

A History of Knowledge

Oldest Knowledge

What the Sumerians knew

What the Babylonians knew

What the Hittites knew

What the Persians knew

What the Egyptians knew

What the Indians knew

What the Chinese knew

What the Greeks knew

What the Phoenicians knew

What the Romans knew

What the Barbarians knew

What the Jews knew

What the Christians knew

Tang & Sung China

What the Japanese knew

What the Muslims knew

The Middle Ages

Ming & Manchu China

The Renaissance

The Industrial Age

The Victorian Age

The Modern World

What the Jews knew

Piero Scaruffi 2004

"I am who I am" (God to Moses)

**Jesus: "I came into the world to bear
witness to the truth"**

**Pilate: "What is truth?"
(John 18:3438)**

What the Jews knew

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 - **Alan Segal: Life After Death (2004)**
 - **Josephus: Jewish Antiquities**

What the Jews knew

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 - **Robert Eisenman: James the Just (1997)**
 - **Timothy Freke: The Jesus Mysteries (1999)**
 - **John Dominic Crossan: The Historical Jesus (1992)**
 - **Oliver O'Donovan: From Irenaeus to Grotius - A Sourcebook in Christian Political Thought 100-1625 (2000)**
 - **Wilhelm Bousset: Kyrios Christos - A History of the Belief in Christ from the Beginnings of Christianity to Irenaeus (1913)**

Judaism

2500 BC: Canaanites live in the city-state of Jericho, a tributary of Egypt

1500 BC: a caravan trader, Abraham, leads Semitic nomads (Hebrews) from Sumer to Canaan and then on to Egypt

1400 BC: Canaanites found Urusalim (Jerusalem)

1300 BC: iron age in Palestine

1250 BC: Indo-European tribes (Philistines) move to Palestine (named after them) from the Aegean sea

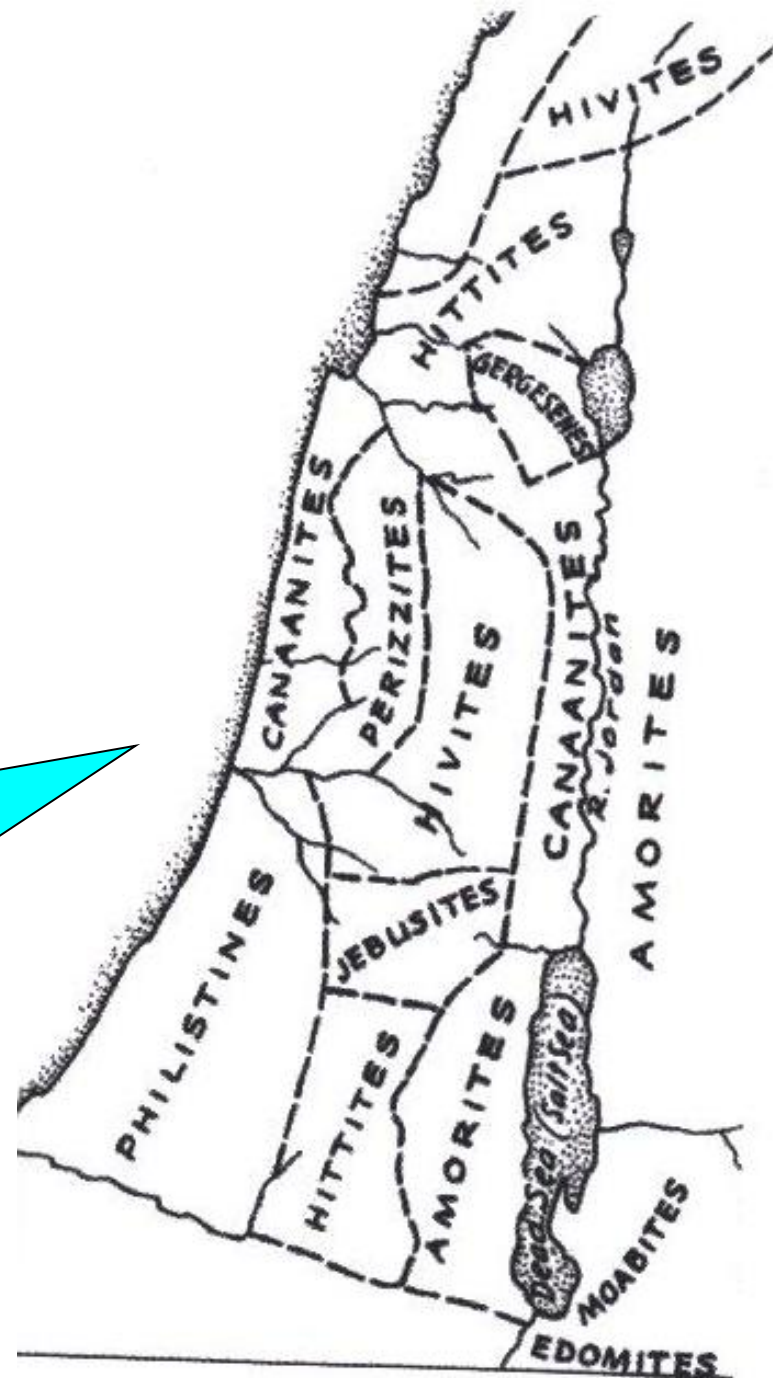
1250 BC: the Hebrews move from Egypt to Palestine (Moses)

1230 BC: Hebrew leader Joshua conquers part of Palestine

1125 BC: the Canaanites are definitely defeated by the Hebrews

1025 BC: the Hebrew king Saul defeats the Philistines and unifies Israel with capital in Jerusalem

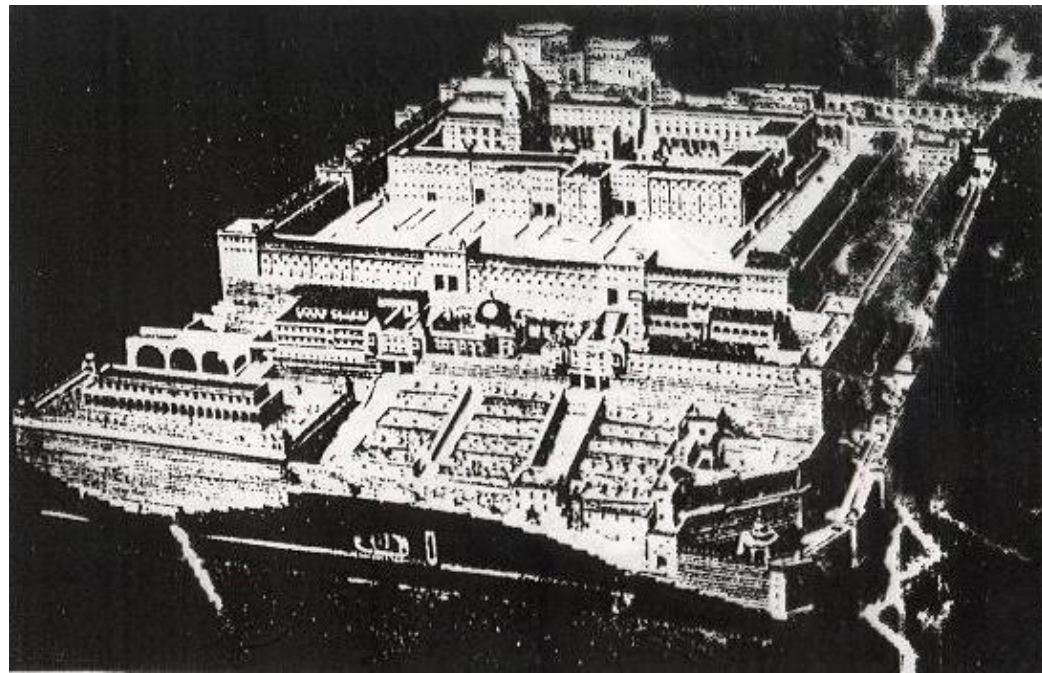
Canaanites, Philistines, Hittites



Judaism



The first temple



Judaism

930 BC: King Solomon builds a temple in Jerusalem for the Jews

922 BC: Solomon dies and the kingdom splits into Israel (north, Galilee) and Judea (south, including Jerusalem)

722 BC: Sargon II of Assyria conquers Israel and forcefully relocates Jews (first Jewish diaspora)

600 BC: King Josiah of Jerusalem destroys idols of all gods except Yahweh

587 BC: the Babylonians conquers Judea, and deport Jews to Babylonia (second Jewish diaspora)

538 BC: Cyrus of Persia sacks Babylon and frees the Jews

515 BC: the Jews rebuild the temple of Jerusalem

332 BC: Palestine is invaded by Alexander the Great

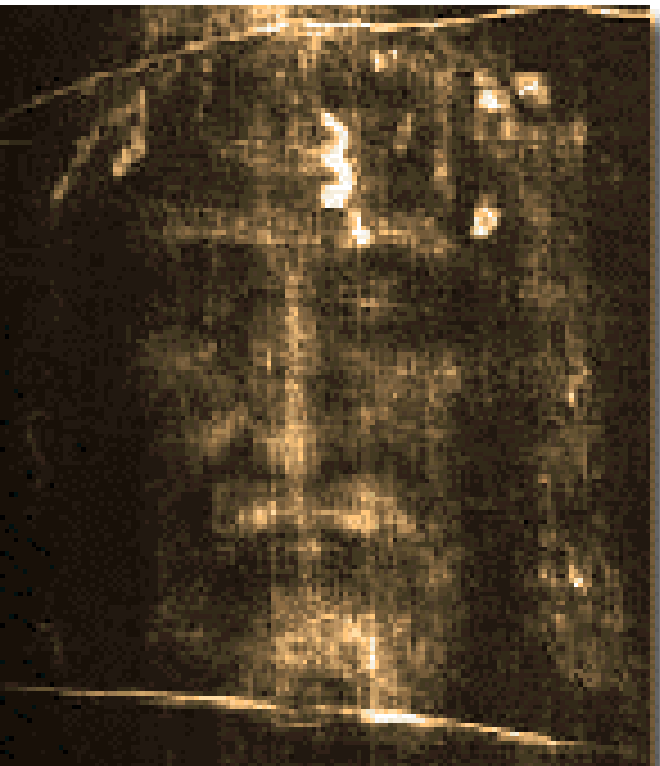
323 BC: Palestine is given to the Ptolemaics (Alexandria)

