

Origins of Christianity * Lesson 1

Outline

1. Origins in the Ancient World
2. Axial Age Greeks
3. Ancient Judaism
4. The Maccabean Rebellion

Terms

Mattathias, Modin, Maccabees, axial age, Karl Jaspers, Plato, Alexander the Great, Hellenization, Ptolemy/Ptolemaic Egypt, Seleucid, Tanakh = Old Testament, Antiochus IV, Emmaus, Hanukkah

The Ancient Context: Food in the New Testament

Cereals

Luke 11:3 "Give us this day our daily bread..."

Matthew 13:3-9 "A sower went forth to sow..."

Matthew 13:30 "Gather the tares to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn"

Matthew 13:33 "The Kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven..."

Mark 14:22 "Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it..."

Wine

John 2:3 "Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine..."

John 15:1 "I am the true vine"

Luke 22:18 "I will not drink the fruit of the vine 'til the kingdom of God shall come"

Mark 12:1 "A certain man planted a vineyard, and set a hedge about it..."

Oil

Mark 6:8 "they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick"

Fish

Mark 8:7 "and they had a few small fishes..."

Matthew 4: 19 "follow me, and I will make you fishers of men..."

Cattle

Luke 15:23 "bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it, let us eat and be merry..."

Sheep

John 10:11 "I am the good shepherd, the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep"

John 1:29 "Behold the lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world..."

FOUR THEMES OF AXIAL AGE (ca. 800-200 BC) TRANSFORMATION

- (1) MYTH → REASON (MYTHOS → LOGOS)
- (2) LOCAL → UNIVERSAL
- (3) MATERIAL → TRANSCENDENT
- (4) MAGIC → SACRAMENT

PERIODS OF JEWISH HISTORY

Patriarchal

Before ca. 1250 BC

Key figures: Abraham, Isaac, Joseph

Key sources: *Genesis*

Founding stories of clans living on fringes of Near Eastern civilizations.

Premonarchy

1250 BC – 1000 BC

Key figures: Moses through the judges

Key sources: *Exodus* through *Judges*

Small tribal groups living in Palestinian hills develop Hebrew identity.

Monarchic

1000 BC – 587 BC

Key figures: Saul, David, Solomon

Key sources: *Samuel*, *Kings*

Monarchy established, Jerusalem becomes central, Temple built

Exilic

587 BC – 539 BC

Key figures: Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon

Key sources: *Lamentations*

First Temple destroyed, exile in Babylon

Second Temple

515 BC – 70 AD

Key figures: Cyrus, Ezra, Maccabees, Herod

Key sources: *Ezra*, Josephus, etc.

Persians allow return to Jerusalem, Second Temple built

515 BC-331 BC

Persian

331 BC-167 BC

Hellenistic

167 BC – 37 BC

Maccabean

37 BC – 6 AD

Herodian

6 AD – 70 AD

Roman

Rabbinic

70 AD – 600 AD

Key figures: Pharisees develop into rabbis

Key sources: *Mishnah*, *Talmud*, etc.

After destruction of Temple, rabbis become central to Judaism