Jewish Groups in Jesus’ Time

6/6/06

Goals for Today

• Announcements
  – Paper Details
• Geography
• Talmud
• Diversity of Jewish Groups in Jesus’ Time
• Dead Sea Scrolls - different genres

Assignments

• Presentation (6/27) (10-15 min.)
Jewish Groups - Evidence

- Josephus - Jewish leader allied with Rome
- New Testament - is it unbiased?
- Talmud - mentions different groups, but also with own agenda
Jewish Groups I

- Pharisees - “Separatists” - interpreted law
  - Used Tanakh plus oral law
  - Believed in resurrection, angels, demons, etc.
  - Hillel, Shammai, Gamaliel
  - Academy of Jamnia 70 CE - Adapting Judaism
    - Judaism could survive without Temple and land

- Sadducees - “Righteous Ones”
  - Upper class, wealthy, priestly class - allied with Rome
  - Conservative religiously - literal reading of Torah
    - No oral law, resurrection, etc.

Texts

- Mishnah Yadayim (p. 270)
- Mishnah Eruvin (p. 272)
- Mishnah Makkot (p. 272)
Jewish Groups II

- Samaritans - lived in center of country
  - Supposedly came as Assyrian immigrants
  - Practiced version of Judaism
  - Used Torah but not Nevi'im, Kethuvim
  - Better image in New Testament than to Jews
- Zealots
  - Political revolutionaries came and went
  - Organized in 66 CE - crushed by Rome

Jewish Groups III - Essenes

- Ascetic sect (self-denial, focus on purity)
- Known in ancient world (Josephus, et al)
- Dead Sea Scrolls discovered 1947
  - Info about early Judaism, parallels to Christians
  - Never identify group as Essenes, despite parallels
- Qumran - exile from Jerusalem?
- Trying to reform, purify Jerusalem Temple
- Purity, celibacy, apocalypticism
Scrolls
Texts and Interpretation
Dead Sea Scrolls
• Habakkuk Pesher (p. 354)
• War Scroll (p. 359)
• Miqzat Ma’ase Torah (p. 363)
• Psalms Scroll (p. 366)

The Messiah
• Hebrew Bible
  – David and Kings as “Mashiach” - annointed
  – Zerubbabel - governor under Persia gave hope
  – Davidic hope still strong during, after exile
• Pharisees expected one, Sadducees didn’t
• Essenes expected two - Priestly, Davidic
• Some rebels claimed title
• But Jesus was non-military / non-royal???
Talmud - Components

Links

• Creation Stories
  – http://www.mythicjourneys.org/bigmyth/2_eng_myths.htm
• Talmud and its shape
  – http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/rs/2/Judaism/talmud.html
• How to navigate a page of Talmud
  – http://www.geocities.com/pittinsky/answers.htm

For Thursday 6/8/06

• Liturgy and Ritual
• Read VanderKam 193-218
  – Schiffman 192-203, 656-670, 726-730
  – Leviticus 12-15
• What are the Biblical settings for these rituals?
• How did they develop in Jewish practice?
• How do they relate to Christianity?