Judaism

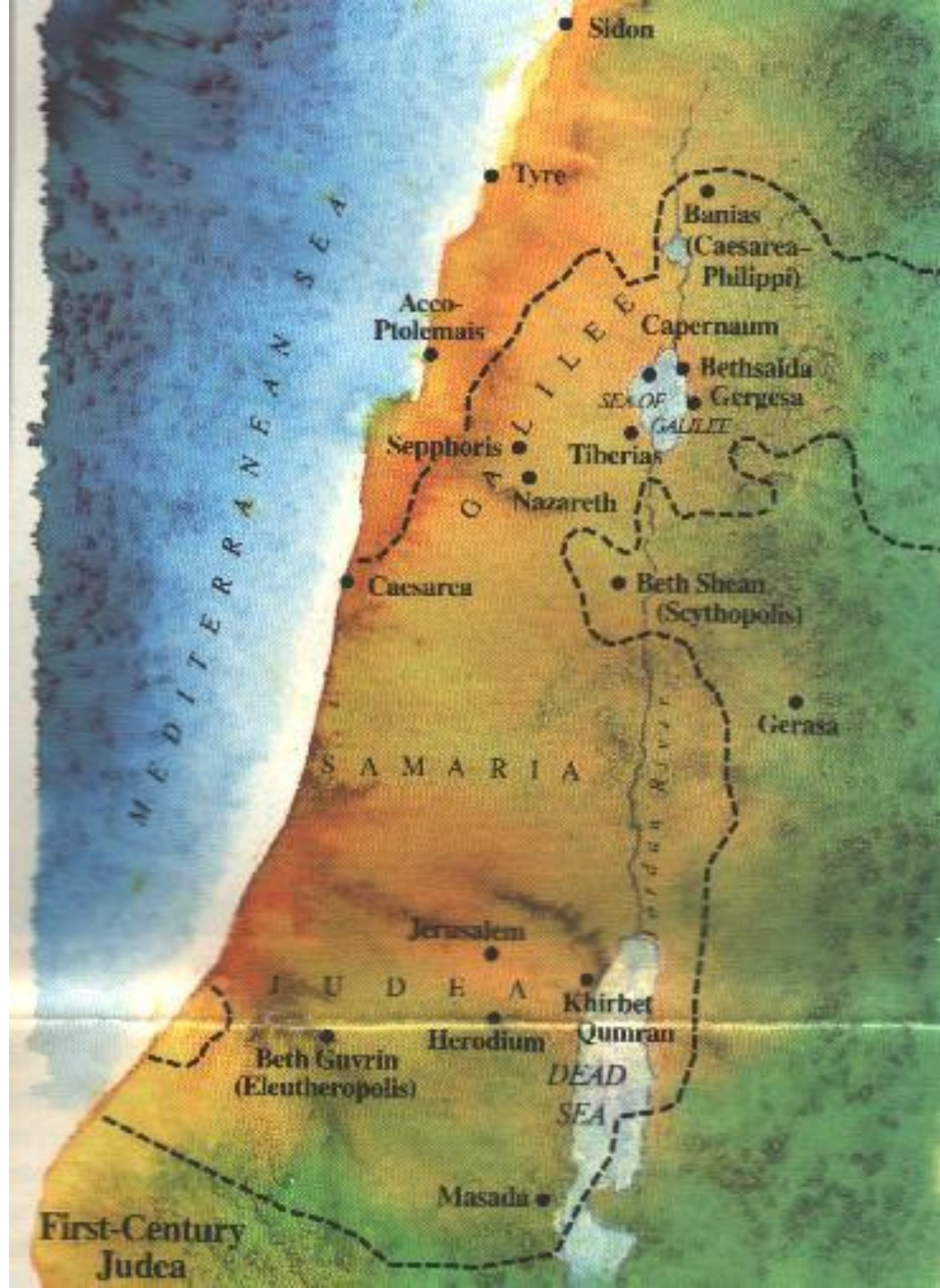
- 260 BC: the Old Testament is translated from Hebrew into Greek by scholars of Alexandria (the "Septuagint")**
- 198 BC: the Seleucids (Antiochus III) seize Palestine from the Ptolemaics**
- 196 BC: the ascetic Jewish sect of the Essenes lives in a monastery at Qumran**
- 168 BC: the Seleucid emperor Antiochus IV outlaws Judaism and mandates the worship of Greek deities**
- 167 BC: Mattathias and his son Judas Maccabean lead a revolt of Judea against the Seleucids and win independence**
- 104 BC: the Pharisees (who adopt the orthodox views of the Maccabeans) and the Sadducees (who adopt the Hellenist views of the Seleucids) fight for control of the temple**
- 100 BC: the Dead Sea Scrolls are composed**
- 63 BC: Pompeus conquers Palestine**

Judaism

- 50 BC: Antipater helps Caesar during the civil war and is therefore granted citizenship and de facto rule of Judea**
- 38 BC: Herod, Antipater's son, marries Mariam Maccabean**
- 12 BC: Augustus becomes emperor of Rome (the "anointed")**
- 6 BC: Herod murders his own sons**
- 6 BC?: Jesus is born in Palestine**
- 4 BC: Herod dies**
- 14 AD: Augustus dies and Tiberius becomes emperor of Rome**
- 26 AD: Pilate (Pontius Pilatus) is appointed procurator of Judea**
- 30 AD: Jesus is crucified by the Romans**



The Sindone



Herod's Kingdom

Judaism

- Summary
 - 1500 BC - 1250 BC: Hebrews move from Arabia to Egypt, Mesopotamia and Palestine
 - 1025 BC - 922 BC: Hebrew monarchy
 - 922 BC - 722 BC: Kingdoms of Israel (north) and Judea (south)
 - 722 BC - 538 BC: Assyrian and Babylonian domination
 - 538 BC - 332 BC: Persian domination
 - 332 BC - 63 BC: Hellenistic domination
 - 63 BC - 636 AD: Roman domination
 - 636 - 1076: Arab domination
 - 1076 - 1920: Turkish domination
 - 1920 - : British/USA domination



What the Jews Knew

- **Western Semites**
 - **Proto-Sinaitic language (1800BC from Egypt)**
 - **Pastoral nomads in the Arabian desert**
 - **Habiru: nomad stranger**
 - **Hebrew 22-letter alphabet derived from Phoenician alphabet (1000 BC)**

What the Jews Knew

- **El/ Yahweh (YHWH)**
 - **God of the Jews**
 - **Nomadic God (not tied to a sanctuary but “god of the father”)**
 - **God talks**
 - **God of punishment and wrath**
 - **Religion is obedience to God**
 - **God = Consciousness**
 - **Prophets**
 - **Indifference towards unbelievers**

What the Jews Knew

- **Elohim (plural) “created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1)**
 - **Elohim is found 2570 times in the Bible, El 226 times**
 - **Remnants of an early polytheism/polydemonism**
 - **The ancient Semites believed that the world is surrounded, permeated and ruled by the Elohim, myriads of nameless supernatural beings (spirits) inseparable from one another**
 - **Elohim: the sum of the divine beings that inhabited any given place**
 - **Aryan gods had names and were individuals, Semitic gods had no names and were a crowd**

What the Jews Knew

- **Elohim**
 - **Ethiopians (Amlak), Phoenicians (Elim)**
 - **Sumerians (3000): An and his wife Ninhursag fathered all the gods who created the Sumer cities**
 - **Akkadians (2000): Eland and his wife Asherah fathered the children-gods that created the cities of Mesopotamia**
 - **Babylonians (1700): The elohim created the world and eventually Marduk became their supreme god**

What the Jews Knew

- **Evolution of God:**
 - **El (3500 BC): The Semitic word for “god”**
 - **Hittites (1500): El and his wife Ashera, mother of Baal**
 - **Canaanites (1500): El the supreme god**
 - **The god of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (“the god of the father”) is identified with the Canaanite god El**
 - **Yahweh originally a bedouin war god of the desert (before Moses)**
 - **Yahweh displaces Baal as the "son" of El**

El



Canaanite El
(from Ugarit, Turkey)



"Jahweh and his asherah"
(from Kuntillet, Sinai, 800 BC)

What the Jews Knew

- Evolution of God:
 - Moses (1,275 BC): Egyptian-born founder of Israel (exodus) and Judaism (Pentateuch) adopts Yahweh
 - Not transcendent: a bodily god
 - Not infinitely good: capable of both good and evil
 - Not infallible: makes mistakes
 - Not omnipotent: his power is limited to the land occupied by the Jews
 - Not spiritual: the reward is material reward for this life, not for the afterlife



What the Jews Knew

Prophets of major religions



What the Jews Knew

- **Evolution of God:**
 - **Exodus 15: God drowns the Egyptian army**
 - **Psalm 82: “Let us confuse their language” (us?)**
 - **Genesis 3:22 11:7 God takes his place in the council of gods**

What the Jews Knew

- **Evolution of God:**
 - **Elijah (875 BC): father of Jewish nationalism, destroyer of the cult of Baal**
 - **There are many gods, but El is the only god of Israel ("El Elohe Yisrael", Gen. 33:20)**
 - **King Josiah (600BC): monolatry (Jews are only allowed to worship Yahweh)**
 - **Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah (8th/6th c BC)**
 - **Monotheism (the gods of the other nations do not exist)**
 - **Omnipotent god**
 - **Just god**
 - **The purpose of religion is not only nationalistic but also ethical: humans must be just too**

What the Jews Knew

- **Evolution of God:**
 - **722 BC: El and Yahweh become synonymous**
 - **Deuteronomy (650 BC): Yahweh is the ONLY god**
 - **Isaiah (550 BC): There is no other god besides me**
 - **Babylonian influence: Yahweh is an inscrutable god, no longer concerned with the problems of the Jews**

What the Jews Knew

- **Evolution of God:**
 - **Stage 1: stage of the elohim, and one "el" is the el of Abraham**
 - **Stage 2: El the nomadic god of the Jews**
 - **Stage 3: Yahweh the human-like god of the Jews**
 - **Stage 4: Yahweh/El the only god, a faceless god**

What the Jews Knew

- **The goddess of the Jews**
 - **Sumerians (3000): An and his wife Ninhursag**
 - **Akkadians (2000): Eland and his wife Asherah**
 - **Babylonians (1700): Apsu and his wife Tiamat**
 - **Hittites (1500): El and his wife Ashera**
 - **Canaanites (1400 BC - 800BC): El and his wife Anat**
 - **Jews (800 BC): Yahweh and his wife Asherah**
 - **Jeremiah (44:15-19, 7:17-18) denounces the people who worship "the Queen of Heaven"**
 - **King Josiah (600BC) destroys the statue of Asherah in the temple and expels the sacred prostitutes from the temple (Chronicles 34:3-7)**

What the Jews Knew

- **The Jews, Israel and God**
 - **Not a people that chose a god, but a God who chose a people**
 - **Abraham's god is a god who loves his people like a father loves his children**
 - **The Persian influence: cosmic struggle between Good and Evil**
 - **The only religion that survived the destruction of its kingdom**
 - **"Israel"'s first mention (1219 BC, Merenptah stele) refers to a people not to a place**

What the Jews Knew

- **Old Testament**
 - **History of the Jews**
 - **Echoes of Sumerian creation stories**
- **Monotheism**
- **Covenant between God and Abraham (Genesis 15:12-21): God grants the land of Palestine to Abraham's descendants in return for obedience (Abraham is promised a son, but he must obey God, even when God asks for the life of that son)**
- **Tables of the Law or “commandments” (Exodus 31:18)**
- **Negative god (“thou shalt not”)**
- **The Messiah (“christos” or anointed): the deliverer and king of the Jews**
- **Dynamic (not cyclic) world**

