

Note:

Course content may be changed, term to term, without notice. The information below is provided as a guide for course selection and is not binding in any form.

MOODY DISTANCE LEARNING

Course Number, Name, and Credit Hours

BI-3302 Second Temple Jewish Backgrounds

3 credits

Course Description

This course provides students with an introduction to various social, cultural, political, and religious aspects of the Second Temple Jewish world. Emphasis placed on the use Second Temple Jewish backgrounds in the interpretation of various New Testament texts. Course focuses on the application of Jewish backgrounds in a specific biblical book.

Course Objectives

Students who successfully complete this course should be able to:

1. Explain major themes from Second Temple Jewish literature and worship that enrich New Testament studies
2. Demonstrate familiarity with the historical, social, economic, cultural, and political environment of Second Temple Judaism and the Greco-Roman world
3. Outline aspects in the lives of Jesus, the apostles, and the early church in light of the Jewish cultural milieu of the Second Temple period and the Greco-Roman world
4. Evaluate the use of backgrounds in recent contributions to New Testament studies
5. Describe and defend the New Testament's teachings about Jews and Gentiles in the Church
6. Create exegetically based ideas for teaching, preaching, counseling, and personal discipleship based upon an understanding of the cultural world of the Bible
7. Reflect on ways to properly integrate academic Bible study with the Christian life of faith, worship, and devotion

Required Materials

Required textbooks for all Moody Online classes can be found on the [Required Textbooks](#) section of the Moody website.

Assignments

Class Participation:

Active participation is expected in this online course. Participation includes two main areas: reading and discussion boards. Class Participation accounts for 15% of the final course grade.

Reading: The completion of the course reading is an important part of the course. You are expected to complete the reading prior to class for discussion purposes.

In addition, students have been assigned very specific and concise readings in Scripture for this course. For credit on the Bible readings, students are expected to follow in the Keener *IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* as they read Scripture. Though there is no prescribed reading requirement in the Keener text, students should be reading slowly and carefully in the Bible, asking questions of the text, and consulting the Keener reading as necessary.

Discussion Boards: You must maintain a significant presence in the discussion board. Please refer to the discussion board rubric included in the **Course Resources** section of this course for more information on how your participation in the discussion board will be assessed.

BI-3302 Second Temple Jewish Backgrounds

You will be asked to reflect graciously, critically, and with openness in the Discussion Boards. The goal is to seek to understand how the views of others may be utilized in studying Scripture, witnessing for Christ, and promoting unity in the church though one may not have the same views/perspectives that you do.

NOTE: Your initial response to a discussion board question should be posted by mid-week (Friday, 12:00am CT) and your response post to two or more of your classmates' initial posts (or as directed by the discussion forum) should be completed by the end of the week (Monday, 12:00am CT) prior to the beginning of the next course week. Course weeks run from Tuesday to Monday.

Journals:

In this course, three journaling assignments have been included to create space for students to grapple with important practical issues that arise from academic study of the Bible. In a course on Bible background studies, it is important to reflect not only on what you have learned, but the way it will be allowed to affect your own life and ministry. Too often students find it difficult to properly integrate what they are learning into their personal walk with Christ and the way that they minister to others. Each of the three journals assigned in this course focuses on a key issue that commonly occurs amongst those who study the Bible academically.

These journals are meant to stimulate honest introspection, reflection, and response. Understandably, these can be very personal, and your instructor takes this accountability equally as serious. Journals will be assessed based upon genuineness, clarity, practical application, and thoughtfulness. See the rubric for journals in the **Course Resources** section of the course. Each journal should substantially cover the aspects of each issue described in its learning objective in no less than 250 words.

Assignments:

Assignment 1: Understanding the Intertestamental Period

Create a one-page handout that would follow such a presentation and assist church members in understanding your material. Include the names and dates of key historical events and periods along with information that would be helpful for students in understanding their importance. Notes should neither be overwhelming for the student nor under-developed. To clarify: *you are not creating a presentation, per se, but instead a thorough handout to go along with one.*

The handouts should evidence creativity. Students should feel free to use a timeline, insert pictures, and (if they are able) use color. Superior grades will be awarded for accuracy, usability, creativity, and comprehensiveness. See the rubric for this assignment in Week 1's **Lesson Resources** folder.

