[ACTS] ACTS 3025: Introduction to the New Testament

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Unit 1: Introduction to the Bible

Lecture 1

Lecture Video

Part 1: https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/h0herycws0lijl2d3fwty/Lecture-1-Part-1.mp4?rlkey=9z5h5bmsju9vmwnkp6m10s40w&dl=0

Part 2: https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/dl2loi5ag7le1aro7wwao/Lecture-1-Part-2.mp4?rlkey=0e3q6bvfi8p18z0k163vja7bv&dl=0

Part 3: https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/jxjy8gfzfvji7iti6uyxo/Lecture-1-Part-3.mp4?rlkey=n5vil34f9n7kxcemer37tpcm3&dl=0

Lecture Notes

- The Bible
  - Chrysostom calls the Scripture “the books”… “Read the books!”
  - The word Bible was derived from this term: The books à Biblia (Latin) à Bible
  - Each book was separate (it wasn’t a single book like we have now)
- Interpretation
  - All heresies use the Bible; all cults use the Bible (Mormon vs Christian Science interpretation of “made in Our Image”
  - What’s missing with them (that Orthodoxy has) is the Tradition of the Church. The early Church knew what the Scriptures meant.
    - Disciples of Emmaus Christ explained to them the Scriptures (He definitely did that on other occasions)
    - When Christ said “the Lord said to my Lord…” and “I desire mercy not sacrifice” and “the stone that has been rejected has become the chief cornerstone” – He was giving all the interpretations
- Two most important factors when studying the Bible:
  - Context
    - **Historical Context** – what was happening when the book was being written. The idea of considering historical context is patristic (i.e. St John Chrysostom homilies always started with ‘who is John and why did he do this’)
    - **Literary Context** – What was said before it? After it? Theme of the book, etc. Cannot take verses out of context. Fathers did this too.
  - Purpose
    - Skopos – goal/aim/purpose
    - Each book has a purpose, each passage has a purpose
    - If your interpretation violates the purpose of the book, then your interpretation is wrong!

    - Bible is a book of faith – it is fundamentally spiritual, and there is a limitation to what we can gain from it if we don't approach it prayerfully. Interpretation of the Bible comes from both a spiritual life, and academic study. Both and not academic study alone. The Bible shouldn't be treated as an encyclopedia, or try to apply it to scientific standards.
    - To Fundamentalists, believing the literary is the highest level of belief. To the Fathers, it is the lowest.
- Fathers used "Scriptures" to refer to the Old Testament because they didn't have a New Testament. Universities use "Hebrew Bible"
- BC and AD… in Universities, BCE and CE
- Testament:
    - □□□□□□□ in Greek is like a "treasure" or a box that holds treasures
    - English it's like "testify" – a witness to something
    - Old Witness and a New Witness – witnessing to God. God's creation of the world, intervention through His Son, etc.
- Covenant:
    - Like a contract or agreement or promise
    - Two parties (to make an agreement)
    - Prominent in the OT (e.g. Noah, Abraham, etc)
    - Christ said: "I make a new covenant with you" at the Last Supper… "This is My Blood of the new covenant"
- Oral Tradition
    - Most of the Bible has an oral tradition behind it first
        - Event happens
        - Oral tradition
        - Eventually written down
        - Eventually recognized as Scripture
    - People didn't write things down because they didn't know how and then because they thought it didn't need to be written down!
    - Oral Tradition is not like the game of telephone because you didn't hear it once – you heard it hundreds of times. That's what people did at night! Sit in the dark under the stars and tell stories.
    - Abraham was in 1800 BC but by the time his story was written down was hundreds of years later… and yet, it's reliable. We know it's reliable because the details are accurate for the lifestyle of the time period (based on what we know in archaeology, etc)
    - Christ did not change His message in every village – do you think He told the Good Samaritan story only once? The disciples heard these parables over and over again. Christ's miracles happened in public around big crowds. These things were kept and preserved because there were many witnesses. Of course, not everything was written down.
- Written Tradition
    - The books of the NT (and also the OT) were written one at a time and most people didn't have all of them
    - Human author
- **Holy Scripture: Writing that is recognized by a worshipping community as inspired by God and authoritative**

