

INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW TESTAMENT

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- **6. Religious Background Of The Time Of Jesus**
- **7. Social Background Of The Time Of Jesus**

SECTION I

FORMATION OF THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

- 1. FORMATION OF THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT
- 2. PALESTINE-THE LAND OF JESUS
- 3. SEASONS IN PALESTINE
- 4. **THE WORLD** OF JESUS.
- 5. THE **POLITICAL** BACKGROUND.
- 6. **RELIGIOUS** BACKGROUND OF THE TIME OF JESUS
- 7. **SOCIAL** BACKGROUND OF THE TIME OF JESUS

1. FORMATION OF THE NT

- JESUS DID NOT WRITE ANY BOOK.
- JESUS DID NOT DICTATE ANY BOOK.
- JESUS DID NOT GIVE ORDER TO WRITE.

- BUT **HE DID** GO AROUND,
- PROCLAIMING,
- TEACHING,
- HEALING

TWO SUMMARIES

- MT 4,23 ----- MT 9,35
- ²³ Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people. (Matt. 4:23 NRS)
- ³⁵ Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness. (Matt. 9:35 NRS)

- (Mt 4,23)

- Jesus went throughout Galilee, **teaching** in their synagogues and **proclaiming the good news of the kingdom** and **curing** every disease and every sickness among the people.

(Mt 9,35)

Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, **teaching** in their synagogues, and **proclaiming the good news of the kingdom**, and **curing** every disease and every sickness.

A. JESUS

- **JESUS WENT AROUND PREACHING**
- **HE WAS “THE SON”**
- **HE WAS REVEALING THE “FATHER”**
- **HE WAS TEACHING THE “THE WAY” TO GO TO THE FATHER.**
- **HE INVITED PEOPLE TO**
- **LOVE THE FATHER AND**
- **SHARE IN HIS LIFE = ETERNAL LIFE**

2. AFTER JESUS - DISCIPLES

- SHARED THEIR
- EXPERIENCES - “SEEN, HEARD” 1JN 1,1
- AND KNOWLEDGE – “COME TO KNOW”
Jn 6,69
- FAITH – “WE ARE WITNESSES” Acts 2,32

What they shared got classified into various “forms”

- - NARRATIONS - JESUS WENT...., SAID
- - DISCOURSES - “I AM..”, “YOU ARE..”
- - PARABLES - TEN VIRGINS
- - WISE SAYINGS - PAY TO CAESAR
- - HYMNS - I THANK YOU FATHER
- - ACCLAMATIONS - MY LORD, MY GOD
- - EXPLANATIONS - THEY UNDERSTOOD
- - EXHORTATIONS - BELIEVE...

SHARING BY WORD OF MOUTH – “ORAL TRADITIONS”

- **SO WE HAVE PROGRESS FROM**
- **A. JESUS – THE ACTUAL MINISTRY OF KINGDOM WHILE ON EARTH**
 - **TO**
- **B. DISCIPLES – ORAL TRADITION ABOUT JESUS AND HIS MISSION AND MINISTRY – AFTER RESURRECTION OF JESUS**
- **C. ?????**

EYE WITNESSES – APOSTLES AND DISCIPLES GROWING OLD

- THERE WAS A FELT NEED TO
- TO PUT DOWN IN WRITING FOR
FUTURE GENERATIONS:
- Lk 1,1-4; Acts 1,1-2

C. “WRITTEN DOCUMENTS”

- A. JESUS

- B. ORAL TRADITION/S

- C. WRITTEN WORKS/ SCROLLS

- THE WRITTEN WORKS -

- SIMILARITIES AND THE DIFFERENCES:

- PLACE OF WRITING, SITUATION OF COMMUNITY, (ADDRESSEES), PURPOSE...

