

FINAL OVERVIEW

What have we sought to do?

- DESCRIPTION
 - This course presents students with an introduction to the New Testament in its social, cultural, and historical milieu, an opportunity to explore ways of reading New Testament texts, and a closer reading of one particular New Testament text, the Gospel of Mark.
- OBJECTIVES
 - This course is intended to develop skills in careful, attentive reading of sacred Christian texts for theological understanding and being able to discuss the same with others. In order to develop these skills of analysis and communication, the course proposes to provide an opportunity to identify, discern and discuss issues in the study of a New Testament text (Mark), as well as an opportunity to explore contrasting approaches to the same issues (from scholars and members of the class).

What have we done?

- Who, what, when, where? The historical background of the New Testament
 - The Holy Land geographically, historically, and politically
 - The Hellenistic world (from Alexander through Seleucids, Ptolemies, and Maccabees)
 - The Roman world (from the pre-Augustan period through the 1st century emperors)
 - The socio-economic fabric of the Roman world (country, cities, villages; the food supply; persons and non-persons)
 - Key moments and persons in 1st century Israel
 - Ideological elements
 - Philosophical and rhetorical schools
 - Mystery religions
 - Jewish “sects” and other important settings and persons (e.g., rabbis)

- Why? The cultural world of the New Testament
 - Honour/shame
 - Limited good
 - Personality (including body actions)
 - Kinship
 - Purity
- Methods for the Study of the NT (Two questions in your Sept 14 assignment: *1. What is a Gospel? And 2. What is required to understand what a Gospel is?*)
 - What is a Gospel?
 - Stages in the formation of a Gospel
 - Historical-critical method (historical, textual, source, form, and redaction criticism)
 - Synchronic approaches (narrative, rhetorical)
 - Ideological approaches
- Exploration of the Gospel of Mark (One of the questions in your Sept 14 assignment: *What is the Gospel of Mark about?*)

Overview of the Gospel of Mark

1.1 Title

1.2-14 Preparation

- Setting the stage for the appearance of the prophetic rebuilding of Israel as a kingdom

1.14 – 9.50 Galilean Ministry

- Call of followers (new kin), Miracles, Teaching (including parables)
- 2 passion predictions
- Transfiguration

10.1-52 The road to Jerusalem

- Divorce (cf. Mal 2), children, rich young man, blind BarTimaeus (cf. 2 Sam 5)

11.1-16.8 Jerusalem

- Temple
 - Curse of fig tree, Cleansing of Temple
 - Discussion of points of doctrine with several sects
 - The widow's penny
 - The destruction of the Temple as the sign of the coming of the Son of Man
- Passover
 - Anointing for burial
 - Betrayal prediction
 - Passover supper
 - Predictions of betrayal and denial
 - Gethsemane
 - Betrayal
 - Trial by Jewish leaders
 - Trial by Roman authority
 - Crucifixion
 - Empty Tomb

FINAL EXAM:

1. One question on historical and/or cultural background
2. Exegesis of a pericope in Mark (passage will be provided) using Template guidelines
3. One overview question on the Gospel of Mark and possible theological implications