

New Testament Literature

DQ1

Hi all,

Today, I asked you an important question:

Does Luke 2 give us one occasion where Jesus' speaks of his father, Joseph when he says "did you not know I a must be among my father's things"?

Please give a response that is based in the biblical evidence, like chapter and verse? :)

DQ2

Read the articles on the **Pharisees** (click the word) and **Sadducees** (click the word) in the *Encyclopedia Judaica*(you must be logged into your Nyack.edu account to access these through the hyperlink otherwise you may be asked to give your Nyack username and password). Describe each Jewish group and the role they played in the first century. What was each of their relationship to Jesus? How does reading these two articles change the way you understand these groups and their place in the Gospels.

DQ3

Read carefully with pen and paper in hand the account of The Cleansing of the Temple in the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke). You can access the three accounts together through this [link](#). After completing the readings, click on the link below and answer the Discussion Question(s):

Compare the details. Mark is often called the shortest Gospel. Is it the shortest report here? In the story, who are the objects of Jesus' protest? Are they described differently in the Gospels? What about Jesus actions? Does he act the same way in all three accounts? What are the differences? If you were a newspaper reporter and wanted to report on what happened and Luke was the only witness for your newspaper story, what would you tell your readers happened? Finally, Jesus quotes two passages of Old Testament Scripture. What are they? Why does Jesus quote them? What is their relevance to what is happening?

DQ4

After having read the information by Binder ([LINK](#)) and Feldman, read the story of Izates in Josephus Antiquities 20:4 (pages 21-27, you can advance by clicking the arrow) provided through this [LINK](#). Discuss the following. Have you ever heard of a God-Fearer in the first century A.D.? How would you describe their status in relationship to the Jewish people? Do you think they have any importance in our understanding the strategy of the first-century church in its preaching the Gospel to Gentiles?

DQ5

Paul is often portrayed as "Law-free" meaning that after his encounter with the risen Christ on the road to Damascus, he no longer saw any reason for Torah observance either for Jew or Gentile. On the other hand, in the first report we have of Paul following the Apostolic Decree in Acts 15, he requires the circumcision of Timothy in Acts 16:1-3. The significance of this act is of no small importance. Elsewhere in Galatians 5:3, Paul asserts, "I testify again to **every man who accepts circumcision that he is obligated to keep the whole law.**" In effect Paul placed upon Timothy the requirement to keep the whole law. Why do you think Paul would do such a thing? To your mind, is this consistent with Paul's teaching? If yes, why? If not, why not?

DQ 6

After having read Martin Abegg's article (see attached):

In his article, Abegg ([LINK](#)) discusses the discovery of the document 4QMMT. What is significant about this fragment? What phrase appears that only appears here and in the Apostle Paul's writings? To which passage from the Hebrew Bible (OT) does Abegg suggest the phrase hints? To your mind does this help us in any way to understand to whom Paul is writing, what they are thinking, and what Paul is trying to say? If so, how?

DQ7

In **Ephesians 4:7-10** Paul introduces the theme of God's gifts to the church. In it he quotes a verse from **Psalm 68:18**. Here is a [LINK](#) with Paul's quote alongside the verse from the psalm.

On several occasions this semester I have encouraged you that when you find Jesus or a NT author quoting a verse from the OT that you take a minute, open up your Bible, and read the verse that is quoted in order to compare them. If you don't, you may miss what is intended by the quote.

Sometimes there are differences between the original verse and the quotation. These differences may be because of text variations between the Hebrew Scriptures we have today and those that existed in the first century.

At other times, the differences may be because of language. In other words, it may be simply because the OT verse is in Hebrew and the NT quote is in Greek. For example: Isaiah 40:3 and Matthew 3:3 (note the small matter of the place of the colon, but which also affects the message).

Still other times, the author or speaker may want to signal to words outside of the actual quote. If you don't open the OT you can miss what the author (or the speaker) meant to say. For example, Jesus' quote in Luke 19:46 (=Jer 7:11) was intended to echo the wider message heard in Jeremiah 7:1-15).

Finally, on other occasions, the differences are because there existed more freedom to adapt Scripture creatively than we are accustomed to in the church.

Before you answer the DQ below, you may want to refer to a commentary or two to see how they deal with this question.

Compare Paul's quote and the verse from the psalm. Are there any differences that you can detect? If so, what are they? Why do you think the differences exist? What solutions do the the commentaries you read propose to answer the differences? Do the differences tell us anything about the Jewish understanding of Scripture in the first century? If so, what?

DQ8

In James 2:18-24 the author refers to Abraham and quotes Genesis 15:6 ("And Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him for righteousness"). He seems to use the same verse as Paul has done in Romans 4:1-5 but to express a very different opinion. Compare these verses through this [LINK](#). What is similar about how the authors use the OT verse? What is different? Do they agree or disagree in their use of the verse? In your opinion how do these differences affect how are to understand what they have to say to us?