

S.D.G.

Chapter Two

## PROCLAIMING THE KINGDOM

Book Three

### THE KING CROWNED

By Stephen H. Funck

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#### BEFORE DAWN

Inside the Temple courts priests and Levites had been working all through the night. The long walls and many gates of the Temple platform had assigned courses of Levites to watch and patrol. The gates for the Inner Courts into the Temple itself had additional men. Inside the Inner Courts, priests were making their preparations.<sup>1</sup> The Chief Priest Joseph bar Caiaphas arose, purified himself in his palace mikveh<sup>2</sup>, dressed in his glorious robes and said the morning prayers. He had not rested well. The astounding events of the day before had him deeply shaken. What was going on? Today, in the next days, how could he prevent riot and destruction? He prayed and worried. Overseeing the Morning Sacrifice would be good, calming. He longed to enter into the presence of the Almighty, offering Him praise and sacrifices surrounded by the great crowd of priests and worshippers.

His Steward Malchus and High Priests were waiting for him. There was little small talk as they walked across the bridge to the Temple Gate. They were all disturbed and wondered what the Chief Priest would do. There was a crowd in front of the gate. There always was. For the great Pilgrim Festivals it was much larger, thousands at every gate. They were warmly greeted, hailed, as the crowds parted before them. A man called out. "Excellency, a request, may I humbly suggest." Joseph stopped and graciously turned. "Your Excellency, we stand here waiting for the gates to open so we can enter, then everyone runs as fast as they can, to the Inner Gates so they might be at the front so they can enter. Sometimes men are knocked down and hurt. There is not enough room for us all in the Middle Court. Could these outer gates be left open? Could even the gates to the Middle Court be opened?" "Your request will be brought to the Council." the Chief Priest replied and nodded.

Inside, they made the rounds of inspection. Joseph and the others walked in the setting moonlight. It was quiet, peaceful. The Great Temple towered over the Inner Walls. They walked in the presence of majesty. Joseph did not lead them on the shortest route. He relaxed as he walked ahead of them and they relaxed also. This was so different from what this would be in a short time, filled with more than a hundred thousand ecstatic worshippers and the animals for sacrifice. For some worshippers from the diaspora, this was a once in a lifetime experience. The locals who were there every day, the regular Pilgrim festival participants, were slightly less exuberant. It was such a privilege to be here in the quiet of the night. The presence of God was wonderful in the

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<sup>1</sup> Edersheim from the Mishnah has overnight 10 levites at each of 24 stations and 30 priests The Temple: Its Ministry and Services, Alfred Edersheim Chapter 7 At Night in the Temple. [http://philologos.org/\\_eb-tms/temple08.htm](http://philologos.org/_eb-tms/temple08.htm) This is the best most complete compilation of the recorded documentation.

<sup>2</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mikveh> palatial mansion jerusalem <http://blog.bibleplaces.com/2012/08/ritmeyer-on-house-of-high-priest-in.html>

quiet, yet the presence of the Lord lifted high on the thunderous praises of the multitude was great in a different way. Joseph got to experience both.

Joseph ascended the Great Altar, twice the height of a man. He thought how the whole Altar would be aflame when the fat of the Passover lambs was burning, flames leaping high and great heat. The four fires looked so small now. He feasted his eyes on the Golden Vine above, around the open doorway. Gold and more gold, with more to come. The stones were pure white, gleaming. It almost seemed a shame to cover them with more gold. He ascended the steps alone to the Porch and entered the Holy Place. Two lamps on the Great Lampstand still burned. Would they last a little while longer? He prayed near the Incense Altar, before the Holy of Holies, what glorious privilege. He was able to enter here because he was the Chief Priest making official inspection. He prayed. He relished prayer in the House of the Lord, near the Throne of the Almighty God, Lord of Lords. He turned and inspected the Showbread Table<sup>3</sup>. It was ready to be carried onto the Porch. As he walked he greeted the musicians and singers. Since this was Festival, the full number<sup>4</sup> were present. Some would be at the steps of the Nicanor Gate<sup>5</sup>, the rest would be on the roofs around the Middle Courts so the great crowds in the Outer Courts could participate. Finally he inspected the lamb, washed and brushed, beautiful.