What the Jews Knew

- **Thou shalt have no other gods before me**
- **Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.**
- **Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth**
- **Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy**
- **Honor thy father and thy mother**
- **Thou shalt not murder**
- **Thou shalt not commit adultery**
- **Thou shalt not steal**
- **Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.**
- **Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox... nor anything that is his**

What the Jews Knew

- **Exodus chapter 20-21: death penalty, polygamy and slavery among other things**

What the Jews Knew

- Adam (Eden, 3761 BC or 4004 BC)
- Seth
- Enosh
- Cainan
- Mahalaleel
- Jared
- Enoch
- Methuselah
- Lamech
- Noah: flood (2105 BC)
- Shem
- Arphaxad
- Salah
- Eber
- Peleg
- Reu
- Serug
- Nahor
- Terah
- Abraham (Ur, 1815 BC): abandons polytheistic paganism and converts to El
- Isaac
- Jacob
- Judah: Egypt
- Perez
- Hezron
- Amram
- Moses (Egypt): exodus (1250 BC) and tables of the law
- Salmon
- Boaz
- Obed
- Jesse
- David: king of Israel

What the Jews Knew

- Tanakh (Hebrew Bible, Old Testament)
 - Torah/Pentateuch: five books
 - Nevi'im/Prophets: eight books
 - Ketuvim/Writings: eleven books
- Originally written using only consonants
- Christian Old Testament: six additional books (deuterocanonical books) and different division in books



Leningrad Codex (1009), the oldest extant copy of the Tanakh

What the Jews Knew

- Tanakh (Hebrew Bible, Old Testament)
 - All books in Hebrew except one in Aramaic (Daniel's) divided in three sections
 - Pentateuch (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy)
 - The Prophets (Moses, Samuel, Elijah, Elisa, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, etc)
 - The Writings (Psalms, Proverbs, the Book of Job, Daniel, the Song of Songs, etc)
 - Book of Daniel (composed about 164 BC, accepted about 90 AD)
 - Psalms of David and Proverbs of Solomon inspired by “Amenemope’s Wisdom” (Egypt)

What the Jews Knew

- **Pentateuch**
 - **The first five books of the Hebrew Bible (“Torah”): Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy**
 - **Traditionally attributed to Moses**
 - **A multitude of different writing styles**
 - **Two different versions of the creation of the world (Genesis 1:1-2:3 and Genesis 2:4-25)**
 - God creates the world in six days
 - God creates the world in one day (Adam is made from mud, Eve from his rib)
 - **Two different versions of the covenant**
 - **At least four authors**
 - **A Yahwist narrative (950 BC)**
 - **An Elohist source (850 BC)**
 - **Deuteronomy (650 BC)**
 - **A priestly document (500 BC)**

What the Jews Knew

- **Creation myths**
 - **Yahwist (950 BC)**
 - **Genesis 2:5**
 - **Yahweh made the desert fertile by a flood**
 - **Yahweh modeled man from mud and breathed life into him**
 - **Yahweh created Eden's garden for man**
 - **Yahweh created woman from a man's rib**

What the Jews Knew

- **Creation myths**
 - **Elohism (850 BC)**
 - **Genesis 1-11**
 - **The gods created the heavens and the earth**
 - **Let there be light**
 - **On the last day El created man**
 - **El created man in his own image (imago dei)**
 - **From creation to the flood (the story before Abraham)**

What the Jews Knew

- **Creation myths**
 - **In both myths something pre-existed: darkness, dust...**
 - **God does not create “ex nihilo”**

What the Jews Knew

- **Deuteronomy**
 - **Jewish code of law**
 - **Derived from Hammurabi's code**
 - **Celebrates mass extermination of infidels**

What the Jews Knew

- **Difference between the Bible and similar legends of Mesopotamia: each event is due to a divine design and bears a moral meaning**

What the Jews Knew

- **Prophets**
 - **Ancient Mesopotamia: divination, sorcery, augury, soothsaying**
 - **First prophets: kingdom of Mari (Syria-Iraq border), 2000 BC**
 - **Strong sense of divine mission**
 - **Ecstatic visions**
 - **Foretelling the future in the form of divine revelations and interpreting natural events as divine messages**
 - **Interested only in events that affected the royalty**
 - **Totally indifferent to ordinary people**

What the Jews Knew

- **Prophets**
 - **Biblical prophets**
 - **Advocated a higher form of morality and justice**
 - **No real concept of an afterlife, therefore conscience is the object**
 - **Obsessed with rejecting idolatry**
 - **Progression towards ethical monotheism**
 - **Addressing the "people" of Israel**
 - **Addressing "all nations"**

What the Jews Knew

- **Prophets**
 - **Age of the Patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (who led the Jews to Egypt), Joseph**
 - **Faith**
 - **Covenant between God (the anonymous “god of the father”) and Abraham (Genesis 15:12-21): God grants the land of Palestine to Abraham's descendants in return for obedience**
 - **Note: Abraham came from Ur (one of the world's most ancient cities, not a desert tent)**

What the Jews Knew

- **Prophets**
 - **The Exodus (Moses)**
 - **God (Yahweh, the god of the Jews, a “human” god who loves, hates, rejoices, grieves, makes mistakes) leads his people to the promised land**
 - **Moses saved from massacre in Egypt**
 - **Moses raised at pharaoh’s court**
 - **Revelation :”I am the god of your father” (Exodus 3:6)**
 - **“I am who I am” (Exodus 3:13)**
 - **The exodus**
 - **The Tables of the Law on Mt Sinai and second covenant**
 - **Remnants of “The Admonitions of Ipuwer”**

What the Jews Knew

- **Prophets**
 - **Age of the Judges**
 - **Conquest of Canaan under the leadership of Joshua**
 - **Yahweh accepted by other tribes**
 - **Nationalistic** religion

What the Jews Knew

- **Prophets**
 - **Age of the Monarchy (Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel)**
 - **Saul proclaimed king (1025 BC)**
 - **Solomon's temple (930 BC)**
 - **Assyrian and Babylonian domination**
 - **Sacralization of history (God as the vehicle for the history of the Jews) and de-sacralization of nature (God is no longer a representation of natural forces)**
 - **History (not nature) as a manifestation of God**
 - **A religion “revealed” by God to the prophets**
 - **Ethical religion**

What the Jews Knew

- **Prophets**
 - **Isaiah**
 - **Repent and Yahweh will forgive you: linear direction to history**
 - **“Behold a young woman shall conceive and bear a son” who will bring the age of peace**

What the Jews Knew

- **Prophets**
 - **Assyrian and Babylonian domination**
 - **Zoroastrian influence**
 - **Apocalyptic (End of the world)**
 - **Eschatological (Resurrection of the Dead)**
 - **Messianic (the Messiah)**
 - **dualistic (Satan)**



What the Jews Knew

- **Prophets**
 - End of the prophetic era (Ezra, Nehemiah)
 - Persian king Cyrus liberates the Jews (538 BC) who return from Babylon (537 BC) and rebuild the temple (515 BC)
 - Birth of the **ecclesiastical** religion: priests, rituals and laws prevail over prophets, revelations and visions
 - Old traditions become institutions:
 - Sabbath
 - Synagogal worship
 - Circumcision
 - Clean food

What the Jews Knew

- **Yahweh throughout the Old Testament orders more than 100 murders and many are mass murders:**
 - "Whoever sheds human blood, by humans shall their blood be shed" (Genesis 9:6)
 - Moses commands the Levites to kill anyone who persisted in the idolatry: "Put your sword on your side each of you, and go to and fro from gate to gate throughout the camp, and each of you kill his brother and his companion and his neighbor... And the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And that day about three thousand men of the people fell." (Exodus 32:26)
 - After his soldiers have killed all of the men among the Midianites, Moses orders his army officers to kill all of the male children, kill all of the nonvirgin females but to save alive all of the virgin girls for his troops: "Arm men from among you for the war, that they may go against Midian, to execute the Lord's vengeance on Midian... And they warred against the Midianites, as the Lord commanded Moses; and they slew all the males... Now therefore kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him... But all the girls who have not known man intimately, spare for yourselves" (Numbers 31:15-18)

What the Jews Knew

- **Yahweh throughout the Old Testament orders more than 100 murders and many are mass murders:**
 - "But thou shalt utterly destroy them; namely, the Hittites, and the Amorites, the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; as the LORD thy God has commanded you."
(Deuteronomy 20:17)
 - "And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword." (The Book of Joshua 6.21)
 - "Then Samson said, With the jawbone of a donkey, Heaps upon heaps, With the jawbone of a donkey I have killed a thousand men." (Judges 15:16)
 - "Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling." (Samuel 15:3)
 - "Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands." (Samuel 18:7)

What the Jews Knew

- **The Afterlife**
 - **The Bible is silent about life after death during the period of the First Temple**
 - **The dead end up in Gehenna (the dump of Jerusalem) or Sheol (the underworld, Hades)**
 - **The Book of Ecclesiastes (3rd c BC) explicitly denies life after death: “The Dead know nothing. They have no more reward. .. Never again will they have any share in what happens under the sun... There is no thought or knowledge in Sheol, to which you are going” (9:3-10)**
 - **Stoic indifference for the afterlife**

What the Jews Knew

- **The Afterlife**
 - **The Bible embraces it in the Second Temple period (534 BC –70 AD)**
 - **The Book of Daniel promises resurrection but not to all**
 - **The Maccabees talks of bodily resurrection**
 - **Influence of Hellenistic thought on the Greek-literate aristocracy**

What the Jews Knew

- **Apocalyptic literature (500 BC - 200 BC)**
 - **An apocalypse is a revelation of future events**
 - **Dream-like vision**
 - **Symbolic imagery**
 - **Historical view of the era**
 - **The powers of evil are attacking God**
 - **God shall triumph and a new age will begin**
 - **Within the Bible: Revelation, Daniel**
 - **Outside the Bible: Enoch, The War of the Sons of Light and the Sons of Darkness, The Apocalypse of Moses, etc**

What the Jews Knew

- **The problem of suffering:**
 - **Why do sinful Gentiles prosper and conquer the world, while pious Jews languish in captivity?**
 - **The Jews will be rewarded in the kingdom that is coming**
 - **The Messiah will come**
- **The problem of evil:**
 - **Why does evil exist if God is omnipotent?**
 - **Because we disobeyed him**

What the Jews Knew

- **Religious intolerance**
 - **Joshua exterminates the Canaanites (the original inhabitants of Palestine) simply because they don't believe in Yahweh (and it is Yahweh himself who orders him to slaughter them)**
 - **First recorded case of holy war**

What the Jews Knew

- **Slavery, discrimination, etc**
 - **Homosexuality is an abomination (Leviticus 18:22: “Do not have sexual relations with a man as one does with a woman; that is detestable”)**
 - **It is ok to sell your daughter into slavery (Exodus 21:7 “When a man sells his daughter as a slave, she will not be freed at the end of six years as the men are”)**
 - **It is ok to own slaves (Leviticus 25:44: “Your male and female slaves are to come from the nations around you; from them you may buy slaves”)**
 - **People who work on the Sabbath should be killed (Exodus 31:15: “Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day must be put to death”)**