Assignment 2: The Pharisees' Rejection of Jesus

As may be easily gathered from the Scripture readings in Week 2, the Gospels include a consistent commentary on the response of the Jewish leaders to Jesus' miracles and accompanying claims. For many Israelites, Jesus was simply *not the Messiah they were looking for*. But the question is: what sort of messiah were they expecting? What led to these expectations? This week's lesson focuses on one of the most significant factors contributing to messianic expectations within Second Temple Judaism: the Roman Empire.

In a **three page** double-spaced paper, provide detailed answers to the questions provided in the Course Resources.

Assignment 3: Ancient Literature Activity

This assignment is designed to help students decipher commonly used abbreviations for primary Jewish sources and learn how to quote such material in academic research. Use the (mainly) online resources below to decipher the following abbreviations. By each abbreviation, write out the full reference to which it refers, then copy and paste the full text of these references into the table provided. **Use the "Ancient Literature Worksheet" in the Lesson Resources folder to complete this assignment.**

Assignment 4: Jesus and the Law Worksheet

Suppose you have a Jewish friend from high school who has begun reading the New Testament on his/her own. Your friend, who knows that you are a Christian, has begun writing you to dialog about what they are reading about Jesus and how it appears through the lenses of his or her religious Jewish heritage. One day you receive a letter from your friend that boldly asserts: "Jesus is clearly *just* a prophet, he merely teaches the Law as my Rabbis do!" Alerted by this you are moved to write a polite yet clear response to this assertion.

Write a **1.5 page single-spaced** letter to your friend that defends the position that Jesus did indeed demonstrate his divinity by fulfilling the Torah.

Assignment 5: Jesus Love for Sinners Worksheet

Complete and submit the assignment in the **Lesson Resources** folder titled: "Jesus' Love for Sinners Worksheet."

Assignment 6: Devotional Assignment

Select a single passage from the list below to use for this assignment. After examining your passage write a concise devotional that you would feel comfortable sharing with others. In this devotional draw out the **historical and cultural background** of the people groups in your passage. Bring out what you believe was the author's intention as they recorded the story of Jesus.

Devotionals should be a **minimum of two double-spaced pages**. Use a personal writing tone and include various points of application. Use of *BBCNT* is suggested, but not required. No citations are required.

Assignment 7: Gentiles in First Century Jewish Thought

Complete the following assignment posted in this week's **Lesson Resources** folder: "Gentiles in First Century Jewish Thought Worksheet."

Assignment 8: Sharing the Gospel from the Old Testament

In a **minimum two-page double-spaced** paper, write out a manuscript of how you would share about Jesus with a Jewish friend or acquaintance.

Students' papers should read like verbatim manuscripts. Therefore, students should demonstrate a natural tone in their writing style and vocabulary (with the exception of any Scripture or extra-biblical references).

Assignment 9: Acknowledging Your Jewish Backgrounds

In recent decades Christians have taken part in what might be understood as a “theological persecution” of the Jewish people. A large number of traditions and denominations read the nation of Israel (past, present, and future) out of God’s plan for salvation. Using the “Acknowledging Jewish Backgrounds Worksheet” in the **Lesson Resources** folder answer the questions provided.

Quizzes:

Synagogue Quiz

Complete the open book reading quiz about “Synagogues,” in *DNTB* on Blackboard: “Synagogues Quiz.”

Jewish Writing and Literature Quiz

Complete open book reading quiz about “Writing and Literature: Jewish” on Blackboard: “Jewish Literature Quiz.”

Assessments

Class Participation	15%
Journals	12%
Assignment 1	7%
Assignment 2	7%
Assignment 3	7%
Assignment 4	7%
Assignment 5	7%
Assignment 6	7%
Assignment 7	7%
Assignment 8	7%
Assignment 9	7%
Quizzes	10%
	100%

Letter grades are determined by the following scale:

Letter Grade	Percentage Equivalent	Letter Grade	Percentage Equivalent
A	96% or higher	C	73 - 76.9%
A-	90 - 95.9%	C-	70 - 72.9%
B+	87 - 89.9%	D+	67 - 69.9%
B	83 - 86.9%	D	63- 66.9%
B-	80 - 82.9%	D-	60 - 62.9%
C+	77 - 79.9%	F	Below 60%

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