

INTERTESTAMENT SURVEY
Course Requirements

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Spring 2021

COURSE Description

History of the Jewish nation in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman periods; cultural and religious developments behind NT times; significance of the LXX and of the DSS; origins of Jewish rabbinics and apocalyptic literature.

COURSE Objectives

1. To introduce the history and religious developments of the so-called “silent years” between the testaments.
2. To focus on the literature of the this period:
 - a. the LXX and the DSS as witnesses to the canon of the OT,
 - b. apocalyptic literature as a window into the thinking of certain NT religious sects, and
 - c. the beginnings of rabbinic literature as a foundation for modern Judaism.

COURSE Outcomes

1. The student will gain insights into God’s providential preservation of His covenant people from the benevolent rule of the Persians through the turbulent times of the imperialistic Greeks and Romans.
2. As an aid to Bible interpretation and exposition, the student will gain a fuller understanding of NT backgrounds, including Maccabean history, origins of NT sects, the politics of Herod the Great, and the Greek OT (LXX) as the basis of many NT concepts and language phrases.

TEXTBOOK and RESERVE READINGS:

DUE

- 26 Jan
- 02 Feb → Josephus. *Wars of the Jews*. Book I, Chpts. 1-7, 27, 33
- 09 Feb → Hoehner, “Between the Testaments”* in the *Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, I:179ff.
- 16 Feb → *I & II Macabbees*
- 02 Mar → Edersheim. *Sketches of Jewish Social Life*, chpts. 14-16, 18
<https://www.google.com/search?tbm=bks&q=Sketches+of+Jewish+Social+Life%2C+edersheim>
- 09 Mar → Soderlund. “Septuagint” in *ISBE, Revised*, IV:400-409
- 16 Mar → Mid-term EXAM
- 22 Mar → LaSor. “The Dead Sea Scrolls” in the *Expositors Bible Commentary*, I:395ff.
- 29 Mar → Spring Break (no class)
- 06 Apr → Cross. *The Ancient Library at Qumran and Modern Biblical Studies*, pp. 197-243
- 13 Apr → Metzgar. “The Apocrypha” in the *Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, I:161ff
- 20 Apr → Pfeiffer. *Between the Testaments* (recommended)
OR R.L. Cate, *A History of the Bible Lands in the Interbiblical Period*
- 27 Apr → Apocryphal Writings: Tobit, Additions to Esther, Ecclesiasticus, Prayer of Manasseh
- 04 May → Thomson. “Apocalyptic Literature” in original *ISBE*, Scts. I-III:161-164
→ *The Book of Enoch* (<http://hiddenbible.com/enoch/enoch.html>)
- 11 May → Final Exam

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS:

There will be two short papers due on the dates listed below. While suggestions are offered for your paper topic, you may choose to develop a topic not suggested.

Each short paper should be in standard, typed form and at least four pages in length. Bibliography should include at least three non-encyclopedic, non-internet sources.

If you prefer, you may substitute one eight-page paper for the two shorter papers. One long paper is due on May 4.

DUE

22 Mar

Intertestamental History Section through the LXX

Suggestions:

- 1) develop the importance of the synagogue for NT worship and polity;
- 2) trace the origin and beliefs of the Essenes (possible comparative study with Sadducees and Pharisees);
- 3) develop a particular theological belief of the Essenes;
- 4) develop the importance of the LXX for textual studies or for biblical theology;
- 4) illustrate how the LXX set the background for and helps define NT terms like “*ekklesia*” and “*kurios*”

04 May

DSS, Rabbinics, Apocrypha, Apocalyptic

Suggestions:

- 1) Develop the value of the DSS in corroborating the authenticity and antiquity of the OT canon; give special attention to the Scrolls’ bearing on Daniel’s authenticity and traditional date (be sure to reference Archer’s *SoOTIntro*);
- 2) summarize the origins and later veneration of the RC apocrypha books, with the weaknesses of the apocrypha that disqualify them for inclusion in the canon.

EXAMS:

1) Mid-course Exam on Mar 16

2) Final exam in class on Dec 11

GRADING:

Exams = 50%

Papers = 20%

Readings = 25%

Attendance = 5%