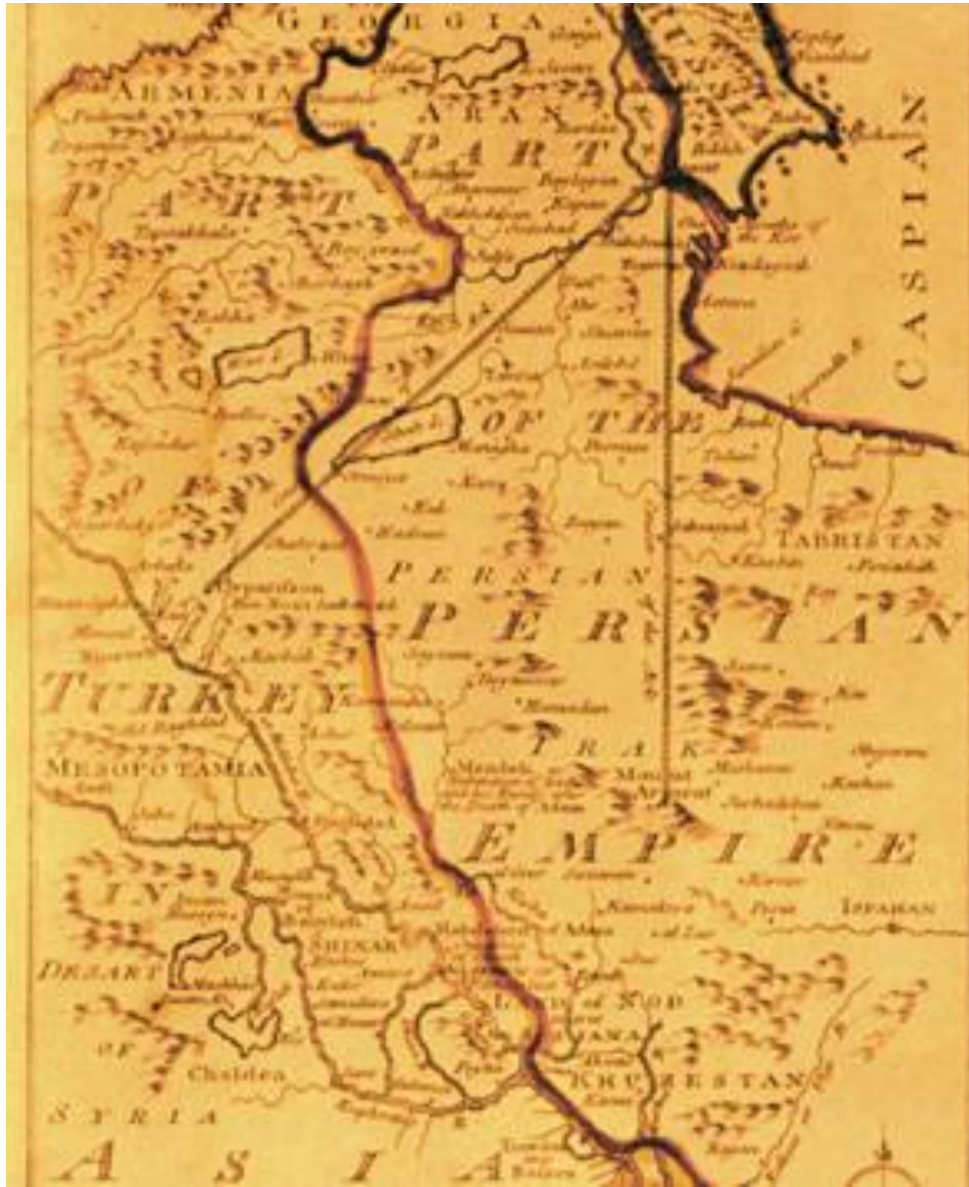
What the Jews Knew

- **Hellenism**
 - **Pharisees (middle class, nationalistic, political Messiah, resurrection)**
 - **Sadducees (priests and aristocracy, acceptance of Roman rule, no resurrection)**
 - **Essenes (lower classes, asceticism, communism, first people to abolish slavery, indifferent towards politics, immortality of the soul, spiritual Messiah, apocalypse)**

What the Jews Knew

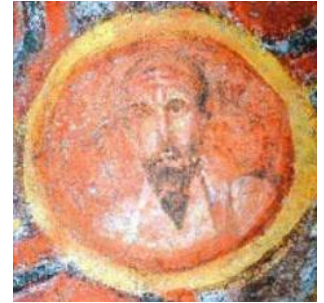
- **Hebrew civilization**
 - **No science**
 - **No art**
 - **No engineering**
 - **Poetry: “Song of Songs” (3rd c BC)**
 - **Theater: “Book of Job” (6th c BC)**
 - **Philosophy: “The Book of Ecclesiastes” (3rd c BC)**
 - **The universe is a machine always repeating the same motion**
 - **Humans cannot control their destiny**
 - **No life (no soul) after death**
 - **All is vain**

Correct Map Of The Countries Surrounding the Garden Of Eden, Or Paradise, With the Course of Noah's Ark During the Flood (Thomas Bowen, 1780)



Christianity

- 40 AD: Saul/Paul, a Jew from the city of Tarsus in Asia Minor, declares Christianity a universal religion
- 60 AD: the earliest gospels are composed
- 62-64 AD: Paul, James and Peter are executed
- 63 AD: Joseph of Arimathea travels to Glastonbury, Britain
- 66 AD: Jews, led by the zealots, revolt against Rome in Palestine
- 70 AD: the Roman general Titus defeats the Jews, captures Jerusalem, destroys the temple and expels the Jews from the region, who spread to Armenia, Iraq, Iran, Arabia, Egypt, Italy, Spain and Greece
- 73 AD: Jews expelled from Jerusalem concentrate in two communities, the western one at Yavneh/Jamnia/Jabne ("Alexandrian" Jews) and the "Babylonian" community, a tributary of the Parthians



Christianity

- 80 AD: the Jewish historian (and former general) Josephus writes the "Jewish Antiquities"
- 132: Jews, led by Bar-Cochba, whom some identify as the Messiah, revolt against Rome
- 135: the bishop of Rome Telesphorus institutes the birthday of Jesus (Christmas) as a Christian holiday
- 136: emperor Hadrian definitely crushes the Jewish resistance, forbids Jews from ever entering Jerusalem
- 136: the bishop of Rome, Hyginus, assumes the title of "pope"
- 150: the four official gospels assume their final form
- 180: the Gaul bishop Irenaeus writes against gnosticism
- 199: Victor I is the first African to be elected pope
- 235: the Egyptian (Coptic) philosopher Origen writes that the Roman empire is a divine will

Christianity

- 246: Paul of Thebes retreats to the Egyptian desert and becomes the first Christian hermit
- 276: Mani is crucified by the Sassanids for trying to fuse Judaism, Christianity and Zoroastrianism into one religion ("manicheism")
- 300: There are about 15 million Christians in the Roman empire, out of a population of 60 million
- 303: Diocletian orders a general persecution of Christians
- 311: Donatus claims that the people could determine how worthy of administering sacraments a priest is
- 312: Roman emperor Constantine converts to Christianity
- 318: Arius (b 256), a student of Lucian, preaches in Alexandria that Jesus was human and not divine ("Arianism")
- 318: Pachomius, a disciple of Anthony, organizes a community of ascetics at Tabennis in Egypt (Christian monasticism)

Christianity

- 325: Council of Nicaea discusses the divine/human nature of Jesus and approves the Christian canon (the New Testament) against "heretic" books
- 339: Athanasius of Alexandria visits Rome accompanied by the two Egyptian monks Ammon and Isidore, disciples of Anthony, who export the idea of monasticism
- 340: Christianization and literalization of the Goths (Ulfila and the "Gothic bible")
- 358: Basil founds the monastery of Annesos in Pontus, the model for eastern monasticism (perfect Christian life and constant penance, meditation + poverty + humility)
- 380: Theodosius I proclaims Christianity as the sole religion of the Roman Empire

Christianity

- 400: Jerome (Eusebius Hieronymus) translates the Bible into Latin (the "Vulgate")
- 431: Palladius is sent by the Pope as first bishop of Ireland
- 451: the fourth Ecumenical Council convened in Chalcedon condemns Dioscurus of Alexandria for monophysitism (Jesus is of one nature, only divine) and affirms that Jesus was one person of two natures (both human and divine)
- 529: Benedetto da Norcia founds the monastery of Monte Cassino and codifies western monasticism (absolute power of the abbot)
- 530: the Benedictine monk Cassiodorus encourages monks to copy manuscripts of the classics
- 533: Mercurius is elected pope and takes the name of John II, the first pope to change name upon election

Christianity

546: Columbanus founds monasteries in Ireland

590: the Benedectine monk Gregory I becomes Pope

600: Pope Gregory I promulgates the doctrine of salvation through confession and penance

601: monk Augustine converts king Ethelbert of Kent and establishes the see of Canterbury with himself as its first archbishop

636: Arabs capture Jerusalem

732: the Muslim invasion of Europe is stopped by the Franks at the battle of Tours

769: the cardinals decide that only cardinals can become popes

800: Pope Leo III crowns Charles emperor of the Holy Roman Empire

Christianity

- 822: Mojmir, prince of Morava, converts to christianity
- 826: Harald Klak of Denmark converts to Christianity
- 862: Boris of Bulgary converts to christianity
- 863: Cyril and Methodius from Constantinople write the Slavic bible in the first Slavic alphabet, glagolitic
- 870: The Serbs convert to christianity
- 904: Sergius III is elected pope thanks to a powerful Roman noblewoman, the first of a series of popes appointed by the Roman aristocracy
- 912: the Normans become Christian
- 948: the leader of the Magyars converts to christianity
- 988: Vladimir of Kiev converts to Christianity
- 995: most of Scandinavia converts

Christianity

- Jewish establishment in the first century BC
 - Pharisees (lower-class, who adopt the orthodox views of the Maccabeans, centered upon synagogue and rabbi)
 - Sadducees (upper class, who adopt the Hellenists views of the Seleucids, centered upon the temple)
 - Ascetic sects (eg, Essenes)
- Jesus gained notoriety by attacking the temple priesthood.
- Jewish persecution of Christians ended when James, the brother of Jesus, allied with the Pharisees
- Sadducees killed both Jesus and James, and eventually expelled Christians from Jerusalem
- Christianity relocated in other areas of the Roman empire

Jesus

- Jesus was born in the Roman Empire during the rule of Augustus, the first emperor
- Jesus died under emperor Tiberius

27 BC: Octavius appoints himself "augustus" (the first emperor)

20 BC: A treaty between Roma and Persia (Parthians) fixes the boundary between the two empires along the Euphrates river

12 BC: Augustus becomes pontifex maximus

6 BC: Jesus is born in Palestine

1 AD: Roma has about one million people

2 AD: Augustus, whose sons have died, chooses Tiberius as his adopted son

14 AD: Augustus dies and Tiberius becomes emperor

14 AD: Five million people live in the Roman empire

26 AD: Pontius Pilatus becomes prefect of Judaea

33 AD: Jesus is crucified

37 AD: Tiberius is murdered and the mad Caligula succeeds him



Catacomb of
Callixtus (3th c)