The Chief Priest consulted the captains of the security forces. All were in place and ready. The entire Watch and those available from the Army had been called up. The day before that mad prophet and his hoards of followers ravaged the Temple. This day as the gates were opened, the Watch and Army were posted around the Temple Courts. Many were on the parapets overlooking the multitude. The clear purpose was to intimidate the crowds. The watch numbered a legion and was a trained auxiliary. Some of the army and half the cavalry were guarding the Arabian frontier. Many from Herod Antipas', Phillip's and Lysanias' armies were attending the Feast. They could be called up. The total would be over four legions. The Roman cohorts at the Palace and Tower of Antonia made a small addition. They did not want tragedy. The image of tens of thousands dead and dying in the Temple Courts was horrible. Moreover they were not confident their own forces would be loyal. Yeshua had called the Master of the Sacred Oil back from the dead. Many, some even in high places, were excited, hoping, fearing he was the Messiah. Had he come to overthrow everything, everyone, and take the throne as ruler of all the world? Was he self deluded? What would he do? What would his followers do?

The door to the Chamber of the Hearth<sup>6</sup> opened for them. It was an especially warm and encouraging greeting as they met. The High Priest told them to carry on with the lots. The officer in charge, Matthew ben Samuel<sup>7</sup> had already made his official inspection. The cleaning the Great Altar and lighting the four fires,

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<sup>3</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Showbread>

<sup>4</sup> Edersheim has 120 trumpets Chapter 8 The Morning and the Evening Sacrifice The Temple Music [http://philologos.org/\\_eb-ttms/temple08.htm](http://philologos.org/_eb-ttms/temple08.htm) <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psaltery> Scholars think the music that sounds the closest to the music of the Temple is from the MarThomast Churches of South India. A Jewish community was there and traded with Rome through Judea. The church claims to date from the disciple Thomas and kept the most ancient forms of worship. <http://marthoma.in/musicgalleries>. What we consider old Jewish and Christian music is known to date from centuries later.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.ritmeyer.com/2010/12/14/the-beautiful-gate-of-the-temple/>

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.chabad.org/library/article\\_cdo/aid/144601/jewish/The-Hearth.htm](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/144601/jewish/The-Hearth.htm)

<sup>7</sup> tractate Shekalin (5.1)

assigned by the first lot, had been accomplished.<sup>8</sup> The second lot was being cast for cleaning the Lampstand, Incense Altar and killing the lamb. When he was chosen, the twelve standing closest to him became his assistants.

The call was made: "Is the sky lit up as far as Hebron?" The trumpets blew three blasts, summoning the people and announcing that the morning sacrifice was about to be offered. The gates were opened and the crowds poured in, with restrained, serious jostling. The Inner Court of Priests filled in with priests far back along the sides of the Temple. A thousand great ones, powerful, claimed their rightful places before them on the lower level, Court of Israel. Through the Nicanor Gate, down fifteen steps, the Middle Court was thronged with ten thousand more. The women, authorized, were escorted to the balcony around the Middle Court. The great masses of worshippers filled the outer courts. Those closest to the gates did get a glimpse inside. The heralds, musicians, were arrayed high above, atop the walls of the inner courts. The heralds repeated the words of the liturgy said inside. More than 150,000 joined in worship with great joy, emotion, excitement. Here and there on the rooftops in the city and on the heights of the hills around others joined in from the distance. Even when the expansion was complete there would never be enough room for them all.

With great dignity and ceremony the lamb was killed. Lambs never protested. The crowds cheered. The priest who killed the lamb went into the Holy Place to trim and refill the lamps. With his assistants, he cleaned and prepared the Incense Altar with fresh figwood coals from the Great Altar, while the lamb was prepared. Except for the few nearby, people were not able to actually see what was going on. It was enough. Almost better, more spiritually powerful, to join in the mind's eye. They all knew what was happening. In the mind, they were there, personally. Joseph stood in the midst of all the actions and supervised. All was done under his authority. He relaxed, all was properly done. He saw the crowds nearby and heard the great throng beyond the walls, thunderous praise. It is good to stand in the house of the Lord. How blessed it is!

They assembled in the Chamber of Hewn Stones<sup>9</sup> for the casting of the third and fourth lots. A young priest was selected for the third. He would never again be eligible and the oldest priests were disappointed. They might never have the high honor of burning the offering of incense and offering the prayer. They surrounded him and quizzed him about how accurately he knew the words of the prayers. The fourth lot was placing the pieces of the sacrifice on the fire, offering the meal and drink offerings.

The crowds heard the sound of the Magrephah<sup>10</sup> and knew the priest of the third lot was entering the Holy Place for the most sacred portion of the morning sacrifice. The Levitical choir took their places on the steps of the Nicanor Gate to sing the psalm. The crowds were hushed, trying to hear. At the command, "The time of

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<sup>8</sup> The best popular source is Leen & Kathleen Ritmeyer "The Ritual of the Temple in the Time of Christ, ISBN 965-220-452-8 Carta Jerusalem 2002 It is based on "The Temple: Its Ministry and Services" by Alfred Edersheim. The Talmud has detailed information but it is disorganized with omissions. We know what Scriptures were read each day but do not know when, where from or by whom they were read.

<sup>9</sup> The Chamber of the Hewn Stone when the interior was finished was the most glorious chamber in the whole complex. The Sanhedrin meet there. <http://jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/14303-temple-administration-and-service-of> <https://torah.org/learning/templetour-class9/?printversion=1>

<sup>10</sup> No one recorded what this was, perhaps a gong.

incense has come”, the whole multitude fell down before the Lord spreading their hands in silent prayer.<sup>11</sup> The incense was placed on the coals and the Holy Place was filled with fragrant clouds.

The priest of the fourth lot took the pieces of the sacrificed lamb, ascended the Altar and cast them on the fire. All the officiates with Joseph in the center gathered on the Porch to bless the people. They said; “Yahweh bless thee and keep thee: Yahweh make His face shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee: Yahweh lift up His countenance upon thee and give thee peace.”<sup>12</sup> Two silver trumpets were blown, The priest of the fourth lot carried the meat and meal offerings of the Chief Priest around the Altar. Joseph was moved to claim his rights to carry his offerings himself and place them on the fire. He wanted to, needed to take action for himself. He did watch as the priest carried the drink offering around and poured it out at the base. One hundred and twenty trumpets blew. The officer of the cymbals clashed his cymbals. The Levitical choir began the Psalm accompanied by the full orchestra. The service concluded with three more trumpet blasts. The people bowed down, worshipped and erupted with shouts, Hallelujahs, cries of rejoicing, proclaiming the Kingdom of God.

## THE MASTER RETURNS

Yeshua spent the night at Bethany. After they rose and said the Shema and morning prayers, they walked down the Mount toward the Temple. When the pilgrims camped on the Mount of Olives saw Yeshua, there was cheering, cries “Hosanna”. They knew what he had done the day before in the Temple. Many thought, hoped, believed, Yeshua was the Messiah. They were going with him to worship the King of Creation, their God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the Redeemer of Israel, the Lord God Almighty, Ruler of the nations. Yeshua was serious, contemplative and motioned those around to carry themselves in peace. His followers at the Olive Press joined in and entered the Eastern Gate. Excitement bubbled under restraint.

The day before, Yeshua arrived riding the donkey colt after the morning crowd thinned out. The news that Yeshua had driven out the animals for sale and money changers, had spread throughout the pilgrims and city. This morning everyone who could come, government bureaucrats, construction workers, merchants, pilgrims. The courts were filled, most would have been there for morning worship anyway.<sup>13</sup> The anticipation of what Yeshua would do, filled them with excitement. Yeshua found some space in the outer court on the southern side of the Temple between the Huldah Gates. It was as far as he could get from the Temple itself. Because the construction behind them was not finished, there was no portico there for the watch to stand on. The crowd that came in with him joined in the worship, watching, wondering.

After morning worship was over, Yeshua prepared to speak. Part way out in the crowd, Yeshua placed three disciples, further out nine took their places. When Yeshua said something, the first group repeated it in

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<sup>11</sup> Tractate Tamin. section v. has a detailed long description, which Edersheim abbreviated.

<sup>12</sup> Talmud 7.2. In the Temple they pronounced the Name, while elsewhere they said “Lord”.

<sup>13</sup> It was not socially possible to begin work, open a shop, begin anything until after morning prayers were finished. Many came to worship. Some came because it was the thing to do, the place where arrangements were made for later. On a non festival days 50,000 could be at morning prayer. With pilgrimage festivals over 150,000 crowded together. Some of the regulars, many women, took the opportunity to avoid the crush and did not come, others just made sure they were extra early so they could still be in front.

unison and then the next group did the same.<sup>14</sup> Tens of thousands could hear his message. There were a number of other teachers with groups around them with similar arrangements. The Outer Temple Court was the place where scholars taught. At festivals there were more teachers and large crowds. People would go from teacher to teacher, listen a bit and compare. It was the way a teacher could become famous. The more famous they became, the greater the crowd they attracted. Money, as always, went along with fame. Judas was happy collecting gifts.

The most famous teachers were Gamaliel and Shammai, Hanina ben Dosa, Jonathan ben Uzziel, Abba Sual ben Batnit, Eliezer ben Jacob.<sup>15</sup> The leaders were happy to see that many of those who listened to Yeshua went on to listen to others. It did not look like he was turning the whole crowd into his followers. The crowds always hoped that Judah ben Bathyra would come from Babylon. He had a great reputation. Meanwhile other worshippers were passing through with sacrifices and gifts. The thirteen trumpets were ringing with coins dropping into the chests of the treasury.<sup>16</sup>

Joseph had business to attend. There were reports from priestly houses and bureaucratic departments. The Festival had long established procedures. The continual growth in numbers made the focus on what adjustments and improvements were needed. Some matters he could decide, others were better for the council. He consulted with his father-in-law, if it needed to go to the council then he discussed that with the Nasi and Av Beit Din. The four controlled the government. Most tasks had assigned Priestly families. That required delicate oversight. The council considered conversions of agricultural land to buildings, markets and campgrounds. Extending the Temple Platform required destruction of some priestly houses. Proper new sites for them had to be designated. The area in front of the Huldah gates was being cleared for the plaza.

The Treasurer, Ishmael the son of Phabi<sup>17</sup>, reported a gold plate, two grape leaves and a grape had already been given. They were displayed on the Duchan inscribed with their donor's names. They would be displayed until mounted at the end of the festival. They exclaimed with joy. All knew this final gold plate completed the interior of the Holy of Holies. Other gold plates were being placed on the exterior of the Temple. One of the younger men exclaimed the Messiah would not come until, his house, the Temple, was finished.

Pilate and Claudia were shopping for luxury items in the fair by the Palace gate. Pilate was relaxed, happy. He had only heard favorable reports. This year promised to be good. There were silks, spices, ivory, pearls, jewels, inlaid tables with rare woods and stones, oryx and rhinoceros horns, giraffe tails. The other fairs were packed with more common trade goods. The servants and Titus were with them, his first experience mixing in with the local people. By their Roman dress and eight man guard, they were very conspicuous. Pilate

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<sup>14</sup> [Until the invention of electronic amplifiers, this is how large groups were addressed. Ghandi spoke to crowds of a half million this way in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century.](#)

<sup>15</sup> [Great Rabbis of Jesus' day still known today. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tannaim> \[Gamaliel I, the Elder\]\(#\) \[Jonathan ben Uzziel\]\(#\) \[Hanina Ben Dosa\]\(#\) \[Abba Saul ben Batnit\]\(#\) \[Judah ben Bathyra\]\(#\) \[Eliezer ben Jacob I\]\(#\) <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shammai>](#)

<sup>16</sup> [www.bible-history.com/court-of-women/the\\_temple\\_treasury.html](http://www.bible-history.com/court-of-women/the_temple_treasury.html) The offering boxes were identified by letters of the Greek not the Hebrew alphabet.

<sup>17</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abba\\_Saul\\_ben\\_Batnit](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abba_Saul_ben_Batnit)

told Titus when the crowds left after the festival, he would show him the Tombs of the Maccabees<sup>18</sup> and Herod's family tomb<sup>19</sup>. It was modeled on the one Augustus built in Rome.

