

INTRODUCTION TO THE WORLD OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Adult Education



Dating and Canonization of the New Testament

<u>By Date</u>	<i>Authorship</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Place of Origin</i>
1 Thessalonians	Paul	50-51	Corinth
2 Thessalonians	Paul	50-51	Corinth
James	James, the brother of Jesus	50-60?	Unknown
1 Corinthians	Paul	54-55	Ephesus
2 Corinthians	Paul	55	Macedonia
Galatians	Paul	55	Ephesus?
Romans	Apostle Paul	55-56	Corinth
Colossians	Paul	60-62	Rome
Ephesians	Paul	60-62	Rome
Philemon	Paul	60-62	Rome
Philippians	Paul	60-62	Rome
1 Timothy	Paul	62-64	Macedonia
Titus	Paul	62-64	Macedonia
Hebrews	Anonymous	62-66	Asia Minor?
1 Peter	Apostle Peter	63-64	Rome
2 Timothy	Paul	64-68	Rome
Mark	John Mark	67-72/70-75	Rome
2 Peter	[Apostle Peter]	68/80-90?	Unknown
Jude	Jude, the brother of Jesus	70-90?	Unknown
Matthew	Apostle Matthew	75-85	Antioch
Acts	Luke	75-90	Greece?
Luke	Luke	75-90/80-95	Greece?
1 John	Apostle John	90-100	Asia Minor
2 John	Apostle John	90-100	Asia Minor
3 John	Apostle John	90-100	Asia Minor
John	Apostle John	90-100	Asia Minor
Revelation	Apostle John	96/98	Asia Minor

Historic Cannon

Athanasius (b. 296)	Origen (b. 185)	Irenaeus (b. 130)	Marcion* (b. 85)
Matthew	Matthew	Matthew	
Mark	Mark	Mark	
Luke	Luke	Luke	Luke
John	John	John	
Acts	Acts	Acts	
Romans	Romans	Romans	Romans
1 Corinthians	1 Corinthians	1 Corinthians	1 Corinthians
2 Corinthians	2 Corinthians	2 Corinthians	2 Corinthians
Galatians	Galatians	Galatians	Galatians
Ephesians	Ephesians	Ephesians	Ephesians
Philippians	Philippians	Philippians	Philippians
Colossians	Colossians	Colossians	Colossians
1 Thessalonians	1 Thessalonians	1 Thessalonians	1 Thessalonians
2 Thessalonians	2 Thessalonians	2 Thessalonians	2 Thessalonians
1 Timothy	1 Timothy	1 Timothy	
2 Timothy	2 Timothy	2 Timothy	
Titus	Titus	Titus	
Philemon	Philemon	Philemon	Philemon
Hebrews	Hebrews	<i>Hebrews</i>	
James	<i>James</i>	<i>James</i>	
1 Peter	1 Peter	1 Peter	
2 Peter	<i>2 Peter</i>	<i>2 Peter</i>	
1 John	1 John	1 John	
2 John	<i>2 John</i>	<i>2 John</i>	
3 John	<i>3 John</i>	<i>3 John</i>	
Jude	<i>Jude</i>	<i>Jude</i>	
Revelation**	Revelation	Revelation	

Italic type indicates that the writer either does not mention the book or expressed some doubt about the status of the book.

*Marcion's views were peculiar to his sect. He was aware of the fact that many of the other books were read as scripture in most churches.

**The Revelation of John was first received and then rejected by many churches in Asia Minor.

During the third century, James, Jude, Second and Third John, Second Peter, and Hebrews were frankly disputed in different sectors of the church, so that Origen and Eusebius classified them among the *antilogomena* (or disputed books, accepted by some churches but challenged by others).



Disputations by the Church Fathers

Y=yes **N**=disputed **M**=maybe Holy **X**=expressly rejected **S**=no mention, rejection

1. Greek & Latin	Date	Heb.	Jas.	Jn.	Pet.	Jude	Rev.
Muratorian Fragment	170	S	S	M	S	Y	Y
Origen	225	Y	N	N	N	N	Y
Eusebius of Caesarea	324	Y	N	N	N	N	N
Cyril of Jerusalem	348	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	S
Cheltenham list	360	S	S	Y	Y	S	Y
Council of Laodicea	363	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	S
Athanasius	367	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Gregory of Nazianzus	380	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	S
Amphilocius of Iconium	380	Y	N	N	N	N	N
Rufinus	380	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Epiphanius	385	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Jerome	390	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Augustine	397	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
3rd Council of Carthage	397	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Codex Claromontanus	400	M	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Letter of Innocent I	405	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Decree of Gelasius	550	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Isadore of Seville	625	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
John of Damascus	730	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
2. Syrian	Date	Heb.	Jas.	Jn.	Pet.	Jude	Rev.
Apostolic Canons	380	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	S
Peshitta Version	400	Y	Y	S	S	S	S
Report of Junilius	550	Y	N	N	N	N	N

KEY TO BOOKS

Heb. - Epistle to the Hebrews

Jas. - Epistle of James

Jn. - Second and Third Epistle of John

Pet. - Second Epistle of Peter

Jude - Epistle of Jude

Rev. - Revelation of John



New Testament & Second Temple Period Sources

Three Types of Sources:

1. Primary – eye witness
2. Secondary – writing what is heard (Luke, Hebrews)
3. Ancient – written close to the time of the events
(Primary or Secondary – Josephus is an ancient source and is both primary and secondary)

Reliability of Sources:

1. Who wrote it?
2. Why did he write what he did?
3. To whom was it written?
4. What were the author's sources?
5. Cross-references
6. Author's association with the events – how close to the actual time of events?
7. How are the documents transmitted? (Josephus, Apocrypha, etc was preserved by the Church and may have been redacted or interpolated).

Second Temple Period sources:

1. Archeology
 - A. Numismatics – study of coinage, reflect titles and claims of rulers, ideas being promoted and religious and political symbolism. They also help determine chronology.
 - B. Inscriptions – most are either epitaphs or donations. The majority are in Greek, but some are in Latin, Hebrew, or Aramaic.
 - C. Necropolises – excavations of Jewish burial sites. The necropolis of Hellenistic-Roman Jericho provides many tombs from the period before 70 CE. Significant finds include wooden coffins and evidence of primary and secondary burials in the same context.
 - D. Herodian Palestine – many of the building activities of Herod the great are manifest in many urban structures at Caesarea, Samaria, Jericho, and Jerusalem.
 - E. Papyri – Egypt is the major source of papyri clarifying in particular the legal status of Jews in the Hellenistic cities and valuable data on the occupations and economic activities of Jews.
 - F. Synagogues – Most date from the post-NT era. Synagogues of possibly pre-70 date have been found at Masada, Herodion, Magdala, and Gamala. Among the most impressive excavated in Palestine are those at Capernaum, Chorazin, Hammath, Tiberias, Bar'am, Beth Alpha (Zodiac), and Ma'aon. Of those outside Palestine are Ostia, Stobi, Delos, Sardis, and Dura Europus. Common features shared are:
 - i. Commonly oriented toward Jerusalem (to the east)
 - ii. Diaspora synagogues built frequently near a source of water
 - iii. Essential part of the furniture was an ark (chest) for keeping the biblical scrolls (originally a portable chest)



- iv. Torah scrolls placed in an ark that was framed in terms of temple architecture.
- v. Most synagogues had a platform where there would have been a reading stand
- vi. Benches lining the walls
- vii. A chief seat (Moses' seat – Mt. 23:2) for the person presiding
- viii. Many had guest rooms adjoining the assembly room
- ix. Pictorial evidence indicates the use of a menorah (lampstand)

G. Jewish Symbols and Art – art found in many of the synagogues. Not all Jews applied the prohibitions in the Decalogue (Ex. 20:4; De. 5:8) as strictly or extensively as rabbinic interpretation attempted. Architectural elements like column capitals found among mosaic floors with scenes from the Bible and nature from the 5th and 6th centuries. Wall paintings also found such as what was found at Dura Europus on the Euphrates. The menorah is found sculptured on the column capitals in synagogues and on sarcophagi, on mosaic pavements of synagogues, painted on walls of catacombs, on gold glasses, on lamps, and on bone and ivory carvings. Other symbols are the lion (of Judah), lulab (palm branch) Torah shrine containing scrolls of the Scriptures and ethrog (a citron) representing the Feast of Tabernacles, the incense shovel for the Day of Atonement and the shofar for New Year's Day.

H. Pagan references to Jews – important for how Jews and Judaism were perceived and thus are significant for various purposes. Some Gentile writers were favorable to Judaism and found it attractive, looking on the Jews as philosophers and as an ancient source of wisdom with pure concepts of the divine and how it is to be worshiped. Other men had very negative impressions of the Jews because of the struggles over citizen rights and the special privileges of the Jews in the empire. The pagan sources do permit some conclusions about the impact of Jews in the Greco-Roman world and what features of the Jewish religion and way of life were prominent to outsiders: Sabbath, circumcision, abstention from pork, and the worship of the one God. Anti-Semitism surfaced mainly where Jews appeared most alien—in race and particularly in customs—and would not conform to pagan society. Hostility from pagan traditionalists increased in proportion to the numbers of Gentiles attracted to Judaism.

2. Documents/Writings – NT, Apocrypha, Josephus, etc.

3. Epigraphy – inscriptions, etchings, etc.

4. Traditions

5. Jewish sources – Hebrew and Aramaic

A. The Dead Sea Scrolls

B. Rabbinic Writings –

i. *Mishnah* –

a. From “repeat”

b. Earliest writings, halakha, legal material

c. Arranged by tractates (subject)



- d. Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi codified around 220 (Rav is Babylonian, Rabbi is Palestinian)
 - e. Compiled collection of pre-destruction writings
 - f. Rabbi Akiva started collecting (105-135)
 - ii. *Tosefta* –
 - a. Means “enlargement” – codified in 3rd century
 - b. Boraita means external – around in school but not in the Mishnah
 - c. Saying from the Tannaitic period
 - d. Not as authoritative as the Mishnah
 - iii. *Talmud*
 - a. Babylonian and Jerusalem
 - b. Jerusalem compiled first – smaller, unorganized, finished in late 300’s
 - c. Babylonian – finished in Sura in the early 500’s
 - Commentary on Mishnah
 - Written by the community
 - Midrash – commentary on scripture, hagadda, not literal or historical
 - d. History is alluded to – it does not exist to detail scripture
 - e. Attribution exists for authority
 - iv. *Midrash* – commentary, arguments, hagaddot, anecdotes, traditions, non-legal, legends
 - a. Transmitted oral, with or without connection to scripture
- C. Jewish Historians
- i. Josephus –
 - a. Born in Jerusalem to a Hasmonean family, but not High Priest family.
 - b. Writing to Romans about Jews to make the Jews look good, but not to offend the Romans
 - c. Sent to Rome at 26 as part of a delegation
 - d. Galilean commander of Jewish forces against Rome (66AD)
 - e. Brought before Vaspasian (Roman general) and Josephus prophesied that he would be Emperor. When it came true he was let out of prison.
 - f. Mostly Secondary source – relies on Nicholas of Damascus, the lawyer of Antipator and Herod, tutor to Cleopatra’s children
 - g. Preserved also in Syriac with some differences
 - h. Jewish Wars was first work, written in classical Greek (75-79)
 - Either had a scribe or was very well educated
 - Accounts of the Jewish War against the Romans until after the Destruction
 - Survey of Jewish History from Antiochus Epiphanies
 - i. Antiquities of the Jews (93-94)



- 20 books
 - Continuous History of the Jewish history from
 - Less Roman sentiments, glorifies Jewish people
 - j. Against Apion
 - polemic written to Greeks on behalf of the Jews
 - k. Hero's Biography
 - His own biography
 - ii. Philo
 - a. From Alexandria
 - b. Lived 20BCE-45CE
 - c. Comes from a very prominent Alexandrian family (his brother was the community treasurer)
 - d. Came to Judea at one point
 - e. Most writings focus on Hellenistic Jewry in Alexandria
 - f. Both historical writings give account of Jewish persecution
 - In Flaccum
 - Legatio as Gaium
6. Greco-Roman sources
- A. Nicolas of Damascus (64BCE-1st century CE)
 - i. Historian, rhetorician, author
 - ii. Tutor of Cleopatra and Marc Antony's children
 - iii. Part of Herod's advisory
 - iv. Wrote Universal History
 - a. 144 books originally, only excerpts have survived
 - B. Strabo (64BCE-20's CE)
 - i. Born in Pontus (Asia Minor) to a distinguished family
 - ii. Traveled extensively but never to Palestine
 - iii. Historian and geographer
 - iv. Historical work was 43 books
 - a. Begins where Polibius stopped
 - b. History of Hasmonean dynasty and Herod's rise
 - v. Geography book is preserved entirely
 - a. Historical sketch of the emergence of Jewish state and religion
 - b. Geography and description of Palestine
 - C. Ptolemy (not a king) end of 1st century BCE
 - i. Grammaticus – history of Herod the Great, attributed to "Ptolemy"
 - D. Pliny the Elder, uncle of Pliny the Younger (1st century-d.79CE at the eruption of Vesuvius)
 - i. Born in Asia Minor
 - ii. Military man in western Roman empire (wealthy)
 - iii. Attached to Flavian dynasty
 - iv. Wrote many books, only one survived
 - a. Natural History – encyclopedia about Palestine, geography, plants, trade, Essenes, etc.



- Associates Essenes with the NW corner of the Dead Sea

E. Pliny the Younger (mid 1st c – to early 2nd c)

- Literary figure – wrote many letters
- 10 books of correspondence
 - 10th book has correspondence with Emperor Tragen
- Appointed Legate over Bithynian
- Did not like to make decision
- Three areas of interest
 - Increase of Christianity in Bithynian and Pontus (Asia Minor)
 - Corroborates with other writings about Christian worship and evidence of female deacons
 - Refusal of Christians to have images of pagan deities and pay divine honors to the Emperor

F. Tacitus (55-120CE)

- Two works survived
 - Histories – Roman civil war after Nero's death and Flavian Dynasty, written during Flavian's dynasty.
 - First four books and part of fifth preserved
 - Atonius Julianus and Pliny the Elder were sources
 - Roman Annals
 - Books 115 to 117 survive
 - Julian to Claudius
 - Fire of Rome and Nero's blame of Christians
 - Written 98-117

G. Suetonius

- Biographies of the first 12 Roman Emperors
- Vaspasian and Titus are of interest here
- Details of Wars in Galilee in and Judea
- Acts 18:2 – banishing of Jews from Rome in 49, Suetonius writes the same thing in biography of Claudius
- Says Chrestus is the instigator of the riots (Chrestus was a common slave name and a popular misspelling of Christos). Probably Christianity being introduced in the Jewish community in Rome.
- 54CE death of Claudius and expulsion edict stopped

H. Dio Cassius (2nd – 3rd centuries)

- Born in Bithynia
- Prominent figure in Roman administration
- Extensive work in Roman history
 - Jewish revolt under Tragian and Hadrian

7. Early Christian

A. New Testament

- Gospels contain biographical detail, life and death in human figures – not written to convey historical events. Written to strengthen the community.



- B. Eusebius – secondary source (later)
- C. Tertullian (160-240) (during the breakaway from Judaism)
 - i. Did not like women or Jews
 - ii. Defended Christianity against charges of atheism and black magic
 - iii. First Latin writer
 - iv. Opposed the Church in Rome
- D. Justin Martyr (100-165)
 - i. Church philosopher
 - ii. Born in Samaria to pagan parents
 - iii. Wrote Defense of Christianity (150) addressed to Emperor Pius
 - iv. Public life and death of Jesus could be attested in Rome Annals called “The Acts of Pilate”
- E. Papyri
 - i. Private letters, legal proceedings, tax receipts, etc
- F. Inscriptions
 - i. Vesuvius preserved a lot - Interior design swapped between Pompeii and Jerusalem

Major Players in the New Testament

1. Major Jewish Players
 - a. Sanhedrin
 - b. Pharisees
 - c. Sadducees
 - d. Priests
 - e. Levites
 - f. Scribes/Sages
2. Romans
 - a. Politicians
 - b. Military
 - c. Jewish workers (tax collectors, etc)
3. Minorities & Outsiders
 - a. Samaritans
 - b. Essenes



Diaspora, Hellenism and Roman Rule: *The Roman Empire and Jewish Survival*

The New Testament World - Week 2
Adult Education



Diaspora Life and Roman Rule

Babylon

From as far back as Sargon in the 700's BCE, some Jews were there. Then of course after 586 BCE many were taken into captivity.

Time of Yeshua

All throughout the Roman Empire the cities had Jews
Influenced by Stoic and Platonic philosophy
Antioch and Cyrene were centers

Alexandria, Egypt

Was a city that had 5 sections and the Jews had 2. This was an important place for literature. The Jews were governed by the *politeuma* (resident aliens with their own self-governing institutions). There was a Senate called *Gerusia* (council of elders). Provided by an *ethnarch*, who was a chief judicial. From the 2nd century BCE the Alexandrian Jews were the mediators who brought Hellenism to the Greek world. They more than anyone else were Hellenistic Jews.

Some of the Alexandrian Jews did have citizenship and did participate in the games. Most of the literature we have is from Alexandrian Jews. The letter of Erasmus tells the story of the Septuagint - 70 Jewish scholars were brought in and put in different rooms and translated the Tanach. This is a miracle. However this is not true. Written about 2nd century BCE.

Philo – (20–50 BCE) a wealthy Jew living in Alexandria. He wrote allegorically (not to be rationalized). He was a mystic, a Platonic philosopher, a citizen of the Alexandrian polis, Greek education, a Greek thinker all the way through. His philosophy is true Jewish philosophy. He wrote about the logos. He brought the Torah to Alexandria Jews in a way they could understand. He thought the Torah is the revealed will of God to Jews and Gentiles.

There were smaller towns of Egypt and Cyrene. In North Africa there were over 1 million Jews. There were more in Babylon. In Teuchira, North Africa there are Jewish cemeteries from the 2nd and 1st century BCE. Cross population, but mostly poor. 47% of the funerary inscriptions were from young people who died before the age of 20. They had to marry before the age of 16 for the community to survive.

Asia Minor

In Miletas Jews were involved with Greek games.
In Sardis there was a huge complex that contained bath, gymnasium and synagogues.
Antioch was one of the most Roman cities in Asia Minor.

Rome

Simon was the first contact with Rome. He went there during the Hasmonean time to get Rome to be friends. 2nd century BCE

Prisoners were brought in 63 CE from Jerusalem.

Jews in Rome were tolerated but not liked. One of the reasons was because they were allies and friends with the Roman government (they had a lot of favor); this caused a lot of jealousy. Magic and necromancy had a strong influence on the Jews.

Under Julius Augustus the Jews were allowed to practice their religion (*religio iacita*)

3 things they were given:

They could organize themselves in their own institutions, to establish an autonomous system of internal administration of justice



Anything they was against Jewish precepts they did not have to do (no idolatry)
They did not have to worship the emperor
This provoked a lot of jealousy. Greeks did not have this kind of freedom.

Three things mark a Jew in the Diaspora:

1. Circumcision
2. Shabbat – holidays
3. Kashrut

What connected the Diaspora Jews to the land:

Temple Worship

- Pilgrimage festivals; Passover, Shavuot; Succot
(By the 2nd Temple period they were not required to come 3 times a year, only once)
- ½ shekel temple tax was paid according to Passover – Israel; Shavuot – countries touching Israel; Succot – countries furthest away
- Sacrifices

Mo'edim

The Jewish calendar revolves around the new moon. Two people sighted the New Moon. After the sacrifices were offered on Mt. Scopus a bonfire was lit and then it would go to the next mountain and etc. It would reach Babylon within 2 hours. It is not known how they did to Egypt.

The reason the Diaspora celebrated 2 days was because they wanted to be sure they had the day right because the signal may come late.

The Greeks in the 6th century BCE – 7 times in a 19 year period you have an extra month consisting of 30 days. Had to balance the lunar year with the solar year so the holidays would fall in the same season. Moon gives us months, Sun gives year.

Development of the calendar – year then moon. Moon into weeks, and days. Not into the time of Yeshua that we get hours. Day was separated into 24 units, 12 units of light and 12 units of night. Example (1st, 2nd, 3rd watch).

Barley is the only thing that ripened during First Fruit. So when we look at the Passover and unleavened bread, first fruit is tied in and it must happen in spring.

Sanhedrin

This connected the Diaspora Jews to the land. You could go to the Sanhedrin for a ruling. If you submitted a decision to the Sanhedrin you had to accept it. If you didn't you could be killed. The Sanhedrin only had authority on religious matters not civil.

Torah reading was a minor discrepancy. In the Diaspora the Torah (54 portions) was read every year. In the land the Torah was read every 3 years (portions were smaller).

Professions

Jews of the Diaspora did everything occupation except banking. Biggest profession was diamond cutting.

Hellenism

A period of time between Alexander the Great to Pompey (30 BCE) (archaeological time period)

A period of time between Alexander the Great to Cleopatra VII (60 BCE) (technically speaking)

Alexander left soldiers behind to intermarry with the locals to help bring this about (merging the culture).

The Greek Culture that Alexander wanted to bring includes:

- Language
- Philosophy



- Literature
- Theater
- Athletics
- Gymnasium/Ephebeion (boys under 18-20)
- Polis
- Disciples
- Museum

Hellenistic influenced the church. The gospels were pinned by Semitic thinkers but were transmitted in Greek.

Roman Rule and the Republic

- Rome founded in 8th century BCE. It was organized into a Republic form of government by the 5th century. By the end of Augustus' rule there was an emperor. Before that it was a republic ruled by the Senate. Although you had an emperor after, he still submitted to the Senate. 200 years of war with Carthage (Punic Wars) ended in 146 BCE.
 - Pompey conquered the Mediterranean including Israel and Egypt. After Julius Caesar was assassinated than Octavian became emperor he took on the name of Augustus.
 - Rome passed through a period of peace called *Pax Romana*. This facilitated the spread of Christianity because of travel. Augustus set up a provincial type of government. This was to keep the pro-counsels subjugated to the emperors.
 - Judea broke the peace with Rome in 70 and 135 CE through rebellion.
 1. Under Senate you had the proconsul
 2. Under the Emperor you had procurators, propaetors
- Lyconians in the province of Lysia and Derbe and province of Galatia.

After the temple in Jerusalem was defiled, the ideology changed and it became more political than religious. Fighting for independence.

Rome – The Roman Genius

- Polybius (2nd century BCE Greek historian) devoted a book to the source of Roman strength. Reason for Rome's achievement was internal. Her constitutional system was a perfect balance of the monarchic (consul), oligarchic (senate), and democratic (assemblies) elements. Held together by the fear of the gods expressed in due performance of the traditional rites.
- Roman power due to Roman piety. In time this would crumble.
- Rome was originally a city-state (different from the Greek city)
- Citizenship in Rome was infinitely expandable.
- Freed slaves became citizens (unlike in Greece).
- Rome more readily extended citizenship to those in other cities.
- It had a great ability to absorb alien populations—human and divine.
- Romans could take borrowed things and make them their own. They were a borrower—culturally and religiously.
- Through its ceremony of evocation, Rome called upon the gods of an enemy city to change sides, promising that the Romans would give more dutiful service to the deities than the people.
- Rome was the melting pot of the ancient world.
- Rome's political genius exceeded its deficiencies in imagination, a quality in which the Greeks excelled. Legal formulation or definition was Rome's great strength.
- The magistrates had imperium, or complete power.



- For Rome, the measure of all things was law whereas for the east the measure of all things was the king, and for the Jews the measure of all things was God.
- The growth of Rome was paramount.
- Their ideal was great statesmanship, not the search for the good, the true, and the beautiful, as in Greece.
- The real greatest of Roman policy lay in the government's interest in people. Moral authority of a high standard was preserved for a long time in the senate, until demoralization came in the first century.
- A permanent court had to be created in Rome in 149 BCE to deal with charges by provincials against Roman officials for extortion. Some Governors got rich. It was said that a governor must make 3 fortunes while in office: one to pay the debts incurred in obtaining the office, one to buy acquittal from the charges that would be brought for his administration and one to finance retirement.

Rome and the West

- Latin language and culture were planted in Spain, Gaul, Britain, the Rhineland, and North Africa (though not by deliberate policy).
- Carthage (a Sea power) was Rome's chief rival in the western Mediterranean and they used mercenaries on land. Rome's strength was in its citizen soldiers. Rome fought 3 major wars with Carthage, known as the Punic Wars ("Punic" from the Phoenician settlers of Carthage). As a result of the 1st Punic War (262-241 BCE) Rome acquired Sardinia, Corsica, and Sicily. Hannibal launched an invasion of Italy from Spain by crossing the Alps. His invasion brought great suffering and anxiety. Rome's general Scipio Africanus finally defeated Hannibal in Africa. Rome came to control northern Italy, southern Gaul, and Spain. The 3rd Punic war (149-146 BCE) brought the final defeat of Carthage and all of the western Mediterranean was in Rome's hands.

Rome and the East

- The Etruscans had connections with Asia Minor. Rome's contacts with (and eventual conquest of) the Etruscans gave it an early experience in taking over Near Eastern institutions and infusing them with its own natural temper.
- Campaigns in southern Italy from 280-275 BCE by Pyrrhus, king of Epirus in Greece, on behalf of the Greek colony of Tarentum engaged Rome in military conflict with Greece. Tarentum fell in 272 BCE and brought Greek slaves to Rome. Thereafter Rome would be significant in the Greek world, and Greek ideas were to penetrate Rome.
- Concluding Rome's 4 Macedonian Wars (214-205, 200-196, 171-167, 150-148 BCE) Macedonia was made a Roman province (148 BCE). In 146 BCE the Greek leagues were dissolved into their component city-states and the city of Corinth was destroyed.
- In 188 BCE the Seleucid king Antiochus II was driven from Asia, with Rome's friend Eumenes of Pergamum the chief benefactor. In 168 Rome ordered Syria to withdraw from Egypt. Within 1 week Rome had defeated Macedonia, taken Egypt under its protection, and forced Syria to submit to its wishes. A new power now overshadowed the 3 chief segments of Alexander's empire.
- Attalus III gave the kingdom of Pergamum to Rome in 133 BCE
- 129 BCE, Rome organized the province of Asia, leaving the rest of Asia Minor under native client kings.
- Syria was made a province in 63 BCE.
- Egypt in 31 BCE.
- Rome is the Greek word for strength. Roman power was respected in the east, if not always admired, and from the 2nd century (in keeping with the practice of worshipping power) the personified city of Rome was honored as a goddess there.
- Rome took over the political and cultural heritage of Alexander west of the Euphrates and became his real successor.
- Alexander's vision of one unified world became accomplished politically through Rome.
- Rome brought security and roads to the Near East.



- It did not bring a new culture.
- It made no effort to Latinize, and Greek remained the effective language.
- Greek culture prevailed in the eastern Mediterranean, whereas culture in the west owed and still owes its stamp to the Roman conquest.
- The educated man from the 2nd century BCE spoke both Greek and Latin.
- Greek culture flowed west as Roman military might and political administration moved east.

The Later Republic: Civil Wars

- The Roman Republic knew civil war for a century from 133 BCE.
- Civil wars began in 90 BCE with a rebellion by a confederacy of Italian peoples.
- Pompey established himself as a military leader and statesman by sweeping the Mediterranean of pirates, ending the threat of Mithridates VI, and bringing the remaining Seleucid territories within Roman control and settling their administration.
- The 1st Triumvirate came into the open with the first consulship of C. Julius Caesar in 59.
- Civil war returned to Rome when Caesar crossed the Rubicon River and invaded Italy in 49 BCE. Pompey's troops were not ready for battle, and he removed them across the Adriatic to Greece. The battle at Pharsalus in Thessaly in 48 left Caesar master of the Roman world.
- Caesar continued to fight battles against pockets of resistance until 45.
- Caesar's own staff officers as well as some whom he had aided were in on a plot to assassinate him.
- Cicero hoped that Caesar's death would mean the restoration of the old Republic, but it would not be.
- Octavian, nephew of Caesar and adopted by him, Mark Antony, Caesar's chief lieutenant, and Lepidus, former consul and governor of Gaul and Spain, formed a "2nd Triumvirate." The triumvirs gained control of Rome and began a massive proscription of the senatorial and equestrian classes. Brutus and Cassius had gathered armies in the Balkans and Syria, but Antony and Octavian disposed of them in the battle of Philippi in 42 BCE.
- Antony had an affair with Cleopatra VII, the last of the Ptolemaic rulers, in Egypt and this gave Octavian all the propaganda he needed to stir up national sentiment in Rome against Antony. The clash was treated as a war against Egypt.
- The defeat of Antony and Cleopatra at Actium in 31 BCE caused both to commit suicide in Egypt (30 BCE). The Ptolemaic dynasty was extinguished and the last of the Hellenistic kingdoms was now in Roman hands.
- The Roman civil wars ended, and the Republic also. Rome had been an imperial republic for a long time; now only the empire remained. Octavian would need to establish a new constitution.

The Roman Empire

The Early Empire

- Augustus – 27-14 BCE – instituted many reforms and revived state religion. Known as Dominus Flavis by some. He attempted to restore family life. He replenished the treasury and was a good overall ruler. He established the empire which greatly influenced Judaism. Yeshua was born during this time.
 - Octavian (later called Augustus) had absolute power.
 - He was a despot by universal consent.
 - His official version of the constitutional settlement was reached in 27 BCE and was a combination of political testament and propaganda.
 - Augustus was an ancient word suggesting the numinous and something more than human.
 - The ruler's name was changed and after 27 his official name was Imp(erator) Caesar divi f(ilius) ["son of a god," in this case the now deified Julius Caesar] Augustus.
 - He had the army and the money and he had the resources of Egypt.



- There was a great emphasis on peace: his rule ushered in the *pax romana*. A sense of gratitude was expressed toward him for the restoration of peace.
- He promoted this virtue of his reign. Security and safety made possible travel, trade, and renewed economic development and prosperity.
- He took the office of *pontifex maximus* in 12 BCE as part of his program of restoring the religion of the Republic.
- Augustus initiated significant building activity, boasting that he found Rome a city of brick and left it a city of marble.
- His contributions for early Christianity include peace, economic prosperity, improved communications, stable government, and a sense of renewal.
- There was a strong sense of a new beginning, an old era of upheaval and warfare ended and a new era of peace and prosperity beginning. Christian authors later concurred in the sentiment, but saw in it an even deeper meaning, for Jesus had been born under Augustus's reign (Luke 2:1).
- Tiberius (14-37 CE) – son of Augustus's 2nd wife Livia by a previous marriage.
 - Adopted son of Augustus. He was distant, haughty, suspicious and easily angered. He was wise and generally disliked and feared. The Roman army suffered many setbacks in Germany. Tiberius became very suspicious and cruel.
 - He was a brilliant military commander but had grown bitter and melancholy by the time he became emperor.
 - He did not approve of the cult of the ruler, but he took an interest in astrology.
 - He disliked the trappings of power, and although he professed a desire for the senate to have freedom, its own debasement under the long rule of Augustus and Tiberius's isolation from it strained relations between them. This isolation plus the oppressive practices of Sejanus, the prefect of the Praetorian Guard gave to the senatorial class the black picture of Tiberius that is reflected in Tacitus.
 - Tiberius allowed Sejanus to exercise effective power, but Sejanus finally overreached himself and Tiberius in a counter plot had him executed in 31 CE.
 - Although Tiberius alienated the senate at home, he was vigilant in foreign affairs. His reign brought stability to the frontiers, and he brought better order to the provinces by leaving men in office longer (the practice in the Republic was to change provincial governors annually). Pilate's 10 years in Judea exemplifies this policy.
- Gaius Caligula (37-41 CE). Was the grandson of Tiberius's brother Drusus.
 - His nickname was Caligula ("little boots") from the soldiers among whom he grew up while his father Germanicus was on campaign in Germany. Very popular in the beginning of his reign and the end was marked with violence and cruelty. He demanded to be worshipped as god. He exhausted the public treasury. He confiscated property, legacies as was known for extortion. He was assassinated. He alienated himself from Judaism and Christianity because he demanded to be worshipped as a god.
 - He began with favor of the senate.
 - He had grown up with a family of tragedy and suspicion and this may have had something to do with the signs of mental derangement that appeared before his assassination.
 - He depleted the treasury and became convinced of his divinity, demanding divine honors.
 - His reign was marked by conflict with the Jews.
 - Although he was friendly to Agrippa the 1st he did not like Jews.
 - When the Jews in Yavneh tore down an altar erected to him in 40 CE, he ordered a statue of himself set up in the temple in Jerusalem. Petonius, the legate in Syria, knew what would happen and successfully stalled on the order. Jews were not the only people relieved when in 41 CE Caligula learned he was not a god.
- Claudius (41-54 CE). Claudius was Gaius's uncle.



- Partially paralyzed. He was a brilliant scholar but appeared like an idiot maybe because he drooled. He extended citizenship to provincials and conquered parts of Britain. He hated the foreign cults and tried to restore the ancient Roman religion. He expelled the Jews from Rome because of the riots caused by Christas.
- He was found hiding by the praetorian guards who killed Gaius. They took him as their candidate for princeps. The negotiator between the praetorians and the senate was Agrippa I, whom Claudius rewarded with an enlarged kingdom throughout Palestine.
- He appeared to be an idiot because he drooled saliva and limped. He was 50 when he ruled.
- He confirmed the privileges of the Jews in Alexandria, warning the Greeks there to maintain the peace and the Jews to be content with what they had and not to seek more privileges.
- Because of disturbances “at the instigation of one Chrestus [Christ?],” he expelled Jews from Rome (Suetonius, *Claudius* 25.4; cf. Acts 18:2)
- His major venture in foreign affairs was the addition of Britain to the empire.
- He set higher standards for Roman citizenship in domestic affairs, yet also opened it up to worthy men in the provinces.
- He sought to make the business of the senate more efficient, but his own activities in public projects in Italy further eroded the distinction between areas administered by the senate and those by the princeps.
- **Nero (54-68 CE)**
 - He saw himself as God incarnate. He had 5 years of success. He was extravagant and careless and hated by the senate and unpopular with the people and the army. He emptied the treasuries. He started the fire in Rome so he could build his golden house and he blamed it on the Christians. Tradition says Peter and Paul died during these persecutions
 - Ancient rumors suggest that Agrippina (the niece and wife of Claudius) had him poisoned when he was of no further use to her in order to secure the throne for her son Nero. The accession was without difficulty: he was proclaimed by the Praetorian Guard and presented to the senate for its approval.
 - His rule began with the quinquennium (the 5 good years), when affairs were under the control of Seneca, whose brother Gallio had been governor of Greece (Acts 18:12) Burrus, the prefect of the praetorian guards, advisors of the 16 year old Nero. Paul’s description of the Romans state in Romans 13 was written during this period. Agrippina was removed from influence and finally murdered, on Nero’s orders, in 59 CE.
 - He increasingly took the direction of affairs into his own hands.
 - Burrus died in 62 and Seneca retired, finally receiving a command to take his life in 65. Their influence was replaced by that of the new praetorian prefect, Tigellinus, who brought out Nero’s worst disposition and instituted despotism.
 - Nero also had his wife Octavia killed in 62 so he could marry Poppaea, described by Josephus as a “worshipper of God,” perhaps a proselyte.
 - He blamed the great fire of Rome in 64 on the Christians, now recognized as distinct from the Jews and marked for disfavor.
 - Tradition puts the martyrdom of Peter and Paul in Rome in the aftermath.
 - The great Jewish revolt in Palestine broke out in 66, and Vespasian was placed in charge of suppressing it.
 - He instituted a reign of terror.
 - Revolts broke out among the legions in the west, and when the praetorian guards rebelled in Rome, Nero fled the city and committed suicide (at 30 yrs old). His death ended the Julio-Claudian dynasty: all of the emperors from Augustus to Nero were in one way or another related to the Julian and Claudian senatorial families, with other families of equal rank having been steadily eliminated.
- **Civil war: 68/69**
 - The confusion of Nero’s flight brought on civil war. The legions and generals discovered the “secret of empire, that “the princeps could be made elsewhere than at Rome” (Tacitus, *Histories* 1.4). Four different men came to power within the space of one year:



- Galba, governor in Spain
- Otho, former governor of Lusitania
- Vitellius, commander of the legions in Germany
- Vespasian
- Vespasian (69-79 CE) - gained the support of the east, and leaving his son Titus to continue the Jewish War, made his march on Rome in late 69, arriving in the city himself in 70.
 - One of the first to declare for Vespasian was the governor of Egypt, Tiberius Alexander, an apostate Jew and nephew of Philo.
 - Vespasian inaugurated the Flavian dynasty. He came from a small town in the Sabine hills of Italy. His grandfather had been a centurion in the army, so he represents the rise of the governing class of the Italian towns to the highest influence in Rome.
 - He changed the character of the senate by drawing new members from the municipal aristocracy of Italy and the west.
 - His chief order of business was the restoration of order—financial stability, confidence in the central government, tidying up the provinces. From his time emperors were known by and knew their armies. He and Titus celebrated a triumph in Rome in 71 for the successful suppression of the revolt in Judea. Vespasian's frugal and old-fashioned virtues were a needed respite in Rome.
 - He treated the cult of the emperor lightly and, when he was dying, joked about the practice of declaring a dead emperor divine: "I think that I am becoming a god" (Suetonius, *Vespasian* 23).
- Titus (79-81 CE) – He was popular and a fever cut short his life. His reign was remembered for 2 events:
 - The eruption of Vesuvius, which destroyed Pompeii and Herculaneum in 79 and gave him the opportunity to demonstrate his generosity.
 - The extravagant opening of the Colosseum, begun by his father and completed by his brother Domitian, and his further expenditures on games and shows, another feature of his reign and a reason for the favor in which the populace held him.
- Domitian (81-96 CE) – His reign was characterized by the exile and execution of quite a number from senatorial families, so his memory was formally condemned by the senate after his assassination. He insisted on the title *dominus et deus* ("lord and god"), and Christian tradition remembered him as a persecutor and the emperor under whom the Book of Revelation was written. Brother of Titus, was a good manager. He made numerous enemies. He tried to raise the morals of Roman society. He demanded worship of himself and wanted to be called lord and god.
- "5 Good Emperors"
- Nerva (96-98 CE) – was a transitional figure. Senate liked him, but the army which resented the murder of Domitian did not. Nerva was childless and in his 60's, adopted the commander of the army of Upper Germany, Trajan. This was probably an emergency measure to give military support to the new ruler. The practice of adopting one's successor gave Rome a series of good emperors under whom the empire reached its highest development. The provinces were prosperous and generally well governed, the empire itself enjoyed internal peace, and a flourishing cultural development left imposing monumental remains throughout the Mediterranean countries.
- Trajan (98-117 CE) came from Spain, and with him the provinces became full partners in the rule of the empire. He gave the empire its largest territorial extent through his successful campaigns, which pushed the frontiers in the north and east to the Danube and the Euphrates. He was a Spaniard. He enlarged the empire. During his reign is the revolt of the Jews. By the time of Trajan Christianity was a major religion. Before this it is a sect of Judaism.
 - Jewish disturbances in Egypt, Cyrene, and Cyprus in 115 destroyed much property and took many lives and had to be ruthlessly suppressed.
- Hadrian (117-138 CE) He introduced a policy of stabilization on the frontier and at home. He was a lover of things Greek. He spent much time traveling in the eastern provinces, and many material remains testify to his interest in the Greek east. Under Hadrian occurred the second major Jewish



revolt in Palestine. He was Emperor during time period of the 2nd revolt (bar Kochba). Set up Temple of Zeus in Jerusalem. Jews fled to Pella. Many believers were excommunicated.

