

**The Old Testament in the New: The Jewish Foundations of the Christian Scriptures**

REL 3249 / JST 3930, Spring 2025

Tuesday 4 (10:40-11:30) MAT 0007 / Thursday 4-5 (10:40-12:35) MAT 0011

**Professor:** Robert Kawashima

**office hours:** Tuesday 12:30-1:30; Thursday 1:30-2:30; or by appointment

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Course Description:

The New Testament is in essence a Jewish text, or better, set of texts. It is thought that almost all of the New Testament writers were apocalyptic Jews who happened to identify Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah – “messiah” being a thoroughly Jewish idea and title that slowly evolved during the roughly thousand-year history spanning Ancient Israel, the Babylonian Exile, and second-temple Judaism. And *all* of the New Testament writers were clearly steeped in the Jewish scriptures – what we now know as the Hebrew Bible or Old Testament, as well as a handful of other sacred texts that didn’t make it into the Jewish canon. As a result, the New Testament abounds with quotations, allusions, and echoes of the “scriptures” of its authors. In this course, we will focus primarily on the biblical allusions found in the New Testament narratives: namely, the four Gospels and Acts. Our approach will be literary. How does identifying and analyzing biblical allusions lead to a richer and more accurate interpretation of the New Testament narratives? More generally, students will come to recognize and understand better the Jewish background of the New Testament.

Required Texts:

*The Jewish Annotated New Testament (JANT)*, edited by Amy-Jill Levine and Marc Zvi Brettler

**Additional secondary readings** will be available online on Canvas at e-Learning.

English Translation of the **Septuagint**: <http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/nets/edition/>

Course Requirements:

**Attendance is mandatory**

Participation – 10%

2 Essays (3 pages each) – 30%

2 Exams – 60%

Make-up exams and late papers must be approved by instructor beforehand, or justified afterward by providing appropriate documentation (medical, etc.).

Grade scale:

87–89 = B+	77–79 = C+	67–69 = D+	below 60 = E
93–100 = A	83–86 = B	73–76 = C	63–66 = D
90–92 = A-	80–82 = B-	70–72 = C-	60–62 = D-

Schedule – 23 CLASS MEETINGS: Mark Matthew John = 15; Luke / Acts = 8

Week 1

1/14 **Introduction:** syllabus; general background; Mark 1:1-3

1/16 **Literary Allusion; Mark 1-5:** Isaiah 40; Malachi; Alter, "Allusion and Literary Expression"

Week 2

1/21 **Class Cancelled**

1/23 **Historical Background:** 1 Maccabees 1-4; "Jewish History, 331 BCE-135 CE" (*JANT*, 583ff); "Revolts against Rome" (*JANT*, 589); "Jewish Movements of the New Testament Period" (*JANT*, 614)

Week 3

1/28 **Philology; Mark 6-12 (Feeding in the Wilderness):** "Septuagint" (*JANT*, 703ff); "The Canon of the New Testament" (*JANT*, 695ff); Exodus 15:22-16:36; 2 Kings 4:38-44; Matthew 14:13-21; 15:32-39; Luke 9:12-17; John 6:1-14

1/30 **Transfiguration; Mark 9:** Exodus 24; 33:7-34:10; 1 Kings 19; Malachi 4; Matthew 17; Luke 9

Week 4

2/4 **Figural Interpretation; Mark 13-16 (The Last Supper):** Auerbach excerpts; Eliade, "Sacred Time and Myths"; Exodus 12, 24; Matthew 26; Luke 22, 24; John 6:51-58; John 19; 1 Cor 11:23-34 "Baptism and Eucharist" (*JANT*, 674ff); Epic of Creation, 233-235, 252-255

2/6 **The Historical Jesus; The Synoptic Problem:** "The Historical Jesus" (*JANT*, 628); "Messianic Movements" (*JANT*, 622); "Gospels and Acts" (*JANT*, 1-8)

Week 5

2/11 **Matthew 1-4 (Genealogies; John the Baptist; Jesus Tempted):** Genesis 5; 11:10-32; Exodus 1-4, 15:22-18:27; Joshua 3-5; Luke 3:23-38