- Styles – eg Mt quotes OT with formulas etc.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF BOOKS

- **GOSPELS**
- HISTORY
- **EPISTLES**
 - **PAULINE – TO CHURCHES**
 - - TO INDIVIDUALS (PASTORAL)
 - A CATECHETICAL “HOMILY” (**Pauline**)
 - “CATHOLIC”
- **APOCALYPTIC WRITING**

GOSPELS

- MEANINGS OF “GOSPEL” CF. RSV IN NT
- 1. - WHAT JESUS PREACHED
- 2. - WHAT APOSTLES PREACHED ABOUT JESUS
- 3. - THE FOUR BOOKS - WRITTEN WORDS

ART OF WRITING IN ANT TIMES

- **MATERIAL – PAPYRUS (CHEAP)**
 - **LEATHER (COSTLY)**
- **MODE OF KEEPING: SCROLLS**
- **EACH BOOK A SCROLL,**
- **ROLLED AND KEPT BY ITSELF.**
- **MANY BOOKS = MANY SCROLLS**

D. COLLECTION OF BOOKS: “CANON”

- DIFFERENT WRITINGS WERE IN CIRCULATION
- SOME WERE “RECOGNIZED” AND “ACCEPTED” AS “APOSTOLIC”.
- THE **OFFICIAL LIST** OF SUCH BOOKS CAME TO BE KNOWN AS CANON
- (EG. SOME BOOKS CLEARED “NOVITIATE”;
- GOT THE “BRAND NAME”)
- SOME WERE LEFT OUT OF THE CANON

CANON AND COUNCILS

- COUNCIL OF HIPPO - 393
- SAME WAS RE AFFIRMED BY
- COUNCIL OF **CARTHAGE IN 397 & 419**
- DEFINED BY
- COUNCIL OF **TRENT IN 1546**

E. “COPIES” OF SCROLLS

- SAME LANGUAGE:
- COPIES OF THE ORIGINAL
 - LOOK – WRITE
 - HEAR – WRITE (DICTATION)
- TO OTHER LANGUAGES:
- TRANSLATIONS
 - NT: JESUS – ORAL TRADITION
 - ARAMAIC – HEB. ARAM.
 - WRITTEN - GREEK
 - *SYRIAC, LATIN, COPTIC, ARMENIAN*

E. “USE OF BOOKS” BY COMMUNITY

- **CATECHETICAL – THEOLOGICAL USE**
 - PREACHING
 - TEACHING
 - EXHORTING
- **LITURGICAL USES**
 - HYMNS,
 - CREDOS,
 - EXPLANATIONS

REVISION: THE HISTORY OF “THE BOOKS OF THE NT”

- A. JESUS
- B. APOSTLES – DISCIPLES – ORAL T
- C. WRITTEN DOCUMENTS
- D. **COLLECTION OF SCROLLS – CANON**
- E. COPIES OF BOOKS
- F. USE OF BOOKS

MORE DETAILS ABOUT

- FORMATION OF CANON,
- CRITERIA OF SELECTING BOOKS
- THE DIFFERENT ‘TRANSLATIONS’ OR VERSIONS

- PAGES 3-7; NRSV “PREFACE”