- Antoninus Pius (138-161 CE) He had a peaceful and largely uneventful reign. The empire was prosperous. There was no discordant note. The emperor gathered around himself men of letters and philosophers. His character represented by the epithet Pius, conferred on him by the senate and suggesting an amiable personality, made a great impression on the age.
- Marcus Aurelius (161-180 CE). He had to face the problems that were to bring disasters to the Roman world in the next century. Soldiers returning from Mesopotamia brought with them the plague, which had lasting consequences for the political and economic development of the empire. It was still going when Germans and Sarmatians invaded the empire. He spent a lot of time fighting on his northern frontier. Germans invaded the northern empire. More persecution of Christians than any other emperor until the 3rd century.
 - Marcus was devoted to duty and principle; much of his time was occupied with wars on the northern frontier, fought with inadequate reserves of troops.
 - There were sporadic persecutions of the Christians under the second century emperors, with more martyrs made under Marcus Aurelius than under any emperor before the Decian persecution of the 3rd century.

The Later Empire

The return to hereditary succession with Marcus's son Commodus (180-192 CE) turned out bad. War followed his assassination. Septimius Severus won out and inaugurated the Severan dynasty, under which Syrian influence became prevalent in Rome.

The 2nd century- emergencies, with pressure from enemies on the frontier, strains on the economy and religious conflict within the empire.

But they really became a problem in the 3rd century. The movement of peoples from central Asia exerted ever more pressure on the northern frontiers, and Parthia (where the Sassanid dynasty had replaced the Arsacid in 230) gave trouble on the east. The purchasing power dropped and the debasement of the currency ruined the middle class. The 3rd century was a bad time for the Roman world. It survived. Decius and the Illyrian soldier-emperors began to stabilize the situation. With Diocletian and Constantine the constitutional realities changed the principate into the dominant: all pretense of partnership with the senate was gone, and the emperor ruled as supreme lord in name as well as in reality. The remarkable thing is that the empire held together as long as it did.

Constantine's rejuvenation gave the empire a century and a half lease on life in the west and laid the basis for the Byzantine state, which remained an important power in the eastern Mediterranean for the next millennium.

Administration of the Empire

Cities – Roman Empire was a collection of cities as far as power and government were concerned. The city was where things happened, where the opportunities were. The civilization of the Roman empire was an urban civilization to a greater extent than any time in the west up to the modern age. There was a classification system of the cities within the empire according to the privileges they possessed.

- First - the *coloniae civium romanorum* (colonies of Roman citizens). These were mostly towns in which military veterans were settled. They were sometimes granted partial or complete immunity from taxation. Each was a little Rome, Rome away from home. Some of the Roman colonies mentioned in the NT are Philippi, Corinth, Antioch of Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, and Troas.
- Second - the other towns that possessed the Roman franchise, the *municipia* or *oppida civium romanorum* (towns of Roman citizens).



- Third - “Latin” towns where the Roman franchise could be obtained by holding magistracy in the town government.
- Other cities possessed no official privileges, but among them were a few that still called themselves “free” (Ephesus, Smyrna, Tarsus, and Antioch of Syria) meaning their internal affairs were governed by their own laws, or “federate” (Athens, Tyre, and Rhodes), although this was anachronistic under the empire.
- The form of municipal government in the cities of the west tended to copy that at Rome. Under the Republic the major political offices were consul, praetor, and quaestor. Praetors were judges. Quaestor was the lowest office that gave entry to the senate. 20 quaestors were chosen each year; they had financial functions. All of the offices were filled by men from the senatorial class.
- Roman towns in the west normally had 2 chief magistrates, *duovirs*, on the pattern of the two consuls in Rome. Inferior to them were 2 *aediles*, who superintended buildings and public works. One such *aedile*, named Erastus and mentioned on an inscription at Corinth, has been identified as possible the same as Erastus, the “city treasurer,” mentioned in Romans 16:23. There was also a local council (*curia*) of former magistrate (called *decuriones*) like the senate in Rome.
- Greek cities in the east (notably Alexandria) were often subdivided into *politeumata* (corporations). The *politeuma* was a self-governing division of the city based on nationality. The Greek *politeuma* had a religious center, a council and magistrates, division of citizens into tribes, and other features of a Greek polis. The Jews in Alexandria, it seems, also formed a *politeuma*.

Provinces

- The peaceful and civilized provinces where no legions had to be quartered
- A provincial governor had the title of proconsul (Acts 19:38), that is, “in the place of consul” or functioning with the power of a consul in that provincia.
- Proconsuls chosen by lot out of the former magistrates at Rome.
- The emperor could manipulate this process in various ways.
- Former consuls were assigned to Asia and Africa, and the other senatorial provinces were governed by former praetors.
- Normally an interval of 5 years for praetors and 10 years for consuls between their magistracy in Rome and receiving a provincial governorship.
- The imperial provinces were the military provinces (e.g., Syria), where by reason of the lack of progress toward internal civilization or danger on the frontier legions were stationed.
- Smaller, troublesome provinces (such as Judea) that were under imperial control received for governor a member of the equestrian order who had a command of auxiliary troops, but not ordinarily legions.

Client Kingdoms

- Rome preferred to leave the government of areas in the east where Hellenization had not advanced very far in the hands of native rulers, who could rule their own people best and by reason of their dependency could serve Rome’s interests without Rome assuming responsibility.
- The modern term for these rulers is client kings because they stood in the relation of clients to the Roman emperor and held the title of king only with Rome’s sanction, but the Romans called them “friends” and “allies.” Herod (Mt. 2:1) and his descendants (Acts 12:1; 25:13) who ruled in Palestine occupied this status. Galatia was ruled this way until it became an imperial province in 25 BCE. The client kings were left free in internal administration, levied taxes for their own use, and maintained armies under their own control. They could not pursue their own foreign policy and were limited in their right to mint coins.
- Their duties were to supply auxiliaries and military aid on demand for the Roman army, maintain order and security on the frontiers, and pay taxes to Rome. These kingdoms also



served to protect trade routes, as buffers between barbarians and the empire, proper, and in general to advance Rome's purposes.

- These client kingdoms disappeared in the course of time and were incorporated into the provincial structure. The uniformity of the status of towns became more general, and the provinces drew closer in status to Italy.

Ekklesia – usual term for political assemblies of citizens in Greek cities. Acts 19:39,41

Concilium – representative from cities and tribes of a province met in the capitol city and became a channel to Rome promoting the imperial cult, not actually having authority but rather influence. Acts 19:31

Citizenship – referenced in Philippians 3:20



Greco-Roman Religions & Philosophies

The New Testament World – Week 3
Adult Education



Greco-Roman Religions

Temple – in Greek and Roman was the home of the deity, not a place of worship. Greeks worship with their heads uncovered, Romans were always covered (seeing omens).

- Dominant tone in the NT is Greco-Roman influence
- Greek gods & Roman gods – became the same with different names
- Acts 19 – Diana of the Ephesians
- Each city/region had a patron god and cult

Two categories of Hellenistic religion:

(Each had old religion that developed)

- State religion
 - Official (polis)
 - Polytheistic
 - Had patron god, temples, feasts, priests
 - Statues of the deity were found throughout the city
 - Existed for the good of the state, not the individual
 - Everyone was eligible to perform ritual (not professional priest)
 - No systematic theology (geographic theology)
 - The Here and Now – not the afterlife (legal systems)
 - Mythology focused on the intervention of the gods (Acts 14:11-18)
- Mystery religion
 - Personal
 - Belonged by choice, not birth
 - Requires initiation
 - Tendency toward monotheism (or supreme god)
 - No geographical area, race or tribe
 - Available to those who swear to keep the mysteries a secret
 - Included communication with the god(ess)
 - Deals with the afterlife for the faithful, connected to the underworld
 - Judaism and Christianity are a mixture of both
 - Combined civil and religious (ethical) law

Local Mysteries -

- Early mysteries were rites to assure fertility, safety, or the like.
- Panamara
 - Southwest Asia Minor
 - Promised only terrestrial benefits.
- Mother of Gods
- Cabirir at Samothrace
 - Non-Hellenistic
 - Numbers varied
 - General protective; mostly of seamen.



Eleusinian Mysteries -

- Transition from local to universal mysteries.
- Had to come to Eleusis to get initiation; was open for all who could come there.
- Behind each mystery was a cult myth, for example “Homeric Hymn to Demeter” for Eleusis.
- The myth is connected to the agriculture.
- Initiations
 - Lesser Mysteries
 - February/March
 - Preparation for the Greater Mysteries.
 - Greater Mysteries
 - September
 - Epopeteia
 - Highest grade of initiation
 - One year after the Greater Mysteries.
- Essential part of the ceremony was making something appear.

Dionysiac Mysteries -

- Greek origin
- Other name Bacchus
- Practiced by private associations but under the control of the state.
- Myth
 - Dionysus was the son of Zeus and Semele, a mortal.
- Faced opposition in the beginning but flourished at the end.
- Shown as
 - An old bearded man
 - As youthful
 - As a child
- Dionysiac worship had wider aspects than the mystery initiation.
- Elements of initiation differed probably.

National Deities

Egyptian Deities –

- Osiris – god of vegetation and underworld
 - Brother (Set) lured him into a gold box and threw it in the Nile. Isis found it in Phoenicia. The body was broken into 14 pieces and she looked and found all pieces except the genitals which she had made out of gold.
 - Fall Feast – search for Osiris, for vegetation
 - Spring Feast – open of sailing season because he sailed off in his golden box.
 - Vegetations god
 - God of the underworld
 - Was replaced by Sarapis
- Isis – sister and wife of Osiris, connected to Demeter and Aphrodite
 - Became chief mother god
 - Most often portrayed with a nursing child



- Every morning and evening, the priests sprinkled holy Nile water and dressed the statue.
- Mother of Horus
- Mother goddess
- Sarapus – replaced Osirus, combination of Apus and Osirus
 - Has similar appearance as Zeus
 - Delivers from danger and heals the sick
 - Healing later given to Asclepius
- Lots of processions – women were honored, musicians, etc
- Initiates wore white and carried a sistra (pitcher?) and could enter the temple (non-observants couldn't)
 - Initiates were desiring to be priests
 - When the cult was Hellenized they added secret ceremonies
 - Chastity was required
 - Purification washing
 - 10 day abstinence from meat and wine
 - Rites all night until dawn
- Women dressed as Egyptian deities
- Egyptian temples were gathering places for the people
- First eastern deities to become important in the hellenistic world.
- Egyptian deities were completely Hellenized to their external but remained their foreign appeal in the ceremonies.
- Were suppressed by Rome because Egypt was the main rival.
- Two great annual festivals
 - Osiris – October/November
 - Isis – early march

Phoenician deities: Astarte and Adonis

- Astarte - Fertility goddess
- Adonis – youth god; son of Astarte

Syrian deities: Atargatis and Others

- Each city of Syria had its Baal (Lord or Master)
- Most successful one – Jupiter of Doliche
- best known – Atargatis of Hierapolis
 - goddess of love
 - goddess of war
 - goddess of fertility

Phrygian Deities: Cybele and Attis

- Cybele – Mother of gods
- Attis – youthful lover of Cybele; vegetation god
- First cult to be received officially into Rome.
- Young priests castrated themselves; higher priests were not castrated.
- No sacred marriage



A Persian Deity: Mithras

- Only Persian god that became important in the Roman empire.
- Difference between Persian and Hellenistic-Roman Mithras.
- Hellenistic-Roman Mithras has its roots in the astral religion.
- Most popular between soldiers and administrative officials along the frontier and in harbours.
- Only men admitted to the mysteries.
- Cult symbol=Mithras slaying a bull.
- 7 different grades of initiation.
 - Raven – protection of Mercury
 - Bride – protection of Venus
 - Soldier – Patronage of Mars
 - Lion – connected with Jupiter
 - Persian – protection of the moon
 - Heliodromus – protection of Sol
 - Father – protection of Saturn

Greek Religions –

Cybele

- Identified with the earth,
- Goddess of death and
- Queen of heaven
- 2nd century BCE, problems with Hannibal
- Goddesses used to help in politics
- 204BCE king of Pergumum gave statue to Rome
 - Priests had to be castrated so they imported priests
- Zeus tried to rape her while she was asleep in the form of a rock
 - She was pregnant and gave birth to a hermaphrodite who was tied to a tree by his genitals, so he castrated himself and a tree grew.
- March 15 started a 2 week festival of the legend
 - Galli (initiates) flogged themselves, castrated themselves and offered their genitals. If they survived they could become priests.
 - 2nd c CE – taurobolium was added, entered into a deep pit. Bulls were brought above the pit and stabbed so that blood would rain down onto initiates' faces and they would drink it.
 - Inscriptions of sacrifices made to the Emperor, and sacrifices made for individuals
 - Longest running mystery religion, banished in 390CE

Mythras

- Came from Persia
- 67 BCE Pompey brought pirates who brought Mythras
- Name means champion of good
- One god – unknown and unapproachable.
 - Children were the earth, sky and sea
 - Dwelt between heaven and earth



- Born from a rock – at his birth shepherds came to adore him, but there was conflict between him and the sun. They fought and then became friend. Subdued bull and killed. The bull killing released life for the benefit of humans and the earth.
- Cult symbol depicts the story
- Image of bull being slain
- Mythras was called “unconquered son”
- Birthday was celebrated on December 25.
- Temples were always near water and a cave
- Cult was only for men
- Strong moral demands and virtues
- “Strength and courage” became popular with Roman soldiers
- Met need of contact with god and cleansing from sin, water purification
 - Sacramental meal of bread, honey and wine – seen as partaking of Mythras’ body
- Promise of help against supernatural powers
- Widespread religion but accepted by few
- 7 stage initiation
 - Each were a sacrament, test of courage, water purification
 - In the final stage, they took the title “father”

Rome State Religion –

- A legal relationship.
- Everything had a god, each has its shrine
- Did not incorporate any ethics or morals
- Religio – scruple or awe in the presence of the divine
- Practical but had no creed
- Augustus began revival
 - First Pontifus (priest) Maximus (leader)
 - The priesthood comes under civil law (priest & king)
 - From Augustus until Constantine, every emperor was Pontifus Maximus
- Failed because it didn’t meet the needs of the people
- Julius Caesar, given title ‘Divus Julius’ after his death
 - Every person had a ‘genius’ (procreative force in a person), but one ruled the family
 - Later, genius was connected with Greek ‘daimon’ or guardian spirit
 - Household is the unit of society (Greek is individual), father is the head of the family
 - Offerings were made to the genius who is outside the person but intrinsically connected
- Deification of Augustus founded the emperor cult
- Everyone took the title until Constantine (after they were dead)
- Caligula ordered his statue to be erected in the J’lem temple
- Domition called himself Lord and God
- Built temples to them (Banias)
- Emperor cult strongest in Asia Minor



Apatheosis – ceremony when Emperor to show his change from humanity to deity.

- Wax image was made, to look like he was sick not dead
- Declaration that he died
- Wax image was carried through town to wooden tower
- Image was burned on the top of tower and an eagle released

Occult –

World full of superstitions

Divination was very popular

Consulted oracles

Magic amulets, charms, formulas, etc

Astrology was important, horoscope, zodiac, etc.

Gnosticism, Hermetic Literature, Chaldean Oracles -

- gnosis=knowledge
- Gnostic writings
 - Gospel of Thomas
 - 112-118 sayings attributed to Jesus
 - Gospel of truth
 - Meditation on the truth of redemption
 - Gospel of Phillip
 - Sayings or discourse gospel
 - Apocryphon of John
 - Epistle to Reginus
 - Emphasizes resurrection of the soul
 - Apocryphon of James
 - Postresurrection revelation of Jesus.
 - Hypostasies of the Archons
 - Tripartite Tractate
 - Most ambitious and comprehensive theological undertaking.
 - Eugnostos the blessed + The Sophia of Jesus Christ
- Not known if Gnosticism was a Christian heresy or was a non-Christian movement from the beginning.
- Many teachers that applied many variations in the teaching.
- Gnostic problems
 - The problem of evil
 - Sense of alienation from the works
 - Desire of special knowledge of the secrets of the universe.
 - Dualism
 - Cosmology
 - Anthropology
 - Radically realized eschatology
 - Ethical implications
- The Corpus Hermeticum + Asclepius + Kore Kosmou = Hermetic literature.
- Greek authors that wanted the Egyptian reputation on wisdom.
- Pagan branch of Gnosticism.



- Chaldean Oracles; verses based on divine revelations.

Later developments: Monotheism and Sun worship -

Beginning of Monotheism goes back to philosophers.

Monotheism remained only a tendency in the Roman Empire.

Sun worship was the result of a fusion between Stoic philosophy and astrology.

Remained a religion of the educated and ruling class.

Greco-Roman Philosophies

Philosophy arises because the state religion isn't meeting the needs of the people.

By Hellenistic period has its own ethical system

Ethics – knowing right and wrong

Morals – acting upon knowledge of right and wrong

Each philosophical school had its own teachings

After Alexander – philosophy turns individual

Additions that came with philosophers:

- Community of believers that centered around a teacher
- Holy men, martyrs, saints
- Spoke against polytheism
- Didn't believe in traditional mythology
- Emphasis on the rational

Ethics –

- Teach people how to live
- Moral instruction on right and wrong
- Often related to nature
- Reinforced teaching through example (Paul's writings)
 - Paranesis – ethical/moral teaching (1 Thessalonians)

Moral teaching became popular in all segments of society.

In Greco-Roman age, tendency towards homogeneity

Society saw the philosophers as a unit, inside was more diverse

Philosophers were distinguished by their robes

Common themes of the Philosophers:

- Marriage and sexual conduct - for procreation only
- Consolation
- Covetousness
- Anger
- Virtue
- Friendship
- Civil concord (government)
- Welfare of the state and freedom



Other teachings –

- Assumption that virtue is teachable
- Strive to make a person self-sufficient in regard to external circumstances
- Ways to obtaining goal different on the philosopher
- Virtuous life is connected to nature
- Turn from luxury to freedom and contemplation

Gnosticism –

- Develops out of the dualism of Platonism (from the East)
- System that provides salvation through knowledge of secret doctrines and passwords
- Dualism
 - Body is evil (asceticism)
 - Only the spirit is real (libertinism)
 - Physical resurrection is abhorrent
 - Gnostic Christian do not believe in the physical body of Jesus
- Salvation is attained by renouncing the physical world and embracing the spirit world
- The highest good is
- There is a Supreme Being (too good to create this world)
- Series of emanations, the last one created the world
- Colossians 2:18-21 hints at Gnosticism

Philosophy was a way of life. For many in the Hellenistic and Roman periods the religion for many, especially the educated was philosophy. It really offered its own moral and spiritual direction and provided a criticism or reinterpretation of traditional religion. There were various schools of philosophy which formed communities of believers around a master and his teachings. The master was revered by his students. They had inter-denomination rivalries and conversion stories. They even had their holy men and martyrs. These schools provided practical guidance and a worldview for life that religion does for people today. Poets and Philosophers provided a conscience for the age.

Some of the things philosophy provided or contributed to:

- Provided a conscience for the age
- Answered questions
- Brought a kind of conversion and cleansing of the soul (although it was a redemption worked by one's own strength)
- Contributed to the impulse toward monotheism even though the god of Hellenistic – Roman philosophy was impersonal
- Emphasis placed on the proper attitudes in sacrifice, worthy conception of the gods, rational worship and upright conduct

The principal concern of the leading Hellenistic philosophies was Ethics. The aim was to teach the people how to live. The moral instruction was very specific about what is right and wrong and one's duties in various social relationships.



Three modes of moral exhortation were used by the philosophers:

- Protrepis – to adopt a particular viewpoint (an invitation to follow the philosophical life)
- Paraeneis – to follow a given course of action or to abstain from a contrary behavior
- Diatribe – Moved people to action. The diatribe set up a brief but lively dialogue

Popular Philosophy

The activities of the philosophers in the various social settings contributed to a popularization of philosophical ideas, particularly moral teachings, at various levels of society. Despite the bitter polemic of the philosophical schools against one another, the Hellenistic-Roman age showed an increasing tendency toward a philosophical *koine*, not just among educated laymen but even among more professional philosophers.

Philosophy, at least from the 1st century, appeared to society as a unity with the purpose of helping humanity. Different schools shared common elements and concerns. Certain themes recur among the philosophical moralists with enough frequency to show what were matters of interest—marriage and sexual conduct, consolation, covetousness, and anger—and what the ideals were—virtue, friendship, civil concord and responsibility for the welfare of the state, and freedom. Despite their sharp differences, the major Hellenistic philosophical schools had much in common.

The purpose of philosophy was to teach people how to live. This entailed the assumption that virtue is teachable. Virtue is related to knowledge, and reason is the means of attaining it. Self-sufficiency, freedom, and happiness were goals, but the schools differed in the specific ways of attaining them. The virtuous life meant a detachment (in varying degrees) from the affairs and concerns of this life—self-sufficiency with regard to all external circumstances. It was common to emphasize freedom from passion through renunciation. The virtuous life, furthermore, was a life lived according to nature, although the definition of nature varied considerable from one school to another. This kind of life brought an inner freedom and happiness.

Philosophy and Individualism

The emphasis on individualism was rooted in Socrates' belief that one's soul must be cultivated through his/her own initiative. Hellenistic philosophers searched for their place in the cosmos and how they could fulfill their personal desires. Traditional community life was no longer the way to live.

Philosophy in Its Social Setting

The philosophers taught in every setting of life from the local market place to the gymnasia to formal schools. The Epicureans had their own communities to themselves. Some philosophers were hired by the empire while others took donations. Not all philosophical schools were official (like the Epicureans) but rather they were "schools of thought".



Sophists and Socrates

- First martyr, drank hemlock (Plato emerged)
- Founder of the Sophists
- The student knows all, but the information must be drawn out
- The Sophists movement began around the 5th c BCE in Athens. They believed that one's speech and conduct were extremely important in public life. If one did not speak well they were ill prepared for life. They tutored privately on using persuasive language and how to reason well so that things will turn to your advantage. They challenged their students to ask questions about everyday things, traditions, even the existence of the gods. This movement of conscience intellectualism set the pace for Socrates and Plato.
- Socrates (469-399 BCE) was the hero of philosophers to whom the philosophical schools of the Hellenistic age traced their origin. His popularity is shown by the large number of representations that survive. He emphasized individualism, partly because he thought that man was the problem in the world and focusing on that would help fix the problem, but he also questioned conscience and personal religion. He sought truth and he himself felt the need for some security in this world of unknowns; he disliked the relativism the sophists taught. He believed that if one was doing something wrong, it's because his thinking was unclear and he lacked the correct information to help him otherwise. When urged to do something wrong it was the *daimon* in him that worked against his urge. His philosophy was not a system but rather a discipline.

Plato and the Academy to the 1st Century

- Material world is a shadow of the ideas
- Allegory of the cave – all of humanity is in a cave with a fire outside. When someone passes by, shadows are seen. Some people escape and they see everything. Some choose to go back in and adjust to the dark. Others stay out of the cave and learn the truth, but they know they have to go back and teach those in darkness. The ones on the inside mock those who have entered.
- Highest goal – the separation of soul and body
- Soul is immortal, divided into three parts:
 - Intellectual or rational
 - Vibrant or spirited
 - The desirous or appetitive
- No direct relationship between Platonism and the NT
- Dualism is reflected (shadow) seen in Gnosticism and Neo-Platonism (Hebrews, tabernacle)
- *Life of Plato (429-347 BCE)* was the greatest of Socrates' pupils and had had a major influence on Western intellectual history. After Socrates' death, he felt compelled to carry on his teacher's passion in life. Teaching was his life. The place where he taught was called the Academy.
- *The Dialogues* dialogue was the manner in which he felt was the best way to get down to the truth of any matter and then put it into writing. He would ask questions about ideas, but took this to the next level of putting into words a description of what



it was. Then he began to sift through these ideas and find that the world was pure and made up of ideas and we only see the copy of those ideas in the world. Finally he landed on the criticism of the theory of ideas and how things were related. His two works, *Laws* and *Timaeus*, have greater importance for the study of Christianity for they show life, public and private, and religion as well as the Hellenistic world view.

- *Plato's Thoughts* Plato believed that ideas were outside of space and time- they were real and this world was an imitation of these ideas. The principle of perfection (which is not found in this world) is the idea of the Good (a form not a god). The myth of the cave- humans live in a cave which they do not realize and in order to know yourself (more than the shadow of yourself) you have to get out of the cave. He believed that humans had a body and a soul. Only the soul comprehends ideas. The soul is immortal. The soul since it is immortal allows itself to recall things that it knew before entering the body- knowledge is instinctive and can only be drawn out by teachers. The soul has three parts: intellectual, vibrant, and desirous. Each part had an ethic: wisdom, courage and self-control. When the soul is balanced one leads a virtuous life of justice, self-control, courage, and wisdom (4 virtues emphasized most in Hellenistic philosophy).
- *Plato's influence* through his ideas on immortal soul, idea of cosmic religion and a just society Plato influenced Christianity, Judaism and Islam.
- *The Old Academy (407 BCE)* the torch was passed on from Plato to his nephew Speusippus to keep the Academy alive. His nephew further worked on definitions and mathematics. Xenocrates carried on from Speusippus and spent more time on structuring the nature of the gods and demons, leading him to think about practical morality. Polemon concentrated on ethics. Crates was the last of the Old Academy.
- *The Skeptical Academy Arcesilaus (316-241 BCE)* became head of the Academy in 268. To keep up with the new Stoics, he adapted the attitude of questioning. Carneades kept this skeptic attitude. He was Socrates in skill and method of arguing (asking annoying questions to make the other feel awkward). He found there were three degrees of probability in this world: the merely probable, the probable and not contradicted, and the probable not contradicted and examined.
- *The Eclectic Academy Philo of Larissa (160-80 BCE)*, became head of the Academy in 110) broke away from the skepticism of previous generations and focused on ethics. Antiochus of Ascalon brought about a shift from skepticism, sometimes called the "Fifth Academy". He claimed that Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics said about the same things, so one should select their common points. He said:
 - True successors of Plato were the Stoics & not the skeptical Academy
 - Stoics accepted certainty, although basing it on the senses
 - Aristotle was essentially a Platonist, although he modified the ethics
 - Academy moved toward the Stoa at a time when the Stoa was becoming Platonic
 - Contributed to the rise of Middle Platonism and Neoplatonism

Aristotle and the Peripatetics

- *Life of Aristotle (384-322 BCE)*
Born at Stagirus in Chalcidice



Father was a doctor

Aristotle had an interest in biology

Came to the Academy at age 17

At Plato's death Aristotle withdrew from Athens

Tutored the young Alexander

His successor, Theophrastus founded a school at a complex of buildings that included a peripatos (a colonnaded walkway), the school was named Peripatetic.

▪ *Aristotle's thought*

Aristotle had an interest in this world and in individual things

He divided things in 2 ways:

1) As substance

2) As Motion

World as Substance – when one looks at things in a moment, as they are in themselves, he sees that everything in nature is a particular substance.

World as Motion – Change is a fact that all observe. He studied change itself.

Change has a pattern that we can understand.

World as Potentiality – change may be considered as the development or transition from potentiality to actuality.

God – Aristotle late in his life allowed for a multiplicity of unmoved movers, but his surviving work does not explain how they would have been related to the prime mover. His view of "God" was unlike the biblical conception. The eternal mind was the logical culmination of the hierarchy of substances and the ultimate explanation of motion and change. Not a person exercising providence or revealing his will. It affected the universe only through the desire for its unattainable perfection that it inspired, but was not in any sense the creator of the universe.

Souls – He spoke of powers of the soul rather than parts. He found 3 kinds of souls:

1) Nutritive or vegetative souls – simply possess the principle of life: nutrition, repair, and reproduction

2) Sensitive or animal souls – the middle level possesses sensation: senses, impulses, instincts. Sensitive faculty is the source of desire and motion, which separates animal life from plant life

3) Thinking or rational souls. The highest level of life possesses reason or intellect, in addition to all the faculties of the lower souls. This level is found in human beings alone.

Soul & Body – are seen related to form and matter, with the soul as the organizing principle of the body. They can be distinguished only in thought, not in fact. He allowed that a part of the intellect might survive death, but his followers developed this in reference to the universal soul shared by individuals, and not as allowing an individual immortality.

Theory of Knowledge – He reversed Plato's epistemology. Knowledge depends on sense experience. Sensations provide the beginning or basis of knowledge, but not its end. The mind has no form or structure of its own to impose on the things perceived.



Ethics – humans are distinguished from other life by rational faculties and the supreme good for them is a rational life. Theoretical reason is the capacity to think, understand, and contemplate and practical reason is reason applied to conduct and persons have both. Happiness includes both intellectual and moral virtues. The fulfillment of theoretical reason is knowledge, learning the truth; the fulfillment of practical reason is moral virtue. This analysis influenced Hellenistic philosophical thought and through it Christian categories for many centuries. Aristotle's successors classified philosophers as theoretical or practical.

- *Aristotle's influence*

- Alexander the Great (his pupil) ushered in such changes in the world that succeeding philosophies turned their attention to practical morality, and the ordered metaphysical worlds of Plato and Aristotle receded into the background. Aristotle's great influence on Christian thought was only to come centuries later.

- *Theophrastus (370-285 BCE)*

- Pupil of Aristotle who remained true to him. He studied plants and two books survive on the subject. Three other works:

On piety – opposed animal sacrifice and argued that the gods were more pleased with right thinking. This was welcomed by Neoplatonists and Christian apologists as a weapon against idolatry.

The Characters – “Superstitiousness” – descriptive sketches of funny or evil characteristics. Character in Greek meant the stamp used in minting coins, so the characters of Theophrastus are those with a distinctive stamp.

Opinions of the Philosophers – only fragments found. Shaped the way later generations viewed the preceding philosophers.

- *Strato*

- He succeeded Theophrastus as head of the Peripatetic school from 287 to his death in 269.
- He gave up the idea of metaphysics, working mainly on mechanics.
- Nature became a blind force, no longer controlled by a divine nous outside itself
- Neither the Academics nor the Peripatetics maintained their founders' emphases in the Hellenistic period, and both gave way in importance to new schools.

- *Latter history and General character*

Strabo gives the story that Aristotle's library was willed by his successor Theophrastus to Neleus, who, not having the headship of the school, returned to his home in Asia Minor. His family hid the manuscript of Aristotle in order to keep the Attalids from confiscating them. In the 1st century BC the manuscripts were sold and taken to Rome. They were edited by Andronicus of Rhodes, who laid the basis for future study of Aristotle and the tradition of scholarly commentaries on Aristotle that has continued to the present. This story is questioned by modern scholars because of evidence that Aristotle's thought was known in the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC (although this may have come from works now lost). After Strato



the Peripatetics in Athens by the mid 3rd century became concerned with ethics and rhetoric. The scientists went to Alexandria, the greatest center of scientific knowledge in the Hellenistic world. The school of Aristotle became known as a research institution. The followers lost sight of Aristotle's conviction of a goal (telos) toward which each of the sciences moved. Their efforts became knowledge for its own sake –encyclopediaism. Anyone interested in the natural world for its own sake tended to be called a Peripatetic. The Peripatetics were the source of facts for nearly everyone.

- *Aspects of the Peripatetic legacy*
 - Soul – was important to philosophers and religious teachers. His followers maintained an alternative to Plato's view of the soul that was continued in Neoplatonism.
 - Worldview – their interest in the natural world, but with religious overtones may be seen in the Pseudo-Aristotelian treatise *On the Cosmos*. The world is seen as the expression of the cosmic deity. God is not the immanent deity of the Stoics nor simply the unmoved mover of Aristotle; "it is more noble, more becoming, for him to reside in the highest place, while his power, penetrating the whole of the cosmos," maintains its order.
 - History of Philosophy – the Peripatetic interest in the lives of philosophers, the history of philosophical schools, and the classification of thought on particular problems flowed into the work of Diogenes Laertius, a major source for the history of Greek philosophy.

Skepticism – (the Greek word "dogma" meant opinion or view, and was the position to which one came after examining something. To examine without necessarily coming to a decision was "skeptesthai").

- Dogma means opinion or view
- Very, very negative
- Situational ethics
- Judgment is relative
- Nothing is more probable than anything else
- Indifference and apathy
- Didn't attack the existence of god but the certainty of knowing god

Pyrrho (c. 360-c. 270 BCE)

- Searched for the purpose of life. He could not find it, so he gave up and "suspended judgment." When he did he found that he had reached the goal he sought. Everyone was looking for peace of mind, and Pyrrho found it in a skeptical suspension of judgment.
- He was characterized by gentleness and by a remarkable indifference (or apathy) because there was nothing to get excited about in life. He arrived at this kind of life because he did not have strong opinions about anything.
- His followers imitated his life rather than his teachings since he did not form a school



Aenesidemus

- 50 BC he revived Pyrrhonism apart from the Academy. He reduced the arguments against knowledge to 10 tropes.
- 2 principal arguments used by the Skeptics were:
 - (1 “nothing is more this than the other”
 - (2 “all is equal”

The result of such reasoning was to make no judgment.

Instead of attacking god’s existence, the skeptics attacked the possibility of knowing God’s existence.

They were very Socratic in this and concluded that there were insuperable obstacles to any conception of God advanced up to that time.

Sextus Empiricus (c. 200 CE)

- A late flowering of true Skepticism occurred with Sextus Empiricus (a Greek with a Latin name) “Empiricus” identifies him as a physician of the Empiric school of medicine. Modern knowledge of Skepticism is due to his interest in it, for he compiled what was known about the skeptics and their arguments.

Influence of Skepticism

- Never became an effective school, for it was always negative.
- Not influential on a continuing basis, and the last flowering came at a time when the world was turning to religion.
- The Skeptics turned out to be the most conservative people in the ancient world. This conservatism in practical life left Skepticism with no message and thus led to its downfall.
- Christians preserved the material of Skepticism and Sextus Empiricus and used it against all the ancient dogmas because of the fully developed arsenal of arguments against all the other ancient philosophical schools.

Cynicism

Beginnings of Cynicism

- Diogenes of Sinope (400-325BCE) – dog
- Grew out of Socratic teaching
- Void of decision making
- Supreme virtue is to not have any wants
- Rejected all pursuits of comfort and prestige
- To do what is natural (act like an animal) – anarchy
- Deliberately acted against the laws of society
- Apathy
- Beggars, renounced possessions
- Give philosophers a bad name
- Practicing self-affliction
- Strongly affected Christian monasticism
- Anti-establishment



Diogenes of Sinope (c. 400-c. 325 BC) credited with founding the Cynic way of life. He was influenced in his outlook by Antisthenes, a devoted follower of Socrates, who taught in a gymnasium in Athens known as Cynosarges ("Park of the Agile Dog") and himself apparently known as the "dog" (Greek *kyon*, "dog," which gave the name Cynic to the movement), but Diogenes became the one primarily known by that epithet. The name "Diogenes the Dog" was given him because of his shamelessness (*anaideia*) in public (cf. the behavior of dogs). Whatever is natural, he felt, is not indecent even in public. Diogenes advocated a life of self-sufficiency in which needs were kept to a minimum. He gave away everything in order to attain independence. To live according to nature meant to live simply. He did not found a school, but others imitated his life-style. The Cynics represented a way of life more than a doctrine or a school of thought.

Crates (c. 365-c. 285 BC) was the most faithful disciple of Diogenes. He led a wandering life preaching voluntary poverty and an independent life-style. Regarded for his peace making efforts and for consoling those in distress.

Bion (c. 325- c. 255 BC) and Menippus (1st half of 3rd century BC) are credited with developing the diatribe style, but the evidence is lacking and the earliest extensive material that permits study is found in the fragments of Teles, a mid-3rd century BC follower of Bion. Teles represented a milder form of Cynicism, better known from Dio.

Zeno, the founder of Stoicism was a disciple of Crates and whereas Stoicism developed in the direction of upholding the norms of society, the Cynics shocked the Greeks by abandoning manners and saying and doing whatever they wanted when they wanted.

Not being a formal school, Cynicism itself was open to whoever chose to appropriate the name and so became more moderate in some of the popular preachers of Roman times.

Cynic Characteristics

- They carried to an extreme the Sophists' contrast between custom and nature.
- Tried to dispel the illusions they saw in human attitudes and conduct and to attain "clarity of mind."
- Sought to free themselves from luxuries and so inure themselves to hardship by ascetic practices.
- They deliberately acted against the conventions of society using violent and abusive language, wearing filthy garments, performing acts of nature (defecation, sex) in public, and feigning madness. This was in order to excite censure.
- The Cynics alone among the Greeks did not view life as lived in society as a life of ruling and being ruled.



