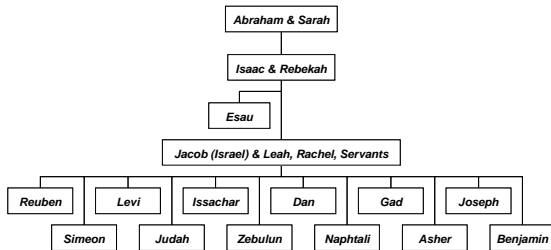


The World of Early Christian Traditions

Ancestral Period (2000-1550 BCE?)



Timeline

- 13th cent. BCE — Exodus: Moses & Covenant in Wilderness
- 13th-11 cent. BCE — Joshua: conquest & settlement
- 11th cent.-922 BCE — Saul, David, Solomon and the United Kingdom
- 922-721 BCE — Northern Kingdom of Israel
- 931-598/87 BCE — Southern Kingdom of Judah
- 587-539 BCE — Babylonian Exile/Diaspora
- 539-400 BCE — Return from Exile/Persian Period
- 400-70 BCE — Hellenistic Period to destruction of Temple

Effects of Hellenism

- Language — koinē
- Cultural Imperialism
 - Philosophy of Platonic Dualism
 - Stoic Natural Law — nature & self-control
 - Cynic Simplicity — rigorous self-discipline

Political Climate of Palestine

- 164 BCE — Antiochus Epiphanes & Hasidim & Maccabees
- 40-4 BCE — Herod the Great
- 26-36 CE — Pontius Pilate
- 66-73 — Jewish Revolt (Josephus)
- 132-135 — revolt of Bar Kochba

Socio-economic World of Jesus' Time

- No middle class – either wealthy or poor (most)
- As many as 1/3 of people were slaves
- Probably 90% were illiterate
- Travel was dangerous because of bandits
- Dominant culture was polytheistic

Religious World of Jesus' Time

- See "One Remarkable Life" on pp. 19- 20
 - Various people were identified as wonder workers and even "son of God"
- See p. 24-35 – how does modern American views of religion differ from the views of people in Jesus' time?
 - View of God
 - Belief in after-life
 - Importance of doctrinal beliefs
 - Relationship between government and religion

Model of Herod's Temple



- Image from <http://www.ebibleteacher.com/imagehtml/jerumodel.html>
 - See pp.40- 41 in Ehrman for dimensions

Synagogue

- Literally, "gathering together"
 - Developed in Diaspora for prayer and study by Jews who were distant from the Temple
 - 10 males or more who gathered to study scripture
 - Eventually associated with buildings where gatherings occurred

First Century Judaism

- Sadducees — upper class, closely tied to Temple priesthood, controlled Sanhedrin, cooperated with Romans; religious conservatives, e.g., resurrection
- Pharisees — lay movement associated with synagogue, descendants of Hasidim with focus upon living out entire Torah; religious “liberals” who survive destruction of Temple (Jamnia)
- Essenes — ascetic commune responsible for Dead Sea Scrolls, awaited apocalyptic war after which they would restore true Temple priesthood
- Fourth Philosophy (Zealots) — anti-foreign control, hope of liberated Israel ruled directly by God

Messianic Hopes

- Messiah — “mashiah” = anointed one
 - King
 - Priest
 - Prophet
 - Cyrus the Great
- Various messiahs:
 - Judas of Galilee circa. 4 BCE
 - Simon of Perea
 - Simon bar Kochba (son of the star)
