



## Course Syllabus

### **NEW TESTAMENT SEMINAR: THE JEWISH WORLD OF THE NEW TESTAMENT NEWT 0728**

**Winter Semester 2012**  
**TUESDAYS, 8:30-11:20 AM**

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Office Location: room 2004

Office Hours: Tues. 1:30-2:30 pm; Wed. 10am-12noon; Thurs. 11am-12noon

#### **I. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

We often forget that Jesus and all of his first followers were Jews. First-century Christians understood their Lord within the story and the thought-world of Judaism. In this course we will explore that ancient Jewish world through its literature, through the eyes of Gentile authors, and through the archaeological remains left behind by Jewish communities. All along the way we will ask how our growing familiarity with this Jewish world deepens our understanding of the New Testament and God's actions in Christ.

#### **PREREQUISITES**

BIBL 0501 (Biblical Interpretation)

NEWT 0321-0322 (Elementary Greek I-II)

NEWT 0522 (New Testament Theology and History)

#### **II. LEARNING OUTCOMES**

By the end of the course, a student gaining a "B+" grade should be able to:

- outline the course of major historical events effecting Jewish communities from 543 BC to 150 AD;
- outline the main development of Jewish theology and practice during this period, focusing on:

- hopes for God's rescue of Israel (with or without a Messiah)
- Israel's chosenness and the fate of the Gentiles
- death and the afterlife
- angels, demons, and the geography of heaven
- covenant, law, and God's grace
- human nature and the problem of evil
- temple worship, synagogue meetings, and daily prayer
- explain the basic characteristics of the main Jewish sects and outline the factors contributing to their development;
- outline the main features of several Jewish literary genres;
- discuss (with examples) how an understanding of these beliefs and practices in Second Temple Judaism contributes to our understanding of Jesus and the New Testament.
- Identify, find, and use the basic research tools for the study of Early Judaism;
- competently read and translate short passages of Jewish Greek from outside the New Testament, making only scattered errors;
- competently make an academic presentation of their own research (as, e.g., at a scholarly conference).

### III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

#### A. REQUIRED TEXTS

- VanderKam, James C. *An Introduction to Early Judaism*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2001. ISBN 0802-84641-6.
- Josephus, *The Jewish War*. Penguin Classics. London: Penguin, 1981. ISBN 9780140444209. = **W**
- Martínez, Florentino García. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated: The Qumran Texts in English* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1996). ISBN 0802841937 = **DSS**
- *The Apocrypha: New Revised Standard Version* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993). ISBN 0521507766 = **A**
- Liddell, H. G. and R. Scott. *Liddell and Scott's Greek-English Lexicon, Abridged*. Simon Wallenburg Press, 2007. ISBN 978-1843560265.

Primary readings will be done from the standard editions listed below, all of which are either in the reference section of the Tyndale library or will be placed on reserve.

#### B. SUPPLEMENTARY TEXTS

Those who wish to invest in copies of the primary Early Jewish texts (in translation) may choose to purchase one or more of the following standard editions:

- Charlesworth, James H., ed. *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (2 vols.; New York: Doubleday, 1985). ISBN 0385096305 (vol. 1), 0385188137 (vol. 2) = **P**
- Danby, Herbert, trans. *The Mishnah*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1933. = **M**
- Colson, F. H., and G. H Whitaker, trans. *Philo*. 12 vols. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1929. = **Ph**

### **C. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING**

1. **Weekly seminar participation:** 20% of final grade;

Each week until Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup> students will be assigned a section to read from VanderKam's textbook, along with selected readings from primary sources. Students will also be given a set of discussion questions related to these assigned readings. During each seminar meeting students will be expected to demonstrate that they can participate actively and appropriately in discussion of those questions as well as in more general discussion about the week's readings. Since this is a seminar (not a taught class), the instructor will function as a facilitator and guide rather than as an expert lecturer. Students will be expected to carry much of the discussion on their own without constant prompting from the instructor. Students' participation will be graded based on

- (a) frequency and appropriateness of their contributions;
- (b) evidence they have completed and understood the assigned readings;
- (c) evidence they have reflected on the assigned reading questions;
- (d) depth of insight and synthesis of the week's learning with previous learning.