SECTION II

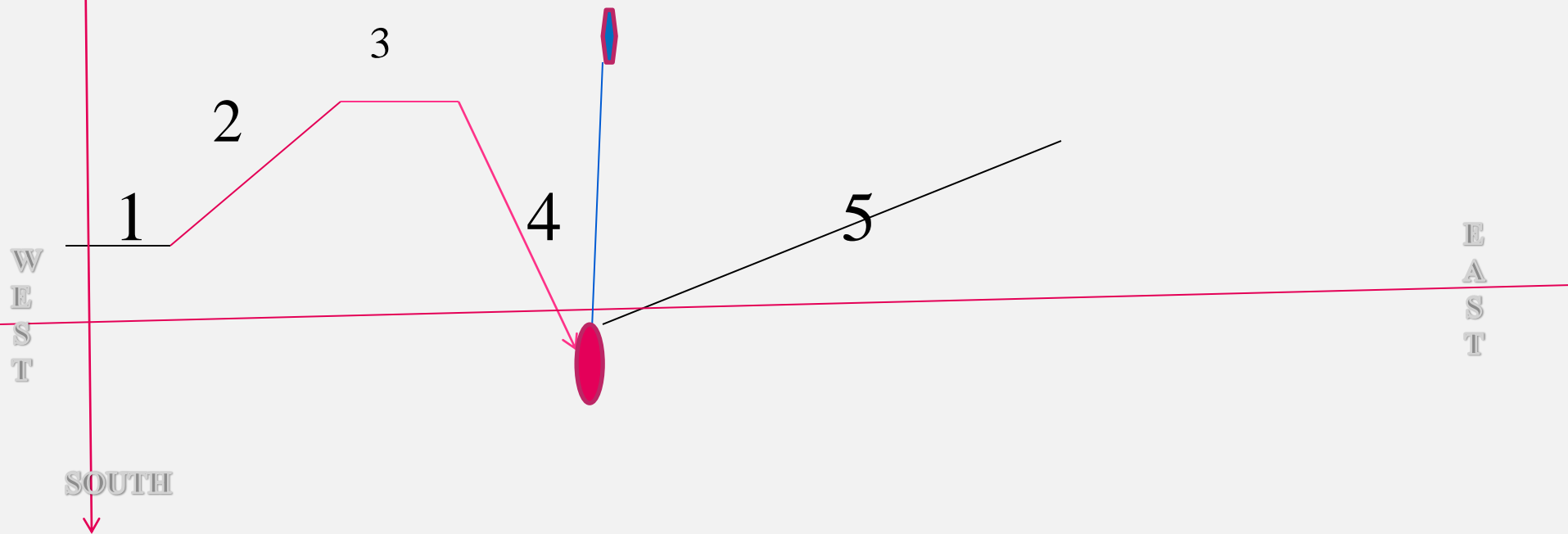
- 1. ✓✓ FORMATION OF THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT ✓✓
- 2. PALESTINE-THE LAND OF JESUS
- 3. SEASONS IN PALESTINE
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- 6. **RELIGIOUS** BACKGROUND OF THE TIME OF JESUS
- 7. **SOCIAL** BACKGROUND OF THE TIME OF JESUS

PALESTINE – THE LAND

- TOPOGRAPHY: WEST TO EAST:
- 1. The Plains
- 2. The Hill Country
- 3. The Desert
- 4. The Jordan Valley
- 5. The Transjordan Region.

NORTH

- 1. The Plains
- 2. The Hill Country
- 3. The Desert
- 4. The Jordan Valley
- 5. The Transjordan Region.



- BIBLE WORKS
- MAPS
- SATELLITE IMAGERY
- NET: MAP OF ISRAEL/PALESTINE

PALESTINE – CIVIL ADMIN

- PROVINCES/REGIONS = STATES/ DISTRICTS:
- **Galilee,**
- **Perea,**
- **Judea**
- **Samaria,** Decapolis, Phoenicia of Syria.

GALILEE

- **IMPORTANT PLACES:**
- NAZARETH, CAPHERNAUM, CANA,
- **CHORAZIN, BETHSAIDA, MAGDALA**
- SEA/LAKE OF GALILEE
- RIVER JORDAN

JUDEA

- IMPORTANT PLACES:
- JERUSALEM
- BETHLEHEM
- BETHANIA
- JERICHO
- DEAD SEA

SECTION III

SEASONS IN PALESTINE

- 1. ✓✓ FORMATION OF THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT ✓✓
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SEASONS

- INDIAN VERSIONS:
 - (1) SUMMER - HOT
 - (2) MONSOON - RAINY
 - (3) HARVESTING - PLEASANT
 - (4) FEASTING - COLD

FOUR SEASONS IN NT

- **(1) WINTER:**
- “Pray that your flight may not be **in winter...**” (Matt 24:20).
- Our Lord’s passion and death took place towards the end of this season: e.g., “When **they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard** and sat down together” (Luke 22:55);
- “At that time the festival of the Dedication took place in Jerusalem. **It was winter.**” (John 10:22).

