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Assignment 9b
October 20, 2017, Bi-103 Synoptic Gospel, Professor Armstrong

1. Who were the Maccabean leaders? Explain.

The Maccabees also were the leaders of a Jewish rebel army that took control of Judea, which at the time had been a province of the Seleucid Empire. They founded the Hasmonean dynasty, which ruled from 164 BCE to 63 BCE. They reasserted the Jewish religion, partly by forced conversion, expanded the boundaries of Judea by conquest and reduced the influence of Hellenism and Hellenistic Judaism

2. Who was Judas Maccabeus? Explain his role.

Judas was nicknamed "the Maccabee" which means "the hammer." He lived in the second century B.C. The Syrian leader Antiochus IV tried to get the Jews to adopt Greek practices and turned the Jerusalem Temple into a shrine to Zeus. Judas and others revolted, also known as the Maccabee Revolt. Under his leadership in 164 B.C., the Jews recaptured and rededicated the Temple in Jerusalem.

3. What did this group have to do with the establishment of the Pharisee sect of Judaism?

The Pharisees first appear on the scene in Israel in the time between the writing of the Old Testament and the events of the New Testament. They emerge out of a group called the Hasidim who helped overthrow Seleucid rule during the Maccabean revolt. Not long after the revolt, the Maccabean leaders became corrupt in the eyes of the Hasidim. The Maccabean descendants had succumbed to Hellenistic influence and had also illegitimately seized control of the office of High Priest. It is out of this Hasidim that the Pharisees emerge.

4. Who was the first Roman Emperor?

The first Roman Emperor was Augustus Caesar, also known as Gaius Octavius, and ruled the Roman Empire between 31 B.C. and his death in A.D. 14. Though Augustus' adopted father, Julius Caesar, had taken dictatorial power in Rome, he never took the title "emperor." Augustus did not become emperor immediately after Julius Caesar's assassination. Instead, he and two others, Marcus Lepidus and Mark Antony, formed a triumvirate to defeat the assassins and jointly rule Rome as military dictators. However, this alliance soon broke down, leading to another civil war, which Augustus won, leaving him in sole control of Rome.

5. Who was the second Roman Emperor?

On September 18, 14 A.D., 1,999 years ago this week, Tiberius became the second emperor of Rome upon the death of his stepfather, Augustus, who had been reluctant to select Tiberius as his successor.

6. Who was emperor during the time of Jesus? When He was born? When He ministered?

At the time of Jesus' birth, Caesar (Octavian) Augustus was the Roman Emperor. Tiberius was emperor at the time of the ministry and crucifixion of Jesus

7. What Roman Prefect was instrumental in the death of Jesus?

Pontius Pilatus, prefect of the Roman province of Judaea held office from A.D. 26-36. Pontius Pilate has come down in history because of his role in the execution of Jesus and because of his mention in the Christian statement of faith known as the Nicene Creed where it says "... crucified under Pontius Pilate...."

8. How did the Hellenistic culture infiltrate Judaism?

Hellenism, of course, refers to the influence of ancient Greek philosophy and culture, which spread throughout the Mediterranean world after the conquests of Alexander the Great in the fourth century BC. One major assimilatory threat to the Jewish people was Greek culture. For the first time, the Jews not only encountered a culture that provided an alternative, but, on the surface at least, provided a superior culture. That is why there grew such a great and strong Hellenistic movement within the Jewish people.

9. List the seven different groups of Judaism. Explain what each group represented and its effect on Jesus' ministry.

- Conservative* Judaism: This began in the mid-nineteenth century as a reaction against the Reform movement. It is a main-line movement midway between Reform and Orthodox.
- Humanistic Judaism: This is a very small group, mainly composed of atheists and agnostics, who regard mankind as the measure of all things.
- Orthodox Judaism: This is the oldest, most conservative, and most diverse form of Judaism. They attempt to follow the original form of Judaism as they view it to be. They look upon every word in their sacred texts as being divinely inspired.
- Reconstructionist Judaism: This is a new, small, liberal movement started by Mordecai Kaplan as an attempt to unify and revitalize the religion. They reject the concept that Jews are a uniquely favored and chosen people. They have no connection at all with Christian Reconstructionism, which is an ultra-conservative form of Christianity.

- Reform Judaism: They follow the ethical laws of Judaism, but leave up to the individual the decision whether to follow or ignore the dietary and other traditional laws. They use modern forms of worship. There are many female rabbis in reform congregations.
- Hasidic Judaism, meaning "piety" or "loving-kindness", is a branch of Orthodox Judaism that promotes spirituality through the popularization and internalization of Jewish mysticism as the fundamental aspect of the faith.
- Modern Orthodox is a movement within Orthodox Judaism that attempts to synthesize Jewish values and the observance of Jewish law, with the secular, modern world.

10. What religion was dominant in the Graco-Roman world? What factors supported the acceptance of Christianity as a religion?

- The dominant religious practice in the Graco-Roman world is Paganism.
- The triumph of Christianity is actually a very remarkable historical phenomenon. ... We begin with a small group from the backwaters of the Roman Empire and after two, three centuries go by, lo and behold that same group and its descendants have somehow taken over the Roman Empire and have become the official religion, in fact the only tolerated religion, of the Roman Empire by the end of the 4th century. That is a truly remarkable development, and a monumental historical problem, trying to understand how this happened. Of course, pious Christians have no doubt about how or why it happened: "This is the hand of God working in history." And the Christians of antiquity already made this very point; the fact that Christianity triumphed is proof of its truth.