    - Writing
    - Recognized by a community of faith. It is in the Bible because the Church acknowledges it as Scripture (this is something Protestants have an issue with)
    - Inspired by God – God breathed into it “inspire” implies a breath
        - How is something inspired?
            - Dictation: God told him what to write (simplistic view – for children). The problem with dictation is that it leads to “well why does the Bible have different or conflicting or duplicate accounts?” (Genesis 1 and 2)
            - Illumination: God illumined the mind of the Biblical author to write what he wrote. It’s the thought of the author, but illumined by the Holy Spirit.
                - This accounts for the different styles and personalities in the NT.
                - This also accounts for the Orthodox concept of synergy – cooperation with God for our salvation. God takes the initiative, and we respond. It’s a relationship.
            - Inerrancy of the Bible is not specific words, but the message
        - Authoritative – Has authority
            - Hymns can be inspired by God but not have authority
            - Someone can be inspired by God to do good but doesn’t make him authoritative
            - Something can be authoritative but not inspired by God
- Three levels of meaning the Fathers believe are in the Scripture
    - Idea first proposed by Origen
    - Literal/Historical
    - Moral
    - Allegorical/Spiritual
- Biblical Criticism
    - To analyze the Bible according to all of our available tools
    - Lower Criticism: Textual Criticism – what did the original author write?
        - Autograph: The original that was written by the hand of the author. We have no autographs of the Bible.
        - Manuscript (MS): Handwritten copy
        - Scrolls: Used by Jews (rolled up, hard to go from one section to another)
        - Codex: Book format invented by Christians
        - Uncials: All capital letters
        - Codex Sinaiticus – Codex that was discovered at Sinai (Monastery of St Catherine)
        - We have hundreds of fragments of the Scriptures on things like Papyrus
        - 300 Manuscript copies of the Book of Revelation in Greek
        - Textual Critics try to find which aberration is the original. There are manuscripts that say in Revelation “I have the key of Hades” or “I have the key of David” – well which one is it? Sometimes the textual critic will try to find the family tree of the manuscripts (i.e. this one was copied from this other one) and try to find the oldest parent
        - Critical Text – a text that has all the variations written in it (i.e. as footnotes)
        - Manuscript variations were nothing to the Fathers (since the variations rarely affect the meaning)
        - Origen did this (Hexapla)

    - Everything in our Bible was the decision of an editor or translator (chapter numbers, punctuation, quotation marks, etc)
  - Higher Criticism (many forms, but some important ones are below) – see handout
    - Historical Criticism
    - Literary Criticism
    - Source Criticism
      - Trying to determine where the author got his original information. Was there an oral tradition? A hymn? Was there a different document?
    - Form Criticism
    - Redaction Criticism
- Translations and Versions
  - Translation refers to the language (English translation)
    - Literal
    - Dynamic
  - Version refers to NKJV, RSV, NIV, etc.
  - Septuagint (LXX) – Greek Translation of the Hebrew Bible in approx. 250 BCE
    - Greece in Greek is “helas” (they say h silent) – “Hellenization” comes from this
    - Jews were Hellenized (Jews of Diaspora are living outside of Palestine)
    - Tells us what the Jews believed about their Hebrew Scriptures BEFORE Christ (we can’t trust what they’d say now, after the fact)
    - Majority of Jews in the time of Christ were reading their Scripture in Greek
    - Jews in Diaspora had more books that they regarded as Scripture than the Jews in Palestine. There was no agreement in the 1st Century (e.g. Pharisees vs Sadducees)
    - Many people called the Septuagint unreliable because it had books that were longer – considered them aberrations. Like the book of Jeremiah has some extra parts. Dead Sea Scrolls brought us a Hebrew version of the Jeremiah that’s in the Septuagint.
    - Hebrews don’t keep their copies – so when a manuscript becomes brittle, the Hebrews bury it and do a funeral ritual.
    - Hebrews did not finalize their canon until AFTER Christ
    - 49 OT Books
    - Pseudepigrapha – books that were never accepted by the Jews into their canon
  - The Vulgate
    - Around the year 200, Latin becomes dominant language in the West
    - By year 400, there were many poor Latin translations
    - Damascus, Bishop of Rome, asked Jerome to translate the Bible into Latin.
    - That was the Bible used by the Catholic Church until the _____. They didn’t expect the regular people to read the Bible (kind of discouraged it)
    - 46 OT Books
  - The Masoretic Text
    - Masoretes – Jewish scholars in Europe living around 900/1000 AD
    - Didn’t like the ambiguity of the Hebrew text since there aren’t any vowels. Invented indicators (diacritics/tashkeel) that tell you how to pronounce a word
  - King James Version/Authorized Version
    - 1611 AD

- Queen Elizabeth I of England and Ireland had no children (Virgin Queen – Virginia named after her). Her nearest relative when she died was her cousin Mary Queen of Scots' son King James I (King of Scotland). So since he's the nearest relative he became King of England as well. So Scotland and England are United as "The United Kingdom". The Union Jack (flag) has a cross + of St George (patron saint of England) And a white cross like x of St Andrew (patron saint of Scotland) and red cross like x of St Patrick (patron saint of Ireland). Put them on top of each other and you have the Union Jack!
- James is Protestant and commissions a team of Bible Scholars (Protestants and Catholics) to arrive at a good, unbiased, English version of the Bible
- Called the Authorized Version because it was authorized by the King
- Nowadays, it seems fancy or formal (Thee, thou, cometh, seeketh, etc) and makes it very difficult to understand
- The Greek and Hebrew were not like that, but they were accessible to all (same with the Vulgate)