Dura Europos (235)

Catacombs of
Marcellinus and
Peter (4th c)



Christianity

- The Christianity that we know today is the dogma that the Roman empire forced on all its provinces
- Rome was not the place where Christianity had been born and was not the cultural center of the world.
- Christianity first spread in Palestine and Syria, then east to Armenia (the first country to convert) and to Greece, that was the cultural center of the empire.
- When Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire, Christianity was "relocated" from Palestine to Rome
- Rome decided to start counting with Peter (the first Christian martyr in Rome) and his descendants, the popes
- Rome assembled the “New Testament” centuries after Jesus (325)

Christianity

- The four official gospels were written in Greece
- They are too antisemitic to have been written by Jews
- Mark, Matthew and Luke (70-90AD) derive from a pre-existing text, called "Q", that tells the story of Jesus
- John (120AD) is a reinterpretation of Jesus' ideas in terms of Platonic philosophy ("in the beginning was the word...")
- All four official gospels were written after Saul/Paul wrote his letters. Paul's letters are the oldest Christian documents.
- There are many other gospels not recognized by the early Church

Christianity

- Papias of Hierapolis in 110 talks of the gospel of St Matthew as a collections of oracles, not of miracles.
- Clement of Alexandria admits that two versions of Mark's gospel existed but one was being suppressed because it contained two passages that should not be viewed by average Christians
- Justin Martyr (150) does not mention a New Testament, does not mention Mark, Matthew, Luke or John: he mentions the "memoirs" of the apostles

Christianity

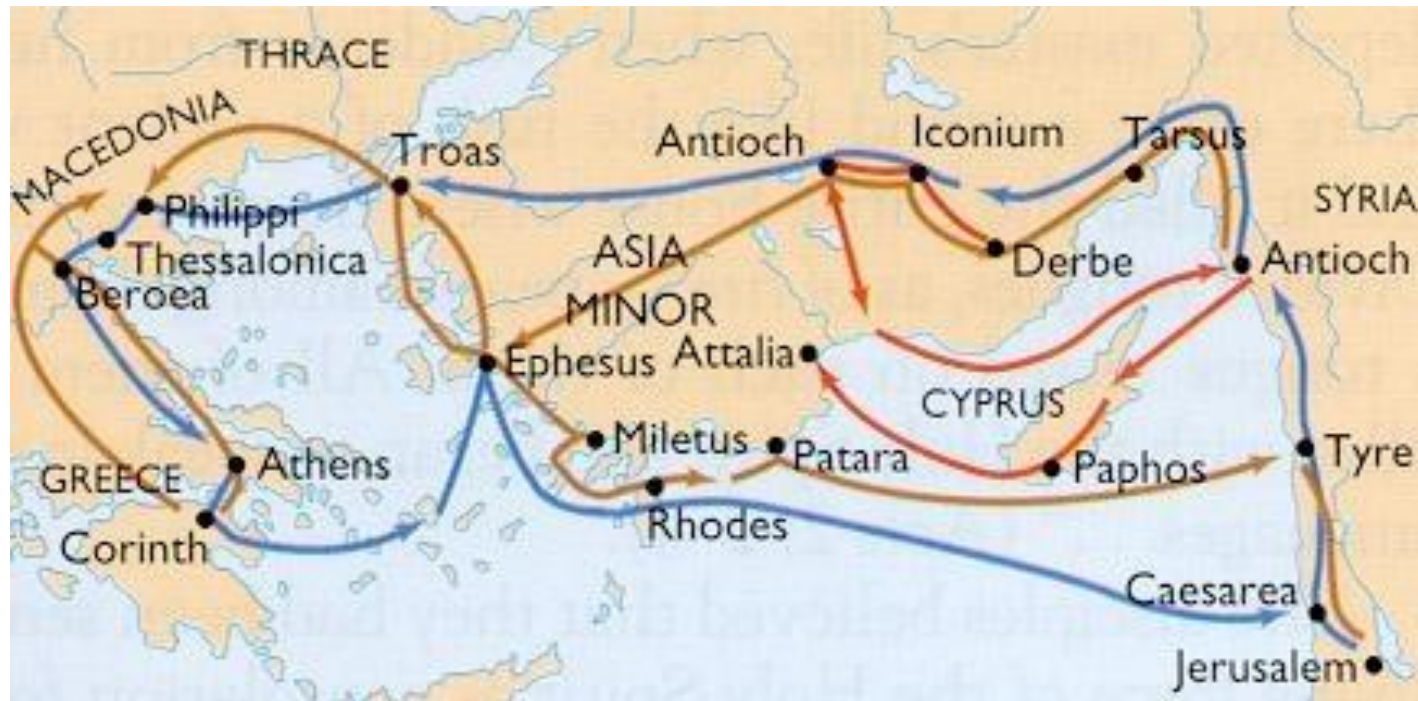
- Many Christian texts were banned possibly because they place the blame on the Romans (apocryphal)
- Original Christianity perished in the Roman persecutions of the "disposyni" (Jesus' heirs in Palestine)
- "Nag Hammadi library" (the "Gnostic Gospels")
- "Dead Sea Scrolls "
- Christian historiography
 - Jewish historian Josephus (37-96 AD)
 - Irenaeus (125 to 202)
 - Eusebius (Constantine's biographer)

Christianity

- James
 - Brother of Jesus
 - The leader of the early Christians in Palestine
 - Paul treats James like the leader
 - James was more interested in rebelling against the Romans than in the kingdom of Heaven
 - James was a "purist" who did not tolerate the Greek/Roman contamination of Jewish religion
 - ideology of faith and goodness ("believe and perform good actions")
 - Martyrdom is not inherent in Paul's preaching, but it is in James' ideology

Christianity

- **Paul (Saul)**



Christianity

- **Paul (Saul)**
 - **The Roman dogma (Christianity as we know it today) is based on Paul's understanding of Jesus' message**
 - **Paul was not one of the twelve and admits that he never met Jesus**
 - **Paul was a literate scholar, not an illiterate fisherman (like the apostles)**
 - **Paul was a Roman citizen and proud of it**
 - **Paul, unlike James, wanted Christianity for both Jews and non-Jews (no need for circumcision)**
 - **Paul's letters date from about the year 50, while the earliest gospel is from 60-70**

Christianity

- Paul
 - Paul's authentic letters talk of allegories (Galatians, 4/24) and symbols (Corinthians 10/6) as if to warn against a literal interpretation of the old testament
 - Paul's philosophy is similar to the Platonism preached by Philo of Alexandria (a contemporary of Jesus):
“what is seen passes away, what is unseen is eternal”
(2 Cor 4)
 - Paul interprets Jesus' religion as a religion for everybody, not just the Jews
 - Paul focuses on the resurrection of the soul (a popular theme among Greeks philosophers) instead of the resurrection of the body (a popular theme among Jews)

Christianity

- Paul
 - God of love (“thou shall”) instead of the negative god of Judaism (“thou shall not”)
 - Goodness is inside the human soul, not in the covenant
 - Acceptance, not rebellion

Christianity

- Desposyni
 - Blood relatives of Jesus (on his mother's side)
 - Ruled the ancient Jewish Christian church
 - Descendants of Joachim and Anna (Jesus' maternal grandparents)
 - Descendants of Elizabeth (Mary's cousin)
 - Descendants of Cleophas (Mary's cousin)
 - Pope Sylvester (314-335) replaced the Jewish desposyni with Greek bishops faithful to Rome
 - Outlaws in 5th century

Christianity

- The historical Jesus
 - There is no record of Pilate trying and executing a man named Jesus.
 - Only two Roman writers of Jesus' time mention Christians (Pliny and Svetonius) but they don't mention Jesus.
 - The first Roman to mention Jesus is Tacitus, but almost a century after the death of Jesus.
 - Paul admits he never met Jesus, and his letters contain almost no reference at all to Jesus' life

Christianity

- Mithraism
 - Mithras the son of the sun
 - Mithras sent to Earth to rescue humankind
 - Mithras was born of a virgin on December 25 in a cave
 - Mithras sacrificed himself
 - On the last day Mithras had a supper with twelve of his followers
 - At that supper Mithras invited his followers to eat his body and drink his blood
 - Initiates repeated his myth by eating bread and wine
 - He was buried in a tomb and after three days rose again.
 - Mithras' festival coincided with the Christian Easter
 - Only men admitted to Mithraic mysteries

Christianity

- Sol Invictus
 - Birthday on December 25 (like all Oriental deities)

Christianity

- Osiris
 - Osiris was born on the 25th of December
 - Osiris died on a friday and resurrected after spending three days in the underworld

Christianity

- Dionysus
 - Dionysus was hailed as 'The Saviour of Mankind' and 'The Son of God'
 - Dionysus was born on December 25 when Zeus the God visited Persephone, a mortal virgin
 - Dionysus has both a divine and a human nature
 - Announced by a star, Dionysus was born in a cowshed and visited by three Magis
 - Dionysus turns water into wine and raises people from the dead.
 - Dionysus is followed by twelve apostles
 - Dionysus was resurrected by Zeus his father after₈₂ death

Christianity

- Dionysus
 - The rituals in honor of Dionysus included a meal of bread and wine, symbolizing his body and blood.
 - An amulet of the 3rd century has been found that depicts a crucified man but bears the inscription "Orpheus Bacchus"
 - Dionysus was worshipped during a three-day Spring festival

Christianity

- Augustus
 - The first Roman emperor, "Augustus", had the title of "saviour of the human race"
 - The legend was that Augustus had been born nine months after his mother was "visited" by the god Apollo
 - The greatest Roman poet of all time, Virgil, had foretold in 40BC that a king would be born under the tutelage of a virgin goddess
 - "At the boy's birth in whom the iron shall cease, the golden race arise, befriend him, chaste Lucina; 'tis thine own" (Virgil)
 - Legend had it that, in the year of Augustus' birth, the Roman senate had ordered the murder of all other children

Christianity

- John the Baptist (27-29 AD)
 - John "initiated" Jesus
 - John claimed the kingdom of God was imminent, but did not claim to be the messiah
 - Jewish historian Josephus did not know Jesus but he knew well John the Baptist
 - John the Baptist created a large movement that came to threaten Herod Antipas

Christianity

- **Jewish nationalism**
 - **The Jews of Palestine never accepted the rule of Rome.**
 - **Jewish prophets were sure that a Jewish kingdom, created by a messiah imbued with divine powers, was coming**
 - **After the Romans destroy Jerusalem, the "gnostic" attitude is born: Jesus not as the messiah, but as a message of knowledge, and the promised kingdom moved to the heavens.**

Christianity

- **Herod**
 - **Married the virgin princess Mary, last of the Maccabeans**
 - **Mary committed adultery with Herod's brother Joseph while Herod was in Rome (29 BC)**
 - **Herod executed Mary and his own sons (they had Maccabean blood)**

Christianity

- **Moses**
 - **Survives slaughter of the innocents**
 - **Raised by a virgin**
 - **Stepson of the daughter of the king**
 - **Performs miracles**
 - **Leads Jews to the promised kingdom**