FOUR SEASONS IN NT

- (1) WINTER
- (2) SUMMER – MT 24,32
- ³² "From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near.

FOUR SEASONS

- (1) **WINTER** – (2) **SUMMER**
- (3) **SPRING** – (4) **AUTUMN**
- JUDE 1,12
- They are waterless clouds carried along by the winds; autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, uprooted

FESTIVALS AND SEASONS

- DIFFERENT FEASTS DURING DIFFERENT SEASONS
- NOTES PAGES 13-14
- (1) COLD; (2) SUMMER; (3) RAIN

SECTION IV

THE WORLD OF JESUS.

- 1. ✓✓ FORMATION OF THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT ✓✓
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HISTORY AND OUR LIFE

- HOW IS OUR PRESENT RELATED TO OUR PAST?
- WHY TO STUDY HISTORY?
- HISTORY WILL HELP US TO UNDERSTAND OURSELVES.
- BIBLE HAS A LOT TO DO WITH HISTORY!

DIFFERENT EMPIRES

- IMAGINE A VISIT TO DELHI
- TASK: PUT IN ORDER FROM OLDEST TO LATEST:
- **INDIRA GANDHI AIR PORT**
- **RED FORT / QUTUB MINAR**
- **PARLIAMENT BUILDING, INDIA GATE**

THE THREE GOVERNMENTS

- MUGHALS - URDU, HINDI
- BRITISH - ENGLISH, HINDI
- INDIAN - BANGLA,*****
 - HINDI,
 - ENGLISH

EMPIRES BEFORE JESUS

- **JEWS** - **HEBREW**
- **ASSYRIANS** - **SYRIAC/ SAMARITAN**
- **BABYLONIANS** - **CHALDEAN/ ARAMAIC**
- **GREEKS** - **GREEK**
- **ROMANS** - **LATIN**

- **Jn 19, 20: it was written in**
- **Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek.**

BACKGROUND

- TOBIT 1,1-2. 10-11
- DANIEL 1,1-2.4
- 1MACC 1,1.7.; 8,18; 2 MACC 4,10

SECTION V

THE **POLITICAL** BACKGROUND.

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TWO “TAXES”

- PIOUS JEWS PAID “TEMPLE TAX”
- Mt 17,24-25
- THEY ALSO OFFERED 1/10 (TITHES) AND THE FIRST FRUITS OF BEASTS / GRAIN

- EVERY JEW HAD TO PAY “ROYAL” TAXES
- - PART OF SALE PROCEEDS -
- - CONTRIBUTIONS FOR BUILDINGS
- - SPECIAL TAXES IMPOSED

ROMAN RULE

- **EMPEROR IN ROME**
- IN PALESTINE,
- JERUSALEM AND JUDEA HAD A **GOVERNOR** (LIKE A UT, WITH A LG)
- GALILEE HAD A VASSAL **KING**
- (HEROD FAMILY)
- SOME WERE “**TETRARCHS**”;

CRITICAL ISSUES

- 1. **ECONOMIC** CRISIS –
– TAXES VS INDEPENDENCE
- 2. **CULTURAL** CRISIS –
- PREDOMINANCE - ??? CHOICES???
- BE GREEK – PHILOSOPHICAL, ARTISITC
- BE ROMAN – POLITICAL, ECONOMIC
- 3. **RELIGIOUS** CRISIS
- BE JEWISH – THEOLOGICAL, RELIGIOUS

DIFFERENT “HERODS”