Lecture 2

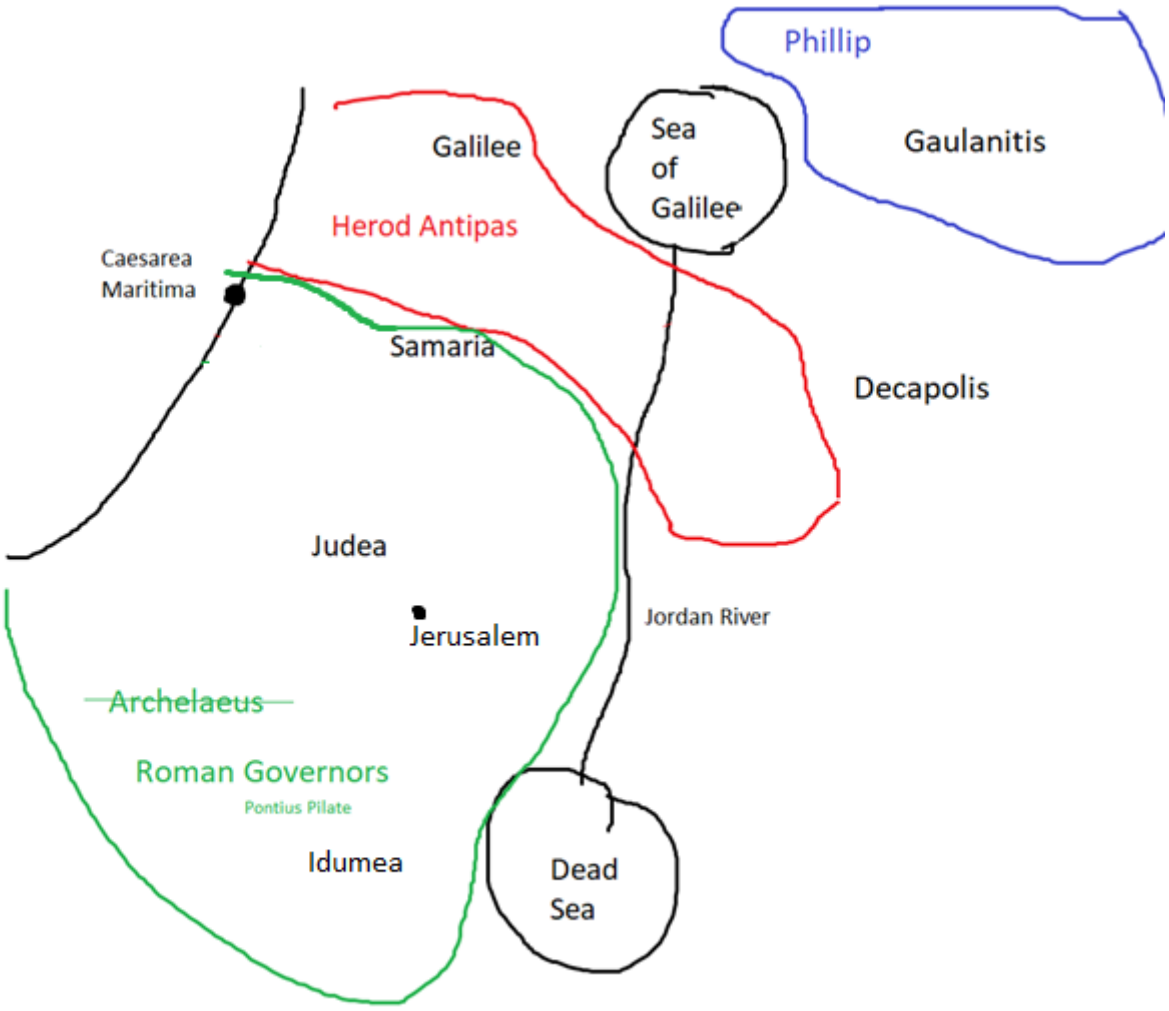
Lecture Video:

Part 1: https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/pvmrdxqi1qdbed215jxyv/Lecture-2-Part-1.mp4?rlkey=1mx5w0eshhm21i3e00wlcnsn4&dl=0

Part 2: https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/qu8r2e81lvud8mcowjiha/Lecture-2-Part-2.mp4?rlkey=gefw6z3qb26c8b1gma3ununqo&dl=0

Part 3: https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/5exvr0s78gbmxyio09m04/Lecture-2-Part-3.mp4?rlkey=tcnwnxomwo089k1onmqaxut9l&dl=0

Lectures Notes:



Intertestamental History

- Orthodox this is between end of Maccabees and beginning of the Gospels
- Protestants have a much longer Intertestamental History because they don't recognize the Maccabees
- Sea of Galiee – Fresh water
- 727 BC – Israel conquered by Assyrians
- 586 BC – Babylon conquers Assyria and continues down to Judah
  - Tribe of Benjamin, Tribe of Judah, Tribe of Levi survived in Judah
  - These are the ones that survived the war and are taken to Bablyon as slaves (Babylonian exile)
  - We get the word "Jew" from "Judah"
  - They didn't think they were coming home because the 10 tribes of the North never came home… fell off the face of the earth
  - Exiled to Babylon (Iraq)
- 539 BC – Persians conquer Babylonians
  - Cyrus the Great (Persian king) issues Edict of Cyrus (538 BC) to allow the Jews to go back (they had the choice).
  - Religious Jews wanted to come back – they knew it was their homeland
  - Many other Jews could not travel, don't know anything about Israel, etc. Many started to come back and ended up settling somewhere else on the way. This is the beginning of the Jewish Diaspora
  - Many Jews returned and rebuilt the temple and the city walls. This is the beginning of Second Temple Judaism
  - Jewish Diaspora
    - This is the first time in all of Israel's history that the Israelites are not all in one place
- Second Temple Judaism (510 BC-70AD)
  - Bigger and better Temple because Herod the great spent a lot on improving it
  - True monotheism starts here (as opposed to Henotheism) – also influenced by Greek philosophy. Also influence by the fact that the Babylonian exile happened "uh oh we messed up" – stopped really intermarrying, cultic worship, animal sacrifice, priesthood, etc.
  - Ideas of the afterlife also started to infiltrate Jewish thought (could be from Babylonians)
- Samaritans
  - When the people came back from captivity, they found the Samaritans living in Israel. And the Samaritans claimed to be Israelites. But the ones of the captivity did not want anything to do with them.
  - The Jews did not intermarry with the Samaritans (they were considered ethnically and religiously impure to them)
  - The Samaritans wanted to help rebuild the Temple – Jews said no they would defile it
  - The Samaritans built their own temple on Mount Gerizim and start to say "that temple in Jerusalem is not the real temple" (this is the topic of the conversation of the Samaritan Woman)
- 333 BC – Alexander the Great conquers the Persians and establishes a huge Greek Empire and then died.
  - His empire is divided among all his generals

    - His generals start to live in all the different places where he conquered and they want all their Greek comforts (ampitheaters, competitions, temples, etc)
    - People want to imitate the ruling class. The empire became Hellenized.
    - Hellenization – the making of something Greek (Greece in Greek is “Hellas”)
    - The world starts to imitate the Greeks – language, though, philosophy, etc.
        - Like how after WW2, the world imitates the United States (civil rights, democracy, English, etc)
    - Common language of Greek across the whole area. Including the Diaspora Jews.
    - Hellenistic Jews
        - Greek speaking Jews
        - Translated their Scriptures around 250 BC to Greek because they didn’t know Hebrew (Septuagint LXX)
        - St Paul, for example, knows Greek culture, knows Jewish culture
- Seleucid Dynasty – Antiochas IV
    - Wants the empire to all worship the same gods
    - Decides to attack Ptolemy in Egypt
    - When he gets to Jerusalem, he plunders the Temple.
    - Antiochas issues an edict that everyone has to worship the same gods (i.e. Greek gods). Jews begin to suffer real oppression and persecution (first time there is religious persecution in the world) around 100 BC
        - Confiscated and burned Torahs
        - Forbids circumcision
        - Forbids keeping the Sabbath
        - Defiled the Temple by erecting an idol, having immoral activities in there, sacrificing a pig on the altar, etc.
        - Sold the priest positions
        - Dredle came from a toy with Hebrew letters so that the Seleucid wouldn’t realize they were keeping Hebrew
    - Some Jews would go to a cave, for example, to keep the Sabbath. Some Jews just succumbed to the other gods.
    - This leads to a revolt
- 165 BC - Maccabean Revolt
    - Mattathias was a priest and didn’t want to sacrifice to the Greek gods, eat pork, etc. Instead, he killed the Jew who stepped forward to do so, and the government official that required the act.
    - He was an older gentleman with sons, so he had his sons lead a revolt
    - Judah Maccabee (Judah the hammer) leads the revolt and is killed, next brother takes over and is killed, third brother takes over and defeats the Seleucid Dynasty
    - They cleansed the Temple – Feast of lights (Feast of dedication, Hannukah)
- The Hasmonaean Kingdom (named after the surname of Mattathias)
    - They call themselves kings (i.e. the Maccabean brothers) but… kings are supposed to be descendent from David
    - They take over the high priesthood but… priesthood is supposed to come from a specific line (line of Zadok/Eleazar/Aaron)
    - They go to Mount Gerizim and destroy the temple
    - 135 BC John Hyrcanus conquered Idumean Kingdom South of Judah and forced them to become Jews