Christianity

- The Essenes
 - Destroyed in 68 AD by the Romans
 - The Dead Sea Scrolls
 - The Essenes are not mentioned in the New Testament
 - Baptism
 - Cosmic battle between angels and demons, good and Satan
 - The forces of evil rule the world
 - The war in Heaven is also taking place on Earth
 - Similarity between the Gospel of John and the Dead Sea Scrolls

Christianity

- **The Essenes**
 - **Waiting for a Messiah to lead them to victory**
 - **Armed rebellion against the Romans**
 - **Monastic life**

Christianity

- **Nag Hammadi**
 - **The "twin brother of Jesus"**
 - **Buddhist-style cryptic sentences**
 - **“The kingdom of Heaven is inside you, and it is outside you”**
 - **“The kingdom of Heaven has already come, but you do not recognize it”**

Christianity

- **Crossan's historical Jesus**
 - Lived in a world of
 - pervasive Greek culture
 - oppressive Roman rule
 - stagnating Jewish establishment
 - A philosopher who viewed the Kingdom of God as “here and now” among the poor.
 - A revolutionary advocating a society built on the principle that all people are equal
 - Rebelled against the hypocrisy of the religious authorities
 - Was killed for his words and actions but with no trial and no burial
 - The passion and the resurrection are fictional

Christianity

- **Eisenman's historical Jesus**
 - **Dead Sea Scrolls written after Christ**
 - **Dead Sea Scrolls are an encrypted history of the early Christian movement**
 - **Allegory of the battle between Roman collaborationists (Herodian dynasty, pharisees, Paul) and Jewish populists (Essenes, Zadokites, Rechabites, Sicarii, James)**
 - **Wicked Priest = high priest Ananas**
 - **Spouter of Lies = Paul**
 - **Righteous Teacher = James**
 - **Early Christianity was a battle between Paul and James**

Christianity

- Eisenman's historical Jesus
 - Jesus never existed
 - Rabbinic Judaism descends from pharisees
 - Christianity descends from Paul
 - Islam descends from James

What the Christians Knew

- **Jesus vs Moses**
- **Jesus not only prophet but even son of God**
- **God of love (New Testament) vs God of wrath (Old Testament)**
- **Positive god vs Negative god (“thou shalt not”)**
- **Miracles and Parables vs Prophecies and Histories**
- **Eternal damnation for unbelievers (as opposed to the Judaistic indifference for unbelievers)**
- **Nature is God’s love and Religion is love of God**
- **Self-sacrifice vs Human sacrifices**
- **Charity instead of gifts to the gods**
- **Hermits (ascetism) and monks (piety)**

What the Christians Knew

- Jesus vs Old Testament
 - *"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you"* (Matthew 5:43)
 - The god of the Old Testament drowns the entire Egyptian army in the sea

What the Christians Knew

- The Sermon of The Mount (New laws and old laws)
 - *It was said: "an eye for eye, and a tooth for a tooth", but I say unto you, if anyone strikes you on your right cheek, turn the other also, and if anyone wants to take your coat, give your cloak as well...*
 - *It was said, "you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy", but I say unto you, "love your enemies, bless them that curse you"...*
 - *You have heard that it was said, "You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy." But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you*
 - (Matthew 5-6-7)

What the Christians Knew

- Egalitarian and universal (catholic) religion
 - Equality and universality: “*there is neither Jew nor Greek... neither male nor female for you are all one in Jesus*” (Gal 3:28)
 - To be a Jew you must be born in a Jewish family. To be a Christian all you have to do is to baptize.
 - Appealing for slaves (first religion with Mithraism to grant slaves full rights of participation)
 - Appealing for women (first religion to grant women full rights of participation)

What the Christians Knew

- Afterlife
 - Immortality comes through resurrection
 - Paul's letters: resurrection not of the body, but of the soul (Platonic), and it's coming soon
 - The gospels' resurrection: the body and it's coming soon
 - The church's resurrection:
 - sacrifice your body (martyrdom) to save your soul
 - the martyr is granted early access to heaven (saints)
 - resurrection is not coming soon
 - Gnostics: knowledge leads to immortality of the soul

What the Christians Knew

- Afterlife
 - Paul's Heaven: not a bodily existence (no sexuality)
 - As Paul's imminent apocalypse recedes in the far future, the role of the intermediate place for the dead becomes more relevant
 - Purgatory (temporal punishment, prayers for the souls of the dead)
 - Devil and Hell
 - Kingdom of God both in the future and in the present

What the Christians Knew

- Problem of evil:
 - God gave humans free will and evil is due to human's misuse of free will
 - Humans can do something that God cannot do

What the Christians Knew

- What Jesus represented
 - A synthesis of pre-existing cultures/civilizations
 - But a grass-roots, low-class (not patrician/intellectual) synthesis
 - Ideal of universality and equality
 - Ideal of love, charity
 - Good deeds towards other human beings, not towards the gods
 - The culmination of a tradition of mysteries for the salvation of the individual, of religion for the ordinary man and woman, even for the slaves
 - The myth of resurrection and eternal life

What the Christians Knew

- What Jesus represented
 - Jesus' bodily miracles vs Buddha's mental miracles
(a more materialistic view of life)

What the Christians Knew

- Spreading of Christianity via the assets of the Roman Empire:
 - The pax romana helps quick movement of ideas
 - Road and shipping networks
 - Literacy of the trivium
 - Cities
 - Universal language



What the Christians Knew

- Christianity spreads
 - Christianity relies on written documents: letters, books,
 - Christianity spreads thanks to Roman roads and the safety of traveling in Mare Nostrum and in Roman roads
 - Christianity starts writing in codex form (bound pages of papyrus or parchment) rather than scroll form
 - Christian writers use punctuation and spaces between words to make books readable by as many people as possible

What the Christians Knew

- Bishops
 - Rome
 - Alexandria
 - Antioch
 - Jerusalem



What the Christians Knew

- Apostles and bishops
 - Parthia: Thomas
 - Scythia: Andrew
 - Asia (Ephesus): John the evangelist
 - Greek world: Paul
 - Gaul: Crescens
 - Bishop of Jerusalem: James (brother of Jesus), Symeon (cousin of Jesus), Justus, Zaccharus, Tobias, Benjamin, John, Matthias, Philip, Seneca, Justus, Levi...
 - Bishops of Rome: Peter (after Asia Minor) followed by Linus, Anencletus, Clement, Evarestus, Alexander, Xystus, Telesphorus
 - Bishop of Athens: Dionysius the Areopagite
 - Bishop of Alexandria: Annianus, Avilius, Cerdo, Primus, Eumenes
 - Bishop of Antioch: Evodius, Ignatius
 - Bishop of Smyrna: Polycarp

What the Christians Knew

- The effect of Christianity on slavery
 - When Jesus was born, half of the population of the western world were slaves
 - Slaves became a major constituency of Christianity
 - Christianity marked the first major ideological opposition against slavery.
 - Massive emancipation of slaves by early Christians
 - St Augustine proclaimed slavery a sin
 - Slavery all but disappeared from Christian Europe
 - Massive economic consequences
 - Revival of slavery under the Arabs

What the Christians Knew

- Persecution
 - Christians refuse to respect the ancient gods of Rome
 - The “king of kings” compete with the authorities
 - Jewish rebellion in Alexandria (17th year of Trajan’s rule = 115) and the Romans also exterminate Jews in Mesopotamia before they can rise up

What the Christians Knew

- The Church
 - Pentecost day, year 30 AD: “They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak foreign languages” (Acts 2:1-4)
 - First Christian martyr: stoning of Stephen (43 AD)
 - Separation of the Christians from Judaism: relocation to Pella by the Romans of the Christians who refused to fight alongside the Jews (66AD)
 - The term “Christians” introduced in Antioch
 - Solidarity
 - Courage in the face of torture and death

What the Christians Knew

- The Church
 - The delay in the Second Coming was explained by the Gospels in different ways
 - The second coming of Jesus is imminent (Mark)
 - The second coming will occur after the Church has spread around the world (Luke, Matthew)
 - The second coming has already occurred and the kingdom of God is already here (John)

What the Christians Knew

- Heretics
 - Gnosticism: doctrines of salvation by knowledge
 - Marcion (144): the God of the Old Testament and the God of the New Testament are different Gods, and Jesus is not the son of the former
 - Tertullian (160): resurrection of the body
 - Mani (300): fusion of Judaism, Christianity and Zoroastrianism
 - Donatus (311): the people can determine how worthy of administering sacraments a priest is
 - Arian (318): Jesus is human, not divine

What the Christians Knew

- Heretics
 - Pelagius (415): the soul has free will and goes to heaven if it chooses the good (humans are responsible for their salvation)
 - Nestorius (428): two natures of Jesus, human and divine
 - Dioscurus (451): Jesus is of one nature, only divine

What the Christians Knew

- Platonism: Immortal soul vs mortal body
- Philo Judaeus (30 AD, Alexandria)
 - Unified Platonic and Stoic philosophy and Judaism
 - Allegorical interpretation of the Jewish scriptures
 - God as a being without attributes, the ultimate knowledge and goodness
 - God is so removed from our world that we need an intermediary to deal with God: Logos
 - Logos: an intermediate world of ideas
 - Logos: the “program” that drives the evolution of the universe towards God’s wisdom
 - The beings of Logos are human-divine beings
 - Souls share in Logos the divine quality of God
 - Souls are immortal because of their divine nature
 - Paradise is oneness of the soul with God

What the Christians Knew

- Origines/ Origen (Alexandria, 220 AD)
 - Synthesis of Christianity and Platonism
 - Allegorical method of scriptural interpretation (threefold sense, corresponding to the threefold division of the person into body, spirit, and soul)
 - The soul pre-exists the body
 - Jesus as the Logos (incarnate word), who is with the Father from eternity
 - Nous vs Soul
 - God's Logos creates a multitude of logikoi, endowed with life and knowledge. They drift away from God and become psychai (souls) with bodies. The souls travel back towards God towards their salvation (apokatastasis)

What the Christians Knew

- Athanasius (Alexandria, 318 AD)
 - Homoousion: the Son (Jesus) identical in substance with the Father (God)

What the Christians Knew

- Plotinus/ al-Shaykh al-Yunani (b205 AD, Egypt): neo-platonism
 - Transcendental and mystical aspects of Plato's philosophy (Phaedrus, Symposium)
 - Soul's ascent from the earthly life to contemplation of the eternal/infinite/absolute (the One), and eventually to full-fledged union with the One

What the Christians Knew

- Plotinus/ al-Shaykh al-Yunani (b205 AD, Egypt): neo-platonism
 - The One cannot be defined, but only known in mystical vision
 - The One is not “being” but is the source of being
 - The world emanates from the One
 - All the stages of this emanation are real and eternal
 - The soul must return to the One (the product must return to the producer and become a producer itself)

What the Christians Knew

- Plotinus (b205 AD, Egypt): neo-platonism
 - Nous is the substance of the forms, and also the medium that allows the soul to perceive the forms (“The knowledge of the thing is the thing”)
 - Nous is the eternal universal mind, that fuels each mind
 - The soul can achieve mystical union with the One through Nous
 - Three hypostases: the One, the Nous (the knowing mind) and the Soul
 - Problem of evil: evil is caused by matter, which is “absolute lack of” Soul, Nous, the One, i.e. doesn’t really exist
 - The Otherworld as the world of ideas

