Course Instructor: David M. Miller, Ph.D.
Email: dmiller@briercrest.ca
Phone: 306-756-3438
Course Dates: October 22-26, 2018

3 Credit Hours

COURSE DESCRIPTION
A seminar on the history, literature, and thought of early Judaism (from 300 BCE to 200 CE). This course highlights the Jewish origins of Christianity, illuminates the thought world of Jesus and his Jewish contemporaries, and explores the reasons for the eventual “parting of ways” between Judaism and Christianity.

COURSE INTEGRATION AND OUTCOMES
Contemporary scholars of Christian origins are committed to studying early Christianity carefully in its early Jewish context; they also agree that Judaism should be studied fairly on its own terms and not simply as the background to Early Christianity.

This course will adopt the same approach. We will examine pivotal “intertestamental” period events, such as the Maccabean revolt, and consider the impact of centuries of Persian, Greek and Roman rule on the beliefs, practices, and dreams of first-century Jews. We will learn about the distinctives of the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes, as well as what was common to the majority of ordinary Jews who did not belong to any group. We will also gain a first-hand acquaintance with early Jewish literature by reading selections from the Apocrypha, the Pseudepigrapha, and the Dead Sea Scrolls. By the end of this course, you will recognize more fully the richness and complexity of the Jewish milieu out of which Christianity developed. You will also be familiar with major trends in scholarship on early Judaism, and be better able to identify the nature and limits of the historical evidence, as well as to distinguish between speculative and solidly-grounded historical reconstructions.

And yet at every turn we will be concerned with the implications of what we are learning for our understanding of early Christianity. Our study of Jewish eschatological beliefs will shed light on the early Christian affirmation that Jesus is the Messiah. Our analysis of early Jewish interpretation of Scripture will help us pay attention to the use of the Old Testament in the New Testament; it will also provide an opportunity to explore the development of the Old Testament canon. Finally, what we learn about the role of the law in early Jewish life will provide a framework within which Paul's statements about the law can be evaluated. Fresh ways of looking at familiar texts will raise new questions as well as answer old ones. This is good—not least because it can direct us back to the Bible, prepared to listen to Scripture more carefully and to hear its challenge with new force.

Our study of Second Temple Judaism will be a collaborative endeavor. Please consider this syllabus your learning contract: By choosing to take this course, you agree to prepare diligently, to participate actively, and to help create a positive learning environment for your fellow students.
COURSE TEXTS

Secondary Sources

Reserve Reading (on Canvas)

Primary Sources
Pseudepigrapha (Note: You are not expected to purchase a copy, but you are required to bring a copy of the assigned readings from the Pseudepigrapha with you when they are discussed in class):

*These texts are available in store and online at the Briercrest Bookstore: http://briercrest.ca/bookstore.

Students are expected to refer to Briercrest Seminary’s Format and Style Guides and Guide for Writing Research Papers, available as PDF documents here: https://www.mybriercrest.ca/seminary/documents/.

Students are responsible for course materials and communication on Canvas (https://briercrest.instructure.com; cf. http://briercrest.ca/online/canvas) and their myBriercrest.ca email account.

ASSIGNMENTS

Pre-Course Assignment:

Cohen Book Review (15%) – Prepare a 4-6 page book review of Shaye Cohen’s From the Maccabees to the Mishnah (3rd ed. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2014). Your review should describe the argument of each chapter in your own words, and then critically interact with it. Devote one third of the review to evaluating the argument of the book and its usefulness for understanding early Judaism. You may consult published reviews of the book as long as you (1) have completed a draft of your own review prior to consulting them, and (2) document any and all ideas from such reviews that you include in your paper. Due Monday, October 22, 2018, at the beginning of class.
Mid-Course Assignment:

Readings and Class Participation (10%) – The readings for this course open on to a different world whose foreignness is sometimes more pronounced because it seems vaguely familiar. Meaningful class discussion can only occur if we all come to class prepared to discuss the primary texts, the issues raised in the secondary readings, and their implications for the interpretation of the Bible. Your grade will be based on a reading log submitted at the beginning of each day of class and on active class participation throughout the course. Note: This is a reading-intensive course. Reading ahead is advised!

