these issues?

For this week's assignment, I'd like you to begin by reading some selections from *1 Enoch*. These are found on the D2L website. *1 Enoch* has many different sections which were added to and revised over several centuries.

The earliest parts, probably from the beginning of the 2nd c. B.C.E., have been found among the Dead Sea Scrolls. The book is supposedly narrated by Enoch, a descendent of Adam mentioned in Genesis. Enoch describes a series of accounts that were revealed to him.

I'd like you to read *1 Enoch* 6-12—the story of the Fallen Angels—and 59-63. As you read, think about the following questions, then write an essay addressing them:

- (a) What is the genre for this work? Who do you think is the audience?
- (b) What first strikes you as unusual about this work, considering what you know about Second Temple Judaism already? What is similar to or different from other types of Judaism from this period?
- (c) What are the author's major religious concerns, that is, what is he writing about? What sorts of beliefs are implied by this work?
- (d) To whom would this sort of literature and the beliefs it reflects appeal? What would someone find appealing about *1 Enoch*?
- (e) Where else have you heard about these sorts of mythological ideas (not necessarily Jewish)?

Mar. 5 ***Was Herod Great?***

It is difficult for us today to understand and know who Herod the Great really was. To illustrate the complexity of this important dynast in Jewish history, I'd like you to read first the introduction from Peter Richardson's book *Herod: King of the Jews and Friend of the Romans*, on D2L. Then I'd like you to read two passages from Josephus: "The Impious Acts of Herod" (*Antiq.* 15.8.1-2 [267-79]), and "The Eagle Incident" (*Antiq.* 17.6.2-3 [149-163]). For this week's essay, consider the following questions:

- (a) In both passages, what is Herod's offense? Who is offended?
- (b) Why is this an offense, do you think?
- (c) In the first passage, whose voice do you think we are hearing, that of Josephus or Nicolaus of Damascus? The second passage? How can you tell? How do these two depict Herod differently?
- (d) After reading Richardson's introduction on Herod, what sort of depiction of Herod himself do you think is being given in these two passages?

Mar. 12 ***Term Paper!***

Please see "Term Paper Assignment" for instructions for the assignment due today.