

LAIDLAW COLLEGE
Te Wananga Amorangi

146.615 Israel in the Time of Jesus
Course Assessment and Delivery Outline

Campus: Distance Learning
Tutor: Alister Gill

Semester SS, 2017-18
NQF Level 6, 15 credits

CONTENT OVERVIEW

An introduction to the historical, geographical, political, economic, religious, and social world of first-century Palestine with a view to how this informs our understanding of Jesus' life and message. Students will begin to work with primary sources used in historical Jesus study.

By the end of the course students should be able to:

1. Describe the historical and cultural context of first-century Palestine
2. Discuss how knowledge of the historical context can inform our understanding of the gospels
3. Examine Jesus' life and message in light of his historical context
4. Consider implications for us and how we might translate Jesus' message into our own contexts
5. Show an awareness of primary as well as secondary sources

COURSE SCHEDULE

Semester Week	Week start	Topic	Assessment Task	Word count	Due date	% Final grade
1	27/11/17	Introduction to Israel in the Time of Jesus	Online Discussion	200+50	3/12/17	Part of 20%
2	4/12/17	'Rulers... lord it over them': Israel in the time of Herod the Great	Online Discussion	200+50	10/12/17	Part of 20%
3	11/12/17	'Love your enemies': from Herod Antipas and Pontius Pilate to the Jewish War				
4	18/12/17	'Is it lawful?' Jewish religious and political groups	Online Discussion	200+50	24/12/17	Part of 20%
5	25/12/17	'These are my mother and brothers': Galilean family and village life	Survey	none given		35%
6	1/1/18	'Good news to the poor' Galilean agrarian economy	Online Discussion	200+50	7/1/18	Part of 20%
7	8/1/18	'A friend of tax collectors and sinners' Galilean ethnicity and religion			14/1/18	
8	15/1/18	'Your Kingdom Come' Social Conflict: bandits, prophets, messiahs, and zealots	Online Discussion	200+50	21/1/18	Part of 20%
9	22/1/18	'Destroy this temple' Political Religion: city, temple, king				
10	29/1/18	'Are you a king then?' Social control: Jesus' crucifixion in context	Online Discussion	200+50	4/2/18	Part of 20%
11	5/2/18	'I've seen the Lord': The	Essay	2000	11/2/18	45%

		resurrection: historical fact or elaborate fiction?				
12	12/2/18	'My word shall not pass away': The gospels as reliable sources for historical Jesus study	Online Discussion	200+50	18/2/18	Part of 20%

Notes:

1. The standard course schedule has been compressed for summer school. There is no break, even over the Christmas/New year period. We recommend you plan to do your work well in advance of days you intend to take off.
2. The library will be open 8am-5pm except over the period from 23/12/17 to 7/1/18. Loan periods will be adjusted to compensate for the closure. Please ensure you obtain any resources required for the assignment before the close down.
3. Academic support will be available every weekday except the statutory holidays. You will be advised on who to contact.

LEARNING HOURS

Reading and reflection	60 hours
Online Discussions	15 hours
Survey	30 hours
Essay	45 hours
TOTAL	150 learning hours (15 credits)

ASSESSMENT TASKS DETAIL

1. Online Discussion

Length:	As specified below
Percentage weighting of final grade:	20%
Due date:	11:55 pm Sunday, Weeks 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
Learning outcomes:	2, 3, 4
Learning hours:	15

The online discussions require you to engage with various themes and topics. Typically these tasks will require you to prepare an initial post of 200 words in response to a reading and/or some questions. This is to be followed by a response to at least one other student's post of at least 50 words, which is due the following week. Specific instructions will accompany each online discussion task.

Expectations for online discussions:

The purpose of the online discussions is to create an opportunity for students to discuss aspects of the course in a well-informed but informal way.

As such, your **initial posts** should address the topic, be logical and concise, consider the course material, and, if appropriate, refer to your experience. In the **response posts**, you should encourage genuine conversation with at least one other student by engaging with their writings, and respond to those who have taken the time to read yours. Both your initial and response posts should be on time so that all students can draw from each other's perspectives.

The forum posts are graded to encourage you to participate, but do not consider them as assignments requiring formal referencing. If you refer to another author or source in preparing your post, it would be helpful to identify it (e.g. "In *Knowing God* Packer says..."), but do not use footnotes.

Criteria for Assessment (major criteria are in bold.)

