

# THE JEWISH FOUNDATIONS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT



Class XI – Everyday Judaism

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# An Introductory Reading

## Ezra 10:10-11 (JPS) –

“Then Ezra the priest got up and said to them, ‘You have **trespassed** by **bringing home foreign women**, thus aggravating the guilt of Israel. So now, make confession to the LORD, the God of your fathers, and do his will, and **separate yourselves** from the **peoples of the land** and from **foreign women.**”

## Ezra 10:17-18 (JPS) –

“By the first day of the first month **they were done** with all the men who had **brought home foreign women**. Among the priestly families who were found to have brought home foreign women were...”

*Marriage outside the ethnic clan = sin against God!*

# An Introductory Reading

## Genesis 42:50 (JPS) –

“Before the years of famine came, Joseph became the father of two sons, whom Aseneth **daughter of Poti-phaera, priest of On**, bore to him.”

## Genesis 48:5 (JPS) –

“Now, your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, **shall be mine**; Ephraim and Manasseh **shall be mine no less than** Reuben and Simeon.”

*How do you explain the marriage of a Patriarch to not just a Gentile but the daughter of a foreign priest? And how are their offspring considered equal?*

# An Introductory Reading

## *Joseph and Aseneth 8.5 (1<sup>st</sup> c. BCE) –*

“And Joseph said, “It is not fitting for a man who worships God...to **kiss a strange woman** who will **bless** with her mouth **dead and dumb idols** and **eat** from their table **bread of strangulation** and **drink** from their libation **a cup of insidiousness** and **anoint** herself with **ointment of destruction.**”

## *Joseph and Aseneth 10.12 -*

“And Aseneth ... took all her gods that were in her chamber, the ones of gold and silver **who were without number** ... and threw all the idols of the Egyptians through the window facing north... And Aseneth took **her royal dinner** and the fatlings and the fish and the flesh of the heifer and **all the sacrifices** of her gods and **the vessels of their wine of libation** and threw everything through the window looking north, and gave everything to the strange dogs.”

# Where are we going?

- Section I: Introduction & the Land of the Bible
- Section II: Who is Our King?
- Section III: Beware Getting What You Ask For
- Section IV: Will the Real Judaism Please Stand Up?
- Section V: Everyday Judaism
  - *How did Hellenistic Judaism practice its faith?*
  - *How did they differentiate believers and non-believers?*
- Section VI: The Future in Hellenistic Judaism
- Section VII: What is the New Testament?

# Definition of 1<sup>st</sup> c. CE Judaism

- The foundational belief of Judaism is the covenant with Abraham
- The acceptance of this covenant initiates a relationship with God that includes ethical obligations based on Torah
- The relationship of these two ideas – covenant and Torah – is called covenantal nomism.
- How to fulfill these obligations was the subject of much discussion and disagreement, especially in the light of Hellenism.

# Jewish Reactions to Hellenism

- Multiple Jewish groups arise
  - Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes
  - Ascetics
  - Gentile believers/sympathizers
  - Multiple Temples
  - Synagogues as cultural bulwark



Caves at Qumran

# Last Week's Homework

- Read Mark 1:4 – 13
- How is John described? Where did he live? What did he eat?
- *What other religious leaders from Jewish history had significant experiences with God in the desert?*
- What is Jesus' experience in the desert?

