

Class Objectives – After this class you will be able to:

- Describe the distinctions between various Jewish sects.
- Describe various Jewish OT translations and other works of Jewish literature.
- Discuss some of the major concepts associated with crucifixion in antiquity.

Key Terms:

- Sadducees / Pharisees / Essenes / Zealots / Sicarii
- Herodians / Samaritans / Proselytes / God fearers
- Septuagint / Targums
- Apocrypha / Pseudepigrapha
- Josephus / Philo
- Talmudic / Midrashic rabbinic literature
- Crucifixion

The First Century and the Context(s) of the New Testament (cont.)

I. New Testament Backgrounds (cont.):

A. Some Key Jewish Terms

1. **Jewish Sects**

Sadducees – power elite, free will, reject resurrection and oral tradition

Pharisees – rabbinic teachers

Essenes –deterministic, monastic, Qumran

“4th Philosophy” – overthrow pagan rule

– Zealots

– Sicarii (dagger-men)

A. Judaism in the 1st Century

B. Other Jewish Terms

1. **Other Jewish Terms**

Herodians (pro-Herodian kingly line)

Samaritans

Proselytes (Gentile converts)

God-fearers (Gentile religious sympathizers)

C. Jewish Sources

1. **Jewish Translations of the OT**

Septuagint (LXX) – Greek

Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotian – Greek

Targums – Aramaic

Peshitta – Syriac (Jewish influence)

Old Latin (poss. Jewish influence)

2. Collections

Apocrypha

Pseudepigrapha

Dead Sea Scrolls (from Qumran, Murabbaat, Nahal Hever, etc.)

3. Jewish Authors

Josephus

Philo

Pseudo-Philo

4. Rabbinic Literature

talmudic (primarily topical)

- Mishnah
- Tosefta
- Jerusalem and Babylonian Talmuds

midrashic (commentary form)

- Midrash Rabbah
- Mekhilta
- Sifra
- Sifre

The Accursed Cross — Crucifixion in Antiquity and the Death of Christ**II. Cultural Distance:**

III. Penal Suspension in Antiquity:

A. Suspension penalties were well known in Mesopotamian history.

1.

Code of Hammurabi (c. 2250 B.C.)

[§226] If a barber has excised a slave's mark without (the knowledge of) his owner so that he cannot be traced, they shall cut off the fore-hand of that barber.

[§227] ⁴³If a man has constrained the barber and he excises the slave's mark so that he cannot be traced, ⁴⁸**they shall put that man to death and shall hang him at his (own) door; ⁵²the barber may swear 'Surely I excised (it) unwittingly', and he then goes free.**

B. Such penalties can be employed to punish particularly heinous crimes.

C. Suspension of victims was especially practiced in times of war.

1.

Nimrûd Slab Inscription (c. 734 B.C.) of Tiglath-pileser III

783. Bît-Shilâni, in its entirety, I smashed like a pot. Sarrabânu, their great royal city, I destroyed (so that it was) like a ruin (left by) the flood. I carried off its plunder. Nabû-ushabshi, their king, **I hung up in front of the gate of his city on a stake.** His land, his wife, his sons, his daughters, his property, the treasure of his palace, I carried off.

IV. OT and Penal Suspension:

A. Suspension penalties, elsewhere testified in Mesopotamian and Mediterranean history can also be seen in the Old Testament.

e.g. Gen 40:19; Deut 21:22-23

V. Questions for Consideration:

1. What assumptions have you had about crucifixion?
2. How have these assumptions been affirmed or challenged?