- EG. INDIAN POLITICS – “GANDHIS”
- INDIRA – RAJIV – RAHUL
- “HEROD” IS A FAMILY NAME.
- KINGS:
 - A. Herod, the Great (37-4 BC)
 - B. Herod Antipas (4 BC - 29 AD)
 - C. Herod Agrippa I (10-44 AD)
 - D. Herod Archelaus (Childhood of Jesus)

A. HEROD THE GREAT

- He was not a Jew.
- He came from Idumea and managed to secure the kingship over the whole of Palestine.
- He was known for his cruelty: he killed his wife Mariamne, his mother-in-law Alexandria, his eldest sons Antipater and Alexander, his brother-in-law high priest Aristobulus etc.
- The murder of the innocents (cf. Matt 2:16-18) is just the kind of thing Herod would do. Herod was extremely unpopular. The Jews hated him as a foreign ruler and also because of his pagan practices.
- To make up for this, Herod rebuilt the Temple of Jerusalem.

B. Herod Antipas (4 BC - 29 AD)

- When Herod, the great died, Palestine was divided among his sons, Antipas and Philip and Archelaus,
- Herod Antipas: as the ruler (tetrarch) of Galilee and Perea, was destined to meet Christ.
- Philip, his brother (son of Mariamne II and Herod) had married Herodias. They had a child Salome. When Philip had divorced Herodias, Herod Antipas took her as his wife. John, the Baptist reproached him for this.
- Herod Antipas wanted to see Jesus (cf. Luke 9:7-9; 13:31). When he met Jesus during the trial, he showed a complete disregard for justice. Herod ordered the mocking Jesus (cf. Luke 23: 6-12).

Herod Archaelaus

- In 6 AD, Jesus must have been ten or eleven years old. He went up to the Temple, when he was twelve years old, that is, soon after this great political change.

C. Herod Agrippa I (10-44 AD)

- Grandson of Herod, the Great. He unleashed persecution against the early Christian communities in Jerusalem. He did this to please the Jews, but not out of religious conviction. This Herod was a friend of Claudius, the Roman Emperor, and thus, very powerful. His death was seen as God's punishment for his pride (cf. Acts 12:1-23).

PONTIUS PILATE

- **The Roman Procurator: Idumea, Judea, Samaria**
- The Roman Procurator at the time of Jesus was Pontius Pilate (26-36 AD). He was normally stationed at Caesarea (on the coast), where he kept an army of five cohorts (of 1000 men each). The Procurator's main task was to collect (procure) taxes; to ensure the internal peace; to confirm all death sentences of the Jewish courts; to report all developments to Rome.

JESUS AND TAXES

- **RELIGIOUS TAX:**
 - MT 17,24
- **POLITICAL TAX:**
- The Pharisees wanted to trap Jesus regarding the taxes to be paid to the Roman Emperor. Jesus gave the famous answer, “Pay to the Emperor what belongs to the Emperor, and pay to God what belongs to God”.
- (Read Matt 22:15-22; Mark 12:13-17; Luke 20:21-26).

SECTION VI

RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND

- 1. ✓✓ FORMATION OF THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT ✓✓
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Different **Groups**:

Eg. Catholics, Protestants, Pentecostals...

- **Religious**: Pharisees, Essenes, priests, Levites, zealots, John the Baptist and his disciples,
- **Institutions**: Sanhedrin, Roman soldiers, synagogue, temple,
- **Political**: Romans, Herod and his family etc
- **Social**: Samaritans, tax collectors (and sinners) the poor (*anawim*) and the rich,

PHARISEES

- THE MACCABBEES
- The story of Judas Maccabeus and friends continued in the form of a **spiritual as well as political struggle by a group of zealous orthodox Jews - the Pharisees.**
- The Pharisees intended to purify the Jewish society. Many members of the priestly class joined them.
- -Dangers: **Hellenism, Romanism, Scepticism**

PHARISEES

- Besides the written Torah they believed in the oral Torah consisting of 613 commandments. Not every scribe was automatically a Pharisee; neither was every Pharisee a scribe.
- They were looking forward to the liberation from the Roman rule.