- By rejecting pleasure and seeking dishonor the Cynics sought to attain hardness, apathy, and freedom. They claimed that this action benefited the public; it shamed the people more than it shamed the Cynic.
- They believed that the life of virtue could be attained by one's moral effort, and so they rejected the claims of fate over an individual's life.
- They were impatient of stoic dogma and were sharply and consistently critical of the traditional religion.
- They believed in the divine and some were monotheists.
- The Cynic sage could be thought of as attaining the divine life.
- Cynics differed from Stoics in their rejection of dogma and of popular religion and in their insistence that the ideal of the wise man was attainable.
- Cynics were bold and frank in their speech, which they took to mean the freedom to speak the truth.
- They contributed much to popular philosophy and popularized certain key themes of the moralists.
- They provided the background to the development of stoicism and influenced the discourses of Dio of Prusa and the satires of Lucian of Samosata, two authors who reflect Cynic concerns and tell us much about Cynics.
- Cynics were one of the important strands leading to the Christian monk (renouncing possessions, wearing a philosopher's cloak, and practicing self-affliction).

Dio of Prusa (40 to after 112 CE)

- The orations of Dio, later called Chrysostom ("Golden-mouth") preserved and give the fullest collection of speeches by a Greek popular philosopher.
- A much better educated and more moderate one than the typical Cynic
- The Cynic way of life attracted deadbeats and imposters who loved the notoriety and alms.
- He and Lucian had much to say distinguishing the "true" Cynic from the other types.
- He was a native of Prusa in Bithynia and practiced rhetoric in Rome until he fell under Domitian's wrath and was banished.
- He traveled around the eastern Mediterranean, preaching the moral philosophy that was the common property of all the schools.
- His theology was Stoic. He did not represent the traditional attitude of most Cynics and did not identify himself with any school, but he adopted many of the Cynic themes and insisted on the philosopher's right of free speech and his role as critic.
- Dio addressed a wide range of topics reflecting the life of his times – such as, the philosophical justification of images in paganism as part of a treatment of ideas of deity and the place of art in religion.
- The main thrust of Dio's messages was sought to improve people through his speeches and heal their sickness of soul.
- He imparted a warmth of religious feeling to his teaching.



Lucian of Samosata (c. 120 to after 180 CE)

- Not a philosopher or an adherent of a particular philosophical school himself, but his satires on religious and philosophical topics repeat certain common themes. His dialogues were indebted in form and occasionally in content to Menippus's satires.
- Philosophers were a major target of Lucian's satire, and he spares none of the schools.
- He could be devastating in his mockery of pseudo-philosophers, especially Cynics.

Stoicism –

Two principal philosophical schools of the Hellenistic Age where the Stoics and Epicureans (cf. Acts 17:18). Both interested in ethics but developed comprehensive explanations of reality that were influential beyond their own circles of adherents.

- Zeno of Cyprus (355-263)
- Probably from a Semitic background (Phoenician)
- Ethics guided by logic founded in physics (natural world)
- Conformity to reason is the highest good
- Strict ethics and morals in accordance with nature and controlled by virtue (Romans 1) (Natural Order)
- Ascetic teaching – indifference to all things external
- Fatalists – no free will, no true existence of evil
- The god is eternal. Each person adds to the divine whole. When a person dies, you go back to the divine whole.
- Pain, pleasure, poverty, wealth, health, sickness don't matter because the world is not real or important
- Basic elements (all things, including man, were created from)
 - Air
 - Fire
 - Water
- Self-respect, not love, was the driving force
- Pantheistic logos (creator)
- Eminent, not personal, god
- The earth has no beginning or end
- Marcus Aurelius was the last Stoic

Early Stoa

Founded by Zeno of Citium (Cyprus) (335-263 BC). Perhaps a Phoenician by race, who came to Athens about 313 BC.

Early outlook influenced by Cynicism.

Stoicism was ambiguous about its Cynic origins.

Some were embarrassed by Cynics and denied that Zeno studied under the Cynics.

But other Stoics did not forget their Cynic origin.

Zeno began teaching in the *Stoa Poikile* (the Painted Porch, which served as a public hall) in Athens.

He started the scientific study of Greek grammar and vocabulary.



He developed a complete philosophical system of 3 branches

- 1) Logic and theory of knowledge
 - 2) Physics and theology
 - 3) Ethics
- His main concern was securing humanity from fear and disturbance.
 - The goal of life is virtue; everything else is indifferent. Since no one can deprive the wise person of virtue, that person is always in possession of the only true good and is therefore happy.
 - Zeno was succeeded as head of the Stoic school by Cleanthes (331-232 BC). He was from Assos and the only true Greek among the early leaders of the school. He looked at Zeno's description of the world as altogether material in a much more religious way. He developed the comparison of the universe to a human being. As the human body has a leading part, a greater concentration of soul, in the chest (where the voice comes from), so there is a leading part of the universe in the realm of the fixed stars. This greater concentration of spirit could be worshiped, as Cleanthes did in his "Hymn to Zeus," which had enough influence on antiquity that it has been preserved. The hymn emphasized "God's universal law," providence, and the individual's need to praise the universal law. The Stoa at this time came under heavy attack from the Academy. Cleanthes was a good man, but he could not handle the logical problems. Zeno had said of him that he was a slow learner but when he got something it stuck with him.
 - Chrysippus of Soli (Cilicia) (c. 280-207 BC) succeeded to the headship of the Stoa in 232, and saw a rebirth of Stoicism.
 - He was interested in psychology and logic.
 - His efforts to show that Homer and Hesiod were really Stoics gave an impetus to allegorizing.
 - Chrysippus became the Stoic par excellence to the ancient world.
 - Zeno and Cleanthes were absorbed into him and their ideas given a new foundation.
 - Through him Stoicism assumed a more academic and technical character.
 - He had the reputation in antiquity of being the best logician and having the worst style among the philosophers.
 - Aratus of Soli (c. 315-240 BC) – although not the head of the Stoic school, Aratus deserved special mention because he was quoted in the NT. He was a pupil of Zeno in Zeno's old age. Aratus was a poet. While at Pella, Aratus put into verse a textbook of astronomy, Phaenomena. Simple astronomy took the place of our calendars for everyone in that time outside of urban and court life. Everyone read Homer and Aratus. When the Romans translated something from Greek into Latin, Aratus was one of the first (Varro, Cicero, and Germanicus translated his work).
 - Aratus gave a Stoic coloring to his poem, and so he was important in the spread of Stoic ideas.
 - When Paul (Acts 17:28) wanted to quote something religious from the Greek poets, the opening lines of Aratus' Phaenomena came to mind. The statement "We are also his offspring" is similar to a statement in Cleanthes' "Hymn to Zeus,"



but Cleanthes uses the second person in direct address to Zeus whereas Aratus's statement is 3rd person, as is Paul's quotation.

Stoic Physics

- Difficulty in distinguishing the views of the first Stoics.
- *Materialism* – nothing is immaterial according to the Stoic view. God, the world, and even words are material. Each thing that one describes has three things that really exist: the word, the idea, and the physical object (e.g., the word horse, the idea of a horse, and the animal called “horse”). Even emotions are material things because they have a physical manifestation (e.g. shame causes a person to blush).
- *Pantheism* – 2 basic kinds of matter: the grosser matter and the finer matter called breath or spirit (pneuma) that is diffused throughout reality. This special form of matter holds everything together and is given various names: logos (reason), breath (pneuma), providence (pronoia), Zeus, or fire (the element considered most akin to reason). Stoicism was pantheistic in that it found the divine reality in everything. Zeus is everywhere, as the Greeks had said.
- *Soul and Providence* – the human being consists of these 2 kinds of matter: the heavier matter of the physical body and the lighter matter of the soul. The soul stretched through the body has 8 parts: the 45 senses, voice, generative power, and the “leading part”, the mind, which is concentrated in the heart. Later stoics, because of advances in medicine, placed it in the head. The universe is like a giant living body with its own leading part (Posidonius later placed it in the sun). Since the universe is rational, it does take thought for humanity. Everything is directed toward a good goal, and even evil exists for a good purpose.
- *Allegory* – the Stoics sought to find their physical theories in the ancient mythology and in so doing promoted the allegorical method of interpretation. Mythology was seen as a crude expression of truth, presented on the level of the people of the time. The gods did not actually do the things attributed to them, which were descriptions of natural events. The allegorical method of interpreting sacred literature was adopted by the Jewish philosopher Philo of Alexandria who harmonized the Mosaic religion with philosophy. From Philo the method passed to such Alexandrian Christian scholars as Clement of Alexandria and Origen.
- *Conflagration and Regeneration* – Stoicism went back to Heraclitus (c. 500 BC) for its view of the world. He thought that the world was essentially fire in various forms. Fire turned into air, air into water, water to earth, and back again. This constant change is balanced by an interchange. He called this principle of balance, stability, or order logos. Logos became another word in the Stoic system for god, since it maintains order. This is unlike the Christian conception found in John 1. From Heraclitus Zeno got the principle of “creative fire” –once all was fire and all will become fire again. The world goes through a period of stability, followed by the conflagration (*ekpyrosis*; cf. the language of 2 Pet. 3:10-12). The cycle will then be repeated (the regeneration –*palingenesia*; cf. Matt. 19:28; Titus 3:5). The world being perfect, if it is done over again it must be done the same way. There was no idea in Stoicism that the soul survives the



conflagration. Cleanthes said the soul lives until the next conflagration, but Chrysippus said only the souls of the wise do so. Later Stoics allowed a kind of limited immortality in that the soul is part of the World Soul and will reappear in the new world, but a personal immortality does not seem to have been a real possibility.

Stoic Logic and Epistemology

- If reality is rational, it must be possible to represent it rationally.
- A fundamental principle of Greek thought was that the universe is orderly.
- Problems in understanding it are logical problems and can be solved if one works on them. Stoics gave a lot of attention to logic.
- Stoic epistemology took as its criterion of truth a “perception that lays hold” (*kataleptic phantasia*)—something that must be believed because it is so compelling. It is not clear whether the mind lays hold of something or the object lays hold of the mind. It is the object lays hold of the mind the view is very near to that of Epicurus, but the Stoics would ever have admitted this.
- There was no place in the Stoic system for the desirous part of the soul or spirit, as in Plato. An emotion was either a superabundant wish (a reaching out of the mind) or an exaggerated impulse (something coming in from the outside and moving the mind more than it should).

Stoic ethics

- *Virtue* – the goal or end of life is being happy and this consists in living in accord with virtue, which is living in accord with nature. The common formulation of this conception was “to live according to nature.” Nature is the perfect environment into which all are born. All people should live in accord with the logos that runs throughout the world. Thus to live in accord with nature means to live reasonably.
- Since virtue is a matter of making the right judgments, it comes down to make right judgments. A person is either wise or foolish, completely virtuous or non virtuous.
- If a person makes the wrong choice, it is evident that he does not have proper training. One wrong judgment is as bad as any other.
- Stoic ethics were in theory quite intellectual
- Once one has the power to make right decisions, the power is never lost.
- By the 2nd generation it was decided that such was only in the past. Not even Socrates survived this attack.
- Thus, being the wise person, a reality to the first Stoics and a goal they strived to attain, became ideal. But admitting that no one truly wise ever actually existed proved to be very damaging. The Stoics initially made a division between the wise and the foolish, then presented the wise person as an ideal, and finally admitted that everyone was quite bad. The other schools made fun of the Stoic wise man.
- *Indifferent Things* – another category in early Stoic thought. Zeno spoke of what is indifferent, which for him was a very large category that included everything except virtue or vice. He divided the indifferent things into 2 groups:



- 1) Things preferred (e.g., family, house, health). Must have something to do with life.
 - 2) Things not preferred
- In between are those things that make no difference at all in life (e.g., whether the number of one's hairs is even or odd). Stoics became concerned with preserving society, because it was to be preferred uncivilized conditions, although it was not part of virtue. Later Stoics figured out a whole series of actions that were fitting or suitable in relation to the "preferred" conditions. As perfect actions became impossible, interest shifted to what was practicable. It increasingly showed an interest in what it considered secondary.
- *Determinism* – if everything is leading toward the best, as the Stoic theory of providence affirmed, then everything is determined in advance. The Stoic cyclical theory also pointed to the same conclusion. After the next conflagration, Socrates will gather the youth about him and teach as in the preceding cycle.
- *And students will be taking the same courses and reading this same textbook – a thought that should deter any potential converts to Stoicism!) Stoicism believed in "free will." How can that be possible within a deterministic system? Freedom has to do with the internal disposition. The Stoics used the illustration of a river with eddies in its current. A person is being carried along the river to perfection. The eddy is the free will when it resists, but like the stream one eventually will be carried away. The wise will submit to the providence of the logos. Since one is going to be swept along regardless, it is better to do so voluntarily. The fundamental problem is how persons can resist at all if everything is determined. This is especially acute for Stoics, since for them the divinity is within. How can one resist what one is a part of?

Middle Stoa

- Panaetius (c. 185-109 BC). Chrysippus was succeeded in the headship of the Stoa by Zeno of Tarsus, Diogenes of Seleucia, and Antipater of Tarsus. Panaetius studied under the latter two before himself succeeding to the headship in 129 BC. He was from a noble family in Rhodes, but by the time he was grown Rhodes had fallen to a second-rate power and was a protectorate of Rome. He turned to philosophy instead of a political career. After studying in Athens he went to Rome about 144 BC., where he became a part of the circle that gathered around Scipio and included the Greek historian of Rome, Polybius. Panaetius was one of the first Greeks to appreciate the new role and power of Rome, and was fortunate to be in the circle of Romans who for the first time were interested in Greek culture. Since he came from a leading family of what had been a great power and was an ally of Rome, it was easy for him to have access to leading Romans. He returned to Athens to head and rejuvenate the Stoic school for the last twenty years of his life.
- He adapted Stoicism to the Romans, making it suitable for a people ruling the world. He gave up the idea of a world conflagration and accepted the eternity of the world (since providence makes for the good, there is no destruction). He returned to a more Platonic understanding of the body and soul which make up a human being.



- He did not believe as Chrysippus in that the mind is not a single part but 2 parts; the drives and the logos. The emotional life is separate from the intellectual life; thus, the virtuous person is the one whose drives are controlled by the logos. Panaetius turned attention in ethics to the practical things of life. The correct act is any act that reflects the control of the logos.
- With Panaetius the natural law became the standard of reference. He said that there are 4 great natural drives: toward community (political), toward knowledge (intellectual), toward ambition (perfection for oneself), and toward beauty (aesthetic). All four drives are to be directed by the logos.
- This was a return to a more Greek concept than had characterized the Stoa and brought back into its philosophy some sense of the beauty of the world.
- He developed the idea that the best constitution is a mixed kind, combining elements of oligarchy, democracy, and monarchy. Polybius set forth this view in his history of Rome as an explanation of its greatness.
- He suggested that there were 3 kinds of gods:
 - 1) those of the philosophers (the natural gods), which are true
 - 2) those of the poets (the mythical gods), which are false
 - 3) those of the state (the political gods), which are somewhat in the middle for they tie the others together and are to be worshiped for their value to society.
- Varro developed this idea in the first century BC in a work Augustine selected as the best philosophical defense of paganism for refutation in his *City of God*.
- Posidonius (c. 135-c. 50 BC). Decorum is the word for Panaetius; enthusiasm is the word for Posidonius. Posidonius may be compared with Aristotle in his achievements in both science and philosophy. Nothing of his writings survived. Some modern scholars have seen it as considerable. He was born in Apamea in Syria and studied under Panaetius at Athens. After travels in the western Mediterranean he went to Rhodes and started a school there. He was never head of the Stoic school in Athens and was regarded as somewhat of a renegade by them. Strabo said he was always Aristotelianizing, which meant that he had an interest in scientific observation of the natural world and in causation. His views:
 - 1) Whereas the earlier Stoics had spoken of a “fashioning [or creative] fire,” Posidonius spoke of a “life-giving force.”
 - 2) There is a sympathetic relationship between all parts of the world. Posidonius discovered the effect of the moon on the tides in one of the great methodical studies of antiquity. Seeing the effect of the sun and moon on the world, Posidonius developed the theory of sympathy a mutual affecting of the parts of the world. From this theory of sympathy he elaborated a theory of unity in which there are 3 kinds:
 - The kind an army has –separate individuals functioning in harmony
 - The kind a building has –each part connected (joined) to the other
 - The kind a living being has –what affects one part affects all
 - 3) The cosmos is an ordered world with graduated levels of being. Each level or grade of being has its own “power.” He spoke of powers of the



soul (as Aristotle), not parts of the soul. Each part of the universe is interconnected with the rest through gradations. Posidonius wrote a work on beings intermediate between human and divine –demons and heroes. Not a mystic himself, his worldview inspired mysticism in others. He carried further a “Platonizing Stoicism.” Posidonius wrote on so much that he gave his age almost an encyclopedia of knowledge.

Later Stoa: Roman Stoicism

- Roman representatives of Stoicism in the 1st and 2nd centuries AD show an exclusively ethical and practical concern. They illustrate many of the themes that are part of the common philosophical outlook of the time. They also represent the broad range of Stoicism’s appeal—from the slave Epictetus to the emperor Marcus Aurelius.
- *Arius Didymus* a philosopher in Alexandria who accompanied Augustus into the city in 30 BC. He compiled epitomes of Stoic and Peripatetic ethics that are extensively preserved in Stobaeus. He said that the Stoics define virtue as “a disposition of the soul in harmony with itself concerning one’s whole life”.
- *Seneca (c. AD 1-16)*. Lucius annaeus Seneca born near the beginning of the Christian era at Cordoba, Spain. He was from an equestrian family and his brother Gallio was the proconsul of Achaia mentioned in Acts 18:12. He was the tutor of the young Nero. When Nero became emperor in 54, Seneca joined with the praetorian prefect Burrus to give good guidance to the government for 8 years. On Burrus’ death in 62, Nero came under the influence of evil counselors and Seneca retired from public life. An offer to relinquish his great wealth to Nero failed to save his life, and he was forced to commit suicide in 65 for alleged participation in a conspiracy against the emperor. Seneca’s principal philosophical writings are the 10 ethical treatises preserved under the name “Dialogues.” Similar in content, and most popular through the ages, is the collection of 124 *Moral Epistles*, which are not real letters. His ascetic advice and realistic assessment of human nature appear irreconcilable. He exposes the deepest and darkest secrets from the bondage of desire.
- *Cornutus (c. AD 20)* – was a freedman of Seneca or of one of his relatives. He taught philosophy in Rome about AD 50 but was exiled in the mid-60s. His literary work included critical studies of logic, rhetoric, and poetry. His principal philosophical work was “Summary of the Traditions concerning Greek Theology,” in which he gives an allegorical explanation of the myths along the lines of Chrysippus’s natural theology. He found a truth behind the myths. His etymological interpretation of the deities was based on the premise that the knowledge of the meaning of a name revealed the real nature of the person or object. He explained that he was writing in order to teach the young to worship in piety and not in superstition. He believed that the soul was annihilated at death.
- *Musonius Rufus (AD 30-101)*. Because of his association with philosophical criticism of the emperors, Musonius Rufus was twice banished from Rome. It is not known of him writing books only his apothegms and discourses have been preserved by others. He considered the practical exercise of virtue the most important part of philosophical education. Several features of his moral teaching



are of interest to students of early Christianity: he is the clearest of any ancient writer on the equality of man and woman; he believed marriage to be a complete partnership, with sexual intercourse to be confined to the marriage relationship and then only for the purpose of procreation; furthermore, parents should bring up all their children; in addition, he advocated vegetarianism and opposed luxury so as to harden the body. He was directly appropriated by the Christian moralist, Clement of Alexandria.

- *Epictetus* (c. AD 55-C. 135). Son of a slave woman, Epictetus was born at Hierapolis in Phrygia. Perhaps through sale he came to Rome where he grew up in the household of Epaphroditus, one of Nero's powerful freedmen who was secretary to the emperor. He was crippled and showed an interest in philosophy, so his master allowed him to attend the lectures of Musonius Rufus and then granted him his freedom. He began teaching philosophy on the street corners and in the marketplace. Banished from Rome with other philosophers in 89. He went to Nicopolis, Greece, and conducted his own school. Students came from Rome and Athens to attend his lectures. He tried to reach the masses with his message. He taught that the universe is the product of Divine Providence, which continues to be manifest in the world's order and unity. He saw the philosopher as an ambassador of the Divine with a mission to teach people how to live, as a physician of souls, a witness for God, a scout. He emphasized indifference to all things that are not within one's own self and will as the way to inner freedom. In one of his quotes it presents a close focus on the difference between Christianity and Stoicism. Stoicism said, "Feel toward yourself as you feel toward others"; Christianity said, "Feel toward others as you would feel toward yourself."
- *Marcus Aurelius* (AD 121-180). Stoicism ascended the throne in the person of the emperor Marcus Aurelius. The last great written expression of the Stoic view of life was his *Meditations* (lit. "To Himself"). These meditations are in no particular order and seem to have been transcribed from the emperor's personal notebooks as he put down thoughts for his private guidance. They represent the Stoicism that had been recast by Posidonius according to Plato's psychological dualism and transmitted to Marcus Aurelius in the writings of Epictetus. These aphorisms and reflections are often obscure, but they reflect the sober conservatism of a great-soul and somewhat ascetic man who was wrestling with great responsibilities. There is a mood of melancholy about the work, but the intensity of religious and moral feeling has made the *Meditations* a book much read through the ages. During his reign was a difficult time for Christians, and he could not understand their readiness for martyrdom, although his own Stoic belief allowed for suicide. But the stoic took his life as a rational decision, not (as the emperor saw it) in rash abandonment of life.
- *The End of Stoicism* – Marcus Aurelius was the last of the great Stoics. Stoicism came to an end, as it has been expressed, "because everyone became a Stoic": not that everyone gave adherence to the Stoic creed, but in the sense that everything Stoicism had to say became common property. What was of value in Stoicism was absorbed into the Neoplatonic synthesis.



Stoicism and Christianity

- Christianity borrowed from Stoicism in terms of some of the names such as: Spirit, conscience, Logos, virtue, self-sufficiency, freedom of speech, reasonable service, etc.
- Biblical injunctions concerning the units of society (Eph. 5:21-6:9; Col. 3:18-4:1; 1 Pet. 2:13-3:7; etc.) in both form (the reference to stations in society) and content (e.g., “it is fitting”) show Stoic influence.
- Even general atmosphere: humankind’s persistent evil, the need for self-examination, humanity’s kinship with the divine, denial of the world’s values, and emphasis on inner freedom from external circumstances.
- The Stoic natural theology, transmitted via Hellenistic Judaism (cf. Wisdom of Solomon 13-14), influenced Romans 1-2 and Acts 17. Paul was familiar with philosophical, especially Stoic, idioms and assumptions and used these to express his own arguments.
- Stoicism did not have a fully personal God; it knew only an immanent god. The God of the Bible is the creator of the world, never equated with it as in Stoic pantheism.
- In Christianity the universe has a beginning, purpose, and end; in Stoicism none of these. The only incarnation in Stoicism is that each one of us has part of the logos within.
- Stoicism’s consciousness of sin did not reach the depths of Jewish and Christian thought. Conscience has little significance unless there is a Person to whom it must answer. Stoicism shared the limitations of all philosophies in comparison to religion: knowledge of universal ethical precepts, as such, is seldom sufficient to call out and organize a corresponding conduct. This only follows when a special religious motive or ground of obligation is united with the knowledge of the universal principle. The basis of Stoicism’s ethics was intellectual and remained a philosophy for the few. Christianity, on the other hand, appealed to the masses. It did so by relating all classes of people to a personal Savior with moral power. Stoicism had no personal immortality. When one died, his divine part went back into the whole. Stoicism was a creed of despair and acquiescence; it looked down on the Christian virtues that depend upon the affirmation “God is love.” Stoicism’s apathy basically denied the emotional side of human experience. Christianity by contrast brought joy and hope into the world.
- Even where the teaching on social ethics was similar, the motivation was fundamentally different. Christians, ideally, act benevolently not merely in fulfillment of the obligation of a common kinship in the universe or even in God, but because they have learned self-sacrifice and active love from God in Christ. Self-respect, not love was Stoicism’s driving force. For Stoicism, as for all Greek philosophy before Neoplatonism, the goal of humanity is self liberation, and this goal is attainable. It did not know the redemptive love of a merciful God.

Epicureanism -

- *Epicurus and His School* – he had more loyal followers than any other Hellenistic philosopher and created close-knit communities with similarities to Christian communities.



- Opposite of Gnosticism in that it is about the tangible world
- Point: absence of pain (moderate hedonism)
- Not abstract, simple, non-philosophical
- Promoted pleasures of the mind, friendship and contentment
- Removes all thought of sin, judgment or accountability
- Did not promote sensuality
- The world is made of atoms (material) and space (the void)
- The gods are made of refined atoms but do not involve themselves in human affairs
- Address in Acts 17
 - He was born in 341 BC at the Athenian colony of Samos. In 307/306 he settled in Athens, where he bought a house with a garden that gave to his school its name, “the philosophy of the Garden.” He died in 270 BC.
 - He gathered disciples of more intense loyalty than any other philosopher in antiquity.
 - He was the most controversial figure in ancient philosophy, with bitter enemies as well as devoted followers.
 - His disciples formed a close knit group, living on Epicurus’s property a life of austere contentment withdrawn from the world. This seclusion and avoidance of public activities contributed to their unpopularity
 - He admitted women (including courtesans) and slaves to his community, and this along with his professed hedonism probably was the source of some of the stories that circulated about his school.
 - He did not teach an “eat, drink and be merry” philosophy (The Cyrenaic school founded by Aristippus advocated this sensual view of pleasure)
 - Epicurus’s philosophy promoted the placid pleasures of the mind, friendship, and contentment. For him there was no reason to eat, drink, and be merry today if you are going to have a headache from it tomorrow. Poor health imposed on Epicurus himself a frugal life.
 - He was a father figure to his followers
 - He formed communities of his followers and wrote letters of instruction to them.
 - They celebrated his birthday and gave him honors as to a god.
 - No later figure of importance and influence arose in his school.
 - There was a conservative tendency in preserving Epicurus’s teachings
 - Epicurus wrote about 300 rolls, but little of this survives.
- *Lucretius (94-55 BCE)*
 - The most important and influential exposition of the Epicurean system has come from the Latin poet Lucretius. He expounds the physical theory of Epicurus with a view to abolishing superstitious fears of interference by the gods in the world and of punishment in an afterlife. Lucretius was the ideal convert—having found “the truth,” he wanted others to find it. The poem provides a good outline of Epicurean philosophy.
- *Epicurean Physics*
 - Epicurus depended on the pre-Socratic philosopher Democritus for his physical theory. The whole of nature consists of matter and space (“the void”). Matter is divisible, but not infinitely, for then we would have nothing. We finally reach the atom (which in Greek means the “indivisible”). Atoms are



the invisible “building blocks” out of which the world is made. They are neither created nor destroyed. Atoms together with space constitute the whole of the universe, which is unbounded and infinite. Epicurus was a materialist. The physical world comes from atoms that operate according to law. Therefore, nature has no purpose. There is no creation—the world is eternal, for atoms are indestructible though they may be changed. For Epicurus this physical theory was the fall of religion. Epicurus did believe in the gods, who are made of refined material atoms. But they never interfere in nature or the affairs of humans. Their existence is something of a paradox, for they have no pragmatic function and do not explain anything in Epicurus’s system. He insisted there is no providence. The gods have bodies, but they never dissolve and so are immortal. They live in the interstellar spaces outside the world and have no contact with it. They are supremely happy and serene, for they are not bothered by humans. No place for prayer or answer to prayer in his system. Epicurus had a theology without a religion. He did counsel his followers to participate in sacrifices and other acts of homage. The gods as supremely perfect beings deserve worship and honor. People receive the benefit of aesthetic pleasure from contemplating their perfect existence. Because they are not involved with humans, we have no responsibilities to them and should not expect anything from them. Epicureans were called “atheists” by the ancients. It was used because the Epicureans did not believe in providence and because many did not follow through with participation in the public cults.

- Epicurus’s goal was to achieve peace of mind and tranquility for all. He wanted to get across the idea that the world is a garden, not a jungle.
- Epicurus wanted to save humanity from the darkness of religion. Oracles, divination, magic, etc., are humbug. He saw religion as a source of fear; therefore the banishing of the gods brought peace and the possibility of a good life.
- *Epicurean Epistemology*
 - He divided philosophy into physics and ethics.
 - For Epicurus sense perception is the basis of all reason.
- *Epicurean Ethics*
 - Epicurus’s physics and canonics existed for the sake of his ethics. The goal of life was formulated in various ways: Tranquility, happiness, or especially as pleasure. But pleasure as Epicurus defined it was not self-indulgence. We must discount the modern content of “Epicurean” if we would understand him.
 - His hedonism was an extension of his empiricism. Immediate feelings of pain and pleasure.
 - It is human nature to seek pleasure and avoid pain, since all pleasure is good and all pain is bad. One seeks the maximum of pleasure and the minimum of pain.
 - He judged pleasure and pain only by each person’s experience. He measured both by intensity, duration, and purity.
 - He divided pleasures into the kinetic (active) and the static (pertaining to a state or condition, passive).



- The lowest pleasures are those of the body.
- ***Estimate and Comparisons***
 - Summary of the philosophy: Nothing to fear in God; nothing to feel in Death; Good [pleasure] can be attained; evil [pain] can be endured
 - The establishment of a community of men and women where all were equal, had a common way of life, were isolated from the world, and were held together by reverence for a master was an ideal that had a great influence.
 - Christians and Epicureans were sometimes lumped together by pagan observers because of their common rejection of traditional religion (“atheists”) and the separation of their communities from ordinary life (1 Thess. 4:9-12 employs words used by Epicureans to describe a life of quietness withdrawn from public affairs).
 - Epicureans and Stoics were the chief rivals for the allegiance of educated people in the Hellenistic age (cf. Acts 17:18) both had a primary emphasis on ethics and made philosophy a way of life that could be its own religion with converting power.
 - Epicureanism drew its physical theory from the pre-Socratic philosopher Democritus, so Stoicism was indebted for part of its physical theory to the pre-Socratic philosopher Heraclitus. Both Epicureans and stoics sought to liberate humans from fate, to make them self-sufficient and indifferent to externals. Their major concerns –undisturbedness (ataraxia) in Epicureanism and passionlessness (apatheia) in Stoicism—were similar, but Stoicism was more stolid.
 - Epicureanism advocated a quiet and peaceful life, the life of “the Garden”; it took no interest in public affairs. Stoicism, as indicated by its name, “the Porch,” was set in the middle of public life and affairs. Stoicism developed in the direction of upholding the structures of society and the traditional religion. Its more active creed appealed to more persons, especially among the Romans, and exerted more influence. Stoics sometimes became Epicureans, but Epicureans never became Stoics. There was a strong cohesion and religious power about the Epicurean way of life.

Eclecticism -

Characteristics

- To pick and choose is the meaning of the name. It refers to the tendency to select elements from different philosophical schools and integrate them into one’s own system of thought or to put them together in new combinations.
- Eclecticism is the opposite of Skepticism
- It posits that at bottom all philosophy is in agreement.
- The eclectic tendency of later Hellenistic philosophy is illustrated in the work of Cicero below. Although his philosophical affiliation was with the Academy, he drew much from other schools, especially the Stoics.

Cicero (106-43 BCE)

- He was born in Arpinum, and struggled to gain acceptance by the Roman nobility.
- Learned the Greek technique of speech.



- Educated in Rome from Phaedrus (an Epicurean), Diodotus (a Stoic), and Philo of Larissa (under whose tutelage he became an Academic).
- In Athens on a foreign tour he attended the lectures of Antiochus of Ascalon (an Academic) and Zeno of Sidon (an Epicurean), and in Rhodes he became intimate with Posidonius (a Stoic).
- He had an eclectic approach and it has been said that his intellect was with the Academy, his conscience with the Stoa, and his information with the Peripatetics. He brought together oratory and philosophy, and he disseminated a theory of natural law.
- Caesar's rise to power forced him into retirement, and in his free time he gathered philosophical material.
- The death of his daughter in 45 BC made philosophy an existential concern. He sought a home or refuge in philosophy, which at that time provided the consolation supplied by religion in our times.
- Up until Cicero's time philosophy at Rome had been a hobby. He made it popular and so had a great influence on intellectual life.
- His philosophical works adapted the Latin language for abstract thought. This made possible a theology in Latin, and without this preliminary phase it is difficult to imagine development of a Latin Christian theology. In that regard his writings are comparable in importance to the Septuagint (which translated Hebrew ideas into Greek). He is a prime source for Greek thought and the status of philosophy at the close of the Republic.

Neopythagoreanism -

Pythagoras

- 6th century BC (the historical Pythagoras) remains a shadowy figure.
- He is associated with 4 ideas of importance for the history of philosophy and religion:
 - 1) Pythagoras had the brilliant idea that number is related to the structure of the universe. This idea came from his discovery of the numerical ratios of the principal intervals in the musical scale. The idea that the universe obeys mathematical laws has been of profound importance, apart from the more dubious speculation about number symbolism encouraged by this idea.
 - 2) Pythagoras taught the theory of metempsychosis, or transmigration (the passing of a soul at a body's death into another body). He shared with the Orphics the idea of a cycle of existence. Pythagoras apparently was an important source for Plato's distinction between soul and body.
 - 3) Pythagoras formed a close group of disciples with the cohesion of a religious group, whose patron deity was Apollo. Pythagoras created a brotherhood (the first thing approaching a "church") and gave his followers a distinctive way of life.
 - 4) He established an ascetic discipline. A member of his group had to live by rules. Purifications were to improve the soul. The Pythagoreans became complete vegetarians.



- 5) They remained a group apart and their ideas were somewhat exotic in classical Greece.

The early Pythagoreans are thought to have almost completely disappeared in the 5th century BC., but a date of 350-300 BC is argued for the Golden verses, a gnomic poem of basic moral, religious, and philosophical doctrines that appears to have been an introduction to the teachings of a Pythagorean group. Such Pythagorean lit produced a revival of Pythagorean ideas and sodalities in the first century BC., which in turn contributed to Neoplatonism.

The Pythagorean Revival

- Nigidius Figulus (d. 45 BC), friend of Cicero and supporter of Pompey, was led by his scholarly and mystical interests to a revival of Pythagorean ideas.
- An underground basilica near the Porta Maggiore in Rome, built in the 1st century AD has been identified by some as a Neopythagorean cult hall.
- The Neopythagoreans continued Pythagoras's interest in numbers and asceticism and his understanding of philosophy as religious.
- They were also interested in the stars and intermediary demons between the transcendent God and humankind, contributing to the concept of a "chain of beings."
- They seem to be the principal philosophical source for the view that the material world is bad, an idea that colored Gnostic thinking and was influential in the general pessimism about the world that began to spread in the second century AD.
- They speculated on the occult meaning of numbers, they were vegetarians, had their own passwords and signs of recognition, and were often linked with occult and magical practices.
- The rule of life—not philosophical speculation—was its chief attraction.
- Their life-style became the ideal representation of the holy, wise man—Christian lives of saints who were not martyrs (e.g., Athanasius, *Life of Antony*) follow the pattern of Pythagoras. We know the ideal best from Philostratus's portrayal of Apollonius of Tyana

Apollonius of Tyana and Philostratus

- He was the most significant Neopythagorean for NT studies. His life spanned the 1st century AD., and he died in the principate of Nerva.
- His biographer was Philostratus.
- Apollonius of Tyana was an ascetic wandering teacher and reformer who visited many of the prominent cities of the Roman world and traveled as far as India. He was known as a wise man and wonder-worker.
- He was persecuted under Nero, like many other philosophers, but other charges of magical practices were also involved.
- His reported miraculous powers and his life-style have made him the principal 1st century representative of the "divine man" concept—both of the sage and wonder-worker types—which has come to prominence in Gospel studies as the background for the portrayal of Jesus.



- Rival traditions about Apollonius were circulated in the ancient world, but the only full account to be observed is the *Life of Apollonius* by Flavius Philostratus (c. AD. 170-249). Behind Philostratus are 2 older views of Apollonius—as a magician and charlatan or a wonder-worker and theosophy. A principal thrust of Philostratus’s work is to defend Apollonius from charges of magic and to attribute his miracles to supernatural power (cf. the charge that Jesus was a magician)
- Apollonius rejected marriage for himself. He condemned animal sacrifice, substituting prayer and meditation.
- His closeness to the gods supposedly gave him a knowledge of the past and the future.
- He renounced monetary advantage and recommended to others a kind of communism.
- Despite his professed adherence to Pythagoras, there are Stoic, Cynic, and Platonic elements in Apollonius.
- Some features of his life parallel with Jesus such as his miraculous birth; the gathering of a circle of disciples.

Numenius

- The last and best philosopher of the Pythagorean revival
- From Apamea (late 2nd century AD)
- Termed a “Pythagorizing Platonist”
- Exerted influence on Plotinus and had contacts with Jews and Christians
- He anticipated Plotinus’s absolutely transcendent One as the first principle of reality, with Mind and world soul providing potential contact with the human soul.
- Difficulty in classifying Numenius (as a Neopythagorean or Middle Platonist) testifies to the flowing together of different philosophical currents in the 2nd century AD., which prepared for the new synthesis known as Neoplatonism.

