

## NEW TESTAMENT SURVEY

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### Introduction

This class is designed to give the student a brief understanding of the 27 New Testament books. This will be accomplished by studying the time period leading up to the N.T. era (intertestamental period) as well as surveying each of the biblical books. Also included in this course will be a short introduction on the formation of the canon.

The student will learn the following six points about each book:

1) Authorship 2) Audience 3) Purpose 4) Key Verse 5) Place of Writing & 6) Contents. This course is not set up to look at each book in an in-depth manner due to the time factor; but, is designed to encourage students to study the Scriptures more thoroughly on his own.

### Objectives:

By the end of this semester the student should know:

1. The events and writings of the intertestamental period.
2. The purpose and contents of the 27 N.T. books.
3. How to research background information on any biblical book.

### Homework

The homework for this class is to complete one book study a week. The forms are provided in your class notes (see page 9). Each student is required to complete one book study each week as assigned. If you miss a class you **must** purchase the CD and keep your syllabus current. Jensen's survey of the N.T. will be used to help with the assignments.

### Schedule:

Week

- 1- 3/30 Intertestamental
- 2- 4/6 The Four Gospels
- 3- 4/13 Acts - 2 Cor.
- 4- 4/20 Gal. – Col.
- 5- 4/27 Mid-Term
- 6- 5/4 1 Thess. - Titus
- 7-5/11 Philemon - James



8- 5/18 1 Peter - 3 John  
9-5/25 Jude – Revelation  
10-6/1 Final

**Required Text:** *Jensen's Survey of the New Testament*, by Irving Jensen

**Questions:** Please feel free to raise your hand during the lecture to ask your questions. If something is not clear, please ask! Never feel your question is not worth asking. I may not be able to answer it at that moment but will be available after class for assistance. Let's enjoy this semester together as we spend time learning the Word of God.



## I. The 400 Silent Years

The Old Testament closes approximately at 430 B.C. At this point Israel was firmly established in the land of Palestine and had their Temple and city rebuilt. The time period between 430 B.C. and the ministry of John the Baptist is known as the 400 silent years. The term is derived from two factors: 1) The Lord did not send any prophets during this period, and 2) None of the inspired Scriptures were written during this period. The voice from heaven, which broke the silence, came from the ministry of John the Baptist, who had the privilege of announcing the coming of the Messiah. The 400 silent years were very eventful years, but the Lord chose for His own reasons not to have any inspired Scriptures written during this period. The Apocryphal books were written during this era, which contain the records of some important historical events, but are not considered to be inspired by the Church. This era can be divided into seven different time periods. Each period is designated by the ruling powers, which controlled Palestine. These are:

Persian	Alexandrian	Ptolemaic	Selucid	Maccabean	Hasmonean	Roman
430-334BC	334-323BC	323-198BC	198-166BC	166-135BC	135-34BC	34BC-30AD

### A. Persian Period 430-334 B.C.

This time period was basically mild and uneventful. At the close of the O.T. era, the Jews were allowed to return to their homeland to rebuild their city and Temple (Ezra-Nehemiah). Two important factors developed:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

### B. Alexandrian Period 334-323 B.C.

The armies of Alexander the Great defeated the Persians along with taking control of Palestine. The Jews developed a friendly working relationship with the Greeks during this period. Two factors are important:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_



**C. Ptolemaic Period 323-198 B.C.**

At the sudden death of Alexander the Great, his empire was divided amongst his four prominent Generals. Ptolemy Legus took over the area of Egypt and Palestine. During this time his descendents became the ruling authorities over the Jews. An unfortunate thing happened during this period, Palestine became a battleground for their two surrounding neighbors (Egypt & Syria). Israel just happened to stand in the middle of these two powers which made it a convenient place to battle. Two important events:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

**D. Selucid Period 198-166 B.C.**

As Ptolemy Legus took over Egypt, Seleucus Nicator (another General) gained control of Syria to the north of Palestine. Palestine continued to be a battleground between the Ptolemies of Egypt and the Selucid family of Syria. The Selucid family eventually gained permanent control of the area, thus having the control over the Jewish nation. Four points of interests:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

**E. Maccabean Period 166-135 B.C.**

The brutality of Antiochus Epiphanes and his desecration of the Temple (slaughtering a pig upon the altar and forcing the Priests to drink its blood) eventually stirred up a revolt led by Judas Maccabees. Under his leadership, despite the incredible odds, they were able to gain their freedom and establish an independent Jewish state. Three factors are:

1. \_\_\_\_\_



2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

### **F. Hasmonean Period 135-34 B.C.**

The term Hasmonean is related to the time when the original descendents of the Maccabean family ruled. During this era the Jewish state began to expand by capturing neighboring countries. The Maccabean family ruled by heredity and became known as the Hasmoneans. The last Maccabean ruler was given the title, "Ruler and High Priest forever until there should arise a faithful Prophet." Two points of interest are:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

### **G. Roman Period 34 B.C.-30 A.D.**

The expansion of the Roman empire eventually engulfed the land of Palestine. Rome placed Antipater's son (Herod) as the one to sit on the throne in Judea and to rule over the Jews. The Jews were even forced to pay taxes to the Roman government during this era. One important issue is:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

## **II. The Formation of the Canon**

Definition of the Word Canon:

Greek Usage: \_\_\_\_\_

Hebrew Usage: \_\_\_\_\_

Base Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_

The formation of the N.T. is a very interesting and detailed process. During the apostolic years there were far more than 27 books written, but the Church did not consider all of them to be inspired by God. The Church had the difficult job of deciding which of the many books were to be placed in the Bible alongside the O.T. Scriptures.

The Church has given names (Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Homologoumena, Antilegomena - defined later) to categorize the nature



of these books. Let us briefly look at the way in which the New Testament came into existence.

**A. The Apocryphal Books** (accepted by some rejected by some)

1. The Definition of Apocrypha: \_\_\_\_\_

There are \_\_\_\_\_ apocryphal books written between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. They bridge a gap between Malachi and Matthew and were written two or three centuries before Christ. The following is a list of these books:

- 1) Wisdom of Solomon 30 B.C.
- 2) Prayer of \_\_\_\_\_ (Song of Three Young Men) 100 B.C.
- 3) Bel and the Dragon \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) Susanna 100 B.C.
- 5) 2 Esdras 100 B.C.
- 6) Prayer of \_\_\_\_\_
- 7) 1 Maccabees 110 B.C.
- 8) 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 100-170 B.C.
- 9) Additions of \_\_\_\_\_ 130-140 B.C.
- 10) Ecclesiasticus 132 B.C.
- 11) Baruch 150 B.C.
- 12) \_\_\_\_\_ 150 B.C.
- 13) 1 Esdras 150 B.C.
- 14) Tobit 200 B.C.
- 15) Letter of \_\_\_\_\_ 300-100B.C.

The Church has always declared these books to be non-canonical, but has been able to appreciate them for their historical value. The RCC has accepted these books as canonical since the Council of Trent (1546). Schaff states the official position of the RCC in his book, **The Creeds of Christendom**:

"The Synod...receives and venerates...all the books both of the Old and New Testament [including Apocrypha]- seeing that God is the Author of both...as having been dictated, either by Christ's own word of mouth or by the Holy Ghost...if anyone receives not as sacred and canonical the said books entire with all their parts, as they have been used to be read in the Catholic Church...let them be anathema."

**1. Six Reasons the Church has Rejected These as Non-Canonical:**

a. The Authority of Jesus: **Jesus never \_\_\_\_\_ from the Apocrypha.**



b. **New Testament Authority:** The N.T. \_\_\_\_\_ cites an apocryphal book as inspired. The NT does however quote from every canonical book in the OT. The NT does make allusions to the Apocrypha, but this falls into the same category as the writers quoting pagan poets.

c. **The \_\_\_\_\_ Community Never Accepted them as Canonical:** Even Josephus, the great Jewish historian, clearly rejects the Apocrypha and lists only 22 books as canonical for the OT.

d. **The Books Contain Historical \_\_\_\_\_** (See Tobit 1:3-5 & 14:11).

e. **The Books Contain Theological Errors:** See 2 Mac 12:45, 46, 4- where \_\_\_\_\_ is mentioned.

f. Most Great Fathers of the Early Church did not View Them as Canonical.

### **B. The Psuedepigrapha** (rejected by all)

#### 1. The Definition of Psuedepigrapha:

The term literally means \_\_\_\_\_.

A file with a list of 280 such books as these was in existence as early as the ninth century. These books contained heretical statements as well as some questionable historical events. No Father, canon or council ever called these inspired, and Eusebius labeled them, "totally absurd and impious." At best these books were received by one of the cults in existence during the early years of the Church (Docetic- Christ had no humanity, Gnostic- Matter was evil therefore they deny the incarnation and emphasized special knowledge). The stories usually centered around the lives of some of the prominent biblical characters. Some of the more popular of these books are:

a. **The Gospel of Thomas** (1st Century) Gnostic view and mentions the childhood \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus.

b. **The Gospel of Peter** (2nd Century) A Docetic and Gnostic forgery.

c. **The Passing of Mary** (4th Century) Mentions the \_\_\_\_\_ assumption of Mary and advanced stages of Mary worship.

d. **The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew** (5th Century) Mentions the visit to Egypt and some of His \_\_\_\_\_ boyhood miracles.

### **C. Homologoumena** (accepted by all)