2/13 **Matthew 5-17 (Sermon on the Mount):** Exodus 20; Deuteronomy 5; Luke 6:12-7:1; "The Law" (*JANT*, 655)

Week 6

2/18 **Matthew 18-27 (The Triumphal Entry):** Deuteronomy 31:10-13; 1 Kings 8:1-11; 2 Kings 22-23; Nehemiah 8:13-18; Matthew 21; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:29-40; John 12:12-19

**The Jewish Festivals:** Leviticus 23; Deuteronomy 16; 1 Maccabees 4:36-4:59; 2 Maccabees 1:18-1:36; "Time, Calendars, and Festivals" (*JANT*, 669)

2/20 **Charisma and Tradition, Jesus and Observance:** Hosea 6; Matthew 9, 12, 15, 23

Week 7

2/25 **The Tabernacle and the Glory of the Lord; The Temple and Sacrifice; John 1:** Exodus 24:16-18; 35-40; Leviticus 4-10,16; 1 Kings 8; "Sacrifice and the Temple" (*JANT*, 658); "Logos, A Jewish Word: John's Prologue as Midrash" (*JANT*, 688)

2/27 **EXAM 1 (1/11-2/17)**

Week 8

3/4 **Jesus's Death and the Temple's Curtain:** 2 Kings 22-25; Ezekiel 8-11; Matthew 27; Mark 15:33-39; Luke 23

3/6 **Class Cancelled: : WRITTEN EXERCISE 1 due**

Week 9

3/11 **John 2-4 (Jacob's Well)**: Alter, "Biblical Type-Scenes and the Uses of Convention"; Genesis 24:10-61; Genesis 29:1-20; Exodus 2:11-22; 2 Kings 17 (on the Samaritans); Luke 10:25-37

3/13 **Elijah and Elisha; John 5-11**: 1 Kings 17-19; 2 Kings 1-13; John 6 and synoptic miracle stories ???; "Jewish Miracle Workers and Magic in the Late Second Temple Period" (*JANT*, 680)

3/18 **Spring Break**

3/20 **Spring Break**

Week 11

3/25 **"The Jews"; John 12-21**: "Ioudaios" (*JANT*, 596); "Jewish Movements of the New Testament Period" (*JANT*, 614); "Pharisees" (*JANT*, 619)

3/27 **Luke 1-3**: Alter, "How Convention Helps Us Read: The Case of the Bible's Annunciation Type-Scene"; Genesis 18, 21, 25; Matthew 1:18-25

Week 12

4/1 **Luke 4-11**

**Sabbath observance; sabbath in the gospels**: Exodus 31; Numbers 15:32-36; John 5, 7, 9

**Jonah**: Jesus asleep on the boat; sign of Jonah; repentance; Mark 4:35ff; Matthew 8:23ff;

Luke 8:22ff; Matthew 12:38ff, 16:1ff; Luke 11:29ff; Jonah

4/3 **The Little Apocalypse; Luke 12-19**: Daniel 7-12; Matthew 24-25; Mark 13; Luke 19:41-48; 21; "Revolts against Rome" (*JANT*, 589ff)

Week 13

4/8 **Luke 20-24 Road to Emmaus** – cf Genesis 18-19

Luke 24.29 → Genesis 19.3, Judges 19.9

4/10 **Acts 1-7: 1.6ff – Mount of Olives** → Ezekiel 11, 43; Luke 24

Week 14

4/15 **Pentecost; Acts 8-14**: Genesis 10:1-11:9; Exodus 19:10-20.26; 34:18-24; Leviticus 23:9-21; Numbers 28:26; Deuteronomy 16:9-12; **WRITTEN EXERCISE 2 due**

4/17 **Food Laws; Acts 15-21**: Genesis 9:1-7; Leviticus 11; 17:11-16; Deuteronomy 14

**Circumcision in Acts; Acts 22-28**: Genesis 17; "Circumcision" (*JANT*, 673)

Week 15

4/22 **EXAM 2 (2/24-4/12)**

Students Requiring Accommodations

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc>) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to me when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/evals>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>

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