What the Christians Knew

- “Theologia Aristotelis”
 - Paraphrasis of Plotinus
 - Doctrine of emanation
 - Plato’s distinction between sensible (in flux) and intelligible entities (permanence and immutability)
 - First emanation: reason
 - Second emanation: soul (intermediate between reason and senses)

What the Christians Knew

- Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea (Judea's capital under Rome)
 - Porphyrios attacks Christianity in his 15-volume “Adversus Christianos” (270)
 - Jesus was an outstanding philosopher
 - Theodosius II ordered every copy burned in 435 AD
 - Great Persecution unleashed by Diocletianus (303-313 AD)
 - Constantine's “Edict of Milan” recognizes the Christian Church (313)
 - Eusebius writes the first history of the Christian Church (324 AD, in Greek)
 - The Christian emperor as God's representative on Earth

What the Christians Knew

- Proclus Lycaeus (Greece, b. 411)
 - Triad:
 - One (Hen), which is beyond being,
 - Reason (Nous), that thinks all forms,
 - Soul (Psyche), which is a form produced by Intellect and it produces in turn the material world and time itself

What the Christians Knew

- Liber de Causis
 - Introduces Existence between One and Reason as an independent principle
 - One is above eternity, not only above time
 - Existence and Reason are above time but in eternity
 - Soul is above time (it creates time) but not in eternity

What the Christians Knew

- Gregory of Nyssa (b. 335)
 - Distinction between the creator and its creature
 - The human soul is a created image of an uncreated God
 - God cannot be described or known
 - God is infinite, the soul is finite
 - God loves its creation
 - The soul has to rely on God's own revelation through the scriptures and Jesus
 - The soul can improve its knowledge of its source, but never fully comprehend it

What the Christians Knew

- Aurelius Augustinus/Augustine (425)
 - Two cities (what belongs to Caesar and what belongs to God)
 - The City of God is a mystical, inner brotherhood
 - The City of God “is” the church
 - At the end of history there will only be the City of God
 - The defeat of Rome (the earthly City) heralds the coming of the heavenly City of God
 - Fusion of Christian mysticism and Roman legalism



Lateran, 6th c

What the Christians Knew

- **Augustine**
 - **Linear progression of time (instead of cycles)**
 - **History is not cyclic (Jesus died only once)**
 - **Second coming of Jesus as end of history**
 - **What is time (Confessions 6.14.17)**
 - **Primacy of the present (memory is present of past things, expectation is present of future things)**
 - **Time is subjective (is in the mind)**
 - **“No time is completely present” (Book XI, section XI, paragraph 13)**
 - **”The present, however, takes up no space” (Book XI, section XV, paragraph 20)**

What the Christians Knew

- **Augustine**
 - **God created matter (not just shaped it)**
 - **God created time (there is no time before the creation)**
 - **God already knows the future**
 - **Free will: God's knowledge of the future does not cause it**
 - **Human history is the unfolding of the will of God: God lives his "life" and our lives are consequences of his will**
 - **God decides who lives in the City of God**

What the Christians Knew

- **Augustine**
 - **Doctrine of original sin: All humans are sinners (sin is inherited, transmitted by sexual union)**
 - **Because of their depraved nature, humans cannot possibly do any good. Any good is due to God, not to humans**
 - **Humans are incapable of saving themselves. Only God can save them.**
 - **The virtues of the Greeks and the Romans are useless: they are “splendid vices”**
 - **Free will coexists with divine omnipotence: humans are responsible for their sins but not for their salvation**

What the Christians Knew

- **Augustine**
 - **Salvation via faith alone**
 - **Sin shall be punished in the afterlife**
 - **Sinners and saints shall be separated only at the end of history**

What the Christians Knew

- **Augustine**
 - **The Christian church is universal (“catholic”) not limited to the pious**
 - **The church is the instrument of the Holy Spirit to reform the world (implication: missionary work, especially among the Barbarians)**

What the Christians Knew

- **Augustine**
 - **Problem of evil**
 - **Evil has not been created by God**
 - **Evil does not exist**
 - **Evil is the absence of good, therefore it is "less", not "more", than God**
 - **Evil (lesser degrees of good) emerged with free-willing creatures**
 - **God created our free will, not evil. Our free will causes evil.**

What the Christians Knew

- **Augustine**
 - **Problem of evil**
 - **We cannot comprehend why God invented such free-willing creatures and thus Evil**
 - **What appears to us mortals as evil is good in the context of eternity**
 - **From God's perspective, evil is good**

What the Christians Knew

- **Augustine**
 - **Body vs Soul (grounded in Greek philosophy, not in Bible)**
 - **Separation of bodily life and spiritual life**
 - **Pleasures of the body detract/distract from the truth of the soul**
 - **Sexuality is evil**
 - **Celibacy and chastity**

What the Christians Knew

- **Augustine**
 - **Truth is God**
 - **Happiness (beatitudo) is enjoying Truth (gaudium de veritate)**
 - **Wisdom is possible only if one desires the knowledge that one lacks, but how can one desire what s/he does not know if s/he does not know it? Desire of wisdom is possible only if one lacks wisdom and possesses wisdom at the same time: contradiction.**
 - **Solution of the paradox: faith. Faith is both a knowing and a non-knowing. Wisdom by faith.**

What the Christians Knew

- **The Christian paradigm**
 - **God dwells in Heaven (Paradise)**
 - **God is omnipotent, omniscient, infinitely good**
 - **The eternal destiny of a human is predetermined by God's decree (predestination)**
 - **The original sin is inherited by all humans (transmitted by sexual union)**
 - **Humans have free will to act as they please but their final destiny has already been determined**
 - **Heresy: you are responsible for your salvation or damnation (no predestination)**

What the Christians Knew

- **The Christian paradigm**
 - **God is not only omnipotent, God is also Love (divine grace)**
 - **The beauty of Nature reflects the Love of God and the beauty of the Heaven**
 - **God created humans to live in a new paradise**
 - **Humans used free will to disobey God (Adam's original sin) and are now condemned to Hell**
 - **Humans cannot change their destiny**
 - **Humans can be saved only by divine grace**
 - **The coming of Jesus was a product of his Love**
 - **Salvation has been secured for humans by Jesus**
 - **Jesus: human, divine, both human and divine?**
 - **Trinity: one God in three persons (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)**

What the Christians Knew

- The Christian paradigm
 - Jesus' human sacrifice (crucifixion and resurrection) reconciled humans to God
 - Salvation is obtained by faith in Jesus alone (baptism, prayers)
 - Humans have free will whether to cooperate with divine grace (repent, faith) or not
 - The souls of the ones who repent are admitted after death into Paradise
 - At the end of time, bodies will be resurrected too

What the Christians Knew

- The Christian paradigm
 - God's intention is to grant everybody an everlasting life
 - The end of the world is coming
 - Universal judgement, resurrection of all the dead
 - The imminence of the kingdom of God
 - The need for immediate repentance

What the Christians Knew

- The Christian paradigm
 - Explanation for the original fall of humankind (creation, birth of evil, fall, redemption, apocalypse)
 - Christianity has both a beginning and an end (unlike Indian religions that only loop)

What the Christians Knew

- The Christian paradigm
 - "It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God" (Luke 18:25; Matt. 19: 16-30; Mark 10:17-31)

What the Christians Knew

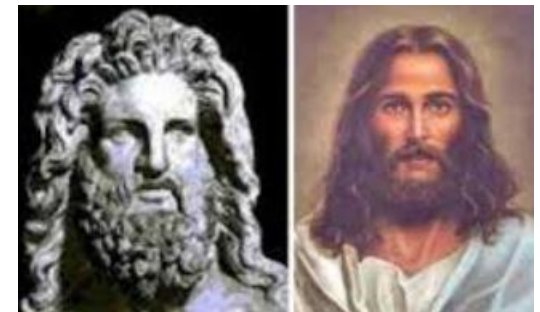
- The Christian paradigm
 - Hell
 - Hell is the place of punishment for Satan, the fallen angels and humans who die unrepentant of the original sin
 - The Devil hijacked humans
 - Jesus fought the Devil
 - Jesus' crucifixion was the defeat of the Devil

What the Christians Knew

- The Christian paradigm
 - Satan
 - Ancient Judaism: creator of divisions, deceiver and accuser (lower case "satan", or "stn"), division within Israel, internal Jewish conflict
 - Later Judaism: adversary of God who tried to usurp God (Satan)
 - Revelation 12:7-9 (96AD): a fallen angel ("I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven", Luke 10:18).
 - Paul: the enemy within, demonizing pagans and heretics
 - Persia: Ahura-Mazda/Ahriman
 - Manicheism

What the Christians Knew

- The Christian dogma and the decline of the Greek ideal
 - Rationality replaced by superstition
 - Virtue replaced by faith (the only virtue)
 - Justice in this world replaced with justice in the next world
 - Free exercise of reason replaced with obedience to Christian dogma
 - Greek tolerance for foreign faiths replaced by Christian intolerance



Zeus vs Jesus

What the Christians Knew

- The Christian dogma and the decline of the Aristotelian world view
 - The world is not eternal and unchanging
 - There is a sequence of events leading from Creation to the Universal Judgement
 - The course of historical events is crucial to understand God's will
 - Christian cosmology (Creation, Flood, Revelation, Crucifixion, Second Coming, Final Judgement)

What the Christians Knew

- Pseudo-Dionysius (500)
 - Our knowledge of God is that we cannot comprehend it
 - One rises to high levels of divine contemplation by defining God by what it is not
 - Negative theology
 - God is light, and every creature is born of and partakes in its light
 - Oneness of the universe

What the Christians Knew

- **Neo-Platonism**
 - The soul is a piece of divinity trapped in matter (matter is evil, the soul is good)
- **Christianity**
 - Nature has been created by God to his own image (matter is good) but humans sinned and lost the Eden (the soul is evil)
- **Neo-Platonism**
 - Way to salvation: knowledge (gnosis)
 - Form of salvation: become one with the One
- **Christianity**
 - Way to salvation: love (agape)
 - Form of salvation: be admitted into Paradise

What the Christians Knew

- **Boethius (524)**
 - **Pagan view of the world, influenced by late Hellenic ethics, adapted to the Christian era**
 - **Human nature is good. Evil is only an illusion**
 - **Happiness is obtained through philosophical investigation not personal transformation**
 - **Happiness is submission to whatever happens, i.e. release from sorrow and desire (not by the Christian love and charity)**
 - **Happiness is communion with God (stoicism)**
 - **Knowledge of God can be attained by studying the beauty and order of Nature**

What the Christians Knew

- **Boethius (524)**
 - Encyclopedic library
 - Quadrivium of “mathematical” disciplines: arithmetic, geometry, music, astronomy
 - De Arithmetica
 - Textbook on music (505)

