



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

New Testament and Early Christianity A: Gospels and Acts - 24344

Last update 26-09-2024

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)

Responsible Department: Comparative Religion

Academic year: 0

Semester: 1st Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Serge Ruzer

Coordinator Email: Serge.Ruzer@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: Wednesday 13:00-14:00

Teaching Staff:

Dr. Serge Ruzer

Course/Module description:

The course will address the core ideas and beliefs of nascent Christianity as expressed in the canonical Gospels and in Acts – with a particular stress on those ideas' backdrop in various late Second Temple Jewish groups. Developments and metamorphoses in nascent Christian perceptions and their socio-historical setting will be emphasized.

Course/Module aims:

To expose the participants to the main trends in early Christian thought -- in their historical, social and religious context -- as attested in the Gospels and Acts.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

On successful completion of the course, the students will be able to properly evaluate the multifaceted nature of the early Jesus movement and its various settings in both Palestinian Judaism and wider Greco-Roman milieu, as well as the process of the parting of the ways between Judaism and Christianity during the first century of the common era.

Attendance requirements(%):

100%

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Frontal lectures (now on ZOOM) that also encourage the participants to actively participate in discussion of textual evidence and various research models.

Course/Module Content:

1. Introductory Session: Jesus, his early followers and their literary output.
2. Variety of messianic beliefs in late Second Temple Judaism and their reflection in the Gospels A: Jesus as a prophet and the Interpreter of the Torah.
3. Variety of messianic beliefs in late Second Temple Judaism and their reflection in the Gospels B: Jesus as son of David and as heavenly savior (son of Man).
4. Belief in Jesus' messiahship as grounded in the Scripture.

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5. *Portraying Jesus as a Torah sage in the Synoptic tradition.*
 6. *Notion of the Kingdom of God. Jesus' parables and parables in rabbinic literature.*
 7. *Identity-shaping struggle: Synoptic Gospels on Jesus and his followers vis-a-vis various trends in Judaism.*
 8. *The Gospel of John: Jesus as God's Word. Notion of Messiah's pre-existence in its Jewish setting.*
 9. *The Gospel of John and the notion of "the last redeemer is like the first one." Jesus as second Moses.*
 10. *Identity-shaping strategies in the Gospel of John: narrative function of the "Jews".*
 11. *Jesus's trial, crucifixion and resurrection: searching for the meaning of the Messiah's death.*
 12. *The Book of Acts as a sequel to the gospel narrative: Acts and Luke. Paul and mission to the Gentiles in connection to biblical prophecy and trends in Second Temple Judaism (A).*
 13. *The Book of Acts as a sequel to the gospel narrative: Acts and Luke. Paul and mission to the Gentiles in connection to biblical prophecy and trends in Second Temple Judaism (B). Changes in the Jesus movement's agenda in light of the joining of the Gentiles.*
 14. *Delay in redemption and the eschatological outlook of Acts.*

Required Reading:

רשימה ביבליוגרפית (חובה)
ז' ואלה, הנצרות הקדומה, האוניברסיטה הפתוחה 2005, פרקים 1 - 3 (עמ' 11-66).
א' לימור, בין יהודים לנוצרים, האוניברסיטה הפתוחה 1993, עמ' 41-121.
ש' ספראי, עם ישראל בימי הבית השני, תל-אביב 1970
ש' ספראי, "ישו והתנועה החסידית", י' גפני, א' אופנהיימר וד' שוורץ (עורכים), היהודים בעולם ההלניסטי והרומי, יום 1996
ד' פלוסר, יהדות ומקורות הנצרות, תל-אביב 1979:
"היחס הספרותי בין שלושת האוונגליונים", "ריפוי במגע ידיים במגילות מדבר יהודה", "הסעודה האחרונה והאיסיים", "משפטו ומותו של ישו הנוצרי", "משלי ישו והמשלים בספרות חז"ל", "ה'תורה' בדרשה על-ההר", "מדרש התנ"ך בברית-החדשה", "טבילת יוחנן וכת מדבר יהודה", "כת מדבר יהודה והנצרות לפני פאולוס".
ד. פלוסר, "השתקפותן של אמונות משיחיות יהודיות בנצרות הקדומה", משיחיות ואסכטולוגיה, ירושלים

תשמ"ד.

345-347.

ד. פלוסר, ישו, ירושלים-תל אביב, 2009.

א' רגב, "ממלכת כוהנים או גוי קדוש? מעמדו של המקדש בנצרות הקדומה", קתדרה 113 (2004), עמ' 5-34.

ס' רוזר, "צמד הציוניים 'ואהבת' בברית החדשה ובסרך היחד", תרביץ עא (2002), עמ' 353-370.
ס' רוזר, "אמונה משיחית ביהדות וסוגיית משיחיותו של ישו במסורת הנוצרית הקדומה", זמנים 120 (2012), עמ' 40-51.

