

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, and the politics of Herod the Great.

TEXTBOOK and SELECT READINGS: The *Expositor's Bible Commentary*, edited by Frank Gaebelein, is a key text for this course, as well as for Bible Introduction. Some other texts can be borrowed from a public library or the pastor’s library, like Josephus, *Zondervan Pictorial Bible Encyclopedia*, and Edersheim. You may wish to purchase either Pfeiffer or Cate on the history of the period. For the apocryphal readings, the books of Maccabees, Tobit, and Ecclesiasticus may be read from a Roman Catholic Bible, but for the rest it is recommended that you borrow a collection of the apocryphal books from a library.

TEXTBOOK and RESERVE READINGS: DUE before Memorial Day 2021

- Josephus *Wars of the Jews*. Book I, Chpts. 1-7, 27, 33
- Hoehner “Between the Testaments” in the *Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, I:179ff.
- *I & II Macabbees*
- 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>
- Blaiklock “*The Septuagint*” in *ZPBE*, V:342-347 (or similar article)
- LaSor “*The Dead Sea Scrolls*” in the *Expositors Bible Commentary*, I:395ff.
- Cross *The Ancient Library at Qumran and Modern Biblical Studies*, pp. 197-243
- Metzgar “*The Apocrypha*” in the *Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, I:161ff
- Pfeiffer *Between the Testaments* (recommended)
OR R.L. Cate, *A History of the Bible Lands in the Interbiblical Period*
- *Apocryphal Writings: Tobit, Additions to Esther, Ecclesiasticus, Prayer of Manasseh*
- Gasque. “*Apocalyptic Literature*” in *ZPBE*, I:200-204 (or similar article)
- *The Book of Enoch* (<http://hiddenbible.com/enoch/enoch.html>)

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 June 4, 2021.

DUE

31 March Short Paper #1: Intertestamental History and 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; develop the importance of the LXX for textual studies;
- 4) illustrate how the LXX set the background for and helps define NT terms like “*ekklesia*” and “*kurios*”

24 May Short Paper #2: Rabbinics, DSS, 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 Survey of OT Introduction);
- 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 Due April 30, 2021 2) Final Exam Due June 30, 2021

GRADING: Exams = 55% Papers = 20% Readings = 25%