Middle Platonism

- Platonism from the 1st century BC to the 2nd century AD is called Middle Platonism
- Began in Alexandria about 50 BC
- The development had been prepared for in the move from skepticism to eclecticism by Antiochus of Ascalon.
- At this time, when the Academy was moving toward Stoicism, the Stoa was becoming more Platonic (Posidonius).
- The 1st century BC saw a revival in the study of Plato and Aristotle, who returned to a position of predominance.
- The idea of the soul as distinguished from the body reappeared and became the basis of patristic and medieval philosophy
- Thinkers included, Plutarch, Apuleius, Albinus, Alcinous, Maximus of Tyre
- Middle Platonism provided the intellectual background for the work of the Christian apologists of the 2nd century—Justin Martyr, Tatian, Athenagoras, and Clement of Alexandria.
- Even in the NT, Platonism has been seen reflected in the Epistle to the Hebrews



- Middle Platonism was Platonism influenced by Stoic ethics, Aristotelian logic, and Neopythagorean metaphysics, religion, and number symbolism.
- The Middle Platonists started with the idea that it might be possible to reconcile Plato's and Aristotle's views about the universe and divine things. For instance, Alcinous identified Aristotle's Supreme Mind (the Unmoved Mover) with Plato's Good (which became the first principle of the world of forms). The Platonic ideas or forms became the thoughts within the divine mind. Philo of Alexandria is the first extant author explicitly to give this formulation: the ideas are the thoughts in the reason of the Supreme God of Judaism.
- The Middle Platonists exalted the absolute transcendence of the Supreme Mind (God).
- The universe is animated by a World Soul
- Direct knowledge of the transcendent Mind is impossible, but a "negative theology" gives an indirect knowledge of God.
- Some influenced by Neopythagoreans, gave a negative judgment on matter as evil, others, closer to Plato, saw evil as the result of the embodiment of ideas.
- Another emphasis of the Middle Platonists was the immortality of the soul.
- They derived from Plato their doctrine that the goal of life as happiness consists in "likeness to God, so far as is possible".
- 3 figures affiliated in varying degrees with various forms of the Platonic tradition:
 - 1) Cicero – at the end of the 1st century BC
 - 2) Philo of Alexandria – at the beginning of the 1st century AD.
 - 3) Plutarch – at the end of the 1st century AD.

They reflect the eclectic tendencies of the time and the capacity of Platonism to absorb many other elements and be the integrating framework for new syntheses, a capacity that enabled it to be the leading force in the last stages of paganism and the major philosophical influence in the formulation of patristic theology. They bracket the 1st century.

Plutarch (c. 50 – after 120 CE)

- The most extensive corpus of writings by an author included among the Middle Platonists comes from Plutarch.
- Citizen of Chaeronea in central Greece
- Came from a prominent family and had contacts with some of the leading men of his time.
- Spent time in Athens, Egypt, and Italy.
- The last 30 years of his life he was a priest at Delphi; he combined piety and respect for the old ways with a moderate rationalism.
- He is an extremely important person for the study of Christian backgrounds because of his proximity in time to the NT writings.
- Some of his writings include: major dialogues on the Delphic Oracle, a major treatise on religious speculation, treatises on technical philosophy, antiaquarian works, and the nine books of Table Talk.
- He was devoted to public duties and advocated a partnership of Greek culture and Roman statesmanship.
- Had tendencies to monotheism with practical moral interests.



- Has maintained popularity with Christian readers.
- His crown of philosophy is to form true and worthy conceptions of God and to give him pious worship.
- His description of God sounds like that of the Christian apologists, but he supported the traditional religion and sought to resolve its contradictions.
- He plotted a middle way between atheism and superstition with “reverent rationalism”.
- He reconciled the spiritualized view of the unity of God with the popular polytheism by seeing the traditional gods as subordinates and by interpreting mythology as a poetic expression of truth for a more primitive age.
- His works *On the Decline of Oracles*, *The Oracles at Delphi*, and *On the Demon of Socrates* are major sources for the doctrine of demons.
- Philanthropy is his favorite virtue.
- He maintained a quiet optimism that good is stronger than evil.
- He has many points of contact with the NT
- He was a source or an illustration of the political, social, cultural, religious, and philosophical thought of the early Roman Empire.

Plotinus and Neoplatonism –

Hellenistic philosophical developments found their climax in Neoplatonism. The eclecticism of philosophy in the early empire was brought into an ordered system by Plotinus, the creator of Neoplatonism. It was the last form of spiritual Greek religion, although some of its representatives combined it with magic and theurgy. It provided the focus for the last intellectual challenge to Christianity in the paganism of the 4th century. As a metaphysical system it had enormous influence on Christian thought. Origen was educated in the same thought-world from which Neoplatonism came. This philosophy was the background of the work of the Cappadocians in the 4th century and through them influenced Greek Orthodox theology. It was decisive in the intellectual development of Augustine and through him had a great impact on the Medieval Latin development.

Life of Plotinus

- Born in Egypt and studied in Alexandria under Ammonius Saccas
- Traveled to the east, and at 40 years old settled in Rome.
- He wrote essays based on the philosophical discussions he had with a number of pupils that gathered around him.
- Plotinus has been a major source of western mysticism.
- One of his students Porphyry says that Plotinus experienced union with the divine on 4 occasions.

Plotinus's System

- Called the greatest thinker between Aristotle and Spinoza
- His system consisted of Platonism with Aristotelianism, Stoic, and Neopythagorean elements.
- The dualistic outlook of the period is expressed within a framework of ultimate unity.



- The highest principle is wholly transcendent.
- It is the One, an immaterial and impersonal force that is the ground of all existence and source of all values.
- The One is neither subject nor object, neither self nor the world. The One is what is left by transcending all duality.
- Plotinus goes beyond Plato in positing a transcendence that encompasses not only all being but also nonbeing.
- Creation is impossible in Plotinus's thinking, for it implies that God is involved in this universe.
- Neoplatonism speaks of emanations that provide the connection between the One and matter.
- The doctrine of emanations made Neoplatonism something of a dynamic pantheism, although not a pantheism in the ordinary sense.
- Evil is not an ontological reality. Nothing is evil in its nature. Evil is nonbeing, the term or limit of being.
- The longing of the soul to return to the source of all being is a desire for union. For Plotinus, this unity is salvation. The return to the One is not achieved easily. It requires asceticism—restraining from actions and desires and purifying the self from the influences of the finite world.
- Plotinus thinks in a circular way. As the One through emanations has produced manifoldness, the manifold returns to the One. Nothing gets lost in this circular movement of devolution and return. There is no person survival in the Christian sense.

Later Neoplatonists

- Very successful because it brought to fruition and systematized the conceptions of the time and united theology and philosophy. The later Neoplatonists made it scholasticism and took superstition and theurgy into its doctrine.
- Porphyry (AD 232-c. 305) born in Tyre, studied under Longinus in Athens and became a devoted disciple of Plotinus in Rome. He preserved Plotinus' work and a wide range of other writings. He wrote 15 books entitled *Against the Christians*, which were burned in 448.
- Iamblichus (c. AD 250- c. 325) studied under Porphyry and wrote a Life of Porphyry. His *On the Mysteries* is a fundamental work for late antique religion. Had his own school in Syria and introduced theosophical tendencies into Plotinus's system. He was attracted by theurgy, the practice of inducing the presence of divine powers by magic. Theurgy makes it possible for humans to enter into relations with the gods. The soul according to Iamblichus had a double life—part united with the body and part separated from it.
- Julian (332-363), emperor 360-363, attempted to reestablish paganism and so earned from Christians the designation "Julian the Apostate." Even though he tried to revive the old Greek religion, he was the champion of a late form of paganism interpreted in Neoplatonic terms, especially in the form given by Iamblichus. He was conservative about religious ceremonies and myths, his



view blended the gods in syncretism. He worshiped the sun as the supreme deity. A spiritual man, he was aristocratic in outlook and superstitious as well as philosophical.

- Proclus (AD 410-485) was head of the Academy in Athens. He was the last great systematizer of the Greek philosophical inheritance, but his system is in reality mystic.
- The school was closed by the emperor Justinian in AD 529. By that time this was not so much an act of religious persecution as a decent burial.



Society and Culture:

Social classes, economic life and entertainment

The New Testament World - Week 4
Adult Education



Roman Society & Culture

Military

Legions –

- Citizen soldiers
- By Tiberius, mostly non-Italian
- Recruits obtain citizenship
- Legion was 6000 soldiers
- 25 legions under Tiberius
- Divided into 10 cohorts of 6 centuries (100 men)
- While not at war, legionaries performed civil service: construction, maintenance, roads, etc.
- 17-46 years old can be drafted
- Went through rigorous evaluation before enlisting
- Wore nails in their sandals

Emblems and Weapons –

- Eagle (aquila) was the principal legionary emblem
- Main weapons of foot soldiers were the short sword and lance (3.5 feet long with an iron point joined to staff of wood)

Auxiliaries –

- Specialized troops: cavalry, slingers, archers, etc.
- Recruited from native populations
- Received citizenship for themselves and their families
- Regiment (cohort) was either 500 or 1000 men

Praetorian Guard –

- 9 or 12 cohorts of 500 or 1000
- Formed body guard of the princes
- Higher standard and higher pay than regular soldiers

Social Classes

Senatorial Order –

- Filled by official magistracies of Rome (quaestor, praetor, consul)
- Broad purple stripe on toga
- Chief civilian and military administrators
- Must be rich before entering the Senate
- Senatorial was worth 250,000 dinarii

Equestrian Order –

- Knights
- Wealth of 100,000 denarii
- Wealthy, educated and related to senatorial families
- Either born into the order or advanced into it



Municipal Aristocracies –

- Top members were decurions (municipal senates)
- 100 members in town in the west
- Paid heavy tax for the prestige

Plebeians and Other Free Persons –

- Not senatorial or equestrian or decurions

Freedmen –

- Former slaves in relationship with their owners
- Mutual responsibilities

Slaves –

- Very extensive
- POWs made cheap slaves
- 1 in 5 residents of Rome were slaves
- Legal status of a possession
- No legal rights, completely subjugated to their master
- Generally, could not marry and their children belonged to the slave mother
- Did every kind of work
- Did not always have a negative economic consequences
- *Peculium* was money or property of the owner available to the slaves
- Christianity gave instructions for existing social structure

Roman Citizenship

- Gradually discovered dual citizenship
- Could be obtained:
 - Birth to citizen parents
 - Slaves of citizens
 - Favor for special service
 - Discharge from service
- Privileges of citizenship:
 - Voting
 - Freedom from degrading forms of punishment
 - Right to appeal to Rome

Roman Law

- Sources:
 - Laws and statutes enacted by a vote of the people
 - Resolutions of the Senate
 - Edicts of magistrates
 - Constitutions of emperors
 - Replies of jurists
- Imperium could be held to impose the death sentence



- Roman officials became involved in matters affecting public order
- Judicial process – drawing up of charges by interested party, no public prosecutor
- No professional lawyers (“lawyers” in the New Testament were Torah experts)
- Adoption – at any age, debts were cancelled, name was taken and entitled to inheritance

Social Relations

Patron-Client Relationship –

- Both had duties to each other
- Was a personal relationship – not business
- Different social classes
- Voluntary

Friendship –

- All things in common
- Mutual exhortations and frankness
- Willingness to share troubles and make sacrifices for one another

Social Networks –

- Neighborhoods, ethnic groups, cities of origin, occupations, religious cults, etc.

Honor and Shame –

- The standard was public opinion
- Individual’s behavior was judged according to what brought honor and shame on the social group
- Honor came to a person because of birth or family
- Might be achieved through acts of courage or benevolence
- Shame came from conduct that should not be done in society

Morality –

- Slavery gave occasion for cruelty and sexual license
- Common punishment for crimes were sentencing to the mines and execution by crucifixion
- Jewish apologetics said immorality came from idol worship
- Sacred prostitutes were common in other cults
- Grouping of duties:
 - Husbands-wives
 - Parents-children
 - Masters-slaves
- Cult had little to do with morality except grave offenses

Marriage and Family –

- Basic unit of society
- Husband, wife, children, slaves and sometimes other relatives
- Greek law required that marriage be preceded by a betrothal agreement
- Marriages are two parts – betrothal and ceremony



- Early betrothals were ceremonial with witness and dowry
 - Later it became a business agreement
- Girls were married in their teens, men around 30 (partly due to army service)
- United by common religious observances
- Father pledged to groom with witnesses and dowry agreement
- Roman Republic had three forms of marriage:
 - *Confarreatio* (religious ceremony)
 - *Coemptio* (sale of a woman)
 - *Usus* (common law for one year or more)
- Roman Weddings:
 - Bride was prepared for wedding with a bath and special garments
 - Torchlight procession to the grooms house
 - Couples clasp hands, formulas of marriage are pronounced, contract is read and signed
 - Girls married in early teens, men around 30
- Jewish Weddings:
 - Contract between two families
 - Two stages – betrothal and wedding
 - Betrothal was legal and could only be broken by divorce
 - Bride price
 - Ketubah listing the husbands duties to his wife and the amount due to her if he should divorce her or die
 - Huppah was set up and bride went to the groom's house
 - Jewish men expected to marry at 18
- Prostitution and adultery were common for Greeks and Romans
- Divorce required little formality
- 1st century marriage could be ended by woman or man
- Egypt – women could divorce husband for sexual misconduct
- Dowry was returned to the woman in a divorce
- Children went with the father
- Augustus brought family under the state in 19/18BCE
- Tried to increase birth rate by encouraging marriage and stable family life
- Bachelors were limited in the inheritances
- Widowed and divorced women were required to remarry within stipulated times
- Men could not be prosecuted for adultery, but women could and were banished

Place of Women –

Greek:

- Confinement to the home prevented suspicion of infidelity and to protect the legitimacy of the children
- Woman managed the household and in that sphere they were supreme
- Men had female companions that could act as prostitutes – they provided entertainment and conversation at parties
- Slave girls were kept for household duties
- Wives bore legitimate children and managed affairs in the absence of their husbands



Jewish:

- Jewish women had less freedom than Roman women but more than Greek women
- Household duties of a Jewish woman – grinding flour, cooking, laundry, making beds and spinning wool
- Husbands were required to provide food, clothing and sexual relations
- Women's influence in the family was greater than the man
- Life expectancy for a woman was shorter than a man's because of malnutrition, childbearing at an immature age, etc.

Roman:

- Some women were patrons due to wealth
- Patrons had considerable power and influence
- Frequently held civil offices
- Some were priestesses
- Variety of occupations – physicians, musicians, artists, athletes, merchants, manufacturing, etc.
- Virtues – chastity, loyalty to the husband, hardworking, able to manage the household and train children

Children –

- High mortality rate
- Important for the security of their family and community
- Puberty also brought the ability to reason
- Adulthood – marriage for girl and registry as a citizen (17) for a boy
- Many children were abandoned and left exposed to die
- After 230BCE, a one-child family was commonest in Greece
- Daughter was an economic liability (dowry)
- Abortions were often attempted, often fatal for the mother and were made illegal under Septimius Severus
- Child was not accepted as family until acknowledged by the father as his child and received through a religious ceremony
- Exposure was not considered murder but refusal to admit to society
- Miscarriages and infant mortality were extremely common

Economic Life

- Basis for agricultural economy – olives, grapes, grain and sheep
- No large industry
- Traditional industry – ceramics, mining, textiles and small handicrafts
- Blown glass emerged in NT times
- Marketplace was a large open area, rectangular, public monuments and statues, surrounded by a *stoa* which had shops and offices behind
- City had offices for magistrates, gymnasium, theater, public fountain and agora
- Ptolemies: (South/Egypt)
 - Land in hand and the king's land in grant



- Grant land was temple lands, cleruch land (military settlers), gift land (officials) and private land (house and garden cultivated by peasants)
- Seleucids: (North)
 - Three land categories – king's land, temple land, city land
 - Better governed than Egypt
- Palestine: (In the middle)
 - Less prosperous than other regions
 - Jewish population was primarily engaged in agriculture
 - Chief products – olives, wine, wheat and barley
 - Jesus' parables give an accurate portrayal of common life

Trade and Travel –

- Four main lines of communication between Rome and the eastern Mediterranean – 2 land and 2 sea
 - Sea Route from Ostia or Petoli to Alexandria (merchant ships)
 - Appian Way to Brundisium and then by ship to Corinth and beyond
 - Appian Way and then by ship to Ephesus and from there by land to the interior (most common by Christians)
 - Land Route to Brundisium across the Adriatic Sea to Dyrrachium and across Macedonia
- Sea travel was dangerous but frequent
- Estimated 53,000 miles of Roman roads from Scotland to the Euphrates
- Appian Way – oldest, began in 312BCE, route that Paul used to Rome
- Egnatian Way – began in 145BCE
- Inns were common but with bad reputation
- Upper class stayed with friends along the way
- Churches provided hospitality for traveling Christians
- Many synagogues had guest houses

Coinage –

- Began in western Asia Minor in the 7th century BCE (lumps of metal stamped to guarantee weight and quality)
- 516BCE Persian coins issued
- 580BCE first Athenian coins with mythological scenes of gods and heroes
- Alexander issued extensive coinage
- Heroes, gods and sacred animals were popular
- Coinage proper began in 269BCE
- 211BCE first Roman coins, the denarius
- 197BCE special issue gold coins in Greece in honor of Flamininus who defeated Philip V
- Rulers used coins for propaganda
- Palestine:
 - 5th and 4th centuries BCE Persian coinage
 - Shekel in the OT was weight only
 - Jewish coinage started with either John Hyrcanus (134-104), Aristobolus (104-103) or Alexander Jannaeus (103-76BCE)



- Hasmoneans avoided images and used anchor pomegranate, etc
- Local mints issued bronze coins, imperial mints issued gold and silver

Taxation –

- Census started with Augustus
- Excellent work in supervising tax collecting and making taxation equitable
 - Direct taxes (tribute)
 - Agriculture (tributum soli) by land owners
 - Head tax (tributum capitis)
 - Indirect taxes (vectigalia) and frontier dues (portoria were most important)
- Publicans were contractors employed to collect indirect taxes (class of nights)
- Telonai (east) were local men of wealth and influence who contracted with their city or district (in Palestine they had no authority to collect payment)
- Telonai were Zaccheus and Matthew, employed by Antipas

Culture and Entertainment

Clothing and Appearance –

- Undergarment was tunic (Latin) or chiton (Greek)
- Outer garment was himation (or pallium/palla in Latin)
- Roman freeborn males wore a toga. (High rank had purple border)
- Veils for women:
 - Jewish women were always veiled in public
 - Greek and Roman sources say mixed
 - Classical Greece – veil was worn outside the house by women who had reached sexual maturity

Theaters

- Theater –
 - semi-circle, called “amphitheater” today, backdrop was a “skene”,
 - actors did not speak
 - orchestra was the voices
 - 1 Cor 13, love was talking about brass jars that set in front of the state, when the gods spoke the actor spoke into the brass jars which echoed deep, thunder was a thin, brass sheet
- Amphitheater –
 - Round Arena
 - Gladiator fights, athletics, etc. (very bloody) Gladiator games drew huge crowds and replaced Greek drama and athletics
- Hippodrome –
 - Hippo is Greek for horse
 - Chariot races Hippodrome was name in Greek east, enclosed for chariot racing
 - Important sport among aristocratic Greeks
 - Winners received large sums of money and popularity
- Greek drama began in the festivals of Dionysus



- Altar of Dionysus occupied the center of the orchestra (round in center front area)
- Roman theater had enclosed structure with back wall, orchestra was a half circle
- Largest place for public gathering
- Comedy flourished in Hellenistic theater
- By Christian era, Greek drama had passed
- Vulgar and sexual content was common
- Few actors would play all the parts (hypocrite)

Athletics –

- Contests accompanied Greek religious festivals
- Religious games began with sacrifice and prayer
- Contestants made vows to the deity
- Hellenistic and Roman times had paid professional athletes
- Physical training centered in the gymnasium
- Foot races were held in the stadium
- Major sports were running, boxing, pentathlon (running, long jump, discus, javelin and wrestling) and pankration (combination of boxing, wrestling, kicking – anything except biting and gouging)

Gymnasia and Baths –

- Gym was Greek, bath was Roman but hybrid developed
- Cultural and social institutions
- Primarily for citizens or at least moderately wealthy
- Gymnasia :
 - Court yard in the middle of a portico with rooms around
 - Bathing rooms, dressing rooms and storage rooms
 - Lecture hall and statues, altars and emblems to Hermes and Heracles
- Baths:
 - Every town had one or more
 - Pools for bathing, different temperatures
 - Warm, hot, warm and cold (order)
 - Furnaces and underground ducts with hot air flues
 - Large baths had large halls, smaller game or conversation rooms, gardens, swimming pools, dressing rooms and palaestrae.
 - Country club and community center
 - Mixed bathing started in the first century CE
 - Public nudity was not always a matter for concern
 - Baths were sometimes associated with immorality

Banquets –

- Dinner party was the most important social occasion
- Greek:
 - Guests elected a president who determined the mixture of wine and water and presided over the evening's entertainment
- Rome:



- Established rules about rank and honor determined by one's place in the dining room
- Three couches (triclinium)
- Ate reclining
- Wine was served after dinner
- Guests might play games or be entertained

Music –

- Weddings, funerals, banquets, official occasions, sacrifice and ritual acts
- Aulos was wind instrument which sounded like an oboe
- Syrinx had different lengths of pipes (pop among rural folk)
- Kithara was stringed instrument to accompany singing
- Played an important role in Greek education

Education

Roman/Greek:

- Most schools were small and private with a single teacher
- Teaching was a humble and despised occupation
- School year went from October to June
- Classroom was usually a shop in the town center
- Primary, secondary and advanced
- Primary began at age 7 – reading, writing and basic arithmetic
- Emphasis on memorization and copying
- Discipline was stern
- Secondary was for upper class – grammar, rhetoric, geometry, arithmetic, astronomy and music
- Physical education was for sport and moral training
- Advanced education – finishing school for young men, PE, rhetoric, philosophy with a library. For greater social significance and political office
- Graduate could choose from philosophy, medicine or law
- Rhetorical education was highly important
- Speech was the queen of studies
- Education was voluntary
- Literacy rate of Hellenistic and early Roman times was high
- Girls and boys went to elementary schools
- Most boys learned a trade and most girls learned household skills

Jewish education:

- Mainly religious
- Home was center for religious education, elementary school for reading and writing
- Classes often in synagogue or adjoining room
- Expected to be able to read the Hebrew scriptures
- Great emphasis on memorizing scripture
- Secondary school – oral law, probably began at 13



- Advanced study – interpretation and rabbinic legal opinions, to prepare for rabbinic ordination or scholar
- Jewish women were discouraged from legal studies

Jewish Society and Culture

Jewish Marriage –

- Judaism expected male to be married at 18
- Torah student could delay
- The point is procreation
- If the wife doesn't bear children in 10 years she was divorced
- *Betrothal*
 - Formal act
 - She became his legal wife
 - A "get" (divorce) was required to break betrothal
 - Virgin had to wait one year from betrothal to marriage
 - Divorced or widow waited 30 days
 - Permissible but not practical to have more than one wife
 - Dowry is the groom's and the gift of the groom to the bride belonged only to the bride
- *Ketubah*
 - Written in Aramaic
 - Legally binding document
 - Includes the amount of money husband will pay wife for a divorce (often high enough to make it impossible)
 - Duties of both parties
 - Promise that he wouldn't have more than one wife
- *Divorce*
 - Only a man could file for divorce
 - Woman was paid the amount specified in the Ketubah
 - A tanner's wife could ask for a divorce and it was granted (tanners stunk from the dung used in dying hide)
 - Man could not force his wife to spin flax for linen because it makes the fingers and mouth swell and bleed
 - Woman could remarry, but if she did, she could not return to first husband
 - Woman could not release her husband from the price in the ketubah
 - Talmud talks extensively about divorce
 - Men would simply leave, assume a new name start a new family
 - Grounds for divorce:
 - Infidelity (man was obligated to divorce), she could be forgiven and she would not be stoned rather than pressing charges. He could not remarry her.



- Hillel took theoretical divorce and tried to find exactly what the law stipulated
- Shamai made it very difficult to divorce – the only situation where Yeshua sided with Shamai

Status of Women –

- Their job was to manage the household which was not below the man
- Did not study, some believed that women lacked the ability
 - Aristocratic women were taught Greek (after Herod's death)
 - Rural women were generally illiterate because she had no need for such education.
 - Children belonged to their mother until 3
 - From 3 to 5, the boys went with their fathers, formal education began
 - Talmud says that if children are nursed beyond 3 years, they will be retarded
 - At 5 boys started school and to read the Torah
 - Girls were not educated
 - Some torah topics were beyond women
- Women are exempt from time related commandments (prayers)
- All negative commandments are required (Thou shalt not)
- Responsible for household religious life (mezuzah, Shabbat, etc)
- Men and women were not separated in Second Temple period

Education –

- Synagogue was dependant on school, not the other way around
- Nothing written regarding Jewish education in the Second Temple Period, only Talmud
- Children started at age 6
- Learned Hebrew at school
- Talmud describes school:
 - Every town with 25 boys or 125 families
 - Community paid the chazzan/teacher regardless of whether or not they have children
 - Studied Torah
 - After school, went to Beit Midrash
 - Did not exist before Hillel (7 rules of exegesis)
 - Everything is learned orally and memorized
 - A good student became a scribe (many meanings)
 - Good memory and analysis
 - Earliest office of "scribe" was a secretary
 - Sage / Wise person (Talmudic time only)
 - Ordained office, after the rabbinut
 - Not allowed to live in a town with no teacher or school
 - All teaching was in Hebrew
- Scribes:
 - Biblically, scribes were wise teachers and respected teachers with authority



- Help make community decision
- Later became epigraphers
 - Minor or non-existent during 2nd Temple
- Most scribes were Pharisees
 - In Mishnaic times (tanna'im), ordained position
 - Later scribes were called rabbi (or sage)
- Considered the descendants of the Prophets

Jewish Society –

- *Royal court:*
 - The highest class
 - Herod was extremely wealthy
 - Personal guard of 500
 - Private tutors, cupbearers, scribes, etc
 - Copper mines in Cyprus
 - Arrested rich men and confiscated their wealth
 - Taxed the people
 - Had 10 wives and 1 queen
 - Only eunuchs were allowed near his wives
- *Small wealthy population (not Aristocracy):*
 - Gave large dowries (10% to bride)
 - Took poor into their homes during Pesach
 - Nicodemus and Joseph of Aramathea
 - Most Pharisees were wealthy class
 - Many Sadducees were Aristocracy
 - Chief priests were part of wealthy class
 - Unsure if the salary was paid from treasury
 - Chief priest:
 - Collected taxes and got kick backs
 - Almost always a Zadokite until Jason
 - After Jason it was bought and sold
- *Middle class:*
 - Merchants, traders, shopkeepers, craftsmen, etc
 - Most successful business men were tourism and religious wares
 - Innkeepers made a good living
 - Pilgrims were required to stay over night in Jerusalem
 - Second tithe in mishnah was to be spent on oneself inside Jerusalem (new clothes, etc)
- *Farmers:*
 - Am Israel (the majority)
 - Most owned small plots of land
 - Helped by children
 - Grow crops to live off of and some for bartering
 - Lots of bartering in this class
 - Self-sufficient lifestyle
 - Not based on money



- Drought brings in the money system which makes farmers poor
 - Have to sell land or become tenant farmers
- Inheritance gave a double portion to the oldest son
- Other sons became beggars, day laborers, thieves, etc.
- Prime land belonged to the king
- *Poor:*
 - Poor class only exist in an urban society
 - Day laborers, beggars or slaves
 - Priests
 - 24 courses, twice a year
 - Scattered throughout the country
 - Two kinds of slaves:
 - Hebrew slave
 - Jew who sold his property or his children
 - Belonged bodily to his master
 - Could be sold but only to another Jew and only in payment to another debt
 - Had families
 - Could only serve up to 6 years
 - Had to be freed on the year of Jubilee unless he chose to be a bondservant
 - Canaanite slave (any non-Jew)
 - Lower than a human
 - Property like an animal
 - Sold in the marketplace
 - Average worth was 100 dinar (1 month's wage)
 - Had no status, no connection to their family
 - Could be punished however the master seemed fit, if disfigured he was set free. If he was killed the master was punished
 - Jew was allowed non-Jewish slaves, but they had to be circumcised. (not conversion)
 - Allowed them to eat the Passover
 - If refused, they were sold in a year
 - Could not be counted in the minyan
 - Non-Jewish female slaves were mikved
- *Tax Collector:*
 - The right to be a tax farmer was sold
 - Tax farmers had tax collectors
 - Rome set the price and each added a little more
 - Were considered thieves
 - Tax collector's money was not accepted in the Temple
 - The terms "tax collector" and "sinner" were synonymous



Jewish Beliefs and Practices:

Jews, Gentiles, theologies and celebrations

The New Testament World - Week 5
Adult Education



Jews and Gentiles

Gentiles –

- Unclean, could not fellowship (didn't study Torah or live a proper lifestyle, didn't keep purity laws)
- Could not leave cattle with a Gentile
- Gentile mother could not nurse Jewish baby
- Doctor-patient had to be both Jewish or both Gentile
- *Categories of Gentiles:*
 - *Ger Toshav* (sojourner) – someone who lived in the land with no intention of converting. Required to keep the 7 Laws of Moses – similar to Acts 15
 - *Godfearers* – interested in Judaism but not ready for circumcision. Keep Shabbat, tithe, go to synagogue, keep kosher (to an extent), not tolerated by religious leaders
 - *Converts* – circumcised. Mishnah records a process that didn't exist in Hillel's time. Upon completion, they are "born again" and were completely considered a Jew. If brother and sister both converted, they were no longer considered related. Mikve – cut hair and nails and were not touched, but observed.

Conversion –

- Maccabees would do mass conversion with conquering (Idumeans converted – Herod the Great)
- Some nations converted by choice
 - Adiabene – converted my merchant
 - Queen Helene – brought goods to Jerusalem (1st C)
 - Dhumnuwas – nation converted (8th C)
 - Qu Saria – Black Sea (5th C)
- 139 Jews were expelled from Rome for proselytizing
- Tiberius, Claudius and Domitian invoked the death penalty for missionaries and converts
- Converts for fear, love or marriage were accepted
- Time of Ester – unacceptable to convert for position or because they had a dream

Mikveh –

- Emphasis on physical purity in the 2nd Temple period
- Never to cleanse the outer body (symbolic)
- Pharisees – mikveh because of obedience
- Essenes – pure of heart before mikveh
- At conversion

Varieties of Judaism

Judaism in General

- One faith, many expressions
- Mikve before marriage
- Mezuza (found in archeological digs)



- Tefillin (phylacteries)
- Tzit-tzit – worn on the outer garment, possibly by men and women
- Women tied their hair back, but not covered (wearing down was the sign of a prostitute or at a wedding)
- Washing of hands (varied practice – Mark 7:1-23)
- Mo'edim united the people
 - Reenactment of historical and prophetic events
 - Spring holidays have been fulfilled by Yeshua
 - Fall holidays yet to be fulfilled by the second coming
 - Rosh Chodesh – Numbers 28:11
 - Pilgrimage feasts (also “hag”)
 - First harvest is the barley harvest. Sheaf is not from the harvest, it is removed from the field. (Day after the Shabbat of Passover). Shavuot is the first fruits of man and beast.
 - Resurrection – any part of the day (even small) counts for the day
 - Rosh HaShana / Yom Truah – agricultural calendar started. Same holiday by Second Temple Period.
 - Judah counted kings from Nisan - Israel counted kings from Tishri
 - New Year is traditional anniversary of creation

Essenes at Qumran –

First Century Palestine

Essenes dwelt in caves and tents surrounding their main complex.

It seems that the communal area with its numerous mikva'ot was the cultural center of the Essenes. By surrounding this center with their tents, the Essenes appear to have been imitating the ancient Israelites, who likewise encircled the Tabernacle with their tents in the wilderness of the Sinai desert.

It seems that the Essenes interpreted Prophet Isaiah: 40:3 as going 'into the wilderness to prepare the way for the Lord' as opposed to coming from the wilderness, “the voice of one crying in the wilderness” to go out and prepare the way of the Lord's Coming.

The Essenes' interpretation of life was in contrast to what God spoke through His Word.

For example, God the Son, rather than community, was the suffering servant.

Also, Salvation came through Messiah Yeshua not by withdrawal from sinners. The Essenes also held to a strict oath of membership prior to ritual cleansing. John the Immerser, saw immersion as a beginning to restoration with God through repentance and forgiveness. When John the Immerser saw Yeshua in bodily form of which John had the Spirit of God guiding him to Jesus, He saw the complete picture in Messiah Yeshua: (from immersion to completion)

Matthew 3:13-15 - Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John to be baptized by him. But John protested strenuously, having in mind to prevent Him, saying, It is I who have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me? But Jesus replied to him, Permit it just now; for this is the fitting way for [both of] us to fulfill all righteousness [that is, to perform



completely whatever is right]. Then he permitted Him.
After Jesus calls and instructs His Twelve Disciples: Matthew 11:1-4 - After Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and preach in the towns of Galilee. When John heard in prison what Christ was doing, he sent his disciples to ask him, "Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?" Jesus replied, "Go back and report to John what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me."

Therapeutae: near Lake Mareotis in Lower Egypt –

Known as 'healers', 'worshippers' or 'miracle workers', this community renounced private ownership in their quest for the vision of God. They also renounced all family life. They spent their days starting with prayer at sunrise, studying scriptures ('law, prophets, and psalms') and writings throughout the day fasting until sunset when they finished their day with prayer. As a community, they saw the allegorical meaning of Scripture and interpreted their daily life accordingly. However, the picture of Scripture points to both and... contemplative life to an active life. For example, inwardly living to going out into the world and living inside out. The actual picture is that of Yeshua who completes the picture for us all.

Zealots, near the Sea of Galilee –

Extreme revolutionaries, these men took their biblical tradition handed down to them and used it as a sword to gain freedom from their oppressors and in this case, the Roman rulers.

They used their practices and traditions as a means instead of a *looking forward to* (Yeshua).

Herodians, possibly a branch from the Essenes –

"party or adherents of Herod", they supported the Herodian dynasty which glorified Herod as a 'god', not the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Samaritans, 'keepers of Torah' –

The religious community of the Samaritans encountered in the New Testament and continuing until today appears to have been religiously very conservative and not inclined toward syncretism with paganism.

During the New Testament time, the Jews of the day looked upon Samaritans as foreigners. The Samaritans did not form a uniform community. The point of difference between the Jews in Jerusalem vs. the Jews near Shechem and Mount Gerizim seems to be their adherence to a rival sanctuary on Mount Gerizim instead of Mount Zion. They developed their own priesthood instead of the Jerusalem priesthood. They also preserved their own text of the Pentateuch, the Samaritan Pentateuch, deriving from a Hebrew text at least as old as the second century, B.C. Only the five books of Moses were accepted by the Samaritans as authoritative, a view shared with the Sadducees.



The Sadducees also rejected the resurrection which is a rejection of a prophetic figure, the ta'eb 'the One who restores' or the 'One who returns' in fulfillment of Deuteronomy 18:18, "I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him."

Judaism in Action

Beliefs and Practices –

Ethical principles seemed to define Judaism as opposed to heartfelt beliefs. In the ancient world, a Jew was identified as a male being circumcised as the seal of belonging to the people, and one who observes the Sabbath rest, other holy days, and the keeping of food and purity laws. One belief that most Jews observed was 'One God' (The God of Israel), the special status of Israel (the chosen and separate people along with the land), and the Torah (the law given by the One God to His chosen people.)

How the beliefs extend into Jewish life is passed down by Rabbi's as an authoritative expression (as opposed to the Holy Spirit interpreting Torah through the light of Messiah).

One God –

For Jews, God is the measure for all things. (God is the eye view) and, because of their reverence for God, the Septuagint translators, the rabbis and the Targumist Jews modified some of the anthropomorphisms of the Bible so as to employ a passive voice 'it was seen before God' 'there was happiness before God'. This aided their resolve to not make God the subject but to revere Him (afar off)

Israel and the Chosen People –

Exclusiveness became the answer to being a holy nation, set apart for God. Some Jews even believed that being buried in Israel guaranteed resurrection and that those buried there would be revived first when Messiah comes.

Torah, Tradition and Scripture –

When tragedy struck the Jewish people, the religious reckoned a failure to keep the law of Moses. The study of the law became a duty of extreme importance so as to redouble the efforts against further tragedy (taken from national tragedy of 586 B.C.).

The Torah governed all aspects of life – the social and legal system as well as religion. Its study was an act of worship.

For the Pharisees and rabbinical Judaism, alongside the written law existed the oral law. "Moses received the (oral) law from Sinai and committed it to Joshua, and Joshua to the elders, and the elders to the prophets; and the prophets committed it to the men of the great synagogue." The oral law continued down through the ages through rabbis and scholars.



Christianity shared the Jewish conviction that the Scriptures were divinely inspired but it attached itself more to the Prophets than to the Law. This may be seen in the way in which the 'law' was the designation among the Jews for the entire Bible, whereas for Christians 'prophets' became the inclusive designation for the Old Testament.

Proselytes and Godfearers –

Resident aliens friendly to or allied with Jews but not converts to Israel (Gentile sympathizers of the Jews).

To become a Proselyte meant to join a Jewish community.

3 Steps were required of the Gentile in order to be initiated into Judaism: circumcision, baptism, and an offering at the temple.

Gentiles were not bound by the Law of Moses, which was given to the covenant people alone. However, provision was made for Gentiles to come into the covenant and assume the yoke of Torah. The rest of humankind lived under the commandments given to Noah (To share in the world to come: establish a court of justice, prohibit blasphemy, no worship of other gods, do not murder, no incest, do not commit adultery, nor thievery, robbery and do not eat of the flesh of an animal before it dies). (In this case – a set of principles to live by as opposed to system of beliefs).

Messianism and the Glorious Identity –

The Jewish expectation centered on the nation and the age to come rather than on the Messiah, who forms the center of Christian Faith.

Messiah, or the anointed one, was used in the Old Testament for kings, priests and metaphorically for prophets:

- God seen as acting directly
- Supernatural Son of Man comparable to Daniel 7
- Rule of The Congregation 'priest'
- Psalms of Solomon 17-18 'coming king' who will be son of David and 'the anointed of the Lord'
- High priest from the tribe of Levi through Aaron
- Governor and hope for King from the tribe of Judah thru David

Christians saw in Jesus the fulfillment of all these expectations – He was God acting among human beings, the Son of man who arises at the end of the age, the Son of David, the anointed Prophet, Priest and King.