PRIESTS

- When the Jews returned from their Babylonian exile, only those descendants from Zadok were recognized as priests who could prove their genealogy (cf. Neh 7:63-65). Those who could prove their descent from Zadok were subdivided into twelve classes.

OFFICE OF HIGH PRIEST

- THERE WAS ONLY ONE HIGH PRIEST.
- Antiochus Epiphanes appointed Jason high priest for a huge sum.
- After a short time Menelaus (not of Zadokite line) paid even a bigger sum to get Jason out of the post.
- In the Maccabean times, the rulers themselves assumed the post of the high Priesthood. It was also called as the Hasmonian high priesthood.

HIGH PRIEST – ROMAN TIMES

- The Romans were very much aware of the great influence the high priest had among the people, and so they appointed only such men to that office as suited them. High priests who failed to please them were deposed.
- From 37 BC, when Herod, the great took up the position, the high priesthood was always auctioned. In about 100 years (till the destruction in 70 AD) there were 28 buyers of priesthood.
- The most prominent family during Jesus' life time was the family of Annas. After having been the high priest for some years (7-11AD), Annas bought high priesthood to all his five sons and son-in-law Caiaphas (18-36 AD).

ANNAS, CAIAPHAS

- Caiaphas, the son-in-law of Annas was appointed as the high priest by the Roman procurator Valerius Gratus (18 AD) and deposed by Vitellius (36 AD). He was known as Joseph Caiaphas, who was the high priest for nineteen years with only brief interruptions.
- Although Annas had been deposed in 11 AD, he still maintained an unrivalled position as the head of this high priestly family.
- Annas was Jesus' leading adversary in the high priestly group, but also Caiaphas too had a personal share in the persecution of Jesus.

SADDUCCEES

- NOBLE, UPPER CLASS, RICH, ELITE JEWS:
- Sadducees enjoyed Greek sports. They gladly frequented Greek buildings and took pride in studying Greek literature. In general, they wanted to be broad-minded and not to be nationalistic with regard to art, poetry and culture.
- The Sadducees also restricted their faith to the doctrine contained in the Pentateuch. They considered many later teachings (on the resurrection of the body, on angels) and later moral practices as superfluous to the Jewish religion.

- The Sadducees went along with the Roman rule. They thought cooperation with the Romans to be the best policy.
- Caiaphas was a Sadducee; he tried to keep peace with the Romans. In some cases, they went too far and fell into indifferentism and scepticism.

THE SCRIBES

- SCRIBES = TEACHERS OF THE LAW
- The study of the law, which had already begun to flourish after the exile, became almost a passion for the Jews. Every letter of the old law (the Torah) was considered to be of the greatest importance. The teaching and the rules contained in the Law needed to be ever more faithfully explained and taught to others.

- It was natural that in this movement some outstanding men should rise as teachers. After sometimes, this grew into an intricate system of instruction.
- Some learned men were recognized as 'teachers of the law' or 'scribes;' they received the title of 'Rabbi' or 'Rabboni.' Such teachers attracted 'disciples' who were taught in a house instruction.

JESUS AND THE SCRIBES, PHARISEES

- At other times, Jesus took the initiative and pointed out mistakes of the scribes and Pharisees, in teaching and attitude. He warned his disciples against these mistakes (cf. Matt 16:1-6; Mark 8:11ff). Well known is Jesus' long sermon against the hypocrisy, legalism, formalism and pride of many scribes and Pharisees (cf. Matt 23:1-36; Luke 11:39-42).