2. **Greek reading:** 30% of final grade;

Each week students will be given 2-4 verses of Greek to read and analyze. They will be responsible to (a) highlight and mark the syntax of the Greek text; (b) submit a written answer to a few brief questions about the contents and grammar of the week's reading; (c) be prepared to offer a rough translation for any part of the week's reading, looking only at the Greek text. Note that students are not asked to prepare a polished translation and are *not* to bring a prepared translation to class.

3. **Research presentation:** 20% of final grade; Given on Mar. 20<sup>th</sup>, Mar. 27<sup>th</sup>, or Apr. 3<sup>rd</sup>;

In the latter weeks of the course each student will be assigned a time to present his or her essay to the class. The essay should be **12-15 pages**, complete and properly edited following the **SBL Handbook of Style**. Printed copies should be provided for each of the seminar members (including the instructor). This should be presented in an appropriate style for academic contexts (as discussed in class). The other seminar members will then have an opportunity to discuss the presented paper, evaluating its strengths and weaknesses as well as reflecting on its significance for our understanding of Early Judaism and Christianity. This can often be a threatening experience. The ability to give and receive critical feedback, though, is one of the most crucial skills (and spiritual disciplines) in any kind of work. So we will try, as a group, to foster an atmosphere of compassion alongside an atmosphere of direct critical inquiry. The grade for this presentation will reflect both the quality of the presentation itself and the quality of the paper presented (though these elements cannot be assigned set proportions of the mark for the presentation). A full rubric for the essay and for the presentation will be provided on the course web-site.

Although this is a new area of study for most students, they will need to get started early in the term on research for their essays. In order to help with this process, some sample essay questions are provided here:

- a) How does the author of *1 Enoch* 6-36 (*Book of the Watchers*) explain evil and sin in the world, and how does this explanation compare with Paul's explanation in Romans 1-8?
- b) How does the Messiah of the *Psalms of Solomon* compare with the Messiah of the *Similitudes of Enoch*, and how do these expectations help us to understand the Christology of the Gospels?
- c) How are God's grace and human obedience related in the *Hymns of the Community (Hodayot)* at Qumran, and how does this compare with Paul's moral theology in Romans 5-8?
- d) How does the approach to legal interpretation in the *Damascus Document* compare with Jesus' approach to the law in Matthew 5-7?
- e) How does the view of a righteous life in *Ben Sira* compare with Paul's understanding of righteousness in 1 Corinthians (or with the understanding of righteousness in James)?
- f) How do the attitudes toward Gentiles in the *Book of Jubilees* compare with the attitudes in *Joseph and Aseneth* (or *Testament of Abraham*)?
- g) How do the authors of *Tobit* and *Judith* each think God's people should respond to oppression? How do these responses compare with Jesus' theology of the cross in Mark's Gospel?
- h) What understanding of divine Wisdom do we find in *Wisdom of Solomon* and how does this influence our understanding of John's Christology?

- i) How does the author of *4 Ezra (2 Esdras)* expect his readers to understand the visions in chapters 11-13? How does this understanding help us to read the visions of Revelation?
- j) How does the author of *Jubilees* interpret the Abraham stories in Genesis, and how does this compare with Paul's understanding of Abraham in Romans and Galatians?

If a student would like to write on one of these questions, he or she must ask the professor. **Only one student in the seminar may write on each question**, and they will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis. Students may also propose their own research questions in consultation with the instructor. In either case, **students must have their research question approved by the instructor before proceeding with substantial work on the essay.**

- 4. **Revised essay:** 30% of final grade; Due two weeks after the student's research presentation;

After having received feedback from the seminar group, students will revise their essays and submit them for oral evaluation with the instructor. At this stage the essay will be evaluated for its content alone, not for its presentation. Each student will bring two (2) copies of the essay to an appointment to be established with the instructor. The student will read the essay to the instructor and engage in an informal conversation about its strengths and how it might be further improved. At the end of this meeting the instructor will assign a grade to the assignment. A full rubric for the essay will be provided on the class web-site.