First century Judaism presented a variety of expectations about an age to come.

Afterlife –

- Whether good or bad, the death of a person enters the underworld. The Wisdom of Solomon by contrast although not consistent alludes to the Greek philosophical teaching of immortality with death as the penalty for the wicked.
- The doctrine of the resurrection became one of the essential dogmas of rabbinic orthodoxy, denial of which excluded one from a share in the world to come.
- There was an increasing tendency to use Sheol or Hades for the place of punishment for the wicked.



- The notion of resurrection, found occasionally in the Old Testament (Isa 26:19, Dan 32:2) finds expression reserved for the Godly only.

Festivals and Holy Days –

Jewish religious calendar included observance of the weekly Sabbath, the monthly new moon, and the annual festivals. The 3 great pilgrim festivals – Passover, Weeks (Pentecost) and Tabernacles – brought large numbers to Jerusalem from Palestine and the Diaspora.

Sabbath –

- Observance of the 7th day of each week was an important element in Jewish SEPARATISM. Admittedly, ‘the rules for the Sabbath are like mountains hanging by air, for Scripture is scanty and the rules many.’
- Certain activities took precedence over the Sabbath command – circumcision and sacrifice in the temple.
- Fasting was forbidden – things that might dampen the joy of the occasion, such as mourning and visiting the sick, were limited.

New Moon –

Like the Sabbath rest, the New Moon was equally observed with additional sacrifices at the temple.

Passover –

Passover was celebrated in commemoration of the exodus from Egypt

Festival of Redemption

The waving of the sheaf of barley, the firstfruits of the grain harvest on the Sunday after Passover provides the background to Paul’s language of firstfruits for the resurrection of Jesus

Passover meal was eaten after nightfall in a family group at least 10 persons

Meal included roast lamb, unleavened bread and bitter herbs –from the bitterness in Egypt

It was eaten reclining, a symbol of being free persons

4 cups of wine mixed with water were passed around during the meal

Passover came in the spring

The lambs were slain on the 13th of Nisan

Meal was eaten on the eve of Nisan 14

Yeshua’s Last Supper: the Synoptics apparently put the meal on Nisan 14 as a

Passover supper, but John apparently has Jesus die at the time the lambs were being sacrificed on the 13th

Pentecost/Shavuot –

Pentecost (or 50th day) –morning after the Sabbath

The calendar followed at Qumran counted from the Sabbath following Passover Week.

A barley festival – celebrating the conclusion of the spring grain harvest

Grain was planted in Palestine allowing to grow during the winter and harvested in Spring



Giving of the Law at Sinai Firstfruits – Acts 2

Sukkoth –

- Feast of Booths – 8 days, coming after the grape harvest
- Commemorating the living in tents during the time of wilderness wandering
- Practice of building individual booths for the week of the festival is referred to in the Transfiguration of Jesus (Mark 9:5 - Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.")
- National Deliverance
- Water libation ceremony (John 7)
 - Every morning building to the last day
- Priests were divided into three divisions:
 - On duty during festival (offer sacrifices)
 - Dumped the ashes out of the Eastern Gate into Kidron valley and cut 25 foot long willow branches. Formed a line holding the branches and would march back with the wind blowing through the branches.
 - Brought back water from the pool of Siloam, led by High Priest. Gold pitcher would draw "living water". Assistant to the High Priest had a silver vase containing wine. They would march back at the same time as the branches. Group 2 would enter and circle the altar. High priest and assistant would ascend the altar and people would sing Isaiah. Funnels were for wine and water and it would flow over altar and the willows would form a sukka over the altar.
- Hannukah was possibly the "Feast of Lights" because it was Sukkot celebrated two months later after the Maccabees cleansed the Temple.

Rosh Hashanah/Yom T'ruah –

Blowing of the ram's horn

Began important religious days – Tabernacles and the Day of Atonement

Yom Kippur –

National Atonement

Solemn fast day

Day of repentance

Prayer for forgiveness

The ritual of Leviticus was carried out while the temple existed

High priest annual appearance in the Holy of Holies with blood for the atonement for the nations sins and called upon Yahweh in prayer

Today it's observed as holy 'fast day'

Hanukkah –

Commemorating the rededication of the Temple thru Judas Maccabeus story in 1 Macc 4 and 2 Macc 10: Only one cruse of oil was found when the Jews reoccupied the



temple, but it miraculously lasted for 7 days so the lamp in the temple was kept burning until a new supply of oil could be consecrated

Purim –

- Freeing the Jewish people from being wiped out
- Joyous holiday
- (Book of Esther: Significance of Favor with the King of Kings and dedication to God)

Daily Devotions –

- The faithful Jew recited the Shame not only in the synagogue but daily.
- Deut 6- Confession of Judaism; Recitation of Judaism
- Prayer: twice a day
- Meals – religious context of purification and blessing of the Creator
- Hands were washed, bread was blessed and broken and after the meal was eaten – thanksgiving at the close



Language and Idioms:

Dealing with obscure sayings in the Gospels

The New Testament World - Week 6
Adult Education



Significance of Idioms

by Pieter M. Lechner
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One problem with translating one language into another is how to deal with idioms. If you translate idiomatic expressions literally there is a chance they will be misunderstood. We understand the common phrase, "It's raining cats and dogs," but put that literally into another language and it probably won't make much sense.

To illustrate, let's look at a few Spanish phrases. "Echar flores" would be literally translated "to throw flowers" and if the context didn't help, you might not know it's similar to our idiom, "to butter someone up". Or what about, "Quemarse las pestañas", which translates, "to burn your eyelashes", but is like our idiom, "to burn the midnight oil". And one more is the phrase "Dejar a uno en la calle" which translates, "to leave someone in the street" but is comparable to our idiom, "to take somebody to the cleaners".

In the case of the words that Jesus spoke we are dealing with a double translation, from Hebrew or Aramaic to Greek and Greek to English. Are there cases where Jesus was using an idiom and the meaning has been lost? Yes, in fact there are. The following is taken from [Understanding the Difficult Words of Jesus](#):

Many Gospel expressions are not just poor Greek, but actually meaningless in Greek. One brief example will suffice to illustrate this fact. The text of Matthew 6:22-23 literally reads: "The lamp of the body is the eye. If your eye is good, your whole body is full of light; but if your eye is bad your whole body is full of darkness..."

"If your eye is good" is an idiomatic way of saying in Hebrew, "if you are generous." But our English translators have not recognized this Hebrew idiom. Almost all translations preserve the singular, "eye," even though "eyes" would make more sense in English. Is it necessary for only one of the eyes to be good? Which one, the right or the left? Only three translations (Good News For Modern Man, New English Bible, New International Version) have felt the absurdity of "eye." These translations have translated "eyes" in spite of the fact that the original Greek text has "eye."

More variety exists in the translation of the word "good." Weymouth and the New International Version translate literally. But obviously, "good" in relation to an eye means nothing in particular. (Weymouth tries to solve this problem by translating eye as "eyesight" - "If your eyesight is good!") Other translators simply guess at the meaning of "good." "Single" is the traditional translation of "good" (King James, American Standard). Most modern versions prefer "sound" (Amplified, Goodspeed, Jerusalem Bible, New Berkeley, New English Bible, Phillips, Revised Standard, Williams). Other suggestions are "clear" (Good News For Modern Man, New American Standard), and "pure" (The Living Bible). Only James Moffatt translates "good eye" as "generous," but even he uses "sound" in the Lukan parallel to Matthew 6:22 (The same Greek word for "good" appears in both places.) Apparently, by the time Moffatt reached Luke 11:34 he was already beginning to have some doubts about his translation of Matthew 6:22.



[Understanding The Difficult Words Of Jesus](#) is an excellent way to get started learning about the Jewish heritage of the Christian faith. The book presents a strong argument that Jesus spoke Hebrew and goes on to demonstrate how powerful a tool that knowledge can be by explaining a number of difficult-to-understand sayings of Jesus.

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HEBRAIC IDIOMS IN MATTHEW

Introduction

It is common knowledge that the earliest manuscripts currently existing of the Synoptic Gospels are in Greek. However, scholarship in the last century has built a very strong case for the Hebraic foundation and beginnings of the Gospels. This is most easily evident by the strong usage of Hebraic idioms. As David Bivin states, “Hebraisms are as ubiquitous in the Synoptic Gospels as cats in Jerusalem”¹. Simply put, idioms mean something different from the literal meaning of the actual words². It makes sense that the colloquial nature of a text reflects its origins. Bivin confidently asserts that the Synoptic Gospels and the story of Jesus are based on Hebrew Documents. Therefore, it is the English translator’s task to put the Greek back into Hebrew, understand the idiom and then translate the Hebrew, rather than the Greek, to English³.

The tradition that Matthew originated from Hebrew is first seen in the testimony of Papias, a bishop in Hierapolis in Asia Minor during the mid-second century CE. Papias says, “Matthew recorded in the Hebrew language the words of the Lord, and each person translated them as best he could”⁴.

Robert Lindsey, a forerunner in this field of research, first came upon the Hebraic origins of the Synoptic Gospels when translating Mark from Greek into Hebrew in 1959. During his collaboration with David Flusser they began to understand the development

¹ Bivin, David. (2004) *Hendiadys in the Synoptic Gospels*. Retrieved from: <http://jerusalemerspective.com/Default.aspx?tabid=27&ArticleID=1616>

² Bivin, David. (2004) *Hebrew Idioms in the Gospels*. Retrieved from: <http://www.jerusalemerspective.com/Default.aspx?tabid=27&ArticleID=1551>

³ Bivin, David. (2004) *Hebrew Idioms in the Gospels*. Retrieved from: <http://www.jerusalemerspective.com/Default.aspx?tabid=27&ArticleID=1551>

⁴ Papias’ work is not in existence, but he is quoted by Eusebius in his Ecclesiastical History III 39, 16.



of the Synoptic Gospels. They theorized that, out of Mark, came Luke and Matthew, most of which originated in Hebrew⁵. Flusser also pointed out that rabbinic parables were always told in Hebrew. Lindsey believed that the Synoptic Gospels were actually written in a form of Hebrew that developed out of Biblical Hebrew – what is now called “Mishnaic Hebrew”. He states:

The presence of post-biblical Hebraisms embedded in the Greek of the gospels also rails against explaining the Hebraic Greek of the synoptic tradition as being an imitation of the Septuagint's Greek. If the writers of Matthew, Mark and Luke were imitating the Greek of the Septuagint, which reflects Hebrew idioms originating in the biblical Hebrew, how could they produce Greek reflecting idioms found only in post-biblical Hebrew?⁶

As David Bivin reminds us, Hebraic idioms are rampant in the Synoptic Gospels. Jesus' teachings in Matthew are particularly full of idioms. For the short scope of this paper we will look at three in particular: abolishing and fulfilling the law found in Matthew 5:17; the eye is the light to the body found in Matthew 6:22; and binding and loosing found in Matthew 16:19 and 18:18.

Abolish and Fulfill – Matthew 5:17

Jesus' words in the Sermon on the Mount are some of the most quoted in sermons throughout churches worldwide, yet they are also full of statements that are often misunderstood. In English we often quote Matthew 5:17 as saying “Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill” (NASB). By looking at the setting we are offered some initial clues about interpreting this verse. The beginning of Matthew 5 tells us that Jesus saw the crowds, went up on

⁵ Lindsey, Robert. (1993) *Jesus: Rabbi & Lord*, chapters 7 and 8.

⁶ Lindsey, Robert. (2004) *Four Keys for Better Understanding Jesus*. Retrieved from: <http://www.jerusalemerspective.com/Default.aspx?tabid=27&ArticleID=1680>



a mountain and his disciples followed him. Then he began to teach the disciples. Perhaps Jesus was not delivering an elaborate sermon to the masses as we have come to assume in this passage. He sat down and taught his disciples like the other rabbis of his day did. When put into his historic and cultural setting, we can evaluate more correctly the idiomatic or colloquial language that he would use to teach.

The concept of abolishing and fulfilling was a common idiom during and after Jesus' day. Exodus Rabbah 6:1 says, "No letter will ever be abolished from the Law"⁷. Jesus teaches the same concept in Matthew, only he acknowledges that nothing will be disappear until after He has accomplished what was prophesied. In Hebrew, our key words would be *lekayem* (to fulfill, preserve or sustain) and *levatel* (to cancel or nullify)⁸. These words are often found in later rabbinic debates. When a sage felt that a colleague was misinterpreting or incorrectly teaching a passage, he was accused of canceling, destroying or abolishing the Torah. The accuser was the one who was fulfilling the Torah by teaching it correctly.

In his New Testament commentary, John Lightfoot explains three important contextual aspects of this verse. First, it was believed that the Messiah would "advance the Mosaic Law to the very highest pitch"⁹ and would fulfill the prophets. Second, this verse served as a polemic against the scribes and Pharisees because he preached against their traditions of the Torah which they enforced upon the people¹⁰. Third, Jesus brings an observance of the Torah which is more pure and excellent than that of

⁷ Bivin and Blizzard. (1984) *Understanding the Difficult Words of Jesus*, p.153.

⁸ Bivin, David. (2004) *Matthew 5:17: "Destroy" the Law*. Retrieved from: <http://www.jerusalemerspective.com/Default.aspx?tabid=27&ArticleID=1866>

⁹ Lightfoot, John. (1979) *Commentary on the New Testament from Hebraica and Talmud, Volume 2*, p. 99.

¹⁰ Lightfoot, John. (1979) *Commentary on the New Testament from Hebraica and Talmud, Volume 2*, p. 100.



the Pharisees and explains the Torah according to its genuine and spiritual intent,¹¹ and thus “fulfilling” it.

David Bivin has offered three progressive translations of Matthew 5:17 that are worth comparing to the English translations we normally use¹².

1. *Literal Translation of the Hebrew Reconstruction*: "Do not think that I have come to cancel the Torah [the five books of Moses] and the Prophets [the second section of the Hebrew canon]. I have not come to cancel but to sustain."
2. *Plain English Translation of the Hebrew Reconstruction*: "Do not think that I have come to weaken the Torah and the Prophets. I have not come to weaken them but to strengthen them."
3. *Dynamic Translation of the Hebrew Reconstruction*: "Do not suppose that I have any intention of undermining Scripture by misinterpreting it. My purpose is to establish and maintain the knowledge and observance of God's Word not undermine it."

There are many scholars and commentators that would somehow pull the “Law of Christ” away from the Torah of God as if what Jesus taught was radically different than the Law. It has been said that Matthew is affirming the Law of Jesus and not the Law of Moses¹³ as if the two were mutual exclusive. However, by putting Jesus’ vernacular back into his context, we find that he was actually stating that his teaching and interpretation of the Torah were superior – not that he was teaching a new Torah.

By not understanding the context and the intended meaning of a text, we open ourselves up for incorrect interpretations and applications of Jesus’ words. In fact, within the Christian world, there is often confusion between “abolish” and “fulfill”. A

¹¹ Lightfoot, John. (1979) *Commentary on the New Testament from Hebraica and Talmud*, Volume 2, p. 100.

¹² Bivin, David. (2004) *Matthew 5:17: “Destroy” the Law*. Retrieved from:
<http://www.jerusalemerspective.com/Default.aspx?tabid=27&ArticleID=1866>

¹³ Sandmel, Samuel. (1956) *A Jewish Understanding of the New Testament*. p. 149.



distinguishing is made when the verse is quoted, but often the end result for the believer is the same – the Torah is done away with.

The Eye is the Lamp to the Body – Matthew 6:22-23

In the next chapter of Matthew we see a rather ambiguous verse that seems out of place in English. In the first 21 verses of chapter six, Jesus is telling his listeners to not be like the hypocrites, or the religious actors, by giving, praying and fasting for everyone to see. Instead, seek things of eternal reward. Then in verses 22 and 23, Jesus says, “The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness” (NASB). This parallels Luke 11:34 which says, “Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eyes are good, your whole body also is full of light. But when they are bad, your body also is full of darkness” (NASB).

Lightfoot explains the Matthew passage as a metaphor for generosity and covetousness, calling it a “usual manner of speech of the nation”¹⁴. He equates a good eye with generosity and an evil eye with stinginess, quoting Tractate Trumot of the Talmud:

This is the measure of Truma (offering given to the priests). A good eye yields one out of forty: that is the fortieth part. The school of Shammai says, one out of thirty. A middle eye, one out of fifty. And an evil eye, one out of sixty. He that gives a gift, let him give with a good eye: and he that dedicates anything, let him dedicate it with a good eye¹⁵.

¹⁴ Lightfoot, John. (1979) *Commentary on the New Testament from Hebraica and Talmud, Volume 2, p. 156.*

¹⁵ Lightfoot, John. (1979) *Commentary on the New Testament from Hebraica and Talmud, Volume 2, p. 156-157.*



Geza Vermes, in his book The Religion of Jesus the Jew, further explains this in relation to other Jewish writings of the times. Vermes finds parallel between the Gospel writings of the eye and the lamp and the sayings of Eliezer ben Hyrcanus who equated the “good eye” with the “good way” (mAb. 2:9) – in other words, proper religious behavior. Additionally, Vermes ties in the dualism of light and dark found in the Qumran writings to the Gospel writings. If the eye is good, it fills the body with light, otherwise darkness would be victorious – the fear of such dualism. In 4Q186 (“Horoscopes”), it is taught that people consist of a nine-part mixture of light and darkness. The Teacher of Righteousness, focusing on the individual, implies that a good eye is a divine gift as is the light that it brings¹⁶.

These two verses under examination actually do fit in with the text. Jesus is talking about actions and their perceptions and benefits within the community. He warns the disciples not to give, fast or pray as a show, but to be genuine and generous to the community and, in doing so, bring light and all that it represents. However, because of the idiomatic nature of the phrase, these verses are often misunderstood or avoided all together.

Binding and Loosing – Matthew 16:19, 18:18

In Matthew we find two instances of the same idiom – binding and loosing. In Matthew 16, Jesus has been tested by the Pharisees who he warns the disciples about followed by Peter’s confession of the Messiah. At this point, Jesus declares that he is establishing his Church and not even Hades can overpower it and that Peter has the authority to bind and loose. In chapter 18, Jesus explains to his disciples how to deal

¹⁶ Vermes, Geza. (1973) *The Religion of Jesus the Jew*, p. 82.



with an unrepentant brother – what has come to be known as “church discipline”. If the brother does not respond responsibly to confrontation, he is to be removed from fellowship. At this point Jesus repeats his previous statement that what is bound on earth will be bound in heaven and loosing, likewise. Both of these passages serve as practical instruction for the authority given to the leaders of the new community of believers.

As John Lightfoot plainly states, to bind is to forbid and to loose is to allow – common vernacular in Jesus’ day. He sarcastically says, “To think that Christ, when he used the common phrase, was not understood by his hearers in the common and vulgar sense, shall I call it a matter of laughter or of madness?”¹⁷

Working from our earlier assumption that Matthew originated in Hebrew, we can take key terms in their Hebrew equivalents. “Bind” in Hebrew is *asar* and “loose” is *hitir*. In the *Tenakh*, *asar* can mean tie (Judges 15:12), imprison (2 Kings 17:4), hitch (Genesis 46:29) and tether (Genesis 49:11); *hitir* can mean the opposite of each of those¹⁸. By Jesus’ lifetime *asar* and *hitir* were commonly used idiomatically. We see prolific examples of this throughout early rabbinic writings. Here are a few examples:

During the war of Quietus, they *bound* the garlands of brides and that no one should teach his son Greek. During the last war [the Bar-Kochba Revolt] they *bound* the bride's riding about the village in a litter. (*m. Sotah* 9:14)¹⁹

If a person made a vow to abstain from milk, he *is loosed* to eat whey. Rabbi Yose *binds* it.... If a person made a vow to abstain from meat, he *is loosed* to eat broth.... Rabbi Yehudah *binds* it.... If a person made a vow to

¹⁷ Lightfoot, John. (1979) *Commentary on the New Testament from Hebraica and Talmud*, Volume 2, p. 240.

¹⁸ Bivin, David. (2004) “Binding” and “Loosing”. Retrieved from:
<http://www.jerusalemerspective.com/Default.aspx?tabid=27&ArticleID=1561>

¹⁹ Bivin, David. (2004) “Binding” and “Loosing”. Retrieved from:
<http://www.jerusalemerspective.com/Default.aspx?tabid=27&ArticleID=1561>



abstain from wine, he *is loosed* to eat a cooked dish which has the taste of wine. (*m. Nedarim* 6:5-7)¹⁹

If a person sold produce in Syria and said, "It is from the Land of Israel," tithes must be paid on it. If he said, "It is already tithed," he may be believed, since the mouth that *bound* is the mouth that *loosed*. (*m. Demai* 6:11)¹⁹

R. Yohanan said, "Why have you brought this elder to me? Whatever I *loose*, he *binds*; whatever I *bind*, he *looses*. (Hieros. Jon. Tobbh, fol. 60.1)²⁰

This man *binds*, but the other *looses*. (Bab. Megillah, fol. 26.7)²⁰

Although of the disciples of Shammai, and those of Hillel, the one *bound* and the other *loosed*. (Tosephta in Jevam. Cap. I)²⁰

R. Meir *loosed* the mixing of wine and oil to anoint a sick man on the Sabbath. (Heiros. Schabb., fol. 3.1)²¹

In chapter 16 of Matthew Jesus appears to be speaking directly to Peter in the presence of the disciples. He tells Peter that he is being given the keys to the kingdom of heaven – the symbol of authority²². According to Dan Juster, "the keys of the Kingdom had a specific meaning within Judaism at the time, as reflected in the Talmud. The keys were understood to be the delegated authority for judicial decisions in Israel, the covenant nation"²³. In chapter 18 of Matthew, Jesus is talking to the group of disciples and tells them that they have the same authority to bind and to loose. Within this time period in Israel, the Sanhedrin had religious authority. Within these chapters in Matthew we see Jesus transferring authority to the apostles in regard to issues of faith, scripture, doctrine and practice for the community of believers.

²⁰ Lightfoot, John. (1979) *Commentary on the New Testament from Hebraica and Talmud, Volume 2*, p. 237.

²¹ Lightfoot, John. (1979) *Commentary on the New Testament from Hebraica and Talmud, Volume 2*, p. 240.

²² Bivin and Blizzard. (1984) *Understanding the Difficult Words of Jesus*, p. 147.

²³ Juster, Dan. (1992) *Due Process*, p. 43.



There are some common misconceptions in the Church today about this idea of binding and loosing. Most believers do not understand that it is an idiom, or how to interpret or apply it. There are those, such as John MacArthur, who understand that the idiom is about authority that was being given to the apostles and that apostolic authority was not in themselves or even in their office. Their authority was from heaven. However, MacArthur then relates it to all believers in the modern day Church. He states:

Christians can authoritatively declare what is acceptable to God or forbidden by Him because they have His Word. Christians do not determine what is right or wrong, forgiven or unforgiven. Rather, on the basis of God's own Word, they recognize and proclaim what God has already determined to be right or wrong, forgiven or unforgiven²⁴.

While there is truth to what MacArthur is saying, it is dismissing the difference between apostolic authority within the community of believers and the common sense, biblical knowledge of the members of the community and their obligation to live according to Scripture. It is possible that this "apostolic authority" (or authority of the community leaders) was intended to be successive based on the idea of authoritative rabbinic succession in Tractate Avot 1:1 of the Talmud. That being the case, the office of apostleship (or community leadership in this case) would have held the authority and would have been passed on successively, at least until the Dispersion. We see this apostolic authority being exercised in a rabbinic fashion in Acts 15 as the leaders of the movement make a religious (and also judicial) ruling on how Gentiles must observe the Torah in order to create harmony and fellowship within the suddenly diverse Body of Believers. In the specific case of Matthew 16 and 18, Jesus was explicitly bestowing

²⁴ MacArthur, John. *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, Matthew 16-23*, p. 34.



authority to the disciples as leaders to govern the fledgling movement. He was not bestowing this authority on all the members within the entire movement.

The second misconception of this passage, due to ignorance of the idiom, is that believers have the authority to “bind” and “loose” spiritual entities such as Satan and demons. It is now clear from our understanding of the idiom that binding and loosing was in regard to the practice of faith from an authoritative standpoint – not spiritual warfare.

However, there are other New Testament verses that use the same words in English translations. For example, in the Gospel of Luke we find a woman who has been crippled for eighteen years. Jesus heals her on the Sabbath and says to the crowd, “And this woman, a daughter of Abraham as she is, whom Satan has bound for eighteen long years, should she not have been released from this bond on the Sabbath day?” (Luke 13:16). There are those that would argue that if Satan had “bound” the woman, can we not engage in the same spiritual battle by declaring Satan and his demons to be bound as well? Secondly, we find in Revelation, “And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison” (Revelation 20:1-2, 7). This could serve as reinforcement for the idea that we have the authority to “bind” Satan, as is popular in certain Christian circles. However, in doing so, our misconceptions and ignorance influence our theology perhaps more than the actual meaning of Scripture.



Conclusion

The scope of our examination has been extremely limited in only looking at three Hebraic idioms in Matthew. Not only does Matthew have many more, but the Synoptic Gospels as a whole are filled with these idioms. First of all, their mere existence in the text suggests to us elements of the origins of the text and the context of the subject matter. Secondly, we see Jesus in the context of his time and his element. Within the abolish and fulfill idiom, we see that Jesus was not claiming to do away with the Torah (even by “fulfilling” it) but that he was engaged in a rabbinic discussion in which he claimed superiority in the teaching of the Torah. In the second idiom – the eye is the lamp to the body – we find that Jesus’ teaching style was common of his day and served the people appropriately. In the binding and loosing idiom, Jesus passes on authority to the apostles in the same fashion as the rabbinic succession of his day. These idioms served to affirm Jesus’ claims, authority and position as rabbi, Messiah and Son of God.

Unfortunately through the past 2,000 years we have divorced ourselves from the context of Scripture. By doing so, we have lost the intended meaning of Scripture and have become ignorant of the world in which Jesus lived and taught. The dangers of this have been brutally apparent – anti-Semitism in the Church, Replacement Theology, misinterpretation of Scripture and incorrect theology. However, the last few decades have brought on the beginnings of a reversal to re-establish the context of Jesus’ teachings which have led to many inquiries such as this paper. Only by understanding the world of Jesus can we ever understand His words.



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Temple, Sanhedrin and Synagogue:

Structure, organization and function

The New Testament World – Week 7
Adult Education



Temple and Priesthood –

Temple:

- 3 in Jerusalem:
 - Solomon – 950-588BCE
 - Zerubabel – commanded by Cyrus, completed around 515, wooden structure, simple structure because of poverty, stood longest, adornment increased as wealth did
 - Herod –
 - refurbished beginning around 19 BCE
 - probably built over the existing structure and deconstructed from the inside
 - cultic system didn't stop
 - completed in 63 CE
 - destroyed in 70
 - doubled area of Temple Mount – 36 acres, larger than the Acropolis in Athens (addition was Gentile court)
 - North – 350m, South – 307m, West – 535m, East – 518m
- Played very political role (2nd Temple)
- Sources:
 - Bible
 - Tenakh – (Solomon's) 1 Kings 6-8, 2 Chronicles 2-4, (Zerubabel) Ezras, Nehemiah, 1 Maccabees
 - NT – Gospels, Acts (Herod's)
 - Josephus (Herod's)
 - Mishnah (Herod's)
 - Temple Scroll (Qumran)
 - Pseudepigrapha – 1 Esdras, Ben Sirah, Letter of Aristeas (Zerubabel's temple during the Hasmoneans, but probably never existed)
- Division of people:
 - Cohenim -
 - Priests who lived in Jerusalem
 - Priests outside Jerusalem
 - David first divided into 24 orders
 - 20 priests from each order were sent twice a year
 - Lighting of the incense, once in a lifetime
 - Offered sacrifices, burned incense, blessed the people
 - Levites -
 - Served in the Temple
 - Carried everything but the Ark
 - 2nd T – door keepers, praisers, shofar blowers
 - Permitted to wear linen again during late 2nd T period
 - Israelites -
 - Not a priest or a Levite
- Temple Organization:
 - General officers -
 - Would distribute tasks to Levitical rotation
 - Announced the opening and locking of Temple Gates
 - Regulated sale of sacrifices and libations



- Directed the details of services
 - Major jobs to priests, minor jobs to Levites
 - Most jobs were hereditary and stayed with clan
 - Beit Garmu – prepared the bread
 - Another family did the incense
- High Priest -
 - Head of the Temple
 - Priest was the head of the people during 2nd T (exception would be early Hasmoneans and Herod)
 - 8 golden garments
 - Sacrifice of cakes offered in the name of the high priest
 - High priest officiated on Shabbat and major holidays
 - Burning of red heifer
 - Reading of the Torah at the end of the Sabbatical year
- Captain -
 - Second in command under high priest
 - Filled in for the high priest if necessary
 - In charge of high priest garments
 - In charge of arrests on the Temple Mount
 - Relative of high priest in early 2nd T, later it was a Pharisee
 - NOT successor to the high priest
 - NT & Josephus – call captain strategos
- Amarkalim -
 - In charge of Temple property
 - Held the key to the storehouses
- Gizbar -
 - In charge of the money
 - Half-shekel tax, free will offering
 - 13 places, shofar-like funnels for people to drop their money (they could tell by the sound – widow's mite)
 - Assessed value of people, animal and objects brought for sacrifice or dedication
 - Usually mentioned with amarkalim, both were usually blood relatives of high priest
- Temple Guard -
 - 24 posts with 10 men each (rotated)
- Offerings:
 - *Tamid* sacrifices in the morning (shacharit) and the afternoon (mincha)
 - Between, people brought offering
 - 2nd T – prayers, blessings, reading from Torah and additional Levitical singing were added
- People came:
 - To watch
 - To fulfill ritual obligations
 - Gifts
 - Offering



- Tithes
 - Vows
 - Firstborn
 - Cleansing
 - Pilgrimage festivals
- To Worship
 - People gathered to pray after the burning of the incense and the priestly benediction would be said
 - When Levites would sing, the people would prostrate
- Deputation (volunteer service)
 - 24 deputations based on geographical living
 - Most of the week they fasted
 - Stood along side the priests
 - Hahnna and Simeon
- Entering the Temple:
 - Ritual immersion
 - Most people wore white
 - Remove shoes
 - Lay aside staff, money belt, cloak, bundles, etc.
- Gentiles:
 - Biblical law permits Gentiles to sacrifice (Lev 22:25)
 - Given to the priest who performed the sacrifice
 - 2nd T period were allowed in the Court of the Gentiles
 - Sign printed in Hebrew, Greek and Latin
 - Sanhedrin could execute the death penalty if a Gentile crossed

Herod's Temple:

- Rebuilding of Herod's started in 20/19BCE
- Completed around 63CE
- 1590 feet north-south, and 1030 feet east-west
- Enclosed by colonnaded porches or porticoes
- NW corner was the Antonia Fortress
- Court of the Gentiles was south of the Temple (place for commerce and main thoroughfare)
- Low wall separated Gentile court from temple proper
- Court of the Women was inside the temple proper on the east side
- "Psalms of Ascents" were the steps that the Levites stood to sing
- Court of Israel surrounded Temple proper
- Court of the Priests had the altar for offerings reached by a ramp and was 50 feet square
- Golden spikes on the roof kept birds from "defiling" it
- Josephus says façade was 100 cubits high and 100 cubits broad
- Temple was considered the stability and center of the cosmos
- Greatest wealth in the 1st century CE
- Major source of income was the half shekel
- Free will offerings were left in the 13 trumpet shaped boxes in the temple precincts
- Jesus' cleansing of the Temple was also an assault on the economic system and challenged the position of Temple authorities



Priests:

- 24 courses, one week at a time, twice a year
- All were to be available at the pilgrimage festivals
- Considerable social gulf between Jerusalem priestly aristocracy and the ordinary priests throughout the country
- Hellenistic kings removed and appointed priests as political favors or in response to bribes
- 28 High Priests from Herod to 70CE
- Two main groups of Levites – singers and gatekeepers
- Levites provided music for services, certain physical and custodial duties and police functions

Cultus:

- Tamid – whole burnt offering sacrificed twice daily
- Morning, at sunrise
- “Evening”, afternoon around 3PM
- Levites began their day by immersing
- Jobs assigned: cleaning the altar of coals, preparing the cereal offering, burning incense, trimming the lampstand
- Incense offering on the altar in the Holy Place was the climax of the daily service
- A priest ordinarily burned the incense only once in his lifetime
- In Jerusalem, the priests used the name YHVH in the benediction
- High Priest probably only presided at pilgrimage festivals
- Priests assisted individuals during guilt, votive or thank offerings
- Twice daily sacrifices for Caesar and the Roman nation – discontinuance by the captain of the Temple was the signal for revolt in 66CE

Sanhedrin –

- Greater Sanhedrin composed of chief priests, elders of the people and scribes
- Greek for “sitting down with”
- Usually refers to supreme political, judicial and religious ruling body in Palestine during the Roman Period before and after of the Temple until 425CE
- Hard to specifically define because Greek and Hebrew sources differ in definition
- Ta’anic sources depict as religious court (not judicial)
- Written references:
 - Josephus – first source, Antiquities 14:91, in 57 BCE Palestine was divided into 5 Sanhedria (administrative districts) by Gabinia
 - Herod was called before the Sanherin while ruler of the Galil, then when he became king he had 46 members of the Sanhedrin killed
 - Condemned James to death (Josephus mentions)
 - Tana’itic sources say the Sanhedrin met in the Chamber of the Hewn Stone on the Temple Mount between the hours of the daily sacrifices
- Suggested reconstruction of the Sanhedrin:
 - 141 BCE, Simeon the last Hasmonean needed a new court system
 - Created Beit Din katan
 - 3, 5, or 7 members (judges)



- Beit Din (Sanhedrin katan)
 - 23 members
 - 3 Beit Din katan with leader and assistant
- Beit Din Gadol (Sanhedrin)
 - 71 members
 - 3 Beit Din with leader (Nasi) and assistant (Av Beit Din)
 - Pool of over 100 people that could be called up
- By Herod's time, the only name is "Sanhedrin"
- Under Simeon, it was a legislative body (government)
- Hasmonean Sanhedrin was composed of all classes (priests, patriarchs, aristocracy, Am Israel)
- Could not try death penalty cases under Roman Rule, except Gentiles at the Temple
- Never met at night, Shabbat, festivals or the eve of the festivals (Mishnah Sanhedrin 7:2 and Tos. Sanhedrin)
- Judgment on one day and penalty on another
- Went to Yavneh, then the Galilee and settled in Tiberius with Yehuda HaNasi
- Drops to Beit Din and drops to 3 judges
- Tried cases dealing with a whole tribe, false prophet and the high priest
- After 70CE, replaced by rabbis, presided over by the President (Nasi) and the VP (Av Bet-Din)
- Executive, judicial and academic functions were combined in the scholars
- Greek sources say that political council presided over by king or high priest
- Rabbinic sources say a legislative-judicial body of scholars headed by the two leading Pharisaic scholars
- Mishnah lists three courts in Jerusalem: one at the gate of the temple mount, one at the gate of the temple court and one in the chamber of hewn stone (possibly subdivisions of the Great Sanhedrin)
- Trial of Jesus – Gospel accounts are flagrant violation of the regulations in the Mishnah, may have applied to a different court
- Capital punishment was reserved for the governor
- Gave considerable power to local bodies to administer justice
- There are instances of the Jewish leaders executing those they found troublesome (Stephen)
- A court of three judges is required for judicial decisions (Mishnah)
- Capital cases required a court of 23 called a Lesser Sanhedrin and were located in larger towns
- City was required to have 120 men to have a lesser court
- Greater Sanhedrin in Jerusalem had 71 members (like the 70 elders in the wilderness with a Nasi)

Community Organization:

- Authority belonged to the community as "the assembly of men of the city"
- Normally a council of older men provided the leadership
- Local Sanhedrin members were ordained and wore the title "elder"
- Judicial and disciplinary, interpreted and applied Torah according to the precedents established by the scholars
- Provided: marketplace, bathhouse, synagogue, ark of the law and Torah scroll



- City was to provide: law court competent to scourge, a prison, charity fund, synagogue, public bath, public latrine, doctor, artisan, scribe, slaughterer and teacher
- “mother” and “father” of the synagogue was an honorary designation for patrons and benefactors
- Some inscriptions identify women as priestess, elder, ruler of the synagogue, etc.
- Many titles were honorary
- Plurality of elders seems to account for the presence of elders in the early Christian communities, particularly those with close Jewish ties

Rabbis:

- Ordained scholars, post-70
- Pre-70 the term was applied much looser
- Professional, salaried rabbis do not begin until the Middle Ages
- Ordination gave judicial authority in interpreting Jewish Law
- Leadership, teaching and preserving the tradition
- Immediately after 70, there was no central organization for ordination so rabbis ordained one or two of their students
- Centralized under the Patriarch in the 2nd century
- Qualifications: wisdom, understanding, fame, able, fear God, men of truth hating unjust gain, married, raised children and around age 40
- Rabbis instituted the centrality of Torah study as an act of piety incumbent on all male Jews
- Prayer became a communal act of service to God
- Scholars replaced priests as the religious leader
- Drew on elements of earlier Judaism to create “rabbinic Judaism”

Synagogue –

History:

- End of 2nd T period, central institution in Jewish life
- Did not function in antiquity as it does today
- Took worship out of the priestly hands and put it in the hands of the people – any Jew could participate (much more inclusive)
- Focus shifted from sacrifice to Torah, from cult to study and eventually to prayer
- Archeological evidence from first century – Gamla, Herodian, Massada, Kiryat Sefer (near Modi’in), possibly Jericho. One in Diaspora in Dellos in Asia Minor

Origin of the synagogue – three ideas:

1. Pre-exilic (Schools of the Prophets)
2. Exilic (Babylon)
3. Post-exilic

- Originally referred to the assembly of people, later became the building
- Origin is unknown, possibly from exile as places to read Torah
- Earliest Egyptian synagogue from 3rd century BCE
- Not created as a temple replacement



- Post-70, increase of furniture, terminology and ritual of the temple brought into the synagogue
- Christianity – place of recruitment for early believers, many aspects of worship and organization derived from the synagogue
- Represented an organized way of carrying out activities in the Torah

Function from Literary Sources:

- Philo
- Josephus – Dora and Caesarea
- New Testament – in Nazareth and Capernaum
- Talmud – no less than 394 synagogues in Jerusalem at the time of the Destruction
 - Talmud Megila – synagogue of the Trasians
- Targum – 480 synagogues in Jerusalem (no ruins found)
 - Targum Megilot and Acts 6 – synagogue of the Alexandrians in Jerusalem
- Apocrypha – 3 Maccabees establishment of synagogue (house of prayer) under Ptolemy 4th (246-221) 3rd century BCE

Activities:

- Center of community, religious and social life
- Served as the schoolhouse, house of prayer, meeting house, house of judgment for administering community discipline
- Organized charity and hospitality was important in Judaism
- Community agencies for feeding the poor, clothing the needy, caring for the sick, burying the dead, ransoming captives, educating orphans and providing poor girls with dowries

Synagogue Service:

- Two foci: prayer and studying Scripture
- Meetings were held on market days (Monday and Thursday) for reading Scriptures
- Prayer and confession of faith were also daily duties
- Meeting opened with a call to “Bless the Lord” followed by the Shema with its two preliminary blessings and concluding profession of faith and praise
- Ritual in Synagogue:
 - Sh'ma – recited before the Torah reading
 - Amida (18) – said twice, Ben Sirah 36 and 51 include some of the formulary statements associated with Temple
 - Meeting days – Shabbat and feast days (Acts confirms)
 - Philo – once a week, in Tiberius on Shabbat
 - Tanaitic – Torah was read Shabbat, Monday and Thursday
 - Rabbinic literature – Torah read on market days (Mon & Thurs), ruling for villagers to read Ester on Monday or Thursday if no one could read
 - Fast Days – connected with public assemblies, early Christian writings say Pharisees fasted on Monday and Thursday
 - Didicae – warns against fasting with the hypocrites, fast on Wednesday and Friday
 - Epiphaneaus – Pharisees at the time of Jesus fasted on Monday and Thursday
- Prayer was the Amidah (present form is post-70)
 - 3, 4, 5, 7 and 18 are pre-70 (1st century)



- Place for spontaneous prayer for individual needs
- 1-3 Worship
- 4 understanding
- 5 repentance (revival)
- 6 forgiveness
- 7 redemption
- 8 healing
- 9 prosperity
- 10 gathering of the exiles
- 11 restoration of leadership
- 12 apostates
- 13 converts
- 14 plea for mercy
- 15 hear our prayer
- 16 return to Jerusalem
- 17 thanksgiving
- 18 blessing
- Readings were from the Torah and Prophets
- Cyclical in a three year rotation in Palestine and one year in Babylon
- Passage from Prophets was chosen because of linguistic affinity
- Scriptures read in Hebrew
- Targumim (Aramaic) was a running translation in the vernacular
- LXX (Septuagint) was read in Greek-speaking communities
- Translations were supposed to remain oral so that they would not be considered on par with the Torah, was not to be literal or prepared
- Sermon accompanied the teaching – either topical or expository
- Characteristic to associate by keywords passages from the Torah, Prophets and Writings
- Synagogue service began with chanting of the Psalms and other hymns

Organization:

- Synagogue could be formed with 10 men
- No class had a monopoly on the conduct of the service
- Rosh HaKnesset presided over services, designated persons to perform functions, assumed responsibility for maintaining the tradition
- Servant of the synagogue was salaried and had multiple duties: attendant in charge of the scrolls, functions in the service, care of the building and its furniture, targumist and school teacher, officer of the community, etc.
- Archisunagogos and Hazzan were possible precedents for the offices of bishop and deacon
- Ruler of the synagogue probably a member of the ruling council, either a figurehead or dominant personality.