B. D. Ehrman, *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings* (New York, Oxford, 1997).

D. Flusser, *Jesus* (Jerusalem, 1998/2001).

The New Jerome Biblical Commentary (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1990).

The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, ed. F. L. Cross, (Oxford, 1957/1958/1978/1997).

N. Perrin, D. C. Duling, *The New Testament. An Introduction* (HBJ, 1982/94).

G. Anderson, "The Interpretation of Genesis 1:1 in the Targums," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 52, 1 (1990): 21-29.

L. H. Feldman, "The Omnipresence of the God-Fearers," in *Biblical Archaeology Review* September/October 1986, 59-69.

P. Fredriksen, "Judaism, the Circumcision of Gentiles, and Apocalyptic Hope: Another Look at Galatians 1 and 2," *Journal of Theological Studies* 42, 532-564.

S. Safrai, "The Jewish Cultural Nature of Galilee in the First Century," in *The New Testament and the Christian-Jewish Dialogue [Immanuel 24/25]* (Jerusalem, 1990).

Schwartz D. R., "The End of the Ge (Acts 1:8): Beginning or End of the Christian Vision?" *Journal of Biblical Literature* 105 (1986): 669-76.

G. Stroumsa, "The Body of Truth and its Measures: New Testament Canonization in Context," in idem, *Hidden Wisdom* (Leiden, 1996).

R. F. Tannenbaum, "Jews and God-Fearers in the Holy City of Aphrodite," in *Biblical Archaeology Review* September/October 1986, 55-57.

J. Taylor, "The List of Nations in Acts 2:9-11," *Revue Biblique* 106.3 (1999), 408-420.

Additional Reading Material:

ל' בק, בשלהי בית שני: הפרושים - ספרי הבשורה, ירושלים 1963.

ד' פלוסר, "שנאת ישראל באוונגליון על פי מתי", יהדות בית שני: חכמיה וספרותה, ים-2002, עמ' 345-347.

י' קנוהל, בעקבות המשיח, ירושלים ותל אביב 2000.

א' רגב, "מקדש או משיח? 'משפטו' של ישו, המקדש והמדיניות הרומית", קתדרה 119 (2006), עמ' 13-36.

א' רגב, "האומנם היה מיסיון לגויים בראשית הנצרות?", זמנים 120 (2012), עמ' 80-89.

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- L. Alexander, "Fact, Fiction, and the Genre of Acts," *New Testament Studies* 44 (1998): 380-399.
- Atkinson K., "On Further Defining the First Century CE Synagogue: Fact or Fiction?" *NTS* 43 (1997): 491-502.
- E. J. Bickerman, *The Jews in the Greek Age* (Harvard Univ. Press, 1988/94).
- R. L. Brawley, "The Identity of Jesus in Luke 4:16-30 and the Program of Acts," *Luke-Acts and the Jews: Conflict, Apology and Conciliation* (Atlanta, Georgia, 1987), 28-50.
- D. Flusser, "Ostrakon from Qumran Throws Light on First Church," *Jerusalem Perspective* 53 (1997), 12-15.
- P. Fredriksen, "Paul, Purity, and the Ekklesia of the Gentiles," in J. Pastor and M. Mor, *The Beginnings of Christianity* (Jerusalem, 2005), 205-17, esp. 215-16.
- J. Gager, "Introduction," in idem, *Reinventing Paul* (New York, 2000).
- R. S. MacLennan and A. T. Kraabel, "The God-Fearers – A Literary and Theological Invention," in *Biblical Archaeology Review* September/October 1986, 46-53.
- Pines S., "Notes on the Twelve Tribes in Qumran, Early Christianity and Jewish Tradition," in Gruenwald I., Shaked S., Stroumsa G. (eds.), *Messiah and Christos* (Tübingen, 1992), 151-54.
- S. Ruzer, "From 'Love Your Neighbor' to 'Love Your Enemy'" in S. Ruzer, *Mapping the New Testament: Early Christian Writings as a Witness for Jewish Biblical Exegesis* (Leiden, 2007), 35-70.
- S. Ruzer, "Antitheses in Matthew 5: Midrashic Aspects of Exegetical Techniques," in *Mapping the New Testament*, 11-34.
- S. Safrai, "Teachings of Pietists in Mishnaic Literature," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 16 (1965).
- J. Taylor, "Paul and the Jewish Leaders at Rome: Acts 28:17-31," in T. G. Casey and J. Taylor (eds.), *Paul's Jewish Matrix* (Rome, 2011), 311-326.
- J. B. Tyson, "Jews and Judaism in Luke-Acts: Reading as a Godfearer," *NTS* 41 (1995): 19-38.

Grading Scheme:

Essay / Project / Final Assignment / Home Exam / Referat 60 %
Mid-terms exams 40 %

Additional information: