



HIS304 Greco-Roman World Syllabus Highlights

And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.
—Isaiah 60:3

Fall 2026
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Course Description

A survey of the cultures, history, and geography of the Greco-Roman and Jewish world from the early centuries BC through the early centuries AD.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course of study, successful students will be able to:

1. Recognize significant people, writings, places, events, and movements in the Hellenistic and Jewish cultures of the Greco-Roman world up to the end of the 1st century AD.
2. Explain and discuss the social, literary, political, legal, religious, and philosophical aspects of the Greco-Roman and Jewish cultures of the Greco-Roman world in relation to the New Testament.
3. Analyze primary source texts from the Greco-Roman world in order to engage in careful comparative study of the New Testament within its historical, literary, and theological contexts.
4. Assess how our knowledge of the Greco-Roman world informs our understanding of the New Testament, Christian beliefs, practices, and worship today.

Textbooks

1. Barrett, C. K., ed. *The New Testament Background: Writings from Ancient Greece and the Roman Empire That Illuminate Christian Origins*. Rev. ed. San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1989.
2. Currid, John D., and David P. Barrett, eds. *Crossway ESV Bible Atlas*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010.
3. Ferguson, Everett. *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003.

Course Requirements

1. Attend and participate in class.
2. Complete all reading assignments and submit a reading report.
3. Write an exegetical thesis paper that demonstrates how the informed use of Greco-Roman historical, cultural, and literary contexts clarifies and deepens the interpretation of a specific New Testament passage.
4. Complete midterm and final exams.

*This abbreviated syllabus is subject to revision. A complete syllabus will be provided on the first day of class.