Weekly seminar preparation and participation		20%
Greek reading		30%
Research presentation	Given on Mar. 20 <sup>th</sup> , Mar. 27 <sup>th</sup> , Apr. 3 <sup>rd</sup>	20%
Revised essay	Due no more than <b>two weeks after</b> the student's research presentation.	30%
		100%

#### IV. COURSE SCHEDULE, CONTENT AND REQUIRED READINGS

	Topic and Readings	Greek Reading
Jan. 10 <sup>th</sup>	What Happened In Between?	Susanna 1:6-7
Jan. 17 <sup>th</sup>	The Maccabean Crisis and its Aftermath <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Josephus, <i>JW</i> book 1</li> <li>• 1 Maccabees (A)</li> <li>• 2 Maccabees 2-8 (A)</li> </ul>	Sus. 1:9-12
Jan. 24 <sup>th</sup>	Life under Rome and Life in Diaspora <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Josephus, <i>JW</i> book 2 (1-83, 94-119, 162-203, 223-344, 388-416, 449-498, 647-654) (W)</li> <li>• Philo, <i>Embassy to Gaius</i> 114-161 (Ph vol. X)</li> <li>• Tobit (A)</li> </ul>	Sus. 1:13, 19
Jan. 31 <sup>st</sup>	Apocalyptic Literature: Justice and the Future <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Enoch 6-36 (P vol. 1)</li> <li>• 1 Enoch 45-57 (P vol. 1)</li> <li>• 4 Ezra (2 Esdras) 3:1-5:20; 7; 11-13 (A)</li> </ul>	Sus. 1:28-30
Feb. 7 <sup>th</sup>	Psalms, Hymns, and Prayers: What Did Jews Say to God? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Eighteen Benedictions (handout)</li> <li>• <i>Psalms of Solomon</i> 3, 9, 17, 18 (P vol 2)</li> <li>• <i>Hymns of the Community</i> (1QHa) viii.16-37, ix.1-39 (DSS)</li> <li>• Judith (A)</li> </ul>	Sus. 1:31-33
Feb. 14 <sup>th</sup>	Re-written Bible and Biblical Interpretation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Jubilees</i> 1-15 (P vol. 2)</li> <li>• <i>Peshar Commentary on Habakkuk</i> (1QpHab) vii-xiii (DSS)</li> </ul>	Sus. 1:34-35
Feb. 21 <sup>st</sup>	The Law and its Observance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Damascus Document x.10-xii.18 (DSS)</li> <li>• Letter of Aristeas 121-171 (P vol. 2)</li> <li>• Mishnah tractate <i>Aboth</i> 1; 3.14-17; <i>Yadaim</i> 4.6-7; <i>Shabbath</i> 1-2 (M)</li> </ul>	Sus. 1:36-38
Feb. 28 <sup>th</sup>	Divine Wisdom <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wisdom of Solomon (A)</li> <li>• Ben Sira (Ecclesiasticus) 1-15; 34:9-36:17; 38-51 (A)</li> </ul>	Sus. 1:39-41
Mar. 6 <sup>th</sup>	The Qumran Community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Josephus, <i>JW</i> 2.119-161</li> </ul>	Sus. 1:44, 48, 51

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Community Rule (1QS; Serek ha-Yahad) (DSS)</i></li> <li>• <i>Damascus Document (CD) i-viii (DSS)</i></li> <li>• <i>War Scroll (1QM) (i-iii, v, x, xviii-xix) (DSS)</i></li> </ul>	
Mar. 13 <sup>th</sup>	** Reading Week, no class **	Sus. 1:52-53
Mar. 20 <sup>th</sup>	Essay presentations	Sus. 1:54-56
Mar. 27 <sup>th</sup>	Essay presentations	Sus. 1:57-59
Apr. 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Essay presentations Filling the Gap	Sus. 1:60, 63
Apr. 10 <sup>th</sup>		

## V. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Items marked with an asterisk (\*) are highly recommended.

### General Reference Works

Betz, Hans-Dieter, ed. *Religion Past and Present*. 5 volumes. Leiden: Brill, 2007.\*\*

Cancik, Hubert, et al., eds. *Brill's New Pauly: Encyclopedia of the Ancient World: Antiquity*. 13 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2002.\*\*

Craig A Evans and Stanley E Porter, ed. *Dictionary of New Testament Background: A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000.\*\*

Neusner, Jacob, Alan J. Avery-Peck, and William Scott Green, ed. *Encyclopaedia of Judaism*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999.\*\*

Neusner, Jacob, and Alan J. Avery-Peck, ed. *Encyclopedia of Religious and Philosophical Writings in Late Antiquity*. Leiden: Brill, 2008.

### Histories of Early Judaism

Davies, W. D., Louis Finkelstein, William Horbury, John Sturdy, and Steven T Katz, eds. *The Cambridge History of Judaism*. 4 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.

Neusner, Jacob. *Judaism in Late Antiquity*. Leiden: Brill, 2001.

Sanders, E. P. *Judaism: Practice and Belief, 63 BCE-66 CE*. London: SCM Press, 1992. \*\*

Schürer, Emil. *History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.-A.D. 135)*. Revised. Edited by G. Vermes et al. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1973-1987. \*\*

### **Introductions to Early Jewish Literature**

Cohen, Shaye J. D. *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah*. Library of early Christianity 7. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1987.

Kraft, Robert A., and George W.E. Nickelsburg, eds. *Early Judaism and its Modern Interpreters*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986.

Nickelsburg, George W. E. *Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah: A Literary and Historical Introduction*. 2nd ed. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005. \*\*

Stone, Michael E., eds. *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran Sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus*. Assen/Philadelphia: Van Gorcum/Fortress Press, 1984.

### **Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls**

Brooke, George J. *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005.

Magness, Jodi. *The Archaeology of Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls*. Studies in the Dead Sea scrolls and related literature. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub, 2002. \*\*

Schiffman, Lawrence H., and James C. VanderKam, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000. \*\*

Schiffmann, Lawrence H., *The Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered*. New York: Anchor, ???.

Schuller, Eileen M. *The Dead Sea Scrolls: What Have We Learned?* Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006. \*\*

VanderKam, James C. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994.

VanderKam, James C., and Peter W. Flint, eds. *The Dead Sea Scrolls After Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment*. Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 1998. \*\*

### **Jewish Diaspora**

Barclay, John M. G. *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora from Alexander to Trajan (323 BCE-117 CE)*. Hellenistic Culture and Society XXXIII. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996. \*\*

Collins, John J. *Between Athens and Jerusalem: Jewish identity in the Hellenistic Diaspora*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2000. \*\*

Gruen, Erich S. *Diaspora: Jews amidst Greeks and Romans*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002.

## **Archaeology**

Stern, Ephraim, ed. *New Encyclopaedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*. Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society and Carta, 1993.

## **The Greco-Roman Context of Judaism**

Hornblower, Simon, and Antony Spawforth, eds. *Oxford Classical Dictionary*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. New York and Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.\*\*

Johnston, Sarah Iles. *Religions of the Ancient World: A Guide*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004.

Potter, David S., ed. *A Companion to the Roman Empire*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 2006.

Shipley, Graham, et al., ed. *The Cambridge Dictionary of Classical Civilization*. Cambridge, U. K.: Cambridge University, 2006.

Cancik, Hubert, et al., eds. *Brill's New Pauly: Encyclopedia of the Ancient World: Antiquity*. 13 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2002.\*\*

## **Rabbinic Literature**

Fonrobert, Charlotte Elisheva, and Martin S. Jaffee, eds. *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature*. Cambridge Companions to Religion. Cambridge: University Press, 2007.

## **Legal Observance and Ritual Purity**

Klawans, Jonathan. *Purity, Sacrifice, and the Temple: Symbolism and Supersessionism in the Study of Ancient Judaism*. New York: Oxford University, 2005.\*\*

Klawans, Jonathan. *Impurity and Sin in Ancient Judaism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.\*\*

## **Messianic Expectations and Eschatology**

Collins, John J. *The Sceptre and the Star: The Messiahs of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Ancient Literature*. New York: Doubleday, 1995.\*\*

Horsley, R. A., and John S. Hanson. *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs: Popular Movements at the Time of Jesus*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988.\*\*

Nickelsburg, George W. E. *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism and Early Christianity*. Harvard Theological Studies 56. Cambridge: Harvard Divinity School, 2006.\*\*

Fitzmyer, Joseph A. *The One Who Is To Come*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2007.

Neusner, Jacob, William Scott Green, and Ernest Frerichs, eds. *Judaisms and Their Messiahs at the Turn of the Christian Era*. Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1987.