1. Engagement with material	Comments show excellent understanding of the topic. Reasoning and connections are clearly articulated.
2. Constructive engagement with others	Meaningful contribution to the online community is shown by considering and responding to issues raised by others in a timely way, using thought provoking questions as appropriate.
3. Structure and presentation	Clear, well-formed structure. Accurate spelling and grammar. Concise writing.

2. Survey

Length:	No specified word limit
Percentage weighting of final grade:	35%
Due date:	11:55 pm Sunday, Week 5
Learning outcomes:	1, 2
Learning hours:	30

The student will complete one (1) of the following two surveys:

EITHER

Read through the gospels of Mark and John. Note carefully every reference to geographical locations (e.g. lakes and hillsides) and place names (e.g. towns and villages) mentioned in these two gospels and locate them on a map of first-century Israel/Palestine. Then construct your own map of first-century Israel/Palestine (either in 2D, 3D, or electronic format) and locate each of these places on your map. Briefly describe the gospel events which are said to have occurred there. Include details you think are important for shedding light on the events described e.g. location, topography, building features, population numbers, ethnicity, historical details, etc. Where there is uncertainty about the location of a particular place, make a note of this.

OR

Using the historical sources available construct a timeline of important historical events in Israel/Palestine from the time of Herod the Great's death in 6 BCE to the fall of Masada in 73 CE at the end of the Jewish War. Include a brief note about where these events took place. Also include approximate dates and locations for Jesus' birth, his baptism by John, his public ministry in Galilee, and his crucifixion outside Jerusalem, and Paul's trial before the governor Felix. Where there is uncertainty about the exact date of a particular event, make a note of this.

Criteria for Assessment (major criteria are in bold.)

1. Breadth of treatment	Every reference to historical place is made on map <u>or</u> every important historical event is placed on timeline. Brief description of place or event is made. Details required for each option are included.
2. Accuracy of data	Correct details. When there is uncertainty in the historical detail, a note is made.
3. Presentation	Quality of creative presentation. Correct spelling. Correct

	referencing.
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3. Essay

Length:	2000 words
Percentage weighting of final grade:	45%
Due date:	11:55 pm Sunday, Week 11
Learning outcomes:	1, 2, 3, 5
Learning hours:	45

The student will complete one 2000 word essay from among the following topics. To do well in this assignment you must first work carefully and critically with the material relating to the first century context, before considering its relevance to the gospels or Jesus' message. Each essay is slightly different but a general rule would be to devote 60% of the essay to discussing the first century context (i.e. the first part of your essay), and 40% to discussing either its relevance for the gospels or how Jesus should be understood in that context (i.e. the remainder of your essay). At this level it is important that you take note of primary sources and reference them accurately, as well as engaging with secondary sources.

Option 1

Describe the purposes, methods, and limitations of archaeology, and discuss its contribution to our understanding of Galilee in the first century CE. Provide one example of how archaeology may shed light on a location, practice, or event described in the gospels.

Option 2

Jesus taught his disciples to love their enemies (Luke 6.27-36). Discuss the significance of this message given its context in first-century Herodian Galilee.

Option 3

Discuss some of the similarities and differences between the Jesus movement and the Pharisees, Essenes, or Qumran community in the first century CE.

Option 4

How significant was it for women to follow Jesus (Luke 8.1-3; Mark 15.40-41) given their first century Jewish and Galilean context?

Option 5

Choose one of the following:

- Discuss the role of Herod Antipas in Galilee and the degree to which he was an effective ruler. How might this inform our understanding of Jesus' words in Matt 20.20-28, Mark 10.35-45, and Luke 22.24-27?
- Discuss the role of Pontius Pilate in Judaea and the degree to which he was an effective governor. How might this inform our understanding of Jesus' words in Matt 20.20-28, Mark 10.35-45, and Luke 22.24-27?

Option 6

Were the majority of Jewish Galileans prospering economically during the first quarter of the first century, or were they falling into indebtedness and penury? Discuss. How might this inform our understanding of Jesus' words in Luke 4.18a?

Option 7

Discuss the role of the temple in first century Israel/Palestine. How might this inform our understanding of Jesus' action in the temple (Mark 11.15-18; John 2.12-22)?

Criteria for Assessment (major criteria are in bold.)