Post-Course Assignments:

Apocrypha Logbook (15%): Read through the entire Apocrypha, and complete logbook entries for each book (including readings discussed during our week of class). Your “logbook” is a place to get your bearings and process what you are reading: to take soundings, to record impressions, to connect the primary readings to what, for most of us, is the more familiar ground of Old and New Testaments, and to puzzle through questions. You may also find that the “logbook” is a convenient place to post initial reflections that will feed into your major writing assignment. Think of the “logbook” as a resource that you can refer back to, a record of your voyage through the course.
- Each logbook entry should comment on or raise questions about the following: (1) Significant similarities and differences from the Old Testament; (2) Connections that shed light on the New Testament; (3) Contributions to our understanding of Early Judaism (concentrate on themes that we are tracking through the course). In addition, note other observations and questions: What is strange, new, unusual, striking, etc.?
- The logbook will be assessed on the basis of its completeness, writing quality, depth of reflection, and thoughtful effort.
- Due Friday, December 21, 2018.

Major Essay (35%) - Write a 12 to 14 page essay (3600-4200 words not including outline and bibliography) on a topic that has the potential to contribute to a better understanding of Jesus, early Christianity and/or the New Testament. Since this is a course on early Judaism, essays should concentrate on early Jewish evidence from outside the New Testament.
1. Proposal (recommended, but not for credit): The proposal should begin by stating your topic, and then introduce it in 1-2 typed double-spaced pages. Explain how you ‘discovered’ the topic and why you are interested in it; describe how the topic relates to the New Testament or early Christianity; discuss your major question or questions; explain how you plan to approach the paper; and, finally, list at least two good primary source texts that relate to the topic and a preliminary bibliography of at least 5 good secondary sources that you have begun to look at that treat the topic. Due Friday, November 2, 2018.
2. Essay (35%). Due Friday, December 21, 2018. Additional instructions about the essay will be given in class. The following is a selection of possible topics:

- Adam and Eve
- Afterlife (heaven, hell)
- Angels and demons
- Atonement
- Calendar
- Covenant
- Hellenism
- Human will and divine providence
- Jews and Gentiles
- Jubilee
- Judas Maccabee and Jesus
- Passover
- People of the Land
- Pharisees
- Politics
- Prayer
- Predestination
- Sanhedrin
- Scribes
- Scripture and canon
- Sexuality
- Sin
- Son of Man
Dualism | Judas and Theudas | Priests | Suffering
---|---|---|---
Election | Judgement | Prophecy | Synagogues
Eschatology | Languages of Palestine | Proselytism | Temple
Essenes | Law | Purity and holiness | Rewritten Scripture
Ethics | Love | Resurrection / immortality | Theodicy
Ethnicity | Marriage (intermarriage) | Sabbath observance | Tribulation
Exile (and the present) | Martyrdom | Sacrifice | Wisdom and Torah
Feasts | Messiah | Sadducees | Women
Food Laws | | Salvation | Worship
Grace and works | | Samaritans | Zealots