Sects: Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, Samaritans and others

*The New Testament World – Week 7
Adult Education*





Pharisees –

History:

- First activity is connected to historical events of the reign of John Hyrcanus
- Perush, to separate
- Comes to be after the split of Zadokite priesthood under Simeon
- Priests made an alliance with the Samaritans and the Pharisees separated themselves
- Totally established by the time of Alexander Janneaus
- Emerged out of Hasidim during the Maccabean Revolt
 - Rejected Hyrcanus' right to be king and priest
 - He gave his allegiance to the Sadducees
 - Continued persecution under Alexander Jannaeus
 - Came to power under Alexander's widow, Alexandra
 - Lost some power again under Aristobulus
- Josephus says there are 6,000
- After 70CE, Pharisees led Judaism
- Scholars at Yavneh and Usha were given recognition by Rome after the Bar Kochba revolt, became a political party
- Regarded as an offshoot of the Hasideans (Antiquities 18:12-15)

Program:

- “Torah and Tradition”
- Differed from Sadducees in divine authority to the interpretation and application of the law
- Believe Torah was given to all Israel
- Interpretation was open to the competent
- Scribes were official scholars of Torah
 - Most scribes accepted the principles of the Pharisees
 - Pharisees followed teachings derived from scribal interpretation
- Mostly non-priests
- Small land owners, shopkeepers, artisans, etc.
- Interpretation and application – “traditions of the elders” Knowledge of Torah should be shared throughout Israel
- Nehemiah 10:33 – making of ordinances
- Spirit, not the letter (Neh. 13)
- Piety should not be limited to the Temple Mount
- Saw Torah as a developing, dynamic social force (Neh. 8:1)
 - Sought to keep the law of Moses from becoming a dead ritual
 - Open to doctrinal developments – resurrection, judgment, eternal reward/punishment
- Fate & Free Will –
 - Essenes – fate only
 - Sadducees – free will only
 - Pharisees – both

Beliefs:

- Respected the elders
- Believed souls survived death
- Bodily resurrection



- Rewards and punishment after death
- Halakha on the Temple
 - Water libation ceremony (Sukkot)
- Torah Observance by “Tradition of the Elders”
 - Shabbat
 - Tithing
 - Application of purity laws (ordinary food)
 - NT & Rabbinic info line-up
 - Lived daily life in priestly holiness (enforced Temple purity on daily life, centered around table fellowship)
 - Felt called to a higher holiness than the Temple

Jesus and the Pharisees:

- Had many friendly contacts – Luke 7:36ff; 11:37; 13:31-33; 14:1; Mark 12:28-34; Matt. 23:1-2
- Four major differences:
 - Association with sinners illustrates a different concept of separation from the world – Mark 2:15-17; Matt. 9:9-13; Luke 5:27-32
 - Ritual purity illustrates differences on the authority of tradition – Mark 7:1-23; Matt. 15:1-20
 - Sabbath keeping illustrates different priorities – Mark 2:23-3:6; Matt. 12:1-13; Luke 6:1-11
 - Divorce illustrates a difference in interpretation – Matt. 19:3-12; Mark 10:2-9)
 - Hillel allowed divorce for any cause
 - Shamai allowed divorce for sexual immorality and immodest behavior
- Sadducees were correct in exegesis, but wrong in relegating Scripture to the place of an archaic relic with less and less relevance to the present.
- Pharisees were right in keeping Scripture applicable, but wrong in their method of making tradition superior or equal to the written word.

Descriptions/References:

- Doctrines and Roles – Antiquities 18:12-15
- View of Fate – Jewish War 2:162-163
- Pharisees & Sadducees – 13:297-298
- Alexander Jannius crucifies Pharisees – Nahum Commentary on 2:2
- Rule and False Teachings of the Pharisees – Nahum Commentary on 3:1-4
- People will Abandon the Pharisees – Nahum Commentary on 3:6-7
- Sadducees – Nahum Commentary on 3:8
- Further History of Pharisees and Sadducees – Nahum Commentary on 3:9b-11

Sadducees –

- Hippolytes said Sadducees only accepted the Torah (236CE) which is repeated by the Church Fathers, also confuses Samaritans and Sadducees (earliest reference)
- Simeon was established as king and priest until the Prophet arrived
 - Made council of people that represented the people



- Priests, people, patriarch, prince
- Pharisees come out of this council
- Called up for national religious, judicial and military issues
- Establish Beit Din
- Party of wealthy priests and friends in the aristocracy
- Combined conservative religious attitudes with power politics
- Stricter interpretation than the Pharisees
- Controlled Temple ritual
- Openness toward certain Hellenistic cultural influences
- Encouraged collaboration with ruling power, maintained the status quo to preserve peace and their power and influence
- Accepted only written law of Moses as authoritative and rejected oral tradition of the Pharisees
- Had their own traditions of interpretation relative to Temple ritual and legal matters, but these were not Torah and were not binding
- Prophets and writings were not a source of doctrine
- No bodily resurrection (Paul's arrest), predestination, eternal reward, angels
- There is no fate – only human responsibility
- Temporal concern that gave inadequate attention to the spiritual side of human existence

Descriptions/References:

- Character of the Sadducees – Antiquities 18:16-17
- Sadducean Doctrines – Jewish War 2:164-166
- Angels and Resurrection – Acts 23:6-10

Qumran Community and Essenes –

- On time, in order and pure of heart
- Strong predestinationists
- Rejected aesthetics
- Single and married communities
- More strict than other sects
- 4000 Essene men, 6000 Pharisees (Josephus)
- Influence of Zoroastrianism

History of Essenes:

- Last two centuries of the Second Temple Period
 - 1-Paleography (ancient handwriting)
 - 2-Carbon 14 testing of linen cloths which some scrolls were wrapped
 - 3-Linguistic studies
 - 4-Historical allusions
 - 5-Archeology
 - Coin found beside jar dated to 10CE
- Excavations yielded:
 - Complete community
 - Slept in tents or caves



- Farming activities at Ain Feshka to the south
- Elaborate water system
- Workshops for pottery making
- Kitchen, storerooms, assembly hall, library
- Prehistory – Hasidim initially supported the Hasmonean revolt. After Judas restored Jerusalem worship, some withdrew from political affairs
- Four Phases:
 - Founding → John Hyrcanus. Date depends on the identification of the Wicked Priest who persecuted the Teacher of Righteousness. One branch withdrew to the wilderness, advocated the Zadokite priesthood against Hasmoneans
 - John Hyrcanus → Herod. Influx of new recruits. Hyrcanus' reign (134-104BCE) settlement flourished
 - Reign of Herod. 31BCE earthquake destroyed Qumran. Essenes supported Herod.
 - Archelaus → Jewish Revolt. Monastic life at Qumran was attractive. Settlement was destroyed by Romans in 68CE, but library hidden in caves. Some may have gone to Massada.

Identity of the Essenes:

- Previously known from Latin and Greek sources
- One year waiting period
- Two years probation
- Purification ritual
- Communal meal
- Community goods
- Studying of scripture
- Philo-banned marriage
- Josephus-mentions married and non-married

Organization, Beliefs and Practices at Qumran:

- Annual examination assigned rank
- Sat and spoke in the assembly according to rank
- Supreme council – three priests and twelve laymen
- Overseer
 - Examined candidates
 - In charge of the finances
 - Directed labor
- Discipline – minor infractions could result in exclusion from communal life
- After probation, went through water purification and turned resources over to the group
- Strong Eschatological expectation
- Prophet and Two Messiahs (Aaron and Israel)
- Dualism between “sons of light” and “sons of darkness”
- When 10 members were together, someone had to study the law
- No fixed text (canon)
- Lived by Solar Calendar
 - Identical to Jubilees and 1 Enoch
 - 364 days, 52 weeks, 12 months



- Meant different religious calendars

Qumran and the NT:

- John the Baptist
 - Priestly family
 - Parents were old, Essenes adopted
 - Activity in the Judean wilderness
 - Asceticism was stronger than Essenes
- Baptisms were different
 - John baptized once for repentance, public
 - Essenes mikva'ed daily, non-initiatory, sectarian
- Jesus
 - Did not forsake the Temple
 - Different practice of the Sabbath
- Strongest NT tie – Melchizedek in Hebrews
- Essenes saw themselves as redeemed, elect, with a new covenant
- Three best represented books were most quoted in the NT (Isaiah, Psalms and Deuteronomy)

Descriptions/References:

- Doctrines and life of the Essenes – Antiquities 18:18-22
- Daily Order of Life – Jewish War 2:119-161
 - Immortality of the Soul
 - Essene Fortunetellers
 - Other Essene
- Teaching on the Two Spirits – Rule of the Community 3:13-4:23
- History of the Sect – Damascus Document 1:1-13
 - Exhortation
 - The Babylonian Exile
 - The Teacher of Righteousness

Samaritans –

- Origins traced to 2 Kings 17 (descendants of forced converts)
- Not inclined to syncretism or paganism
- Jews viewed as foreigners
- 4th and 3rd centuries there was documented contact between Jerusalem aristocracy and Shechem (Josephus' Antiquities 11:306-312)
- Beliefs were Jewish
 - One God
 - No images
 - Loyal to the written Torah (like the Sadducees)
 - Shabbat
 - Circumcision
 - Mo'edim (Biblical holidays)
- Emerged in the postexilic period
- Second deportation took people from Samaritan region



- Other people brought in and intermarried
- Babylonian Jews returned with Babylonian wives
- When Jews came back, Samaritans didn't have a right to build temple
- Alexander gave the right to build a temple
- Samaritan and Jerusalem priesthood intermarried (Ezra & Nehemiah)
- John Hyrcanus destroyed the Samaritan temple
- Separation of Samaritans and Jews was more a process than an event
 - Some say it started in the 5th century BCE during Nehemiah and Ezra's time
 - 128BCE John Hyrcanus' dynasty could have also caused split according to other scholars
- Rival Worship site
 - Temple on Mount Gerizim
 - Built in the days of Alexander the Great
 - John Hyrcanus destroyed their temple 200 years later
 - Had their own priesthood traced to Aaronic line through Eleazar
- Samaritan Pentateuch
- Rejection of the resurrection
- Expectation of a prophetic figure (fulfillment of Deut 18:18)

Therapeutae –

- Jewish community living near Lake Mareotis in lower Egypt
- Parallel lifestyle to Essenes
- Extremely prophetic
- Lived alone and came together for study, eating
- May have been a branch of Essenes
- Renounced private property
- Both men and women
- No family life
- Prayed at sunrise and sunset
- Allegorical interpretation of Scripture
- Fasted until sunset
- Men and women were separated by barrier and sat by age
- Every 50th day was a festal assembly

Descriptions/References:

- Dwellings, Daily Routine, Sabbath Observance and Ceremony, Sabbath Sanctuary – Philo, On the Contemplative Life 24-33
- The Dance and the Chorus – Philo, On the Contemplative Life 83-85, 88-89

Zealots –

- Revolted in 6CE against Roman census
- Josephus opposed them
- Started in Galilee
- Came to the Temple Mount



- Split between three factions of Zealots
- Destroyed each other
- Complete political motivation Thought it was unlawful to pay taxes to Rome
- Extremists among the revolutionaries; took the lead in the revolt
- Sicarii – “Knife-men”
 - Sicarii would kill people on all sides
 - Mingled into crowds with knives
 - Seized and held Masada

Descriptions/References:

- Antiquities 18:4-6, 9-10
- Courage of the Zealots – Jewish War 7:418-419
- Fourth Philosophy – Antiquities 18:23-24
- Zealot Retribution – Mishnah Sanhedrin 9:6

Herodians –

- Only mentioned in the Gospels
- Supporters of Herodian dynasty, especially Antipas
- May have been Essenes

Hasideans (Hasidim) –

- No one knows the origins
- Mentioned in Talmud
- 1 and 2 Maccabees speak of the Hasideans joining the revolt (1 Macc 2)
- Abandoned the revolt after Alcimus’ priesthood (1 Macc 7)
- Possibly took their name from Psalm 149:1 (the pious ones)
- Apocryphal Psalm from Qumran might also mention them
- Early rabbinic writings speak of the former Hasidim
- Splinter group / Priestly family that pulled away from Sadducees
- Some think they are the root of the Essenes
- Prominent in the Hasmonean (Maccabean) Revolt
- Started revolt against Seleucid
- Accepted Alcimus as a Zadokite priest

Pairs (Zugot) –

- At the time of the Hasmoneans
- Simon the Just (Zadokite, son of Onias)
 - Alexander the Great called him “the Just”
- Men of the Great Assembly → Simon → Antigonus of Sokho
- Nasi and Av Beit Din
- Yosse ben Joezer & Yosse ben Yohanan
 - Responsible for chain of transmission



- 174-164 BCE, disciples of Antigonus
 - Dispute over laying on of hands at festival sacrifice
- Joshua ben Perahyah & Nittai the Arbelite
 - 150-100BCE
 - Laying on of hands continues
- Judah b. Tabbai & Simeon b. Shetah
 - 1st century BCE, Alexandra
- Semaiah & Avtalyon
 - Herod the Great
 - Known for their cooperation
- Hillel & Menahem/Shamai
 - Yeshua's time
 - Greatest sages of the 2nd Temple
 - Hillel was Babylonian
 - Early days in Jerusalem
 - Hillel was appointed Nasi around 10BCE-10CE
 - Hillel made ideological revolution – Torah must be taught publically, regardless to family background and wealth
 - Last of the Pairs
 - Hillel's dynasty lasts 400 years
 - Hermeneutical laws for exegesis (7 Midot)
- Descended from Moses, but not traceable to Moses, rabbinics traces to Moses



Linage of the Herod's

Herod the Great embraced the elite Roman culture of luxury and excess. This infatuation with Rome, along with generous gifts, established him among influential romans and the Senate. He was appointed procurator of Judaea by Julius Caesar in 47 B.C. Because of his loyalty to Rome he was appointed king of the Jews (at the suggestion of his friends Mark Antony and Octavian) by the Roman Senate in 40 B.C. While there was great opposition from the Jews (because Herod was not a member of the royal family) he eventually took possession of the kingdom in 37 B.C.

Mark Antony's involvement with Cleopatra was a serious threat to Herod since she wanted to reunite Judaea and Syria with the Ptolemaic kingdom. Following the battle of Actium, in which Egypt fell to Rome, Herod's position was assured because of his loyalty to Octavian (who was now the new emperor Augustus.)

To eliminate any threat from the Hasmonaeen family, whom he had displaced from the throne, Herod systematically had their leaders killed. (Including his Hasmonaeen wife Mariamne, and the two son's she had bore him.) Even though Herod tried in many ways to placate the Jews, including the restoration of the temple, they never did forgive him for destroying the royal family.

Even though Herod the Great was well learned, had proved himself in diplomacy and battle, and had undertaken many elaborate building projects, he is best remembered for his cruelty. Any threat, real or imagined, was swiftly dealt with, as is illustrated in the slaughter of the infants of Bethlehem (*Mt. 2.*)

Herod the Great died at the age of 70 (4 B.C.), within years of the birth of Jesus and John the Baptist.

Antipas, or Herod the tetrarch, inherited his title along with the Galilean and Peraean sections of his father's, Herod the Great's, kingdom. He divorced his first wife, the daughter of Nabataean king Aretas, to marry his niece Herodias, who was his half-brother Philip's wife. John the Baptist denounced this marriage as unlawful. Because of John's large following, Antipas was careful not to over react. However, on the instance of Herodias, Antipas had John imprisoned. Then on the occasion of Antipas' birthday Herodias coaxed her daughter, Salome, to "dance naked before the king and his court." In appreciation of this Antipa offered Salome any gift she desire. Her request, as instructed by her mother, was for the head of John the Baptist (*Mt 14:6; Mk 6:22.*)

Following this Antipas' former father-in-law, king Aretas of Arabia, waged war against Antipas over a border dispute (at the urging of his daughter who Antipas had discarded to marry Herodias.) Antipas was badly defeated in this war and sent to Rome for help. Legions were dispatched but before they could punish king Aretas emperor Tiberius died. Caligula, the new emperor was not concerned over this matter so the army turned around and went home. (The Jews believed this defeat of Antipas was God's punishment for killing John the Baptist.)

Antipas is the Herod that Pilate sent Jesus to. Antipas simply asked idle questions and mocked him before sending him back to be crucified. (*Lk 23:7*)



When Agrippa became king of the Jews, Antipas' wife Herodias was envious. Although Antipas was content with his situation, Herodias continually nagged her husband that he should be king, not his nephew Agrippa. Eventually Herodias wore Antipas down and he agreed to petition the emperor to be made king.

When Agrippa learned of his uncle's plan, he sent a messenger to his old friend emperor Caligula with letters accusing Antipas of planning a revolt. When Caligula asked Antipas if he had armor for seventy thousand men, as claimed in Agrippa's letters, he couldn't deny it - this was common knowledge. Caligula considered this sufficient proof of Antipas guilt, and rewarded Agrippa for warning him of the revolt by giving him his uncle's tetrarchy as well as his wealth. Antipa was banished to Gaul (A.D. 39.) When Herodias challenged the emperors decision against Antipa, her wealth was also given to Agrippa, and she was banished to Gaul with her husband..

Agrippa, or Herod the King, lived an extravagant life, so much so that he was deeply in debt. But because of his family, and friends in Rome, there was always someone to save him from the trouble he would get in.

However, Agrippa had once told his friend Caius that he looked forward to the day when emperor Tiberius would die and Caius would become emperor. A short time later Agrippa accused Eutychus, a freeman, of stealing some of his clothing. Since Eutychus had overheard Agrippa's comment to Caius, he asked that the charges against him be brought before the emperor. Doing so gave Eutychus the opportunity to embellish the story and tell Tiberius of Agrippa's desire to see him dead. This landed Agrippa in prison.

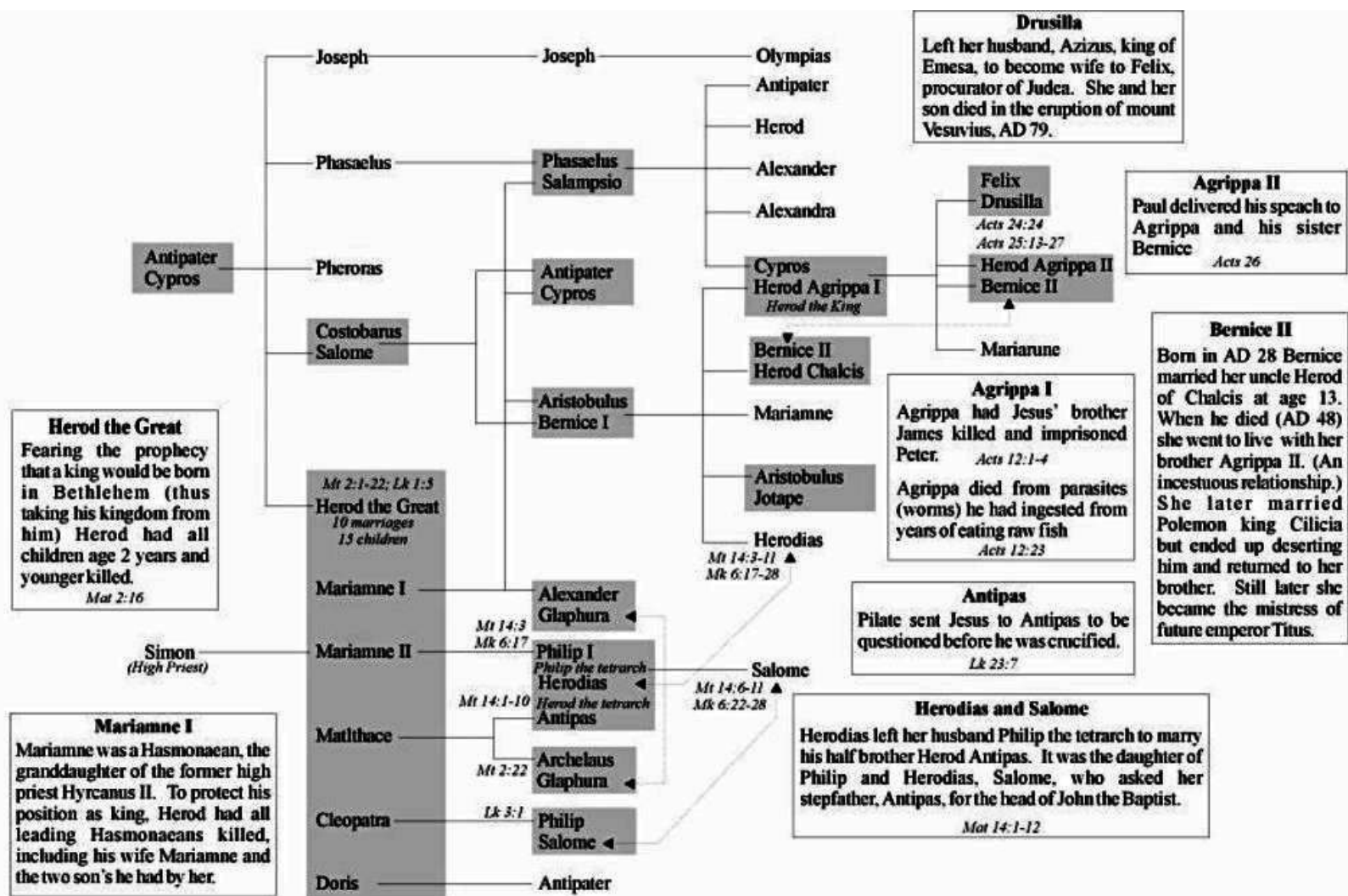
After six months in prison news came that Tiberius was dead and Agrippa's good friend Caius was now the new emperor Caligula. Agrippa and his guards were celebrating the good news with wine when word came that the emperor was not dead, only ill! Agrippa was immediately beaten and thrown back in his cell, the guards fearing that should news of their party get out they would certainly be killed. But, in the morning it was learned that the Tiberius was indeed dead.

Emperor Caligula not only released his old friend Agrippa from prison, but also made him king of north east Palestine. When his uncle Antipas was banished to Gaul, Galilee and Peraea were added to Agrippa's kingdom. Then when Claudius became emperor, Judaea and Samaria were added to his kingdom.

Agrippa is best remembered for the death of Jesus' brother James, imprisoning Paul (*Acts 12:21*), and his incestuous relationship with his sister Bernice. He died at the age of 54 (A.D. 44.)

<http://www.imt.net/~gedison/herod.html>





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Lineage of the Herods

THE TEMPLE IN SECOND-TEMPLE JUDAISM (EXCLUDING EARLY CHRISTIANITY)

1. The Temple in Prophetic Prediction
2. The Second Jerusalem Temple
 - 2.1. The Pre-Herodian Temple
 - 2.2. The Herodian Temple
 - 2.2.1. References to Events Relating to the Herodian Temple
 - 2.2.2. References to Events Relating to the Herodian Temple
 - 2.2.3. Description of Herod's Temple
 - A. Introduction
 - B. Situation and Dimensions
 - C. The Outer Courts
 1. The Temple Walls
 2. The Temple Gates
 3. Beyond the Walls
 - D. The Inner Courts
 1. Soreg
 2. Gates into the Inner Courts
 3. Court of Women
 4. Court of the Israelites
 5. Court of Priests
 6. Sanctuary
3. Discontent with the Temple and the Expectation of a Third Temple
4. The Heavenly Temple Corresponding to the Earthly Temple
 - 4.1. The Heavenly Temple in the Old Testament
 - 4.2. The Heavenly Temple in the Second-Temple Period
 - 4.2.1. References to the Heavenly Temple
 - 4.2.2. Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice



1. The Temple in Prophetic Prediction

In the context of Israel's exile and the destruction of Solomon's Temple, the prophet Isaiah predicts that a second Temple would be built when the people have been restored to the land (Isa 2:2-3; 44:28; 56:7; 60:7, 13; 66:20-21). In Isa 2:2-3, the prophet says that "in the latter days" the rebuilt Temple would become an international religious center, where the nations will be instructed. (The same prophecy is found in Micah 4:1-2.) According to Isa 56:7, the rebuilt Temple would become a house of prayer for the nations. In the context of the restoration and the establishment of the new covenant, Jeremiah prophesies that the priests would continually serve at the Temple offering sacrifices (33:18). Ezekiel predicts that at the restoration God's dwelling place will be with the people (37:27), and receives a vision of the new Temple to be built after the restoration (40-48). Every aspect of Ezekiel's plans for the second Temple sounds normal until in 47:1-12 he says that a river originating in the temple and will flow eastward towards the Dead Sea, which makes the temple appear almost surreal. (See Joel 3:18 for the same idea of a water flowing from the Temple.)

2. The Second Jerusalem Temple



Solomon's Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 BCE. After years in exile, King Darius allowed some Jews to return to Judea in order to rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple. The second Temple underwent many partial renovations and even a complete dismantling and rebuilding until its destruction by the Romans in 70. Unfortunately, information on the history of the second Temple is meager and spotty.

2.1. The Pre-Herodian Temple

The second Temple underwent many partial renovations and even a complete dismantling and rebuilding until its destruction by the Romans in 70. Unfortunately, information on the history of the second Temple is meager and spotty.

The second Temple was built on the ruins of Solomon's Temple on the Temple mount. A very incomplete description of the plan of the structure built under the direction of Zerubbabel is found in a copy of the original decree by Cyrus (Ezra 6:3-4; 1 Esdras 6:24-25; see *Ant.* 11.4.6; 99). The Temple was to be a place of sacrifice--so that the altar was to be rebuilt--and was to be ninety feet (i.e., sixty cubits) high and ninety feet wide with three courses of well-polished stones and one of timber. According to The Book of Haggai, the returnees were slow to rebuild the Temple.

The history of the Temple during the Persian and early Hellenistic periods is largely unknown, owing to a lack of sources. Presumably, it still existed and operations went on within it as normal. There is one reference from this period to consider. Josephus claims to quote from a work written by a certain Hecataeus of Abdera, a philosopher who lived in the fourth and third centuries BCE and who wrote a work about the Jews. In his work, Hecataeus describes the Jerusalem Temple (*Apion* 1.22; 198-99).

The same man describe our city Jerusalem also itself as of a most excellent structure, and very large, and inhabited from the most ancient times. He also discourses of the multitude of men in it, and of the construction of our temple, after the following manner: "There are many strong places and villages (says he) in the country of Judea; but one strong city there is, about fifty furlongs in circumference, which is inhabited by a hundred and twenty thousand men, or thereabouts; they call it Jerusalem. There is about the middle of the city a wall of stone, whose length is five hundred feet (five plethra), and the breadth a hundred cubits, having a pair of gates; wherein there is a square altar, not made of hewn stone, but composed of white stones gathered together, having each side twenty cubits long, and its altitude ten cubits. Hard by it is a large edifice, wherein there is an altar and a lampstand, both of gold, and in weight two talents: upon these there is a light that is never extinguished, either by night or by day. There is no image, nor any thing, nor any donations therein; nothing at all is there planted, neither grove, nor any thing of that sort. The priests abide therein both nights and days, performing certain purifications, and drinking not the least drop of wine while they are in the temple."

He says that the Temple encompassed an area of five hundred feet (i.e., five plethra = c. 98 feet) long and one hundred cubits broad, access to which was through a pair of gates (The implication is that the Temple is surrounded by a wall). He describes the altar, which was square (twenty cubits x twenty cubits and ten cubits high) and made of unhewn stones, and beside it, a building containing an (incense) altar, a lampstand, both made of gold. The lamps on the lampstand are never extinguished. He remarks that in the Temple there are no statues or votive offerings, and no vegetation, in the form of sacred groves.

Palestine, which included Judea, passed over from the Ptolemaic kingdom to the Seleucid kingdom in c. 198 BCE. It seems that during the war between the two kingdoms that the Temple was damaged, so that Antiochus III, the king of the Seleucid kingdom, decreed that work on the Temple be completed under favorable political conditions. The goal was to make it more splendid than it was before (*Ant.* 12.3.3; 139-41). The only reference to a specific feature of the Temple is to the stoa (porticos): "I would



also have the work about the temple finished, and the stoa, and if there be any thing else that ought to be rebuilt" (*Ant.* 12.3.3; 141). " Whether these stoa were already existent before the renovations sponsored by Antiochus III or were architectural innovations is impossible to determine. The edict published by Antiochus concerning the Temple, as cited by Josephus, implies that there was an outer court, into which gentiles may enter, provided that they have purified themselves: "He [Antiochus III] also published a decree through all his kingdom in honor of the temple, which contained what follows: "It shall be lawful for no foreigner to come within the limits of the temple round about; which thing is forbidden also to the Jews, unless to those who, according to their own custom, have purified themselves. (*Ant.* 12.3.4; 145). Surely the decree of Antiochus III would not have allowed gentiles to enter the inner courts, so that there must have existed an outer court into which ritually-pure gentiles were allowed to enter, but proceed no further.

It seems that it was Simon (surnamed the just or the righteous), high priest from 219-196 BCE, who was responsible for overseeing the Temple repairs and renovations (*Sir* 50.1-3). *Sirach* says that Simon was responsible for reinforcing the Temple. In particular it is said, "In his time the wall was built, for the residence in the Temple of the King. In his day the reservoir was dug, the pool with the vastness like the sea's" (50:2-3). The wall that Simon built seems to be the outer wall, which would encompass the outer court. Simon also dug a reservoir, presumably to hold water used for sacrifice or other purposes. In his eyewitness description of Simon's high-priestly service in the Temple, most likely on the Day of Atonement, *Sirach* mentions "the house of the curtain" (i.e., the holy of holies) (50:5) as well as the altar and the court of the sanctuary (50:11).

Succeeding Antiochus III was Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who in 168 BCE plundered the Jerusalem Temple, including the veil separating the holy place from the holy of holies. He also built another altar on the altar already in the Temple. After several years of armed struggle, Judas Maccabees took control of the Temple, but found it in a state of disrepair. The description of the state of the Temple after the Antiochan persecution and Judas's restoration of it in 1 Macc 4.36-51 provides valuable data for a historical reconstruction of the second Temple.

Then Judas and his brothers said, "See, our enemies are crushed; let us go up to cleanse the sanctuary and dedicate it." 37 So all the army assembled and went up to Mount Zion. 38 There they saw the sanctuary desolate, the altar profaned, and the gates burned. In the courts they saw bushes sprung up as in a thicket, or as on one of the mountains. They saw also the chambers of the priests in ruins. 39 Then they tore their clothes and mourned with great lamentation; they sprinkled themselves with ashes 40 and fell face down on the ground. And when the signal was given with the trumpets, they cried out to Heaven. 41 Then Judas detailed men to fight against those in the citadel until he had cleansed the sanctuary. 42 He chose blameless priests devoted to the law, 43 and they cleansed the sanctuary and removed the defiled stones to an unclean place. 44 They deliberated what to do about the altar of burnt offering, which had been profaned. 45 And they thought it best to tear it down, so that it would not be a lasting shame to them that the Gentiles had defiled it. So they tore down the altar, 46 and stored the stones in a convenient place on the temple hill until a prophet should come to tell what to do with them. 47 Then they took unhewn stones, as the law directs, and built a new altar like the former one. 48 They also rebuilt the sanctuary and the interior of the temple, and consecrated the courts. 49 They made new holy vessels, and brought the lampstand, the altar of incense, and the table into the temple. 50 Then they offered incense on the altar and lit the lamps on the lampstand, and these gave light in the temple. 51 They placed the bread on the table and hung up the curtains. Thus they finished all the work they had undertaken.

The Temple desecrated by Antiochus had gates, which were burnt down; in addition, it seems that there were living quarters for priests on duty, which were in ruins. All the furniture and utensils were missing, including the veil (see also *Ant.* 12.317-18 = *War* 1.39;). Judas removed both the original altar and the altar that Antiochus placed upon the original, replacing these with another altar. Judas and his followers made a new lampstand, altar of incense and table (of shewbread), in addition to building a new altar



made with unhewn stones. It seems also that a new veil was manufactured. (In 2 Macc 4.12, 28; 5.5 references are made to the citadel adjacent to the Temple.)

Letter of Aristeas is probably a historical fiction written in the early part of the second century either before or during the Antiochan persecution, as opposed to the time of Ptolemy II Philadelphius (283-247 BCE). Nevertheless, the description of the Jerusalem Temple found in *Letter of Aristeas* (83-91) is credible and seems to be that of an eyewitness.

83 I have given you this description of the presents because I thought it was necessary. The next point in the narrative is an account of our journey to Eleazar, but I will first of all give you a description of the whole country. When we arrived in the land of the Jews we saw the city situated 84 in the middle of the whole of Judea on the top of a mountain of considerable altitude. On the summit the temple had been built in all its splendor. It was surrounded by three walls more than seventy cubits high and in length and breadth corresponding to the structure of the edifice. All the buildings 85 were characterized by a magnificence and costliness quite unprecedented. It was obvious that no expense had been spared on the door and the fastenings, which connected it with the door-posts, and 86 the stability of the lintel. The style of the curtain too was thoroughly in proportion to that of the entrance. Its fabric owing to the draught of wind was in perpetual motion, and as this motion was communicated from the bottom and the curtain bulged out to its highest extent, it afforded a pleasant 87 spectacle from which a man could scarcely tear himself away. The construction of the altar was in keeping with the place itself and with the burnt offerings which were consumed by fire upon it, and the approach to it was on a similar scale. There was a gradual slope up to it, conveniently arranged for the purpose of decency, and the ministering priests were robed in linen garments, down to their 88 ankles. The Temple faces the east and its back is toward the west. The whole of the floor is paved with stones and slopes down to the appointed places, that water may be conveyed to wash away the 89 blood from the sacrifices, for many thousand beasts are sacrificed there on the feast days. And there is an inexhaustible supply of water, because an abundant natural spring gushes up from within the temple area. There are moreover wonderful and indescribable cisterns underground, as they pointed out to me, at a distance of five furlongs all round the site of the temple, and each of them has countless pipes 90 so that the different streams converge together. And all these were fastened with lead at the bottom and at the sidewalls, and over them a great quantity of plaster had been spread, and every part of the work had been most carefully carried out. There are many openings for water at the base of the altar which are invisible to all except to those who are engaged in the ministration, so that all the blood of the sacrifices which is collected in great quantities is washed away in the twinkling of an 91 eye.

