

Introduction to the Apocrypha

Torah in Motion
January–March 2021
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Recommended books:

- Jonathan Klawans and Lawrence M. Wills, eds., *The Jewish Annotated Apocrypha: New Revised Standard Version*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020.
- Malka Z. Simkovich. *Discovering Second Temple Literature: The Scriptures and Stories That Shaped Early Judaism*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2018.

Class 1: Introduction: The History of the Second Temple Period I

The History of the Second Temple Period I
Historical Timeline: Jewish life under Persia, Greece, and Rome
When did Judaism become an “ism?”
Sectarian Life: Essenes, Pharisees, and Sadducees
The Dead Sea Scrolls

Class 2: Introduction: The History of the Second Temple Period II

What are the books of the Apocrypha?
The Concept of Canon and the Latest Biblical Material
What were Greeks and Romans Writing About Jews?

**Read for upcoming class: Judith, Greek Esther, Tobit (in Coogan and Brettler)

Class 3: Novellas: Judith, Greek Esther, Tobit

** Read for upcoming class: Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, The Prayer of Azariah (in Coogan and Brettler)

Class 4: Legends of Biblical Heroes: the Daniel Stories

** Read for upcoming class: 1 Maccabees 1-4; 2 Maccabees 1-8

Class 5: Historical Records and Historical “Records:” 1 Maccabees and 2 Maccabees

**Read for upcoming class: Ben Sira 42–51

Class 6: Wisdom Literature: Ben Sira and 4 Maccabees

TIMELINE:

BCE

200: Judea transitions from being under Ptolemaic control to being under Antiochid control

175: High Priest Simon II dies, and conflict breaks out between supporters of his son Onias III and Jason (Onias' son was probably the founder of the temple at Leontopolis)

164: Judea gains autonomy from the Greeks; Hasmonean dynasty begins

63: Pompey invades Jerusalem; Judea now controlled by Roman client kings

62-61: Preconsul of Asia Minor, L. Valerius Flaccus, seizes foreign funds designated by diasporan Jews to be sent to the Jerusalem Temple

59: Cicero delivers a speech defending Flaccus

c. 20: Philo of Alexandria is born

CE:

6: Judea becomes a province of Rome

c.32: Jesus is crucified by the Romans

37: Josephus is born

38-41: Riots against the Jews in Alexandria, supported by Flaccus the governor and largely ignored by Gaius Caligula the emperor

40: Philo writes *Embassy to Gaius*

67-70: Jerusalem riots; Temple destroyed by Romans

115-118: Jewish uprisings throughout the Roman Empire; Trajan dispatches Lucius Quietus to quell the rebellion. This marks the end of Alexandrian Jewry. Tens of thousands of Jews are killed throughout the Empire.

132-135: Bar Kokhba revolt: Jews expelled from Jerusalem (which Hadrian had renamed Aelia Capitolina); Rabbinic community moves to Yavneh and the Galilee

200: Mishnah edited and likely completed

6th century: Babylonian Talmud edited and redacted (it will still be subject to small revisions over the next three centuries)