        - Many people think the Jews are always persecuted but in reality, when they had the power they did the same persecution
    - They couldn't decide who should be king or who should be high priest (both are high ranks) so they asked the Romans to help them decide. Roman General Pompey came "to help" and conquered them
- Roman Empire (conquered Greek Empire)
    - Pompey decides who is king for them (and if he's deciding who's king, then he's really in charge)
    - He chooses Hyrcanus
    - Hyrcanus dies, and there's a rich guy in Idumea who has connections with the Romans and wants his son to be king. His name is Herod. (Of course, this wouldn't happen if the Hasmonaeans had left Idumea alone)
    - Herod establishes himself as King of Judea and comes to be known as Herod the Great (37 BC – 4 BC). His name becomes a title (Herod). Very long and bloody reign. Known for his cruelty and his building projects.
        - Expansion of the Second Temple, Builds many palaces, etc.
        - Very paranoid (someone always wants you dead to take the throne), had a lot of people put to death (including 3 of his 10 wives and many of his kids – "it was safer to be a pig than a prince in Herod's palace" (because he considered himself Jewish, wouldn't eat pork).)
        - He left an order that upon his death, 1000 of the leading citizens of Jerusalem would be put to death (so that the city would be in mourning, since people wouldn't mourn his death)
        - Responsible for the killing of the babies at the birth of Christ – questioned by historians because it's only recorded in the gospels. But in reality, it wouldn't have been that great of an event in comparison with all the other bloody things he did.
    - Sons of Herod: Archelaus, Antipas, Philip
- Qumran Community
    - Some people living at the Dead Sea (dead sea scrolls)
    - Dissatisfied with the corruption of the kingship and priesthood, so separated from them and lived in isolation
- NT Geography
    - Caesarea Maritima
        - Herod the Great did something with Mark Antony and Cleopatra and it failed so he went to ask Caesar for forgiveness and Caesar let him stay king… or something (review the video)
    - Roman Empire had some kings (i.e. under Rome), governors (provential governors), colonies (Corinth, Philippi), independent city-states (self-administering). Free movement between territories.
    - After Herod died, his territory was split among his three sons (oldest gets largest territories, etc)
    - Herod Antipas – involved in killing of John the Baptist, in crucifixion trials, etc.
    - Archelaeus – turned out to be worse than his father, killing people for no reason, etc. The people complained to Caesar. Caesar removed Archelaeus and put Roman Governors in that region (as opposed to putting a new king there). One of them was Pontius Pilate.

        - Joseph was afraid to settle in Judea because of Archelaeus (who turned out to be worse than his father) after Egypt
    - Herod Agrippa (a future herod) is mentioned in Acts, etc. and at some point has rule of both Antipas and Archelaus' areas
    - Decapolis (region of 10 Greek cities deca-polis) that were all self-administered. They were under Rome but did not have a king or governor
- Greco-Roman
    - Roman Administration, but Greek culture dominated
    - Religion
        - Was about appeasing the gods, connecting with them to prosper, etc. It was not about morality or virtue (even the gods were immoral – Zeus cheating on his wife, for example). They didn't want to imitate the gods.
        - Roman religion
            - Traditional Greek gods of Olympus – patrons of regions, protectors of different things. Worshipped those gods because they thought that city is powerful because of its patron god. Rome was great because they had the god Roma.
            - The worship of traditional gods was embedded in every day life – military day started with some sacrifice, holidays are all related to them, sports were for Zeus, etc.
            - If you were Jewish it didn't bother them. Jews were protected
        - Mystery Religions
            - Cults devoted to a specific god. They were secret societies so we don't know very much about them
            - They were open to specific people (i.e. there would be one for only men, one for only slaves, one for only women, etc.)
            - Promises of spiritual experiences, personal connection with the gods, etc.
        - Emperor Cult
            - Formal worship of the Roman emperor
            - Emperors were given divine titles (divine Augustus, son of god, savior). They didn't believe they were deities, but it was a way of respecting them.
            - When Julius Caesar died, his successor (Augustus) said he was a god and built temples to them. When he died, his successor did the same. Loyalty/Patriotism
            - Book of Revelation is related to this problem.
        - Judaism
            - One God who created the world
            - This appealed to many people, but they could not tolerate the lifestyle of Judaism so didn't join
            - Some people say that Christianity took a lot of Greek thought but in reality, Judaism was Hellenized long before the time of Christ. And Jews used Greek philosophy and thought to explain aspects of Judaism
        - Philosophy
            - Was about becoming a better person; cultivation of virtues (generosity, patience, etc)
            - Platonism (platonic philosophy)

        - How the world came into existence, what matter is made of, etc. Logos
    - Other schools of Philosophy: Stoicism, Epicureanism, Pythogoreans, Aristotle
    - People respected Christianity because they had **virtue** – being able to take torture and martyrdom and show self-control, bravery, cheerfulness, forgiveness. They had generosity, welcoming strangers, etc. How did they have these without studying philosophy? So Christianity started to appeal to the people
- 1st Century Judaism
    - Judaism today is the product of the loss of the Temple and developed in the Middle Ages. Not like 1st Century Judaism, 2nd Temple Judaism, 1st Temple Judaism, or Pre-Temple Judaism.
    - Jewish Diaspora – Dispersion was a reality
    - Law of Moses – thousands of rules for daily life (from the moment you wake up until the moment you sleep)
    - No image
    - Holy and righteous God who created the world
    - Covenantal Relationship with His people
    - Jews believed themselves (and until now) to be a light unto the nations. There's "us" and "them" and "us" were called by God to be a light to all nations (by your behavior, your life, etc you are showing that there is a God – the one true God. The God of Israel.)
    - Temple at Jerusalem – The one place to offer sacrifices
        - Temple tax (half a shekel) – all males around the world financially supported the Temple
        - Temple became very important – presence of God
        - Many Jews came to Jerusalem because of the Temple. Acts 2 – The people heard the apostles in their own dialect. There were so many dialects because all those people were there visiting Jerusalem.
    - Synagogues – place of prayer, worship, hymns, sermon, scripture reading, etc.
    - Pharisees – the ones that exist until today (Rabbis and Synagogues)
        - Leaders: Rabbis and Scribes
        - Area of Influence: Synagogue
        - Emphasis on: Ritual Purity
            - Thousands of rules.
                - 613 are in the Torah of Moses.
                - In the 1200 years from Moses to 1st Century, there's a whole body of additional rules – The Oral Law.
                - "You shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk" – expanded to try to show extreme piety "dairy and meat products cannot touch"
                - As they kept all these rules, they thought "we are better than everyone"
            - Christ is criticized by Pharisees for not washing His hands before eating (an oral law)
        - Accepted more books as Scripture (Torah and Neviim) than other groups
        - Scribes