If he is writing around the time of Antiochus IV, then the author is probably describing the Jerusalem Temple as it appeared in the early second century. How similar the Temple in this appeared was to the Temple a century earlier during the reign of Ptolemy II is impossible to determine. The author of *Letter of Aristeas* says that the Temple sat upon the tallest hill in Jerusalem and faced east; it had three enclosing walls over seventy cubits high, while the west wall of the sanctuary served as the fourth enclosing wall. In general, the author was impressed by the quality of the workmanship and the material used in its construction, giving as examples the doors, their fastenings and the lintels. He mentions the veil and describes how air currents would cause it to be in a gentle but perpetual motion, which created quite the spectacle for the on-looker. The foundation of the Temple was said to be covered with precious stones. He also makes reference to the altar, which one approached by a ramp, and how there was a method devised to wash away sacrificial blood from the altar using water from a spring and a system of underground reservoirs that channeled water to the altar; the blood was washed out through discrete holes at the base of the altar through which the water would wash away the sacrificial blood. Presumably, the water and blood would flow underground and exit somewhere beyond the outer walls. (Actually, It is not clear what exactly is being described.) The author also claims to have toured the citadel adjacent to the Temple; he describes seeing towers and catapults (100-104).



Later, as the conflict between the Seleucid kingdom and the Maccabeans continued, Antiochus V Eupator, the son of Antiochus IV, is said to have pulled down the walls of the Temple: "But when the king entered Mount Zion and saw what a strong fortress the place was, he broke the oath he had sworn and gave orders to tear down the wall all around" (1 Macc 6.60-63; see *Ant.* 12.9.7; 382-83). These walls were probably the outer walls surrounding what was known as the outer court, because in 1 Macc 9.54, it is said that the high priest Alcimus, hostile to the Maccabeans, tore down the walls of the inner court: "In the one hundred and fifty-third year, in the second month, Alcimus gave orders to tear down the wall of the inner court of the sanctuary." Which walls these were is not clear, but probably they were the walls surrounding the priests' court and sanctuary. Jonathan, a brother of Judas, rebuilt the outer Temple wall (1 Macc 10.11; *Ant.* 13.2.1; 41); presumably the inner walls were also rebuilt at some point after Alcimus's death. According to Josephus, Jonathan later repaired the Temple walls and added high towers to the Temple precincts: "When Simon and Jonathan had finished these affairs, they returned to Jerusalem, where Jonathan gathered all the people together, and took counsel to restore the walls of Jerusalem, and to rebuild the wall that encompassed the temple, which had been thrown down, and to fortify the Temple precincts by very high towers" (*Ant.* 13.5.11; 181). (Presumably, parts of the outer walls of Temple were destroyed during Jonathan's conflicts with the Seleucids, since he had repaired the outer Temple wall earlier.)

John Hyrcanus, the son of Simon, inherited the high priesthood from his father. Josephus describes how, on what seems to be the Day of Atonement, Hyrcanus burned incense alone in the Temple (*Ant.* 13.10.3; 282). During the reigns of Aristobolus I, the son of Hyrcanus I and the reign of Alexandra, references are made to the citadel adjacent to the Temple (*Ant.* 13.11.2; 307 = *War* 13.3; 76; *Ant.* 13.16.5; 426-27 = *War* 1.5.4; 117-19; see *Ant.* 14.1.2; 5, 14.3.4; 51). Alexander Jannaeus, the second husband of Alexandra, is said to have erected a wooden barrier around the altar and the Temple as far as the wall in order to keep the people away from him and the other priests (*Ant.* 13.13.5; 372-73)

As to Alexander, his own people were seditious against him; for at a festival which was then celebrated, when he stood upon the altar, and was going to sacrifice, the nation rose upon him, and pelted him with citrons [which they then had in their hands, because] the law of the Jews required that at the feast of tabernacles every one should have branches of the palm tree and citron tree; which thing we have elsewhere related. They also reviled him, as derived from a captive, and so unworthy of his dignity and of sacrificing. At this he was in a rage, and slew of them about six thousand. He also built a partition-wall of wood round the altar and the temple, as far as that partition within which it was only lawful for the priests to enter; and by this means he obstructed the multitude from coming at him.

This innovation was precipitated by the fact that some Jewish men observing Alexander Jannaeus offering the required sacrifices at the festival of Tabernacles pelted him with citrus fruit during the feast of Tabernacles. This barrier to keep the people at a distance from the High Priest seems to be a wall designed to keep non-priests at a safe distance from the priests (i.e., out of throwing range). It is not clear, however, how this new barrier related to the one that must have already been in place before the incident of citron-throwing. Perhaps what is being described is an enlargement of the area where only priests could enter.

Josephus says that during the Hasmonean period, the ravine between the Temple mount and the city was filled in to give better access to the Temple; in addition, the hill on which the Akra (fortress) stood was lowered, so that the Temple would be the tallest structure in Jerusalem and not be blocked from view by the Akra (*War* 5.4.1; 139-40)



The faction loyal to Aristobolus II took refuge in the Temple when the Roman general Pompey marched on Jerusalem in 63 BCE. In his description of Pompey's siege, Josephus describes the Temple and its situation (*Ant.* 14.4.1-4; 58-73 = *War* 1.7.2-6; 143-53). The rebels took refuge in the Temple and cut the bridge that led to the Temple from the city. The Temple is said to have been a natural fortress since it was surrounded by a ravine; in addition, the Temple was fortified with towers, which may refer to towers attached to the fortress later called Antonia or to other towers built into the outer wall of the Temple. (During the siege and even when Pompey's troops had breached the outer wall, the priests faithfully carried out their duties of offering the morning and evening sacrifices.) Pompey eventually breached one of the largest towers. Josephus says that Pompey and some of his troops entered the inner court of the Temple and even inspected the holy place. They saw the golden table, the sacred lampstand, the libation vessels, and a great quantity of spices, but took nothing, not even the deposits in the Temple treasury. The author(s) of the Psalms of Solomon refers disapprovingly to Pompey's siege of the Temple, especially as he desecrated it (*Ps. Sol.* 2.1-2, 26-27; 8.16-18; 17.12).

The Roman Crassus, proconsul of Syria from 54-53 BCE, intending to march against the Parthians and needing funds for this campaign, took money on deposit in the Temple and is said to have planned to strip all the gold off the Temple also (*Ant.* 14.7.1; 105-109 = *War* 1.8.8; 179).

Now Crassus, as he was going upon his expedition against the Parthians, came into Judea, and carried off the money that was in the temple, which Pompey had left, being two thousand talents, and was disposed to spoil it of all the gold belonging to it, which was eight thousand talents. He also took a beam, which was made of solid beaten gold, of the weight of three hundred minae, each of which weighed two pounds and a half. It was the priest who was guardian of the sacred treasures, and whose name was Eleazar, that gave him this beam, not out of a wicked design, for he was a good and a righteous man; but being entrusted with the custody of the veils belonging to the temple, which were of admirable beauty, and of very costly workmanship, and hung down from this beam, when he saw that Crassus was busy in gathering money, and was in fear for the entire ornaments of the temple, he gave him this beam of gold as a ransom for the whole, but this not till he had given his oath that he would remove nothing else out of the temple, but be satisfied with this only, which he should give him, being worth many ten thousand [shekels]. Now this beam was contained in a wooden beam that was hollow, but was known to no others; but Eleazar alone knew it; yet did Crassus take away this beam, upon the condition of touching nothing else that belonged to the temple, and then brake his oath, and carried away all the gold that was in the temple.

Apparently the gold covered the interior and/or exterior of the walls of the Temple buildings. Eleazar gave Crassus the beam or rod that held up the veils in the sanctuary. The purpose of these veils is not clear; possibly this is a reference to more than veil that separated the holy place from the holy of holies. Josephus explains that the Temple contained much wealth, some of which was used as ornamentation, because Jews from outside of Palestine sent money to the Temple (*Ant.* 14.109-13).

Antigonus, a Hasmonean, the son of Aristobolus II, allied with the Parthians took control of Jerusalem from the Romans. Herod, with Roman support, in 39 BCE began a campaign to retake Jerusalem. Herod laid siege to the Temple, and eventually gained access to the outer courts of the Temple. Josephus says that some of the porticos were burnt. When Herod took the outer court of the Temple, his enemies fled into the inner courts. When the Romans gained access to the inner courts, a massacre ensued, but Herod restrained the Roman soldiers from entering into the sanctuary (*Ant.* 14.15.14; 465-83 = *War* 1.17.8-18.3; 342-57).

2.2. The Herodian Temple



2.2.1. References to Events Relating to the Herodian Temple

In 20-19 BCE, in the eighteenth or the seventeenth year of his reign, Herod announced that he planned to renovate the Temple (*Ant.* 15.11.1-2; 380-90 = *War* 1.21.1; 401). Actually, it seems that what he intended was its dismantling and complete reconstruction, so that one could call it a new Temple; some feared that Herod would pull down the old structures but would not be able to rebuild them. Josephus's detailed description the Herodian Temple will be considered later.

When Herod was on his death bed, Josephus says that some youths, at the instigation of their teachers Judas and Matthias, pulled down a golden eagle that Herod had erected over the great gate of the Temple as a dedicatory offering (*Ant.* 17.6.1-3; 151-63 = *War* 1.33.2-4; 649-55). The Temple gate referred to is probably the eastern gate leading into the inner courts of the Temple, called the Beautiful Gate. In their view, the biblical prohibition against images justified their action. The youths responsible climbed onto the roof, lowered themselves and cut the image down with axes.

Upon Herod's death, Archelaus, one of Herod's sons, went to the Temple, ascended a platform and sat on a golden throne (*Ant.* 17.8.4; 200 = *War* 2.1.1; 1-2). Where exactly in the Temple this took place is not clear. This pretentious act was for the purpose of staking a claim to power. When Archelaus was in Rome petitioning Augustus to confirm the last will of his father, Herod, a riot broke out in the Temple during the festival of Weeks; Varus, proconsul of Syria, attempted to quell the disturbance (*Ant.* 17.10.2; 254-64 = *War* 2.3.2-3; 45-50). According to Josephus, the rioters climbed atop the porticos surrounding the outer court and attacked the Roman legionnaires from above. In retaliation, the Romans burned the porticos feeding the fire with combustible materials until the porticos collapsed (Josephus says that the porticos had some wooden components and even gold ornamentation). Pushing their way through the fire, the Romans made their way into the Temple treasury, which they proceeded to pillage; where exactly in relation to the porticos the treasury was situated is difficult to determine. Probably, however, as will be seen, the Temple Treasury was located in the women's court.

Josephus gives the account of how Samaritans scattered human bones throughout the Temple during Passover, when the priests were accustomed to throwing open the gates of the temple after midnight; this had the effect of ritually contaminating the Temple (*Ant.* 18.2.2; 29). When he was procurator of Judea, Pontius Pilate illegally expropriated funds from the Temple treasury to build an aqueduct (*Ant.* 18.3.2; 60-62 = *War* 2.9.4; 175-77). Josephus also explains, in some detail, how, when he became emperor, Gaius (Caligula) ordered Petronius, proconsul of Syria, to erect a statue of him in the Temple. Petronius protested and delayed, and Gaius died before the former carried out the order, to the relief of all sensible people (*Ant.* 18.8.2-9; 261-309 = *War* 2.10.1-5; 184-203). Finally, Josephus relates how once during a Passover celebration, a Roman soldier standing on exterior temple walls exposed himself to the Passover crowds, thereby causing a riot. As a result a massacre ensued as the Roman legionnaires attempted to restore order (*Ant.* 20.5.2; 104).

During the reign of Agrippa II (52-66 CE), the Temple was to undergo renovations because its foundation had begun to sink. Importing huge timbers from Lebanon, Agrippa hoped to underpin the sanctuary and raise it up twenty cubits, but the war with Rome interrupted his work (*War* 5.1.5; 36). On behalf of the unemployed construction workers, whose jobs were terminated with the completion of the Temple, the people request that Agrippa II allow the workers to raise the height of the east portico, which Josephus says was built by Solomon. No doubt, he means that the eastern wall was pre-Herodian, that Herod did not rebuild this part of the outer wall (*Ant.* 20.9.7; 219-22).



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2.2.3. Description of Herod's Temple

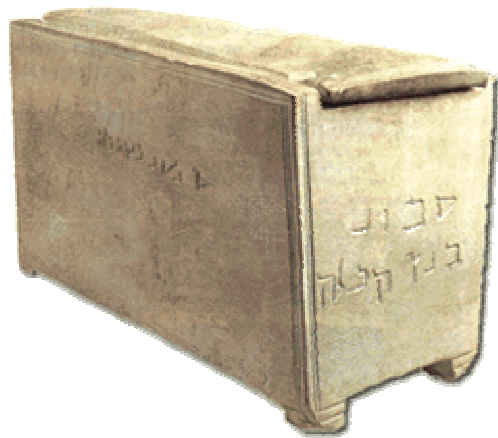
A. Introduction

In 20-19 BCE, in the eighteenth or the seventeenth year of his reign, Herod announced that he planned to renovate the Temple (*Ant.* 15.11.1-2; 380-90 = *War* 1.21.1; 401). Actually, it seems that what he intended was its dismantling and complete reconstruction, so that one could call it a new Temple; some feared that Herod would pull down the old structures but would not be able to rebuild them (*Ant.* 15. 388-89). Josephus records Herod's speech to the people on the eve of his massive renovation project (*Ant.* 15. 382-87); probably Josephus copied it from the court archives.

"I think I need not speak to you, my countrymen, about such other works as I have done since I came to the kingdom, although I may say they have been performed in such a manner as to bring more security to you than glory to myself; for I have neither been negligent in the most difficult times about what tended to ease your necessities, nor have the buildings. I have made been so proper to preserve me as yourselves from injuries; and I imagine that, with God's assistance, I have advanced the nation of the Jews to a degree of happiness which they never had before; and for the particular edifices belonging to your own country, and your own cities, as also to those cities that we have lately acquired, which we have erected and greatly adorned, and thereby augmented the dignity of your nation, it seems to me a needless task to enumerate them to you, since you well know them yourselves; but as to that undertaking which I have a mind to set about at present, and which will be a work of the greatest piety and excellence that can possibly be undertaken by us, I will now declare it to you. Our fathers, indeed, when they were returned from Babylon, built this temple to God Almighty, yet does it want sixty cubits of its largeness in altitude; for so much did that first temple which Solomon built exceed this temple; nor let any one condemn our fathers for their negligence or want of piety herein, for it was not their fault that the temple was no higher; for they were Cyrus, and Darius the son of Hystaspes, who determined the measures for its rebuilding; and it hath been by reason of the subjection of those fathers of ours to them and to their posterity, and after them to the Macedonians, that they had not the opportunity to follow the original model of this pious edifice, nor could raise it to its ancient altitude; but since I am now, by God's will, your governor, and I have had peace a long time, and have gained great riches and large revenues, and, what is the principal filing of all, I am at amity with and well regarded by the Romans, who, if I may so say, are the rulers of the whole world, I will do my endeavor to correct that imperfection, which hath arisen from the necessity of our affairs, and the slavery we have been under formerly, and to make a thankful return, after the most pious manner, to God, for what blessings I have received from him, by giving me this kingdom, and that by rendering his temple as complete as I am able."

In preparation to execute his building project, Herod acquired a thousand wagons (with oxen) to transport the stones from the quarry to the building site, hired 10,000 skilled workmen and trained 1,000 priests as masons and carpenters, for only priests could build the Temple proper (*Ant.* 15.11.2; 389-90). The huge blocks of stone were fit into place by means of ramps and pulleys (M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 84). Herod's Temple was under construction from c. 20/19 BCE until 63, just before its destruction by the Romans, but most of the work was completed earlier rather than later. Josephus says that the Temple proper (ho naos) was completed after a year and a half, whereas the construction of the stoa and the outer courts took eight years (*Ant.* 15.11.5-6; 420-21). The rest of the time was spent finishing the task. He also claims that during the time the Temple proper (ho naos) was under construction, no rain fell during the day, but only at night, so as not to hinder progress (*Ant.* 15.11.7; 425).





Simon the Temple Builder

One of the ossuaries found in a tomb in the Old City of Jerusalem bore the inscription "Simon the Temple Builder." Presumably, this man was involved in the construction of Herod's Temple, a fact for which he wanted to be remembered.

No one knows for certain what Herod's temple looked like, nor its exact dimensions, but one can form a general idea of its layout from recent archaeological excavations (see M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*), accounts of authors contemporary with Herod's Temple and from the Mishnah. The major literary sources are Josephus (*War* 5.5.1-8; 184-247; *Ant.* 15.11.5-7; 410-25) and the Mishnaic tractate *Middot* (*m. Mid.*), as well as other tractates. The problem is that the literary sources are all incomplete and contradictory at points; the Mishnah is suspect on some counts because it was written long after living memory of the Temple. Where these sources diverge, either both are given as options or one of the two options is determined to be the most likely.

B. Situation and Dimensions

The Jerusalem Temple was situated on top of the Temple Mount, also known as Mt. Moriah. To the west of the Temple was the Tyropoeon valley and to the south and east was the Kidron valley, possibly identical to the Hinnom valley (Gehinnom).



Temple Mount

Beginning in 19/20 BCE, Herod the Great began to enlarge the existing Temple Mount to be able to accommodate larger crowds of Jewish festival pilgrims.

The north provided easiest access to the Temple. Josephus describes the city as laying before the

Temple as a "theater," by which he means that the city was situated as on the west and south sides of the Temple, in a sort of semi-circle (*Ant.* 15.410). Archaeological investigation reveals the outer wall of Herod's Temple itself was an irregular quadrangle: south wall = 280 m.; west wall = 485 m.; north wall = 315 m.; east wall 460 m. The total circumference of the temenos or sacred precincts, was 1,540 m., and the total area = c. 144,000 sq. m. (M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 77). These dimensions were large by ancient standards; most temples in the ancient world were much smaller. Herod had the old foundations of the Temple removed (*Ant.* 15.391). Archaeological evidence suggests, however, that he kept the eastern wall in tact, for there is a "seam" visible near the southern corner of the eastern wall separating the Herodian stonework and what is presumed to be the pre-Herodian eastern wall. From the seam southward is thirty-two meters (out of a total of 460 meters) of Herodian wall, from which it may be inferred that Herod's builders extended the outer wall this distance to the south (M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 101-103). There is also archaeological evidence of an elaborate drainage system.



"Seam" on Eastern Wall

In the Mishnah it is said that the Temple mount—the outer wall—was 500 cubits square (*m. Mid.* 2.1) (A cubit is c. 22 inches or 56.1 centimeters), and Josephus says that the east portico was 400 cubits long (*Ant.* 20.9.7; 221-22). Obviously there is a discrepancy between the archaeological and the literary evidence concerning the size of the Temple. (The Mishnah may base its measurements on Ezek 42:16-20, which specifies that the Temple should be 500 cubits square.) In another place, Josephus said the circumference of the outer walls was four stadia (stadiou = c. 607 ft. or 184 m.) with each side being one stadion, which would make the outer courts a square (*Ant.* 15.401).



Mikveh

This mikveh (ritual bath of purification) is located to the south of the Temple close to the Huldah gates, and dates to the second-Temple period. Jews would cleanse themselves from ritual impurity in this mikveh in order to be qualified to enter the Temple (see Lev 14, 15; Num 19).

In *Apion* 2.8; 103-109, Josephus gives a brief description of the layout of the Temple. He says that the Temple had four courts, each with restrictions on who could enter. The outer court was open to all, including non-Jews, except menstruating women. Into the second court were allowed all Jewish men and



menstrually clean Jewish women. Beyond the second court was the third court into which ritually pure Jewish men could enter. Finally the fourth court was restricted to priests who were properly attired. Josephus also indicates that only the high priest dressed in his high priestly raiment could enter the sanctuary (adytum). Similarly, the Mishnah distinguishes degrees of holiness possessed by various areas of the Temple: the Temple mount was holier than the city, whereas the terrace surrounding the inner courts was holier than the Temple mount. The court of women is holier than the terrace and the court of the Israelites is holier than it. Finally, the court of the priests is holier than all (*m. Kelim* 1.8-9). It should also be noted that one ascended as one went up to the Temple and, once in the Temple, moved upwards towards the sanctuary (*War* 5.1.1; 9-11).

C. The Outer Courts

1. The Temple Walls



Largest Stone in Temple Found to Date

The outer courts were surrounded by a high and thick wall. Josephus says that this wall was the "greatest ever heard of," which, although exaggerated, is not far from the truth (*Ant.* 15.11.3; 396). Parts of this wall still survive today and have recently been excavated down to their original street level. Not surprisingly the stones used were large, especially those used in the lower courses and the corners. Josephus says that some of the stones were 40 cubits long (c. 20 m.) and six cubits (c. 3 m.) high (*War* 5.5.1; 189; *Ant.* 20.9.7; 221); the largest stone found to date is 12 m. x 3 m. x 4 m., weighing c. 400 tons (M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 88). The outer wall consisted of three rows of blocks and was about five meters thick (M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 90-91); the blocks were fitted together using the "dry construction" method, which means that no mortar was used in the construction. Each block had a "marginal dressing," meaning that each had a frame or margin chiseled around its edge (M. ben Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 96). The stones used are described by Josephus as "hard and white" (lithoi leukoi te kai krataioi) (*Ant.* 15.11.3; 392). According to Josephus, Roman battering rams were unable to cause a breach in the outer western wall (*War.* 6.4.1; 220-22).





Marginal Dressing

The outer face of each block used in the construction of the outer wall was smoothed. Herod's masons then chiseled a margin around the edge of each block; in this way, anyone could easily see that the wall was composed of individual blocks. The margin varied from between one to two centimeters deep and nine to eighteen centimeters wide.

The height of the wall varied, but on the exterior to the south it extended more than thirty meters above ground level (Sanders, *Judaism*, 68). In some places, the actual height of the wall is fifty meters, because the foundation is twenty meters below street level (M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 77, 92). (Josephus says that the actual height of the wall in some places was as high as 300 cubits (= c. 150 meters), but this seems to be in error; he is correct, however, in noting in general that, "The whole depth of the foundations was not apparent; for they filled up a considerable part of the ravines, wishing to level the narrow alleys of the town" *War* 5.188].)



"To the Place of Trumpeting" Sign

This inscription, which translates as "To the place of trumpeting...", was discovered during B. Mazar's excavations at the base of the Herodian wall at the southwest corner of the Temple Mount. It probably served to indicate where a priest would stand to blow the trumpet to begin and end the Sabbath. Josephus explains the procedure: "And the last [tower] was erected above the roof of the Priest's Chambers, where it was the custom for one of the priests to stand and to give notice, by the sound of a trumpet, in the afternoon of the approach, and on the following evening





the approach, and on the following evening of the close, of every seventh day, announcing to the people the respective hours for ceasing work and for resuming their labors" (War 4.582-83). This inscribed stone was found at the southwest corner of the Temple, which suggests that this was the place where the trumpeting occurred.

Josephus describes how the outer wall was constructed (*Ant.* 15. 397-400). The outer walls were built around the base of the Temple mount, starting from the lowest point; the blocks were fastened to one another with lead (He also says that iron clamps were used on the inside of the blocks to join them together, giving the outer walls greater strength). When the wall reached the designated height, the summit of the Temple mount was leveled off, and fill was brought in to fill up the empty space between the walls and the Temple mount, so that the outer walls functioned as retaining walls. This provided a level surface for the Temple complex. Actually, the empty space between the summit and the outer walls was not completely filled in, for under the Temple complex are layers of vaults, now known as "Solomon's Stables" (M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 91); this empty space reduced the pressure exerted against the outer walls from within (see also m. Para 3.3: "The Temple Mount and the Temple Courts had a hollow space beneath them in case there was a grace in the depths"). These vaults on the southern side of the Temple complex supported the floor of the temenos, the precincts of the Temple. Obviously the outer wall would be almost impenetrable, especially since the Temple was surrounded on three sides by ravines; only the access from the north was relatively level. This explains why so frequently the Temple was used as a citadel.



Part of Lintel from Temple



Western or Wailing Wall

What is known as the Western Wall or the "Wailing Wall" is a portion of the outer western wall of the Herodian Temple; it is the traditional Jewish place of prayer. At present, the Western Wall measures c. 50 m. wide and c. 20 m high; the original ground level of this portion of the Herodian Temple, however, is several meters below present ground level.

. The Temple Gates



Part of Lintel from Coponius (Kiphonus) Gate

According to the Mishnah, one entered the Temple complex, surrounded by the outer wall, through one of five gates, two on the south and one each other side (*m. Mid.* 1.3); according to *m. Mid.* 2.3 the gates were ten cubits wide by twenty cubits high (c. five meters by ten meters). The gate on the west was known as the Coponius (Kiphonus) Gate (*m. Mid.* 1.3), which may correspond to what is today known as Barclay's Gate, named after the American J. T. Barclay, who identified the remains of the lintel and arch of this Herodian gate (M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 116, 140-41). Contrary to the Mishnah, however, archaeological evidence confirms that there was more than one gate on the west side, bordering the Tyropoeon valley. In fact, Josephus says that there were four gates leading into the Temple from the west (*Ant.* 15.11.5; 410). The most southerly of these four gates was situated

twelve meters north of the southwest corner of the outer wall. In 1838, Edward Robinson identified the remains of an archway, now known as "Robinson's Arch," that once led to the place where this gate once stood; the supporting pier for the western edge of this arch was uncovered thirteen meters from the western wall.

Robinson's Arch and Supporting Pier for Staircase



To the south of this pier, perpendicular to the archway, was uncovered the foundations of a row of vaults that rise gradually from south to north; these vaults supported a staircase connecting the street running along the Tyropoeon Valley with the Temple. Josephus may be describing this gate when he writes, "The last [gate] led to the other part of the city, from which it was separated by many steps going down to the ravine and from here up again to the hill" (*Ant.* 15.11.5; 410). It is clear both from Josephus' description and the archaeological evidence that one ascended a staircase in order to enter this southernmost gate on the western side of Temple complex. North of "Robinson's Arch" and "Barclay's Gate," which may be the Coponius Gate, is located what is now known as "Wilson's Arch,"



"Wilson's Arch"

named after the man who explored it in the late 1860's. This structure probably dates from the post-destruction period, but marks the location of another western gate (M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 169-78). The northernmost gate along the western wall may have been situated at what is now known as "Warren's Gate," named after its discoverer, Charles Warren, who led the British expedition under the auspices of the Palestine Exploration Fund. What is visible at present is the upper portion of a blocked-up gate, which is probably a later, Muslim reconstruction of a gate original to Herod's Temple (The arched lintel of "Warren's Gate" dates from the Muslim period, but the gate posts are probably from the second-Temple period [M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 145]).



"Warren's Gate"

Josephus describes how, during the siege of the Temple, Titus burned some of the outer gates and how their silver plating melted to revealed a wooden interior, which soon caught fire; this fire soon spread to the porticos (*War* 6.4.2; 232-35). On the outside of the outer western wall of the Temple ran a street paved with stones; along the eastern side of the street, adjacent to the outer western Temple wall and the western side were many shops (see M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 80, 114).





Street Along Western Wall

In the 1990's, further excavations were carried out along the outer western wall of Herod's Temple. After the removal of much debris, the street that ran along the west side of the Temple was uncovered. The street is 10 m. wide, and is paved with stones. Along the outer wall there are the remains of shops that opened onto the street. Across from "Robinson's Arch" there was uncovered a pier that once supported it; it contains four cells that were probably used for the purpose of commerce.



**Remains of Shops
Along Western Wall**



A staircase led to a walkway that ran along the top of the shops along the western wall; it led to the two lower gates through which one entered into the Temple underground.



**Staircase along
the Western Wall**

The two sets of southern gates are known as the two Huldah Gates, the Double Huldah Gate and the Triple Huldah Gate. It seems that the southern gates became the de facto main entrance to and exit from the Temple, because they were the most used. A paved street seven meters wide ran along the southern outer wall of the Temple in front of the Huldah Gates for a distance of 280 meters. Access to the both Huldah Gates was by means of staircases.



Reconstruction of Southwest Corner of Temple
Urban Simulation Team

View of the Temple Mount from the South

Beginning in 1968, Benjamin Mazar excavated the southern wall of Herod's Temple down to its original foundation. He discovered paved street and a staircase that provides access to a set of gates leading called the Double Huldah Gates.





The staircase in front of the Double Huldah Gates was 65 m. wide, while that in front of the Triple Huldah Gates was 15 m. The Double Huldah Gate served as an entrance into the Temple, while the Triple Huldah Gates were used as an exit (*m. Mid.* 1.3; 2.2) (M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 113). Both gates enter into the space under the Royal Portico and eventually led up through highly-decorated tunnels up into the outer courts M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 136-37).



Double Huldah Gates

At present only half of the the right wing of the double Huldah gate is visible from the exterior. The lintel is probably original to Herod's Temple, but the arch and ornamentation are likely from the early Muslim period (H. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 138).



Triple Huldah Gates

To the east of the Double Huldah Gates was situated a set of three gates, called the Triple Huldah Gates. Leading up to these gates was a staircase. The present gates are not original to the Herodian period, but were built on their ruins (H. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 138).



Reconstruction of the Double Huldah Gates
Urban Simulation Team

The eastern gate led to the Mount of Olives, whereas the gate on the north, the Tadi Gate, was not used (*m. Mid.* 2.1). There are the remains of an arch near the "seam" on the eastern wall, indicating that there used to be an entrance into the Temple at this point and that there was a street that ran under this arch parallel to the eastern wall (M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 115-16).

3. Beyond the Walls

The area inside the outer walls is known as the outer courts or, as Josephus expresses, "the first court" (ho prōtos peribolos) (The Mishnah refers to the outer courts as the "Mount of the House"); the largest area within the outer court was to the south, then the east, then the north and then the west (*m. Mid.* 2.1). It was paved with stones (*War* 5.11.2; 192-93).

The outer court was surrounded by a portico adjacent to the inside of the walls (*War* 5.5.2; 191-93; *Ant.* 15.11.5; 410-416) (A portico is a porch or walkway with a roof supported by columns). The portico consisted of double rows of columns, except along the southern wall where there were four rows of columns (Acts 2:46). The outermost columns were pilasters, columns set into the Temple wall (M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 93).

Stoa of Attalos in Athens

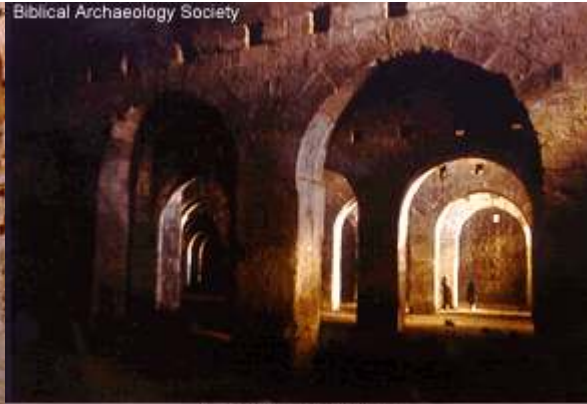


The stoa of Attalos was originally built along the Athenian Agora in 150 BCE. It functioned as a commercial center and a shelter for wealthy and influential Athenians. The photograph above is of the lower level of a modern reconstruction of this ancient structure. The stoa of Attalos consisted of two stories with a Doric colonnade on the ground floor, and an Ionic upper colonnade with a balustrade. On both levels, there exist rooms behind the colonnades. The stoas in Herod's Temple no doubt resembled the stoa of Attalos in many respects.





Possible Column from Herodian Temple



"Solomon's Stables"

With the exception of those along the southern wall, each column was twenty-five cubits high and made of a single piece of white marble; the ceiling of the portico was lined with cedar. On the three sides of the outer court the portico was thirty cubits wide (c. 30 x c. 18 inches = 45 feet or 30 x .5 m. = c. 15 m.) (*War* 5.11.2; 190). As indicated, the portico on the south side of the Temple consisted of

four rows of columns, thereby creating three aisles; the two outer aisles were thirty feet (podes) wide and over fifty-feet high, whereas the middle aisle was one and half times wider than each of the outer aisles (i.e., forty-five feet wide) and twice as high (100 feet high). (Josephus uses the "foot" as a unit

of measurement in this section rather than the cubit; this foot is approximately equal to the English foot.) (This implies that the columns used in the construction of the Royal Portico were taller than those used in the outer porticos.) The ceilings of the Royal Portico was made of wood, which were decorated with carvings of different figures. (*Ant.* 15.11.5; 413-17). Josephus says that there were 162 columns used in the Royal Portico, each with an impressive Corinthian capital; each of these columns was so wide that "it would take three men with outstretched arms touching one another to envelop it" (*Ant.* 15.11.5; 413) (Whether this was true for the columns used in the other porticos is not said.) According to *War* 5.11.2; 192, the total circumference of the the stoa adjacent to the inner wall of the outer court was six stadia (i.e., 6 x c. 607 feet or 184 m.), and in *Ant.* 15.11.5; 415, the length of the Royal Portico was one stadion (c. 607 feet or 184 m.). (His other statement that each side of the wall was one stadion conflicts with this.) These porticos are not mentioned in the Mishnah, possibly because these were typically Greek architectural feature; but archaeologists have uncovered parts of the columns used as part of the porticos (Sanders, *Judaism*, 59). According to Josephus, if one stood on the roof of the Royal portico and looked down into the Kidron valley one would become dizzy, so great was the height (*Ant.* 15.11.5; 410). Another one of these porticos is called Solomon's portico, which probably was situated along the east side of the outer court (John 10:23; Acts 3:11; Acts 5:12). Josephus relates how, during the Roman attack on the Jewish revolutionaries who were in the Temple, some 6,000 women and children took refuge on the top of the one remaining outer portico not yet on fire; without orders, some Roman soldiers set fire to this portico, resulting in the deaths of those who had taken refuge there (*War* 6.5.1 277-78; 6.5.2; 283-85). The tunnel from the Triple Huldah Gates at the south led to what is now called "Solomon's stables," where there were stalls for animals. Presumably, those entering the Temple from the south could buy animals for sacrifice that were certified as valid by the Temple authority.

D. The Inner Courts

1. Soreg

Around the inner court was a balustrade three cubits high called the soreg; the soreg was probably a free-standing structure, separating the outer court from the inner court, and had warning signs regularly spaced along it advising gentiles that entrance into the inner court was forbidden on pain of death (*War* 5.193; *m. Mid.* 2.3) (see also Josephus, *War* 6.2.4; 124-26; *Ant.* 15.11.5; 417; Philo, *Leg. ad Gai.* 212).



Temple Warning Sign



One complete and two fragmentary copies (all in Greek) of the warning to gentiles to proceed no further have been discovered. The inscription translates as follows: "No foreigner is to enter within the balustrade and embankment around the sanctuary. Whoever is caught will have himself to blame for his death which follows." Both Greek (above) and Latin versions of this warning were posted at regular intervals around the soreg (balustrade).

On the inside of the soreg would be found stairs leading up to a terrace (called the chel in *m. Kelim* 1.8), ten cubits wide, which was bounded by the walls of the inner court. According to Josephus, there were fourteen steps leading up to the terrace, while the Mishnah states that there were only twelve steps (*m. Mid.* 2.3). The number in the Mishnah, however, is suspect because of the symbolic importance of the number twelve. Josephus explains that beyond the terrace lay other sets of five steps leading up to gates opening up into the inner courts (*War* 5.5.2; 196-97), but the Mishnah describes the terrace as bounded by the inner wall with no additional steps (*m. Mid.* 2.3). On the exterior the height of the wall, including the steps, separating the two courts was forty cubits, while on the inside it was twenty-five cubits, since the inner courts were elevated above the outer courts. According to the Mishnah, when Nisan 14 fell on the Sabbath (and carrying the sacrificed paschal offering out of the Temple was forbidden) the first group to offer the Passover remained in the outer court, the second group on the terrace surrounding the inner courts, inside of the soreg, whereas the last group waited where they sacrificed their lambs until sundown, when the Sabbath was concluded (*m. Pesah.* 5.10).

2. Gates into the Inner Courts

According to Josephus, there were ten entrances into the inner courts, four on the south, four on the north, one on the east and one leading east to west from the Court of Women to the court of the Israelites, called the Nicanor Gate (*War* 5.5.2; 198; *m. Mid.* 1.4). This is confirmed by the Mishnah, for *m. Sheqal.* 6.3 and *m. Mid.* 2.6 both indicate that there are four gates each on the south and north sides of the inner courts, in addition to the Nicanor Gate. According to *m. Sheqal.* 6.3 and *m. Mid.* 2.6, on the south side, from west to east, are found the Upper Gate, the Fuel Gate, the Firstling Gate and the Water Gate; on the north side, from west to east, are located the Jeconiah Gate, the Offering Gate, the Women Gate and the Song Gate. Only three of these gates actually lead into the women's court from the outer



courts, one from the east (see below), the Song Gate from the north and the Water Gate from the south. There is a discrepancy in the Mishnah, however, concerning the number of gates leading into the inner courts. *m. Mid.* 1.4-5 says that there were only seven gates, three on the south, three on the north and one on the east. But *m. Mid.* 1.4-5 may refer only to the gates on the north, south and east sides that lead into the court of the priests or the court of the Israelites (what Josephus calls the "sacred [court]" and the "third court" *Ant.* 15.11.5; 419), omitting to mention that there were three more gates, one on the north, one on the south and one on the east, each of which leads into the woman's court. In addition, there is some disagreement on the names of the gates in this parallel passage. According to *m. Mid.* 1.4, the gates on the south were called the Fuel Gate, the Firstling Gate and the Water Gate. These three names also occur in *m. Sheqal.* 6.3 and *m. Mid.* 2.6. Only one of the names of the three gates on the north side in *m. Mid.* 1.5, however, matches the names of the four northern gates mentioned in *m. Sheqal.* 6.3 and *m. Mid.* 2.6: the Offering Gate. The other two gates on the north side in *m. Mid.* 1.5 are called the Light Gate and the [the Gate] of the Chamber of the Hearth. With the exception of the Nicanor Gate, these gates were thirty cubits high and fifteen wide, and each had two doors and a gate room. (In *Apion* 2.8; 119, Josephus says that the gates were sixty cubits high and twenty wide, which seems to be an exaggeration.) The Nicanor Gate was forty-cubits wide and fifty cubits high. The nine gate rooms (*exedra*) were thirty cubits wide, thirty cubits deep and forty cubits high, each supported by two columns (*War* 5.5.3; 202-203). Elsewhere, Josephus says that these gate rooms had three rooms each (*Ant.* 15.11.5; 418). The gate room of the Nicanor gate was probably larger in its dimensions. According to *m. Mid.* 1.4 (see *m. Mid.* 2.6), the gate room of the Nicanor Gate had two rooms, one on either side; one was called the Chamber of Phineas where the priest responsible for the distribution of priestly raiment carried out his duties, while the other room was used for the preparation of the meal-offering cakes. In *m. Mid.* 1.6, [the Gate of] the Chamber of the Hearth Gate is said to have four rooms used for different purposes. The room to the southwest was the "Chamber of the Lamb Offerings," the one to the southeast the "Chamber of Shewbread," the one to the northeast the place where the Hasmoneans hid the defiled altar stones, and the room to the northwest was a chamber which led down to the "Chamber of Immersion," where priests would cleanse themselves ritually when needed.