What the Christians Knew

- **Cults**
 - **Martyrs and their relics (end of 2nd c)**
 - **First martyr: St. Andrew (AD 60, relics kept in Constantinople), not Peter (64, relics kept in Rome)**
 - **A martyr's martyrdom makes her/him similar to Jesus**
 - **His relics assumed to have the same power to perform miracles as Jesus'**
 - **Relics parceled out so every church has one (contributes to the spread of Christianity)**

What the Christians Knew

- **Cults**
 - **Martyrs and their relics (end of 2nd c)**
 - **Bishops turn the worship of relics into a huge business**
 - **Processions and pilgrimages**
 - **No discrimination: men and women, rich and poor, aristocrats and commoners**
 - **Entire cities rise around the worship of a relic**

What the Christians Knew

- **Cults**
 - **Icons (3rd c)**
 - **Easier to multiply and distribute than relics**

What the Christians Knew

- **Apocalyptic faith**
 - **Early Christianity is apocalyptic (indifferent to politics) and non-ethnic**
 - **Inherently well-suited to adapt to different political models (monarchy, democracy, communism) and social structures (feudal, industrial, rural, urban, savage, bourgeois...)**

What the Christians Knew

- **Apocalyptic faith**
 - **But Christian ideology also discourages commerce and technology ("Business is in itself an evil", St Augustine)**

What the Christians Knew

- Monasticism
 - Pachomius (318)
 - Basil (358)
 - Ireland (445)
 - Benedetto (529): sing the praise of God in unison at every hour of the day
 - Columbanus (563)

What the Christians Knew

- Reading and writing
 - Ancient scrolls did not separate words and did not use punctuation (mistakes were common, eg “*collectam ex Illo pubem*” instead of “*collectam exilio pubem*” in Virgil’s “Aeneid”)
 - Augustine describes St Ambrose’s silent reading as odd (4th c AD)
 - Roman republic: the codex, a bound papyrus

Oldest surviving codex: the Isocrates Codex
found at Dakhleh Oasis (written in the 4th c AD)



St Ambrogio
Church (5th c)



What the Christians Knew

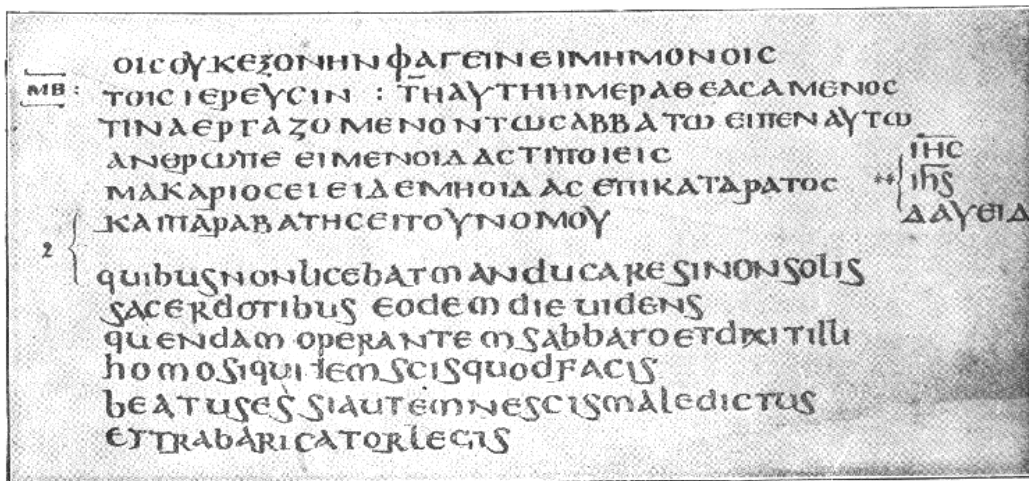
- Reading and writing
 - Christians use the codex to hide their holy books
 - The pages of the codex can be numbered, making it easier to find a specific passage
 - [The “scroll” would reappear in the age of the computer and of the smartphone]
 - 4th c AD: parchment replaces papyrus (sturdier, and doesn’t need to be imported from Egypt) and remains the main material for books until paper in the 12th c]



The scroll in the digital age

What the Christians Knew

- Reading and writing
 - 5th c AD: The Church begins publishing huge missals, antiphonaries, etc
 - No separation of words but (after St Jerome) division of the text “per cola et commata” (“by phrases”)
 - Silent reading becomes more common



per cola et commata

What the Christians Knew

- Bestiaries
 - Symbolism
 - Allegorical interpretations of the nature of plants and animals
 - Real or fabulous animals as religious symbols for Jesus, the devil, the virtues and vices
 - "Physiologus" (written in Greek at Alexandria, 2nd c)
 - Eucherius (Lyons, 4th c): "Formularium spiritualis intelligentiae ad Veranium"

What the Christians Knew

- Evolution of the Church
 - The bishops are no longer slaves or ordinary people but members of the aristocracy
 - Gregory I the Great
 - Benedetto da Norcia/ Benedict of Nursia

What the Christians Knew

- Evolution of the Church
 - Christian bureaucracy modeled after Roman bureaucracy
 - Pope = Emperor
 - Cardinals = Senate
 - Archbishops = Governors
 - Priests = Bureaucrats
 - Dioceses
 - But ecclesiastical prohibition of torture

What the Christians Knew

- Evolution of the Christian dogma
 - In order to survive it had to incorporate competing dogmas
 - Roman times: fuse Judaism and Christianity
 - Middle Ages: Christianity and Platonism
 - Renaissance: Christianity and Aristoteles (Aquinas)
 - 20th century: Christianity and Democratic Capitalism
 - 21st century: Christianity and Islam

What the Christians Knew

- The Social Impact of the Christian dogma
 - Prohibition of incest (even marriage to first cousins) and of polygamy de facto dismantles kin-based institutions and causes the transition from the tribal societies of the past to the modern state

What the Jews knew

- **The Jews are the only people in the world who can trace their ancestry back thousands of years**
- **Jews penetrated most societies of the world.**
- **Writing a history of the Jews entails writing a history of the world.**
- **After 70AD rise of the rabbi (a religious scholar who is also a working Jew), who replaced the priests**
- **The intellectual is not separated from political power as in Christian and Islamic societies**

What the Jews knew

- **Jews in the Islamic world**
 - **Kairouan (Tunisia) from the 7th c**
 - **Granada (Spain) from the 8th c**
 - **25% of the population of Baghdad under the Abbasids from the 8th c**
 - **Cairo (Egypt)**
 - **Jews lived in separate quarters**
 - **Jews were mainly traders and scholars**
 - **Jews expelled from Spain in 1492 resettle are welcome in the Ottoman Empire and help the Ottomans wage war against the Christian powers**

What the Jews knew

- **Jews in the Christian world**
 - **Jews sometimes demanded to live in separate quarters**
 - **Jews were mainly traders and financiers**
 - **In medieval times Jews constituted the main economic link between the Islamic and Christian worlds, operating as far as China**
 - **After the Crusades the Knights Templar of Jerusalem become the first Christian bankers and make the Jews less relevant for Europe**
 - **Jews banned from universities (create their own schools)**

What the Jews knew

- Jews in the Christian world
 - Jews persecuted (continuous emigrations, mainly towards Eastern Europe)
 - Persecutions led by Franciscan and Dominican friars (the most educated Christians)
 - Jews expelled from Spain in 1492 are welcome in the Ottoman Empire and help the Ottomans wage war against the Christian powers
 - Jews expelled from Spain in 1492 move to Italy
 - Poland becomes the safest country for Jews (150,000 Jews out of seven million people in 1575)
 - Jews move into the underdeveloped lands of Eastern Europe (Poland, Lithuania, Ukraine) and develop them

What the Jews knew

- Jews in the Christian world
 - Food-supply chain of Eastern Europe: andowners were (Polish) Christians, port managers were (German) Protestants, ship owners were (Dutch) Calvinists, Jews funded and ran the food-producing estates
 - Legend of the "Wandering Jew" (first published in 1223 in Italy but boom of books in the 16th c)
 - Jews accepted oppression and discrimination as long as it came with stable, definite rules
 - Jews welcomed segregation (meant to protect Christians from Jewish influence) when it protected them from persecution (and from un-Jewish secular lifestyles)

What the Jews knew

- **Jews in the Christian world**
 - **The Reformation eliminates the friars (the Jews' main enemies) from Protestant countries**
 - **After the Reformation Jews are welcome based on their usefulness**
 - **Jews help fund the big European wars (Thirty Year War, Austro-Turkish wars) supplying all the powers**
 - **Vienna saved from the Ottomans (1683) by Samuel Oppenheimer who equips the Austrian troops**
 - **Jewish loans finance the great projects of the new nation states**

What the Jews knew

- Jews in the Christian world
 - Persecution of Jews
 - Christians think Jews crucified the son of god
 - Muslims think Jews sin for rejecting Mohammed (but did not crucify him)
 - Christians and Jews have different traditions (circumcision, diet, etc)
 - Arabs and Jews have similar traditions (circumcision, diet, etc)

What the Jews knew

7th c: Visigoths massacre Jews and force them to convert to Christianity

711: Jews help Muslims invade Spain

1215: Anti-Jewish code of the Lateran Council

1278: Mass arrests of Jews in England

1421: Mass expulsion of Jews from Austria

1442: Mass expulsion of Jews from Bavaria

1481: Dominicans set up the Spanish Inquisition that burns hundreds of Jews in the next twelve years

1489: Expulsion of Jews from Milano

1492: Mass expulsion of Jews from Spain after the Christian "Reconquista"

1494: Expulsion of Jews from Firenze

1495: Mass expulsion of Jews from Poland and Lithuania

1497: Mass expulsion of Jews from Portugal

What the Jews knew

- 1516: Venezia decides to confine the Jews in a "ghetto" (2,400 Jews out of a population of 98,000) and charge them special taxes**
- 1518: Ottomans massacre Jews in Hebron**
- 1541: Jews expelled from Napoli**
- 1557: The Pope creates a ghetto for Jews in Roma**
- 1597: Expulsion of Jews from Milano**
- 16th c: Russian czar Ivan the Terrible orders to drown Jews who refuse to convert to Christianity**
- 1925: Adolf Hitler writes "Mein Kampf"**
- 1933: Adolf Hitler seizes power in Germany and promotes anti-Semitism**
- 1936: Arabs massacre almost all the Jews in Hebron**
- 1938: Synagogues and Jewish shops are destroyed by Hitler's followers in Germany ("Kristallnacht")**
- 1941: Mass extermination of Jews begins in Germany**

What the Christians Knew

- **World Jewish Population**
 - **1875: 7.75 million**
 - **1900: 11 million**
 - **1938: 16.7 million**
 - **1950: 12 million**
 - **2000: 14 million (5m in Israel, 6m in the USA, 700k in Russia, 600k in France, 400k in Canada, 400k in Argentina, less than 50k in the entire Islamic world)**
- **<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/jewpop.html>**

Summary

- **Evolution of the Semitic god**
- **Linear progression of time**
- **Christian god of love**
- **Problem of evil**
- **Fusion with Plato**
- **Fusion with Aristotle**
- **A synthesis of poor people's ideologies/beliefs**