        - Sometimes called Lawyers in the NT
        - Party of the Pharisees
        - Experts in the Law of Moses (went to school and memorized all the regulations) and could answer all the questions based on legal precedence, and old Rabbi commentaries
    - Talmud made up of Mishnah and Gemara came after the time of Christ and wrote down the Oral Traditions (especially the Mishnah)
- Sadducees
    - Only accepted the Torah – did not accept the Oral Law
    - If it's not in the Torah it's not for us
        - People seem to think that the canon of scripture should have been resolved. But even by the Jews, there's no official canon in the First Century
    - Didn't believe in angels, demons, afterlife, resurrection in the last days, etc.
    - After the Temple was destroyed in 70 CE, the Sadducees disappeared since without the Temple they had no power nor purpose
- Essenes
    - Not mentioned in the NT. We know of them from Josephus
    - Lived on the shores of the Dead Sea (Qumran) monastic-like
    - Believed in the oral laws and ritual purity
    - Had a "teacher of righteousness"
    - Apocalyptic group – the end of the world is coming soon, so they have to live lives of ritual purity. They were the sons of light and the others are sons of darkness. There would be a war and God would vindicate them. They rejected the Temple, etc. because those who were called high priests were not descendants of Zadok, kings not descendent of David, etc.
- Nazarenes
    - Jews who believed that the Messiah had come and He is Jesus of Nazareth
    - They were called Nazarenes by other Jews

- Titles of Christ
    - Messiah ("The anointed One")
        - God promised David that his kingdom would be everlasting. So many thought of it as political – someone from the line of David would come and restore the nation of Israel
        - When Christ was called "Son of David" it was an indication they believed He was the Messiah
        - People thought He was the Messiah not because of his blood line, but because of what He did
        - Christ accepted the title of Messiah but redefined it as One who would suffer and die for them. "Your King is coming daughter of Jerusalem riding on a donkey" (not on a high horse). He avoided the title as well – "Don't tell anyone"
    - Son of God
        - Greeks had this term as literal children of their gods
        - Christ referred to Himself as "The Son." Some people say Christ never called Himself the Son of God – not true. He often called God His Father and called Himself the Son (when He told us say "Our Father" He wasn't including Himself in "our." He typically referred to Himself **uniquely** as the Son.

    - He was crucified for saying He was Son of God – that is not a term Jews would have made up because Jews had no concept of God having a Son (Messiah was going to be a political figure). For the same reasoning, the early Christians would not have made that up because it was not part of Jewish belief.
- Son of Man
    - Exclusively Jewish term
    - It can mean “human being” – God refers to Ezekiel as son of man
    - It is the term used by Daniel for a Person who he saw in his vision next to the Ancient of Days
    - Jewish expression meaning “me” or “I”. He seems to use this term especially when referring to:
        - His Divinity (which links to the book of Daniel) or divine authority (i.e. judging, forgiving sins, healing)
        - When referring to the Second Coming
- Lord
    - “Mar” in Aramaic – “Sir” used for Rabbis as well
    - “Kyrios” in Greek – same as “Mar” but also same as “Adonai”
    - “Adonai” in Hebrew – no one used this word (because it meant God)
    - In an English Bible, you find “The LORD” (all caps) – that is a translation from YHWH in Hebrew. In LXX, that word is translated as Kyrios

Exam 1 Study Guide

1. Who were:
   - Flavius Josephus
     - First Century Jewish historian who testified to the existence of Christ as well as the fact that Christ did miracles and signs. He also testified of John the Baptist.
   - Herod the Great
     - He is from Idumea and was placed as King of Judea by Romans through his influential and rich father
   - Archelaus
     - Eldest son of Herod the Great who took over the southern region of Judea, Idumea, Jerusalem. He turned out to be worse than his father (killing people for no reason). The people complained to the Romans and they removed him placing instead of him Roman governors (e.g. Pontius Pilate).
   - Antipas
     - Son of Herod the Great who received the northern region of Judea (Gallilee)
   - Philip
     - Son of Herod the Great who received the region of Gaulantis
   - Jerome
     - Translated the Bible into Latin (Vulgate) at the request of Damascus Bishop of Rome
   - King James I
     - King of the United Kingdom who commissions an English translation of the Bible
   - Alexander the Great
     - Greek conqueror of the world who conquered the Persians and Hellenized the world spreading as far East as India

2. What are the two most important factors to remember in biblical interpretation?
   - Context (Historical Context, Literary Context) - Interpretation of any passage must not contradict the context.
   - Purpose (skopos) - Goal or Aim. Interpretation of any passage must not contradict the purpose, goal, or aim of that passage/book.