3. Court of Women

The gate to the east leading into the Court of Women may have been the Beautiful Gate (Acts 3:1-10) and was the principal entrance into the inner courts. (The inner courts faced east, though the main entrance to the outer courts was from the south.) Women were required to enter through the north or south gates (*War* 5.5.2; 199). Like the other gates, they that were overlaid with silver and gold (*War* 5.5.3; 201). The Beautiful Gate led into the court of woman, where all Jews could enter, except those who were ritually impure (*Apion* 2.8; 104). The north and south walls of the Court of Women were lined by porticos, thereby creating a corridor from east to west (*War* 5.5.2; 200); along the walls of the Court of Women were storage chambers where temple property or perhaps private property was stored (*War* 5.5.2; 200).

Somewhere among the chambers in the Court of Women was located the Temple treasury (*gazophylakia*), a place where money donated to the Temple or deposited privately was kept (*War* 5.5.2; 200; 6.5.2; 282; see *Ant.* 19.6.1; 294). According to the Mishnah there were located in the Temple thirteen horned-shaped depositories (*shoparoth*) designated for different types of offerings; people would deposit money in these depositories for different purposes (*m. Sheqal.* 2.1; 6. 1, 5). It is probable that these thirteen depositories were located near the Temple treasury; the contents of these depositories were periodically emptied and stored in the Temple treasury. (The same name is used for these depositories as for the Temple treasury itself.) Probably, another name for the Temple treasury is



"Storehouse of God" (tau theou thesauros) (see *Ant.* 17.10.2; 264; *War* 2.3.3; 50).

According to the Mishnah, which may be correct, there were four unroofed chambers in the four corners of the Court of Women: one was the place where unclean priests inspected the firewood removing wood that was worm-eaten; another was the room where those taking the Nazarite vow would cut their hair and cook their peace-offerings. One was the place where lepers would cleanse themselves before presenting themselves before the priest (see Lev 14; Mark 1:44). The Mishnah seems to refer to this chamber as being one of the two chambers closest to the eastern (i.e., Beautiful) gate; if so, in addition to the inspection of lepers, this chamber was also used for women to be purified after childbirth (Lev 12) and for the carrying out the ordeal for the suspected adulteress (Num 5:5-31) (*m. Sotah* 1.5; *m. Tamid* 5.6). Another of these chambers was a the place where drink offerings and grain offerings were kept (*m. Mid.* 2.5). Also, according to the Mishnah, which again may be correct, there was an elevated gallery in the Court of Women, probably on top of the portico roof of the south, east and north sides (*m. Mid.* 2.5)

4. Court of the Israelites



Reconstruction of Nicanor Gate

The Court of Women led into the Court of the Israelites via a curved staircase of fifteen steps, which led up to the Nicanor Gate (*m. Mid.* 1.4; 2.6). As indicated, according to Josephus, this gate was larger than the other nine gates (being fifty cubits high with doors forty cubits wide); its doors were supposed to have been made of Corinthian bronze (*War* 5.201) and it took twenty men to open and close it (*War* 6.5.3; 293). One first entered into the Court of Israelites, where only ritually pure Jewish men could enter (*Ant.* 15.11.5; 419). (According to Josephus, during the Roman attack on the revolutionaries who had taken refuge in the Temple, the Nicanor Gate opened of its own accord after having been closed and bolted [*War* 6.5.3; 293-94].) Under the Court of the Israelites there were chambers that opened out into the Court of the Women; these underground rooms were used for storage equipment and musical instruments used by the Levites (*m. Mid.* 2.6). According to the Mishnah, the Court of the Israelites was 135 cubits wide and eleven cubits deep, and was separated from the Court of the Priests by a low balustrade, which was elevated above the Court of the Israelites by a few steps (*War* 5.5.6; 226; *m. Mid.* 2.6). The Mishnah also claims that the Court of Priests was 135 cubits wide and eleven cubits deep, whereas the entire Temple Court (seemingly excluding the Court of

Women) was 135 cubits wide and 187 cubits deep (*m. Mid.* 2.6). If true, then probably what is referred to as the Court of Priests ("Hall of Priests") in *m. Mid.* 2.6 does not include the area in which the altar is found, because the altar would seem to be too large to fit comfortably into a space of eleven cubits; rather the eleven cubits is probably a space separating the altar from the Court of Israelites (see below).

5. Court of Priests

The Mishnah indicates that there were six chambers (*lškw*) along the north and south sides of the Court of Priests, three on the north side and three on the south side, corresponding to the six gates, set aside for special purposes. On the north side there was the "Salt Chamber" where salt used for sacrifices was stored, the Parvah Chamber where the hides of the sacrifices were salted and the "Rinsing Chamber" where sacrifices were rinsed (probably the innards of sacrifices). On the south side, were located the "Wood Chamber," the function of which was forgotten, the "Diaspora Chamber," where the water supply for the Temple was controlled, and the "Gazith Chamber" (i.e., Hewn Stone Chamber) where the



Sanhedrin used to meet to judge the priesthood (*m. Mid.* 5.3-4).

In the Court of Priests stood the altar, the ramp, the shambles, and the laver among other things needed for sacrifice (*War* 5.5.6; 225; *m. Mid.* 3.1, 6; 5.2; *m. Tamid* 1.4). (There is also a reference to the "Chamber of Utensils" in *m. Tamid* 3.4.) According to *m. Mid.* 3.1, the base of the altar was thirty-two cubits square, rose one cubit from the ground and had a one cubit wide ledge around it; on the base stood the altar itself, five cubits high with a one cubit ledge around it. Josephus, who may be more credible, however, indicates that the altar was fifteen cubits high and fifty cubits square (*War* 5.5.6; 225). On each corner of the altar there were four "horns." Leading up to the altar on the south side was a ramp; on the west side of the ramp was a "cavity" where disqualified bird offerings were thrown (*m. Mid.* 3.3). *Letter of Aristeeas* describes a drainage system connected to the altar in the pre-Herodian Temple for the purpose of washing away sacrificial blood (89-90); since the Mishnah also refers to a system for the elimination of sacrificial blood (*m. Mid.* 3.2), likely this indispensable feature was retained in the Herodian Temple. According to *m. Mid.* 3.2, at the southwest corner of the altar there were two holes through which blood was flushed away by water into the Kidron valley. Also at the same corner of the altar there was a pit covered by a paving stone functioning as a lid; the paving stone had a ring in it with which to remove it (*m. Mid.* 3.3). Priest probably poured what remained of libations into this pit. To the north of the altar there were rows of rings affixed to the ground, which were used in the slaughtering of animals (It seems that the animal's head was put into the ring to keep it immobile.) In the same location was found the shambles ("House of Slaughter") where the animal was killed and flayed (*m. Mid.* 3.5). To the south, between the sanctuary portico and altar was situated the laver (*m. Mid.* 3.6). According to biblical prescription, priests would wash their hands and feet in the laver before making sacrifices.

6. Sanctuary

The sanctuary, consisting most importantly of the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies, was situated west of the Court of the Priests; to the west of the altar was a portico functioning as a propylaeum (an entrance or vestibule) to the building behind it (*War* 5.5.3; 206). According to *m. Mid.* 4.7, the portico was called the "Chamber of the Slaughter-knives" because knives used for killing sacrificial animals were stored there. The entire sanctuary was wider in front and narrower behind (*War* 5.5.4; 207; *m. Mid.* 4.7 "like a lion"). The portico was 100 cubits across (44 m.) and 100 cubits high; the width of the building behind the portico was sixty cubits (*War* 5.5.4; 207; 5.5.5; 221); according to *m. Mid.* 4.7, from east to west, the sanctuary was 100 cubits. The exterior of the building was covered with gold so that it reflected the sunlight (*War* 5.5.6; 222); this part of the temple was the most elevated so that the gold would be visible from afar off. There were golden spikes affixed to the roof of the sanctuary to keep birds from landing on it (*War* 5.5.6; 223-24; *m. Mid.* 4.6).



Image of Temple on Coin Minted during the "Bar Kochba" Revolt



During the revolt of 132-135 CE led by Simon ben Kosiba, who became known as "Bar Kochba" or "Son of a Star" (see Num 24:17), Jews began to mint their own coinage. On the obverse of this coin is represented the facade of sanctuary; the inscription written in ancient Hebrew letters is "Jerusalem." Since only relatively few years had elapsed between the destruction of the Temple by the Romans and the minting of this coin, it is conceivable that the image represents how the sanctuary appeared before its destruction by the Romans.



The reverse of the coin displays a lulav (myrtle, palm branch, and willow tied in a bundle) and ethrog (citron fruit), which are used in the celebration of the Jewish holiday Sukkot or Feast of Tabernacles. The inscription reads: "Year 2 of the freedom of Israel."

One ascended twelve steps up to the portico into which one entered through a gate with no doors; this entrance was seventy cubits high and twenty five cubits wide (*War* 5.5.4; 208). (The Mishnah states the dimensions of this entrance, however, as forty cubits high and twenty cubits wide [*m. Mid.* 3.7].) Moving westward, one entered through the portico into the Holy Place, where only priests could enter. There were two sets of two doors fifty-five cubits high and sixteen wide, separating the portico from the Holy Place, each covered with gold, and above these were golden vines (*War* 5.5.4; 210; *Ant.* 15.9.2; 394; *m. Mid.* 3.8; see also Tacitus. *Hist.* 5.5). In front of the doors, but presumably not obscuring them, hung a tapestry (*War* 5.5.4; 210). In *m. Mid.* 3.8, it is said that actually there were two sets of two doors separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies; moreover, each of the four doors was a double door and would fold back on itself (*m. Mid.* 4.1). To open both sets of doors, a priest would enter through a small door on the north side and make his way into a corridor between the two doors where he would open each set of doors; the smaller door also led into the Holy Place (*hekal*) (*m. Mid.* 4.2). One could see through the entrance of portico to the doors separating the portico from the Holy Place (*War* 5.5.4; 208). In the Holy Place stood the menorah, the incense altar, and the table of shewbread (*War* 5.5.5; 217) (see Luke 1:5-25).



Menorah



Depicted on one the reliefs of the Arch of Titus in Rome is Titus' soldiers carrying plunder from the Temple, which included the menorah. The depiction is credible since the menorah was probably still in Rome at the time when the arch was constructed. Josephus describes the menorah as "made of gold but constructed on a different pattern from those we use in ordinary life. Affixed to a pedestal was a central shaft, from which there extended slender branches, arranged trident-fashion, a wrought lamp being attached to the extremity of each branch; of these there were seven, indicating the honor paid to the number among the Jews" (*War* 7.148-50).



Two fragments of a representation of a menorah in unpainted plaster were discovered in the debris of a house in Jerusalem from the Herodian period. Most likely, it is a copy of the menorah used in the Temple.

To the west of the Holy Place lay the Holy of Holies where only the high priest could enter once a year on the Day of Atonement; there was nothing in the Holy of Holies (*War* 5.5.5; 219; *m. Mid.* 4.7). In *m. Yoma* 5.2, it is explained that there was a stone called "Foundation" (shetijah) three finger breadths high in the Holy of Holies. A curtain separated the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place (*War* 5.5.4; 212-13; 5.5.5; 219). Josephus describes this curtain in some detail.

"It was a Babylonian curtain, embroidered with blue, and fine linen, and scarlet, and purple, and of a contexture that was truly wonderful. Nor was this mixture of colors without its mystical interpretation, but was a kind of image of the universe; for by the scarlet there seemed to be enigmatically signified fire, by the fine flax the earth, by the blue the air, and by the purple the sea; two of them having their colors the foundation of this resemblance; but the fine flax and the purple have their own origin for that foundation, the earth producing the one, and the sea the other. This curtain had also embroidered upon it all that was mystical in the heavens, excepting that of the [twelve] signs, representing living creatures" (*War* 5.5.4; 212-13).

There is some evidence that there were in fact two curtains, a cubit apart (half a meter), separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies (*m. Yoma* 5.1; see *Heb* 9:3). Philo explains that the outer curtain was called the "covering" (*kalumma*) whereas the inner curtain was called the "veil" (*katapetasma*) (*Vita Mos.* 2.101).

To the north, south and west sides of the sanctuary (the Holy Place and Holy of Holies) (sixty cubits in height) were three stories of interconnected rooms; access to these rooms was from the two sides of the portico (*War* 5.5.5; 220-21). The Mishnah describes these rooms and their functions in some detail. According to this source, there were three stories of five rooms on the north and the south; on the west side there were two stories of three rooms and a third story of two rooms, for a total of thirty-eight rooms. These rooms were connected to one another on either side and above and below. In addition, there was a winding staircase that led from the lower northeast corner to the upper northwest corner; one then traveled along a corridor on the west side moving south and, reaching the end, one turned east and traveled along the south side until one reached the entrance to the story above the sanctuary. From this upper story one could ascend a ladder until one reached the roof. In the upper story there were openings into the Holy of Holies from which workers could be lowered facing the wall in order to make repairs (*m. Mid.* 4.3-5). The use to which the upper portion of the sanctuary (forty cubits in height) was put is not known (*War* 5.5.5; 221).



Model of Temple from "Holyland Hotel"

In the north west corner of the Temple mount stood the Antonia citadel, a Roman garrison where the procurator resided when in Jerusalem; it was connected to the outer court of the Temple by an underground passage (*Ant.* 15.11.7; 424). This citadel was formerly called the *baris* (see *Ant.* 15.11.4; 403).





3. Discontent with the Temple and the Expectation of a Third Temple

Most Jews during the second Temple period recognized the Temple as a Jewish cultic center and made use of it, according to their interpretation of the biblical prescriptions. Evidence of this is the positive references to the Temple and its religious significance in Sirach, Letter of Aristeas and the writings of Philo of Alexander (*Spec. leg.*, 1.141-44; 66-345; *Leg. ad Gai.* 156).

In spite of his glowing description of the high priestly work of Simon ben Jochanan (Greek: Onias), who was high priest from 219 to 196 BCE, however, Jesus b. Sirach implies in his prayer in chap. 36 that what the prophets predicted has not taken place. He asks that God would "gather all the tribes of Jacob and give them their inheritance" (36:13, 16) and that he would "have pity on the city of your sanctuary, Jerusalem the place of your dwelling. Fill Zion with your majesty, and your Temple with your glory" (36:18-19). It seems that Sirach anticipates a time when the eschatological prophecies concerning the return of the exiles and the Temple cult will take place. Similarly, in a letter allegedly sent from Jerusalem to Jews in Egypt, it is said that the ark of the covenant and the original altar of incense was hidden by the prophet Jeremiah and its hiding place would remain concealed "until God gathers His people together again and shows them His mercy" (2 Macc 2:7). At that time God will disclose the location of these items and "the glory of the Lord and the cloud will appear, as they were shown in the case of Moses, and as Solomon asked that the place should be specially consecrated" (2 Macc 2:8). The clear implication is that the promises of restoration and a renewed Temple remain to be fulfilled, at least in their entirety.

Some Jews during the second-Temple period believed that the second Temple would be replaced by a third, eschatological Temple. The author of the Book of Tobit, writing sometime in the second century BCE, states that the Temple rebuilt under Nehemiah will be replaced by a third Temple, built at the final restoration of Israel to the land. (Although this book purports to be a historical record of events in the late 8th and early 7th centuries, it probably dates from the early 2nd century, before the reign of Antiochus IV, and reflects ideas from that period.) In chap. 13, in a hymn to God, Tobit expresses the hope that, after God has afflicted Israel for its iniquities, God would then show it mercy again by gathering the people from all nations and restoring them to the land; Jerusalem will be restored along with the temple and nations shall come to Jerusalem to worship God. But in 14:1-11, part of the testament of Tobit, it is stated that in fact two Temples will be built, one immediately upon returning to the land and the other "when the times of fulfillment shall come" (14:5). The author explains, "After this they will all return from their exile



and rebuild Jerusalem in splendor, and in it the Temple of God will be rebuilt, just as the prophets of Israel have said concerning it" (14:5). At that time the nations of the world will be converted, and abandon all their idols, those who go to Jerusalem will live in safety and the wicked will disappear from the earth. In other words, the author distinguishes between the Temple rebuilt by Ezra and the eschatological Temple foretold by the prophets.

After the Antiochan crisis, the idea that the existing Temple did not represent the fulfillment of the prophetic promise of a new Temple persisted. The existing Temple, rededicated by Judas, was at best an interim Temple to be replaced by an eschatological Temple. This idea is found in many different texts. In the *Book of Jubilees*, written in the early part of the second century BCE, history is divided into two periods: "From the first of creation until my [God's] sanctuary is built in their midst forever and ever" (1:27-28; see 1:29); this sanctuary is the eschatological Temple, the one spoken of by the prophets, and its appearance marks the transition from this age to age to come, the time of Israel's eschatological salvation. This implies that the author viewed the Temple that existed at the time of his writing as destined to be replaced at the end of the age by another, permanent Temple (see also *Jub.* 25:21).

I Enoch 83-90 (usually dated from the early Maccabean period) is a description in symbolic terms of the periods of history from the beginning to the messianic period. Near the completion of history, after the oppression of the Jews (sheep) by the Seleucids, God (the Lord of the sheep) intervenes, destroying the Gentile oppressors, and brings judgment upon Satan, the stars (rebellious angels) (90:24-25) and apostate Jews (90:26-27). After this God brings a new Temple: "And I stood to see till the old house was removed....And I looked till the Lord of the sheep brought a new house, greater and loftier than the first, the old one which he had taken away" (90:28-29). This new, eschatological Temple is also referred to in the *Apocalypse of Weeks*: "And thereafter there shall arise the eighth week of righteousness....And there shall be built the royal house of the great one, in splendor, for all generations for ever" (91:13). In addition, all the Gentiles pay homage to the Jews (90:30), and the dispersed Jews return to the land and perhaps the dead are raised (90:33).

Book 3 of *The Sibylline Oracles*, probably dating from the second century BCE, makes reference to the building of a new Temple by the Messiah (3.294); the Temple is to have a permanent place in the eschatological age (3.702-20, 772-74). There is also a probable reference to an eschatological Temple in the *Testament of Benjamin*: "...And the latter Temple will exceed the former in glory" (9:2).

Although the Qumran community withdrew from participation in the Temple, its members expected to take control of Jerusalem and build a new, eschatological Temple. This would take place after the final battle between the sons of light and the sons of darkness. The reason that we know that this group intended to replace the second Temple with another, rather than simply purify it, is that found among the Dead Sea Scrolls is a document (11QTemple) that provides a plan for a replacement Temple, which was very different from the second Temple at any time during its evolution. (See also 4Q171 3.11; 1QM 2.1-6; 7:4-10)

Nevertheless, in spite of its plans to build a new, eschatological Temple, from its inception the Qumran community considered itself as a community as a temporary replacement for the Temple. This is evident in its use of Temple imagery to describe itself. In 1QS 8.5b-6a, the community is "a holy house for Israel and an assembly of the holy of holies for Aaron"; similarly, in 1QS 8.8 the community is said to be "a dwelling of the holy of holies for Aaron...offering up a soothing odor," and a "house of perfection and truth in Israel." Finally, in 1QS 9.6 again the community is described as "a holy house for Aaron, for the community of the holy of holies, and a house of the community for Israel. The phrases "holy of



holies," "holy house," and simply "house" are terminology used of the Temple. In these passages, the priests in the community are associated with the holy of holies and the lay membership with the Temple in general. This no doubt is the basis of the many statements to the effect that the community provides atonement for the sins of its members and for the land. (See also 4Q174 [Florilegium] 1.1-18.)

4. The Heavenly Temple Corresponding to the Earthly Temple

4.1. The Heavenly Temple in the Old Testament

In Exod 25:9, 40 Moses is instructed to make the earthly tabernacle according to what God showed him (see 1 Chron 28:19). This could be taken to imply that Moses was to model his earthly tabernacle on a heavenly original. The idea that Yahweh dwells in a heavenly Temple (hekal) is found in the Old Testament. In Isa 6:1-2, Isaiah sees the Lord seated upon his throne in the heavenly Temple (hekal) (see also Isa 63:15). In his song to Yahweh, David says that from His Temple (hekal), Yahweh heard his voice (2 Sam 22:7; Ps 18:6). The prophet Habakkuk proclaims, "Yahweh is in his holy Temple (hekal); let all the earth be silent before Him (Hab 2:20), and Micah refers to Yahweh's dwelling in his Temple (Micah 1:2). Finally, David refers to how everyone in the Temple of Yahweh cries holy to Him, which seems to be a reference to the heavenly Temple where Yahweh dwells (Ps 29:9), and in Ps 11:4, he says, "The Lord is in His holy Temple; the Lord is on His heavenly throne" (see also Ps 150:1: "Praise God in His sanctuary [qadosh]").

4.2. The Heavenly Temple in the Second-Temple Period

4.2.1. References to the Heavenly Temple

A. 2 Baruch 4; 59:4

2 Bar 4

And the Lord said to me, "This city will be delivered up for a time, and the people will be chastened for a time, and the world will not be forgotten. Or do you think that this is the city of which I said, 'On the palms of my hands I have carved you?' It is not this building that is in your midst now; it is that which will be revealed, with me, that was already prepared from the moment that I decided to create Paradise. And I showed it to Adam before he sinned. But when he transgressed the commandment, it was taken away from him—as also Paradise. After these things I showed it to my servant Abraham in the night between the portions of the victims. And again I showed it also to Moses on Mount Sinai when I showed him the likeness of tabernacle and all its vessels. Behold, now, it is preserved with me—as also Paradise. Now go away and do as I command.

2 Bar 59:4

For he showed him many warnings together with the ways of the Law and the end of time, as also to you; and then further, also the likeness of Zion with its measurements which was to be made after the likeness of the present sanctuary.

B. Wisdom of Solomon 9:8



You have given command to build a Temple on Your holy mountain, and an altar in the city of Your habitation, a copy of the holy tent that You prepared from the beginning.

C. *Testament of Levi* 3:4-5

In the uppermost heaven of all dwells the Great Glory in the Holy of Holies superior to all holiness. There with him are the archangels, who serve and offer propitiatory sacrifices to the Lord on behalf of all the sins of ignorance of the righteous ones.

D. 1 *Enoch* 14.10-20

And the vision was shown to me thus: Behold, in the vision clouds invited me and a mist summoned me, and the course of the stars and the lightnings sped and hastened me, and the winds in 9 the vision caused me to fly and lifted me upward, and bore me into heaven. And I went in till I drew nigh to a wall which is built of crystals and surrounded by tongues of fire: and it began to scare 10 me. And I went into the tongues of fire and drew nigh to a large house which was built of crystals: and the walls of the house were like a tessellated floor (made) of crystals, and its groundwork was 11 of crystal. Its ceiling was like the path of the stars and the lightnings, and between them were 12 fiery cherubim, and their heaven was (clear as) water. A flaming fire surrounded the walls, and its 13 portals blazed with fire. And I entered into that house, and it was hot as fire and cold as ice: there 14 were no delights of life therein: fear covered me, and trembling got hold upon me. And as I quaked 15 and trembled, I fell upon my face. And I beheld a vision, And lo! there was a second house, greater 16 than the former, and the entire portal stood open before me, and it was built of flames of fire. And in every respect it so excelled in splendor and magnificence and extent that I cannot describe to 17 you its splendor and its extent. And its floor was of fire, and above it were lightnings and the path 18 of the stars, and its ceiling also was flaming fire. And I looked and saw therein a lofty throne: its appearance was as crystal, and the wheels thereof as the shining sun, and there was the vision of 19 cherubim. And from underneath the throne came streams of flaming fire so that I could not look 20 thereon. And the Great Glory sat thereon, and His raiment shone more brightly than the sun and 21 was whiter than any snow. None of the angels could enter and could behold His face by reason 22 of the magnificence and glory and no flesh could behold Him. The flaming fire was round about Him, and a great fire stood before Him, and none around could draw nigh Him: ten thousand times 23 ten thousand (stood) before Him, yet He needed no counselor. And the most holy ones who were 24 nigh to Him did not leave by night nor depart from Him. And until then I had been prostrate on my face, trembling: and the Lord called me with His own mouth, and said to me: 'Come hither, 25 Enoch, and hear my word.' And one of the holy ones came to me and waked me, and He made me rise up and approach the door: and I bowed my face downwards.

In a vision, Enoch is taken to Heaven where he sees a house before which was another, greater house in which was found the throne of God. Enoch bows before the open door of the second house, but is summoned to appear before God; he is then told that the request of the Watchers for forgiveness has been refused. 1 *Enoch* 14 seems also to assume the existence of more than one Temple, each belonging to one of the heavens.

4.2.2. *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*

Of particular interest is the text, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, copies of which were found at Qumran and Masada. This is a liturgical composition, made up of thirteen parts. They serve to "invoke angelic praise, describe the angelic priesthood and the heavenly temple, and give an account of the worship performed on the Sabbath in the heavenly sanctuary" (C. Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice: A Critical Edition*, 1). Each song begins with a call to praise God followed mostly by a description of



angelic praise in the heavenly sanctuary. Without going into too much detail, this text presupposes the existence of a heavenly temple and its angelic priests. There are also probable references to a single angel who presides over the angelic priestly hierarchy (4Q401 frg. 23.1; 4Q401 frg. 20.2; 4Q403 frg. 1, col. 2.23; 4Q403 frg. 1, col. 2.24). (These angels functioned as heavenly priests in the heavenly Temple.) There are also two probable references to Melchizedek as one of these heavenly priests (4Q401 11.3; 22.3). Given Melchizedek's identification with Michael/Prince of Light, it is likely that Melchizedek would have been understood as this presiding priestly angel, which would make him the heavenly high priest. Other references to angelic priests include *Jub.* 31:13: "May he [God] draw you [Levi] and your seed near to Him from all flesh to serve in His sanctuary as the angels of the presence and the holy ones" and *T. Levi* 3.5: "There are with Him [God] the archangels, who serve and offer propitiatory sacrifices to the Lord on behalf of all the sins of ignorance of the righteous ones. They present to the Lord a pleasing odor, a rational and bloodless oblation."

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In Search of the Synagogue Part II: The Temple Destroyed; The Synagogue Takes a Turn [70c.e.–4th century]

To understand the evolution of the synagogue in Roman-occupied Palestine, we interviewed Lee I. Levine, professor of Jewish History and Archaeology at Hebrew University and author of The Ancient Synagogue: The First Thousand Years.

How did the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in 70 C.E. impact upon Jewish communal life?

The impact varied significantly depending on where the Jews lived. The effect on those living closest to Jerusalem and the Temple, including the neighboring region of southern Judaea, was undoubtedly traumatic. Suddenly the major national and religious focus of Jewish life—the Temple—had been eliminated, and with it the rituals and ceremonies that had constituted the sole focus of Divine worship in Israel. Those living close by had frequented the institution on a regular basis; it played a central religious role in their lives. And since the Temple had also served as the central forum (or communal center—politically, socially, judicially, and religiously) for Jews throughout the province of Judaea, communal life in the region was seriously disrupted as well.



In contrast, the severity of Jerusalem's destruction for Jews living in the Galilee, and certainly for those throughout the Diaspora, was probably minimal and even negligible, except perhaps for the psychological impact.

What happened to the synagogue in the wake of this destruction?

The synagogue continued to function as the focal communal institution of Jews everywhere, both in the Diaspora and Judaea, much as it had in the pre-70 era. It universalized official Jewish ritual practice and democratized worship by taking it out of priestly hands—opening the way for any Jew anywhere to participate and officiate in the recognized communal ritual. Moreover, the synagogue radically changed the content of this ritual, shifting the focus from sacrifice and libation to Torah study and, later on, to prayer. Finally, the synagogue welcomed within its confines the presence of the congregation as a whole, unlike the Temple where people were often kept far removed from the scene of the ritual.

What about the existence of actual synagogue buildings in the post-70 era?

There is no question that synagogues existed then, as they are regularly mentioned in second- and third-century rabbinic sources. However, there is scant archaeological material for the 200 years following the Temple's destruction. Of the 150 or so synagogues known from Late Antiquity, fewer than a half dozen can be dated to the two centuries following the destruction.

How can this be explained?

Some scholars suggest that these synagogues were either destroyed or converted into buildings which served other purposes as a result of the various Jewish revolts against Rome between 66 and 135 C.E., especially in the aftermath of the Bar Kokhba revolt. We know from Malalas, a sixth-century chronicler, that army commanders (later emperors) who successfully led the Roman efforts to quell the Jewish revolt of 66 C.E. converted synagogues in Caesarea and Daphne into an *odeum* (a small theater) and theater



respectively. In addition, the Jerusalem Talmud notes the destruction of a major Alexandrian synagogue as a result of the 115–117 C.E. Diaspora revolt. However, there is no information linking the devastation resulting from the Bar Kokhba revolt in southern Judaea to the synagogues in the Galilee or elsewhere. So, while the Bar Kokhba revolt might explain the lack of evidence in and around southern Judaea, this theory does not account for the absence of remains elsewhere in the country.

Another theory is that the synagogues of this time were small and inconsequential, perhaps even located in private homes, as were “contemporary” churches. This would explain the difficulty in their identification as synagogues. However, it is difficult to imagine the existence of a synagogue in such modest circumstances when we know this institution convened in separate buildings both before (in the first century) and after (in the fourth to seventh centuries) the destruction.

What, then, is your opinion?

It seems most plausible that the synagogues of the post-70 C.E. era were destroyed or reused in later construction, i.e., in the third to fourth centuries and onward. It is well known from archaeological excavations that later buildings invariably obliterated earlier remains. Such was the case in Jerusalem, for example; medieval remains are far more prominent than those from the earlier Muslim and Byzantine eras, and the latter are more numerous than the Roman or Hellenistic strata, and all these together have almost completely erased any significant remains from the biblical period.

What can we learn from rabbinic sources about post-70 synagogues?

The rabbinic literature reports a fascinating exchange between two rabbis in the first half of the third century C.E. that has a modern ring: “And Rabbi Hama bar Hanina and Rabbi Hoshaya were walking among the synagogues of Lydda [a city in the coastal region, southeast of Tel Aviv, today located adjacent to Ben Gurion Airport]. Rabbi Hama bar Hanina asked Rabbi Hoshaya: ‘See how much money my ancestors [lit., my fathers] have invested here [in these buildings]?’ The other responded: ‘And how many souls have your ancestors lost here [lit., have they sunk here]? There are no people to study Torah!’” (Jerusalem Talmud, Sheqalim 5, 6, 49b)

Here, then, we have two contrasting rabbinic reactions to the city’s impressive synagogue buildings: one takes pride in the architectural structures, while the other sharply criticizes the waste of communal funds in light of poor attendance and suggests that monies should go instead toward supporting the community’s educational dimension. From this exchange we learn that synagogue buildings might have been very prominent at this time. Other sources provide additional information: eighteen synagogues existed in Sepphoris and its environs at the time of Rabbi Judah I’s funeral there, ca. 225 C.E. (Jerusalem Talmud, Kilaim 9, 4, 32b) and thirteen synagogue buildings stood in late third-century Tiberias (Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 8a).

We can also learn about synagogues from the *halachic* (legal) questions asked of third-century rabbis. For example, the people of Bet Shean (at the eastern end of the Jezreel Valley) asked Rabbi Ami: “Is it permissible to take stones from one synagogue in order to build another?” In another case, “the people of Migdal [north of Tiberias] asked Rabbi Simeon ben Laqish: ‘Is it permissible to take stones [from a synagogue] in one city to build [a synagogue] in another?’” (Jerusalem Talmud, Megillah 3, 1, 73d).

Notably, these rabbinic questions about synagogue buildings in Palestine in the latter part of the third century are quite unique. We then need to consider: were these issues of import only at this time, or were such questions common but not preserved elsewhere?

There are many possible explanations. To me, the most plausible is that the Jews, having lost the Temple, Jerusalem, and much of the region of Judaea, and now finding themselves in the throes of political instability, a growing Christian presence, and possibly a resurgent paganism, may have sought to



reaffirm their identity and demonstrate their cohesiveness by erecting communal buildings, some of monumental proportions.

You say that at this time the synagogue continued to function as the central institution of Jewish communal life. How do we know this?

Archaeological evidence attests to the synagogue's importance. Throughout late Roman Palestine (second to fourth centuries C.E.), Galilean and Golan synagogue buildings, such as those at Khirbet Shema', Nevoraya, Qatzrin, Chorazim, and Horvat 'Ammudim, were erected in the very center of these towns and were much larger than any other local structure. At times the synagogue's prominence was expressed topographically—at Khirbet Shema' the building was positioned high on a hill, overlooking the town, while at nearby Meiron, the synagogue was perched at the very peak of a mountain towering over the adjacent village. In addition, the buildings tended to have imposing and elaborate façades, usually facing south, in the direction of Jerusalem.

Rabbinic sources of the period also attest to the synagogue's centrality in Jewish life. The Tosefta (a mid-third-century collection of laws usually based on the Mishnah) says: "One should not behave lightheartedly in a synagogue. One should not enter them in the heat because of the heat, or in the cold because of the cold, or in the rain because of the rain. And one should not eat in them or drink in them or sleep in them or stroll in them, or just relax [lit., enjoy oneself] in them, but [one should] read Scriptures and study laws [lit., Mishnah] and engage in midrash [i.e., exegetical commentary] in them" (Tosefta, Megillah 2, 18). From these prohibitions, we can infer that such practices were widespread; otherwise, why would the rabbis issue explicit restrictions? Indeed, other sources also indicate that the synagogue may have been used for a variety of communal, nonreligious purposes, and thus it is not surprising that a number of Jewish communities referred to their synagogue as a "house of the people." Synagogues in America today may be viewed as approximations of ancient synagogues and how they functioned.

When did synagogues start facing Jerusalem?

Archaeological evidence reveals that beginning in the third and fourth centuries almost all synagogues were oriented toward Jerusalem. The orientation was sometimes expressed by an elaborate exterior façade, and always by the building's interior design: the focal wall would face Jerusalem. Synagogues in the southern part of the country, in Eshtemoa and Susiya for instance, were thus oriented to the north.

We also read at this time in history about the requirement to direct oneself toward Jerusalem during the *Amidah* prayer:

Those who stand outside Israel must direct their hearts [i.e., face] toward the Land of Israel, as it is written: "And they will pray toward their land" [II Chr. 6:38]. And those standing in the Land of Israel direct their hearts toward Jerusalem and pray, as it is written: "And they shall pray toward this city" [ibid.]. Those standing in Jerusalem shall direct their hearts toward the Temple, as it is written: "And they shall pray toward this House" [ibid., 6:32]. Those standing in the Temple should direct their hearts toward the Holy of Holies and pray, as it is written: "And they shall pray toward this place" [I Kgs. 8:30]. Thus, those who stand in the north will face south, those who stand in the south will face north, those in the east will face west, and those in the west will face east. Thus all Israel will be praying to the same place (Tosefta, Berakhot 3, 15–16).

What does the synagogue's orientation toward Jerusalem tell us about the Jewish community at this time?

The orientation toward Jerusalem constituted a powerful statement of religious-ethnic particularism. No longer was the synagogue—the central communal institution—considered an "architecturally neutral" gathering place. The synagogue now expressed and reflected collective historical memories of the destroyed Temple and perhaps hopes and dreams of its restoration.



Not everyone, however, was pleased with these and other expressions of Temple worship. Some rabbis expressed reservations about the propriety of reproducing Temple-related items. The Babylonian Talmud cautions: "One should not make a house like the Sanctuary; nor an exedra[an outer room] like the Temple porch; nor a courtyard like the [Temple courtyard]; nor a table like the (Temple) table; nor a menorah like the (Temple) menorah...." (Rosh Hashanah 24 a-b).

When did prayer replace Temple sacrifice as the primary mode of worship?

In rabbinic circles, soon after the Temple's destruction in 70 C.E. (e.g., facing Jerusalem during the central *Amidah* prayer). By the third century, a statement in the Jerusalem Talmud says that prayers were introduced in place of the Temple's daily sacrifices (Jerusalem Talmud, Berakhot 4, 1, 7b; Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 26b). Sometime in the third or fourth century, the rabbis introduced memories of the Temple ritual into synagogue liturgy, such as the recital of the requisite Temple sacrifices on Sabbaths and holidays. Together with the transfer of Temple practices to the synagogue setting (such as the use of the *shofar*, *lulav*, and *etrog*), the synagogue building was gradually accorded a degree of sanctity. As the third-century rabbi Samuel ben Rabbi Isaac explained, the synagogue should be considered "a diminished Temple" (Babylonian Talmud, Megillah 29a)—an eloquent expression to the ambiguity and ambivalence surrounding the synagogue's changing role. It was a diminished sanctuary, a replica of sorts, not nearly as sacred as the Jerusalem Temple, but sacred nonetheless.

In the coming centuries, with the triumph of Christianity under Constantine and thereafter, the sanctity of the synagogue accelerated. This is only one in a series of dramatic developments in the evolution of the synagogue we will explore in our next installment.

Reform Judaism Online Magazine: <http://reformjudaismmag.org/Articles/index.cfm?id=1294>

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