RELIGIOUS “STATE”

- JEWISH LIFE, AT THE TIME OF JESUS, WAS A WELL ORGANIZED SYSTEM WITH ITS OWN CALENDAR
- AND ITS INSTITUTIONS

JEWISH FEASTS

- **1. PASSOVER**

- It was celebrated on 15th of Nisan. It had to be celebrated at Jerusalem. It began on the full moon. It commemorated the Exodus and it also inaugurated the harvest of barley.

- **2. THE PENTECOST**

- It was celebrated on the fiftieth day after the Passover. This feast was originally called, ‘**the feast of weeks,**’ as it was celebrated seven weeks after the Passover.

- **3. The Feast of Tabernacles**

- It was celebrated from the 15th to the 21st of Tishri. All Jews made little huts of branches (in the garden or in the compound) and lived in them for seven days. Many went up to Jerusalem to partake in the celebrations there. The feast commemorated the stay in the desert and the covenant.
- Jesus was in Jerusalem during one such feast of tabernacles (cf. John 7:2,10).

- **4. The Feast of Dedication**
- It was celebrated on the 25th of Chislev. This festival commemorated the solemn purification and rededication of the Temple in 163-164 BC, after it had been desecrated by Antiochus Epiphanes IV. It was during this feast that Jesus had one of his discussions with the scribes in the Temple (cf. John 10:22).

- **5. The Feast of Purim**

- This was celebrated on the 14th and 15th of Adar. It commemorated the liberation from the Persians through Esther.

RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION: INSTITUTIONS

- 1. SYNAGOGUES
- Synagogue means ‘assembly’ or ‘Meeting-house.’ When the people were exiled to Babylon, they did not have temple for worship. Then, synagogues got prominence. This was later developed, when they return to Palestine. Every village had its own synagogue, and each town had several.

RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS:

2. TEMPLE

- THE TEMPLE JESUS VISITED HAD A HISTORY OF ITS OWN:
- 1. SOLOMON'S TEMPLE
- The temple was dedicated with great solemnity (cf. 1 Kgs 5-8).
- This Temple was completely destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, the king of the Babylonians. All the treasure and precious furniture were carried off to Babylon. The ark was hidden and never found again. Only the empty Temple courtyard remained, filled with ashes and ruins (cf. 2 Kgs 25:1-9).

- **2. Zerubbabel's (The Second) Temple**
- Some Jews who returned from the exile started rebuilding the Temple. **Zerubbabel, a descendant of David, and governor of Judah,** had an important share in this work, so that the Temple was named after him (cf. **Neh 12:47**).
The work was begun in 537 BC

- **3. Temple of Herod, the Great**

- When Herod, the Great had become king of Palestine, he renewed this Temple of Zerubbabel.
- The porches, fortresses, entrances and gates were all very beautiful. The whole complex did become one of the most outstanding structures of Herod's time. It was filled with gold and all possible decorations. The rabbis said that he who has seen this temple has not seen anything in the whole world. The whole empire was run with the income of the temple. However, in the time of Jesus, lots of misuse entered the temple.

- THE DETERIORATION OF THE TEMPLE
- (NOTES: MERCHANDIZE IN THE TEMPLE) P 29

SECTION VII

SOCIAL BACKGROUND

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THE JEWS' SCHOOLS -

- A JEW AT THE TIME OF JESUS ATTENDED:
- 1. “ARAMAIC MEDIUM” SCHOOL! *Mother Tongue*
- 2. BUT HE ALSO LEARNT “HEBREW” – THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE (-Hindi!)
- 3. SOME OF THEM (LIKE PAUL) LEARNT ALSO “GREEK” (LIKE ENGLISH!)
- 4. LATIN WAS ONLY STARTING TO SPREAD.

SOCIETY OF JESUS

- A JEW WOULD COME ACROSS
- GENTILES:
- GREEKS
- SAMARITANS
- ROMAN SOLDIERS AND OFFICERS

- JEWS:
- TAX COLLECTORS – SINNERS
- WOMEN,
- LEPERS, BLIND, LAME...

- SLAVES

- QUESTIONS