3. Why did Chrysostom refer to the Scriptures as “the books”?
   - Because each book was separate. It wasn’t bound in one book as we have now.

4. What is the definition of “Scripture” as given in class?
   - Writing that is recognized by a worshipping community as inspired by God and authoritative

5. What is inspiration?

- “God-breathed” - Illumination: God illumined the mind of the author to write what he wrote. It is the thoughts of the author illuminated by the Holy Spirit

6. What are the two main “explanations” and the advantage and disadvantage of each understanding of inspiration.
   - Dictation – God spoke to the author. This is simplistic and good for children, but does not account for variation or contradictory information.
   - Illumination – God illumined the mind of the biblical author to write what he wrote. It is the thought of the author illuminated by the Holy Spirit

7. What is the typical Orthodox view of inspiration?

8. Why is that the Orthodox view?

9. What were the three “levels” of meaning that the Fathers believed were present in the Scriptures?
   - Literal/Historical
   - Moral
   - Allegorical/Spiritual

Biblical Criticism

10. What is Biblical Criticism?
    - Analysis of the Bible using all available tools

11. What are:
    - higher criticism
      - Refers to several forms of criticism except textual. They are “higher” in that they build on the foundation of the text. Concerned with finding the meaning of the author. What he meant.
    - lower criticism
      - Refers to textual criticism
    - textual criticism
      - Refers to looking at the actual manuscript texts and trying to find what the original author wrote
    - textual critic
      - Someone who looks at all of the manuscript texts and tries to trace back a history of copies to find what the original author wrote and dates manuscripts
    - critical text
      - A text that contains all the variations (e.g. as footnotes) of manuscripts
    - form criticism
      - What form did certain texts take? For example, taking a parable or song or poem out of its context – was it transmitted orally before being written where it is now? What was its form?
    - source criticism
      - What sources did the author use? An oral tradition? A song? A passage from another writing?

- redaction criticism
  - How did an editor compile sources? Given multiple accounts of the same story, how and why did each author redact some information?

Manuscripts

12. What is a manuscript in biblical studies?
    - A hand-written copy

13. What are:
    - Parchment: Paper made from animal skins
    - Papyrus: Paper made from the pith of a papyrus plant (reed-like plant)
    - Codex: Book format invented by the Christians
    - Uncial: A majuscule manuscript from the 4^{th}-8^{th} Centuries
    - Majuscule: All capital letters
    - Miniscule: A cursive writing with smaller letters
    - Autograph: The original written by the author (we have none of these from the Bible)

14. What does the style of writing in a ms tell us?
    - Help us to date the manuscripts

15. What is the Codex Sinaiticus?
    - A Codex discovered at St Catherine's Monastery in Mt Sinai that contains the whole New Testament (plus some other books) and are all bound in one Codex (which was rare)

16. Why do most copies of the bible date from the 4^{th} century onward?

17. Why do Christians have many ancient copies of their scriptures but the Jews do not?
    - Hebrews don't keep their copies – so when a manuscript becomes brittle, the Hebrews bury it and do a funeral ritual.

Translation

18. What is the difference between the terms "version" and "translation"?
    - Translation refers to the language; version refers to things like NKJV, NIV, etc.

19. What are the advantages and disadvantages of literal and dynamic approaches?
    - Literal is closer to a word-for-word
      - Advantage is that it retains what was originally there, but it may be more difficult to comprehend
    - Dynamic tries to capture the original meaning
      - Advantage is that it is easier to understand, but it may lose some of what was originally there

20. Know the approximate date, language and the reasons for the creation of following translations or versions:

- The Vulgate
  - Latin; around 400 AD; Latin became the dominant language around 200 but by 400 there were only a few poor Latin translations out there
- Masoretic text
  - Jewish scholars around 1000 AD did not like the ambiguity of the Hebrew text (I.e. no vowels so certain things may have different meanings) so they added diacritical signs to indicate vowels and grammar marks
- Septuagint LXX
  - Jewish Diaspora was Hellenized and there was need for a Greek version of the Hebrew Bible. Around 250 BC, 70 Jewish scholars came together to produce the Septuagint translation
- Hellenism
  - Greek-ness... Hellenizing is the making of something more Greek (in language, culture, philosophy, etc).
- King James Version/Authorized Version
  - When King James of Scotland (Protestant) became King of England and King of Ireland after the death of Queen Elizabeth I (who had no children), he commissioned the translation of an English version of the Bible by Protestants and Catholics together (1611 AD) that would be unbiased

First Century

21. Know the basic beliefs and characteristics of the first century groups:
    - Essenes
      - Qumran by the Dead Sea – monastic-type community
    - Zealots
      - Violent revolutionaries who hated Rome and wanted to take back Judea
    - Nazarenes
      - Title given by other Jews to the followers of Jesus of Nazareth who believe Jesus is Messiah and Lord
    - Pharisees
      - Rabbis and Scribes that emphasized ritual purity – influence in the synagogues. Accepted Torah and Neviim and also the oral laws
    - Sadducees
      - Chief priests, high priests, elders – influence in the Temple – only accepted the Torah
    - Scribes
      - Sect of the Pharisees that were very learned in the Law and ability to interpret LAw of Moses

22. Who were the Samaritans?
    - When Israel returned from captivity, they found the Samaritans living in Israel and claiming to be Israelites. They were rejected by the Jews (no inter-marrying). The Samaritans built their own temple which was later desatroyed.

