

BS2090P/ 3090P

Holiness, Hope, and Resistance: Jewish Literature of the Second Temple Period

Semester 2: Classroom-based (BS2090P, BS3090P)

Description

This unit explores the texts and communities of Second Temple Judaism. The extraordinary discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls and continued study of other ancient manuscripts have prompted renewed appreciation for the diversity of Judaism in this period. Meanwhile biblical scholarship since the second half of the 20th century has underscored what is at stake in seeking to understand these sources on their own terms. This unit will introduce some key ancient personalities and texts—from, for instance, the Maccabean literature, Philo, and Josephus, to the Dead Sea Scrolls and apocalyptic literature—and explore themes that arise as matters of primary theological, cosmological, and political significance for the writers. In addition to dealing with texts that are intrinsically interesting, the unit will be of great value to anyone wanting to go on to further study in Hebrew Bible, Judaism, or New Testament or simply wanting to attend better to the essential context of the New Testament writers.

Learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of this unit, it is expected that students will be able to:

1. Apply skills in close reading of ancient texts.
2. Articulate the key themes of a selection of Jewish texts that survive from the Second Temple period.
3. Identify elements of continuity and discontinuity in historical and theological themes that emerge across this literature.
4. Facilitate discussion, drawing on independent reading and reflection, about a key text/writer.
5. (Level 3 only) Reflect critically on the implications of the diverse treatments of key themes across the selected literature for New Testament interpretation.

Assessment

| Assessment Type | Weighting |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| Level 2 | |
| Report on a primary text (500 words) | 15% |
| Oral Presentation (1000 words) | 25% |
| Essay (2500 words) | 60% |
| Level 3 | |
| Report on a primary text (500 words) | 10% |
| Oral Presentation (1000 words) | 20% |
| Essay (3500 words) | 70% |

Pre-requisite: 15 points in Field B

Lecturer: Kylie Crabbe

Recommended reading

Charlesworth, James H., ed. *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. 2 vols. ABRL. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983-1985.

Collins, John J. *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016.

Howell Chapman, Honora and Zuleika Rodgers, eds. *A Companion to Josephus*. Blackwell Companions to the Ancient World. Chichester, UK: Wiley Blackwell, 2016.

Lim, Timothy and John J. Collins, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of the Dead Sea Scrolls*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Najman, Hindy. *Losing the Temple and Recovering the Future: An Analysis of 4 Ezra*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

Neusner, Jacob, William Scott Green, and Ernest Frerichs, eds. *Judaisms and their Messiahs at the Turn of the Christian Era*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.

Nickelsburg, George W. E. *Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah: A Historical and Literary Introduction*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981.

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Rajak, Tessa. *Translation and Survival: The Greek Bible of the Ancient Jewish Diaspora*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

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

Seland, Torrey, ed. *Reading Philo: A Handbook to Philo of Alexandria*. Grand Rapids, MI and Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2014.

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Learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of this unit, it is expected that students will be able to:

1. Apply skills in close reading of ancient texts.
2. Articulate the key themes of a selection of Jewish texts that survive from the Second Temple period, with mature engagement with primary sources as evidence.
3. Critically assess elements of continuity and discontinuity in the historical, theological, and literary themes that emerge across this literature.
4. Facilitate discussion, drawing on independent reading and reflection, about a key text/writer.
5. Reflect critically on the implications of the diverse treatments of key themes across the selected literature for New Testament interpretation.
6. Develop and respond to an essay question in light of acquired knowledge of texts and their contexts.

Assessment

| Assessment Type | Weighting |
|---|-----------|
| Report on a primary text (1000 words) | 15% |
| Oral Presentation (15 Min, 1000 words) | 15% |
| Essay (4000 words) | 70% |

Pre-requisite

15 points in Field B

Lecturer

Kylie Crabbe

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