1. Careful use of sources	A good selection of primary and secondary sources are used, with attention to author perspective and occasion for writing.
2. Engagement with scholarly research	Literature is selected appropriately to provide a range of views / perspectives for study.
3. Clarity of argument on good supporting evidence	The most important ideas are developed and supported with good evidence. There is good balance between context and arguments for relevance. Arguments are reasoned and presented logically. Implications from the data are skillfully drawn out.
4. Structure and presentation	Clear grammar and language use, overall coherence, correct referencing.

TEXTBOOK

The compulsory texts for distance learning students are:

Hanson, K.C. and Douglas E. Oakman. *Palestine in the Time of Jesus: Social Structures and Social Conflicts*. 2nd Edition. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008.

Hayes, John H. and Sara R. Mandell. *The Jewish People in Classical Antiquity: from Alexander to Bar Kochba*. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998.

Also highly recommended is:

Bailey, Kenneth E. *Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes: Cultural Studies in the Gospels*.

Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2008.

(We will refer to a number of readings in this book but due to copyright restrictions, cannot copy them all. Therefore you may also wish to purchase a copy of this for yourself).

Feldman, Louis, H. and Meyer Reinhold. eds. *Jewish Life and Thought among Greeks and Romans: Primary Readings*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996.

(We will refer to a number of readings in this book but due to copyright restrictions, cannot copy them all. There are two hard copies available in the Dean Memorial Library, plus one ebook, but you may also wish to purchase a copy of this for yourself.)

NOTES

Please note:

- All assignments need to be presented according to the Laidlaw College "Guidelines for Written Assignments".
- Assignments are to be submitted to Moodle no later than 11.55pm on the due date, unless otherwise noted.
- Assignments must comply with the standards set out for assessment in Laidlaw College's "General Information and Regulations".
- Please see these regulations for guidance on extension requests, submission of late work, and plagiarism.

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Other recommended books:

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Brown, Michael. *The Real Kosher Jesus: Revealing the Mysteries of the Hidden Messiah*. Florida: Frontline, 2012.

Chancey, Mark A. *The Myth of a Gentile Galilee*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Charlesworth, James H. *The Historical Jesus: An Essential Guide*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2008.

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Dickson, John. *The Christ Files: How Historians Know What They Know about Jesus*. Sydney South: Blue Bottle Books, 2006.

Evans, Craig A. *Jesus and His World: The Archaeological Evidence*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox press, 2012.

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Lloyd, Jacqueline. "The Women Who Followed Jesus: Parts 1 & 2", *Stimulus* 20/2, 2013:4-12; and *Stimulus* 20/3, 2013: 24-31.

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Schnabel, Erckhard, J. *Early Christian Mission: Vol. 1, Jesus and the Twelve*. Downers Grove, IL.: IVP, 2004.

Ancient Sources

- Barrett, C.K. ed. *The New Testament Background Selected Documents*, rev. ed. London: SPCK, 1987.
- Bock, Darrell, L. and Gregory J. Herrick, eds. *Jesus in Context: Background Readings for Gospel Study*. Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker Academic, 2005.
- Charlesworth, J.H. *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments*. New York: Doubleday & Company, 1983.
- Danby, Herbert, ed. & trans. *The Mishnah: Translated from the Hebrew with Introduction and Brief Explanatory Notes*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980.
- Horsley, G.H.R., and S.R. Llewellyn. eds. *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity: A Review of the Greek Inscriptions and Papyri*, Vols 1-9. NSW: Ancient History Documentary Research Centre, Macquarie University, 1977-2002.
- Josephus: The Complete Works*, trans. William Whiston. Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1998.
- Martinez, Florentino G., and Eibert J.C. Tigchelaar. *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Study Edition*, Vols 1-2. Leiden: Brill, 2000.
- Tacitus. *The Annals of Imperial Rome*, rev. ed., trans. Michael Grant. London: Penguin Books, 1996.
- Tcherikover, Victor A. and Alexander Fuks. *Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum*, Vols 1-2. Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1957-60.
- Vermes, Geza, trans. *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*. London: Penguin Books, 1998.
- 1 & 2 Maccabees, Ben Sirah* (also known as *Ecclesiasticus*), and *Judith*. You will find these books in *The Jerusalem Bible*.

Modern Sources

- Arav, Rami and Richard A. Freund, eds. *Bethsaida: A City by the North Shore of The Sea of Galilee*, Vols. 1-4. Kirksville, Missouri: Truman State University Press, 1995-2009.
- Bailey, K.E. *Poet & Peasant and Through Peasant Eyes*. Grand Rapids, MI.: Eerdmans, 1983.
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