23. Who was Herod the Great?
    - What was he known for? Cruelty, Bloody Reign, Building projects

- Where did he come from? Idumea
- Why did the Jews object to him being called King of the Jews? He was from Idumea which was forced to be Jewish but not originally Jewish. Not a descendent of David.
- What was the name of the ruling family before the Herodians? Hasmoneans
- Who were Herod the Great's sons and what territories did each acquire?
  - Archelaeus acquired southern Judea, Idumea, Jerusalem, Samaria
  - Antipas acquired Gallilee
  - Phillip acquired Gaulanitis

24. Know the titles used for Jesus in NT – know their meaning, as well as why and how these titles were used.

First Century Judaism

25. First century Judaism. What was the difference between the Temple and a synagogue?
    - Temple is the place where animal sacrifices happened
    - Synagogue was a place of prayer, worship, sermons, etc.

26. Why was the Temple important?
    - It is the place where God's presence is

27. Which biblical books were accepted by all Jews in the first century?
    - The Torah

First Century Roman World

28. What was the role of Greek philosophy in Roman culture?
    - Philosophy was the way of acquiring virtues and was looked upon very highly

29. What was the most commonly accepted type of philosophy?
    - Platonism

30. What was the role of traditional gods in Roman society?
    - They were to be appeased so they can give prosperity, etc. Not to be looked upon for morals.

31. What were the mystery religions and why they appealed to people?
    - They were religions that were only open to specific types of people and they promised spiritual enlightenment, connection with the gods, etc.

32. Be able to draw the basic map of Palestine during the 1st century, including the Mediterranean Sea, Sea of Galilee, Dead Sea, Jordan River, Galilee, Samaria, Judea, Idumea Decapolis, Perea and the general location of Caesarea Maritima and Jerusalem. Be able to SPELL these bodies of water cities and territories.

Essay

33. Using the chapters by Stylianopoulos, in a couple of paragraphs, discuss the basic Orthodox understanding of the Scriptures and their relationship to Tradition. Then express your opinion of whether Orthodox Christians can apply some of the techniques of modern biblical criticism, and why or why not? **This portion you MAY write *in advance* and upload or paste from your computer. Do *not* make this very long. Three paragraphs are about ¾ of a page. Do NOT discuss or explain details of patristic interpretation in this answer. This question is about Scripture, Tradition and the Orthodox interpretation of the New Testament, not about the technique(s) of Patristic interpretation.**

Essay Question

Stylianopoulos' definition of Scripture (in connection with Tradition) can best be summed up with this sentence: "The faith of the believing reader or interpreter ultimately rests in the Apostolic faith of the New Testament and the broader reality of the Church that put the New Testament together." (Stylianopoulos 92).

The Orthodox perspective is that all Scripture is "God-breathed" or "Given by the inspiration of God" (2 Tim 3:16 NIV, NKJV) through revelation to holy men, prophets of God, disciples of Christ, etc. More specifically, "Holy Scripture is the record of revelation rather than direct revelation itself." (Stylianopoulos 37) It is important to note this human aspect of Scripture so as not to fall into the Protestant idea of sola scriptura.

Scripture, itself, affirms that the apostles received much more than what was documented in the Gospels: "And with many such parables He spoke the word to them as they were able to hear it. But without a parable He did not speak to them. And when they were alone, He explained all things to His disciples." (Mark 4:33-34)

It is through the Tradition that Scripture is interpreted, and by Tradition, that Scripture was authenticated. This may seem, at first glance, to leave no room for any sort of biblical criticism. In my opinion, that is not the case.

First, regarding Lower (Textual) Criticism, there are many writings of the Fathers that use different versions of the same verse. For example, in Genesis 1 – some may write “Then God said, ‘let light be created’” whereas others may say “Then God said, ‘let there be light’”. Determining, through textual criticism, which of these is “more accurate” or which is “older” would make no difference on the fundamental message of the passage – that God created light.

Regarding some of the forms of Higher Criticism, I want to use the example given in class. The author of Genesis is known to be Moses through Tradition (both Jewish tradition and Christian tradition). Modern scholarship has developed other theories of authorship of the Pentateuch (especially Genesis) based on methods of Literary Criticism, Historical Criticism, Source Criticism. St John Chrysostom, in his homilies on Genesis, consistently speaks of “Moses spoke” rather than “Moses wrote.” The tradition of Moses being author is not overwritten by the Biblical Criticism, but rather it is expanded on. An Orthodox Christian can participate in and use the methods of criticism without having compromised his Orthodox faith.

Unit 2: The Gospels

Unit 3: Acts and the Pauline Epistles

Unit 4: Hebrews, General Epistles, Revelation