**Take-Home Exam (25%) – Due Friday, November 9, 2018.**

**Course Outline and Content**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class Topic</th>
<th>Primary Reading</th>
<th>Secondary Reading</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon Oct 22 AM</td>
<td>Course Introduction; Issues in the Study of Early Judaism; A Literary and Historical Overview</td>
<td>Tobit Sirach 1-3, 15, 17, 24-25, 39, 50</td>
<td>JANT 583-589, 596-9; 759-763</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon Oct 22 PM</td>
<td>Tobit; From Alexander to Antiochus IV; Wisdom (Ben Sira)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues Oct 23 AM</td>
<td>The Maccabean Revolt; Common Judaism I: Torah and the Righteous Life</td>
<td>1 Macc 1-4; 2 Macc 3-9; Susanna</td>
<td>JANT 592-6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues Oct 23 PM</td>
<td>Introducing Apocalypses; Maccabees (cont’d)</td>
<td>1 Enoch 1-20; Jude</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed Oct 24 AM</td>
<td>Introduction to the Dead Sea Scrolls; Rules (1QS, 1QSa)</td>
<td>4QpNah; 1QpHab (V504-516); 1QS, 1QSa (V97-117, 159-162)</td>
<td>JANT 710-714</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed Oct 24 PM</td>
<td>Scripture: The Canon &amp; Ancient Exegesis</td>
<td>Jubilees 1-3, 6, 12, 50; 11Q5 (V307-313); CD I, VI-VII (V127-130, 133-5)</td>
<td>Kugel 151-178; JANT 727-730</td>
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<td>Thurs Oct 25 PM</td>
<td>Common Judaism III: Messianism; Eschatology &amp; the Afterlife</td>
<td>4Q521; 4QTest; 4QFlor (V412-13, 525-8); Pss Sol 17-18; 1 Enoch 91:12-94:11; 100</td>
<td>JANT 622-628, 691-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri Oct 26 AM</td>
<td>Herod and his Successors; The First Jewish Revolt &amp; Its Causes</td>
<td>Pss Sol 2</td>
<td>JANT 717-721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri Oct 26 PM</td>
<td>Life after 70 CE, the Parting of the Ways, Rabbinic Literature, “Parallelomania” &amp; Course Conclusion</td>
<td>Mishnah &amp; Talmud Excerpts</td>
<td>JANT 589-592, 653-4; Sandmel “Parallelomania” 1-13</td>
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SEMINARY CALENDAR

Students are expected to be aware of the policies that govern course work at Briercrest Seminary, all of which are published in the current Seminary Calendar: https://www.briercrestseminary.ca/academics/calendar/.

Attendance Policy
Students are expected to attend 100% of each modular for which they register. If this is impossible, arrangements must be made with the course professor. A maximum of 1 full day of class can be foregone. Students should request to withdraw from the course or move the course to an audit if additional time is missed.

Course Schedules
Classes begin at 9:00 a.m. on Monday morning and run a minimum of 30 hours through the course of the week. The schedule is determined by the course professor. Students should check the syllabus for specifics. When the syllabus does not state class times, students are responsible to check with the professor prior to making travel plans.

Assignment Submission
All assignments must be submitted no later than eight weeks after the last day of class as stated in the syllabus. The correct due dates will be clearly noted in the syllabus and each faculty member will state in their syllabus how assignments should be submitted. Assignments submitted within a week after the due date will be accepted with a 10 per cent penalty. For additional information refer to the late assignment policy or the extension policy in the academic calendar.

Return of Graded Assignments
Professors are expected to return graded assignments within six weeks of the due date. If they fail to do so, students may submit an inquiry to the Seminary. If an extension is granted, the professor is no longer obligated to meet this deadline.

Academic Honesty
Students are accountable to perform each task according to principles of academic honesty. Please refer to pages 24-25 in the academic calendar for more information.

Academic Accommodations
Any student with a disability, injury, or illness who may need academic accommodations should discuss them with the course instructor after contacting the Student Success Centre in person (Room #215), by telephone (1-306-756-3230) or by email (studentsuccesscentre@briercrest.ca).

David Miller’s Policy on Electronic Devices:
Laptop and tablet computers may be used in class to access primary sources and take notes. The use of electronic devices for any other purpose is forbidden in this class. Please turn off your cell phone at the beginning of each class.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

**Encyclopedic Reference Works**

**Selected Primary Sources**

**Dead Sea Scrolls**

**Josephus**

**Philo of Alexandria**

**Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha**


Rabbinic Literature


Talmud Online: http://www.halakhah.com/ (Soncino Edition English); http://www/mechon-mamre.org/ (Hebrew/Aramaic)

Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism


Selected Secondary Sources

General Introductions


The Dead Sea Scrolls


Other Early Jewish Literature


**Beliefs and Practices, etc.**


**Ethnicity, Nationalism, Jews and Gentiles, Events and Major Figures**


**Groups and Sects**


Law and Purity


Messianism


Scripture


**Women**


**Jesus, John, Paul and Judaism**


Sanders, E. P. *The Historical Figure of Jesus*. London: Penguin, 1993.


**The Parting of the Ways**


Selected Websites


“The Dinur Center for Research in Jewish History.” Online: http://jewishhistory.huji.ac.il/.


Smith, Mahlon H. “Into his Own: Perspective on the World of Jesus.” Online: http://virtualreligion.net/ih0/