

Syracuse University

Fall, 2004

REL/JSP 302

Second Temple Judaism

Time: TTh 10:00-11:20 a.m.

Place: HL 205

Instructor: [JIM WATTS](#) (PhD)

Office: Hall of Languages 505

Office Hours: W 10-12

& by appointment

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Course Description: The period between the construction of the second Jewish temple in Jerusalem in 515 B.C.E. and its destruction by the Romans in 70 C.E. witnessed major historical upheavals and significant religious changes that would affect all subsequent Western religions. The origins of the authority of scripture, of the centrality of law and morality in religion, of the synagogue and of apocalyptic expectations for the future all developed in the Judaism of this period. This course will approach the history and literature of Second Temple Judaism by focusing on two key features: the Jerusalem Temple in history and in religious imagination, and the reinterpretation of Jewish tradition in the Dead Sea Scrolls. It will conclude by considering the developing role of scripture in religious thought and literature, to set the stage for interpreting the emergence of rabbinic Judaism and early Christianity.

Course Objectives: The goals of this course goals are to have students:

1. gain a thorough knowledge of the literary sources for Second Temple Jewish history;
2. investigate the impact in this period and culture of social forces on religious beliefs and practices, and of religion on social institutions;
3. use the context of Second Temple Jewish ritual and literature to think both critically and imaginatively about the nature of religion as a basic response to and expression of the human condition;
4. develop an understanding of Second Temple Jewish literature and practice as key instances in the diversity of human religious phenomena, and achieve a fluency in interpreting and describing it.

Course Requirements:

The course consists of class discussions, lectures, student projects, and, most of all, readings. This course is a **reading** course, and students' completion of all reading assignments is essential for their success. Assignments, discussions, lectures and tests all presuppose that students have read carefully and on schedule the assigned readings. Students must come to class each day with **written comments and/or questions** about the days readings.

Attendance at lectures and participation in discussions is expected of all students and will influence evaluation of their work (10%), which will also be based on a midterm exam (20%), two 6-10 page papers (25% each), and a final exam (20%).

Required Textbooks (available at the campus bookstore in Schine Student Center):

Schiffman, Lawrence. *Texts and Traditions* (KTAV, 1998)

Vanderkam, James C. *An Introduction to Early Judaism* (Eerdmans, 2001).

Recommended: *New Oxford Annotated Bible* (New Revised Standard Version) *or* *The Jewish Study Bible* (Tanakh/New Jewish Publication Society Version)

Topics & Assignments: Readings from textbooks appear by author and page numbers, readings from biblical books appear as book title and chapters. Further resources for biblical studies and religion may be found by at <http://web.syr.edu/~jwwatts/UsefulLinks.htm>:

Date	Topic	Assignment (due by class on date listed)
T Aug 31	<i>Introductions</i>	
<i>From the Temple ...</i>		
Th Sep 2	<i>Ancient Near Eastern Temples</i>	(handout)
T Sep 7	<i>First Jerusalem Temple</i>	1 Samuel 4-6, 2 Samuel 6; 1 Kings 5:15-6:38; 12:1-33
Th Sep 9	<i>Loss of temple and land</i>	2 Kings 16-20, 25; Leviticus 26; Lamentations 2
T Sep 14	<i>Idealizing the Temple</i>	Ezekiel 40; 46; Exodus 25-26; 40; Leviticus 8-9
Th Sep 16	<i>Second Temple</i>	VanderKam 175-85, 193-211, Schiffman 93-96
T Sep 21	<i>Temple Community</i>	Vanderkam 1-11, Schiffman 65-73
Th Sep 23	<i>High Priests & Kings</i>	Vanderkam 11-32; Schiffman 151-169, 240-247
T Sep 28	1st Exam	Study! (study guide)
Th Sep 30	<i>Other Temples</i>	Vanderkam 147-150, Schiffman 73-79; 130-33; 180-82; Eleph. letters (handout)
T Oct 5	<i>Synagogues</i>	VanderKam 211-13, Schiffman 472-75
Th Oct 7	<i>Second Temple destroyed</i>	VanderKam 41-49, 166-173, Schiffman 429-439, 457-471
T Oct 12	<i>Idealized Temple</i>	Schiffman 583-90; 706-707; Revelation 21; Neusner on Talmud (handout)
<i>... to the Dead Sea Scrolls</i>		
Th Oct 14	<i>Torah</i>	Schiffman 29-39; Deuteronomy 5-6, 30-31
T Oct 19	<i>Prophets</i>	Schiffman 50-59; 109-117
Th Oct 21	<i>Josiah & the Book</i>	2 Kings 22-25
T Oct 26	No Class	1st paper DUE (paper topics)
Th Oct 28	<i>Ezra & the Book</i>	Schiffman 86-92
T Nov 2	<i>Apocalyptic</i>	Daniel 7, 12; Schiffman 340-341, 359-61, 365-66, VanderKam 102-115
Th Nov 4	<i>Jubilees</i>	Vanderkam 94-100; Schiffman 342-54
T Nov 9	<i>Parties in Second Temple Judaism</i>	Schiffman 231-34, 266-75; VanderKam 186-90
Th Nov 11	<i>Dead Sea Scrolls: Qumran</i>	VanderKam 150-66, 191-93, Schiffman 275-300

T Nov 16	<i>Dead Sea Scrolls: Interpreting Torah</i>	Schiffman 361-65
Th Nov 18	<i>Dead Sea Scrolls: Expecting the End</i>	Schiffman 354-56; 359-61
T Nov 23	No Class	2nd paper DUE (paper topics)
Th Nov 25	Thanksgiving	<i>No Class</i>
T Nov 30	<i>Philo & Josephus</i>	Vanderkam 138-46; Schiffman 203-206, 220-230, 479-86
Th Dec 2	<i>From Hillel to Rabbinic Judaism</i>	Schiffman 503-522
T Dec 7	<i>From Jesus to Christianity</i>	Mark 1-16; Acts 1-4, 9-10; Galatians 1-2; Schiffman 421-27
Th Dec 9	<i>Spiritualizing the Temple</i>	Schiffman 471-72; <i>b.t. Menahot</i> 110a-b (handout); John 2:13-22; 1 Corinthians 3
T Dec 14, 5:00- 7:00pm	FINAL EXAM	Study! (study guide)



**The Department
of Religion**
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY



*Jim Watts's
Homepage*