Yeshua had hardly taken his seat when he was challenged. The leaders said he had no authority to do what he had done or even to speak.<sup>20</sup> His answer, a question to them, put them to shame. Then he told the crowds parables that were veiled criticisms of the leaders. He was calm, friendly, relaxed as he taught. He had the powerful voice of an experienced orator, which he was. The crowds were eager. They wanted him to lead them in rebellion. They despised the leaders over them. The Romans were an insult. They were the chosen people. Their God was the God of the whole world. They longed for His Kingdom to be revealed, Jerusalem, to be the Capitol of the nations. They despised their own authorities. They rejoiced at every word of Yeshua that condemned the leaders and showed how self centered and false they were. The powerful rejected God's will and in turn were rejected by God. The crowds wanted Yeshua to be the promised Messiah of God. He was proclaiming the Kingdom of God.

Av and Phil were watching closely. They had heard tales about this Yeshua. He was the talk of the nation even before yesterday. They heard in their synagog the council had posted him for arrest, blasphemy, a death sentence. They liked to spend their time at the Festivals going from teacher to teacher, checking out the sights, looking for something new. They were from a small town in the Negev off the route of the travelers, so it missed much of what was happening.

"Phil, what do you think? Folks are saying he is going to claim he is the Messiah."

"Av, I don't know. We need the Messiah. That will overthrow everything."

"He has set himself up as a great one. Look how many trained disciples he has."

"He has been building a base for action. This is no small thing."

"They say he does miracles. Do you think we might see a miracle?"

"Raising Lazarus from the dead was supposed to have happened just over at the Mount of Olives."

"Look at all the priests listening. The Temple watch are all around, soldiers too."

"On all the roofs around. I have never seen so many before. Makes me uncomfortable."

Gamaliel had a very large crowd, numbering tens of thousands with a large number of disciples. He carried on the lineage and teachings of his grandfather Hillel and father Shimon<sup>21</sup>. With an equally large attendance on the other side of the Court was Shammai. He was very old and of the highest respect. The people would contrast their teachings. Gamaliel was Nasi - Prince<sup>22</sup> and Shammai was Av Beit Din "Master of the

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<sup>18</sup> <https://www.livescience.com/52243-lost-tomb-maccabees-possibly-found.html>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.baslibrary.org/biblical-archaeology-review/9/3/2>

<sup>20</sup> Matthew. 21:23, Mark. 11:27, Luke 20:1

<sup>21</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hillel\\_the\\_Elder](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hillel_the_Elder) [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simeon\\_ben\\_Hillel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simeon_ben_Hillel)  
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gamaliel>

<sup>22</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nasi\\_\(Hebrew\\_title\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nasi_(Hebrew_title))

Court” - Chief Justice<sup>23</sup>, that limited their time to teach. They would hand their places over to leading disciples. In between the great ones were minor, newer teachers hoping to attract some of the spill over. People would go from one to the other, listen for a while. Some would stay and move in closer. In time after faithful listening, learning, the teacher might invite them to the front as disciples. The highest disciples were sent out into the crowd as heralds, repeating the teacher’s words. The teachers were careful to repeat their parables and teachings with identical words so they could be memorized. That made it easier for the heralds since they knew the words by heart. <sup>24</sup>

People in the crowds were saying. “Who does he think he is to talk like that?” “All the other Rabbis quote and explain the scriptures.” “They quote the other scholars and logically prove their points. He talks for himself.”<sup>25</sup>

“I liked what he did when he asked them how the Messiah could be both David’s son and Lord. They couldn’t answer him. They would have had to admit the way they understand the scriptures was wrong.”

“He is a man just like you. He is out of step with them all. He does not follow the accepted ways. The others all talk like men even though they all disagree.” “He talks like he is from somewhere else.” “Ignorant Galilean. They say he has a spirit, stay away from spirits. miracles of Satan.”

“But he speaks deep truths for life. The scholars just try to show off how much they know. How far above us they are. They talk as if the only things that matter are agreeing with their understanding and keeping the laws their way. Is that everything God the Creator of all Heaven and Earth expects of us?”

“God commands us to purity and righteousness. Being correct is most important.” “Many who talk that way, seem to arrange the coins on the table to fall into their pockets.” “The Lord God commands us to meditate constantly on His precepts, to be faithful to His word. We must be careful to obey His word exactly.”

Av and Phil liked to listen carefully to the teachers explain the meaning of passages in scripture and in the Oral Law. They were precise and clear. Their teachings were impressive displays of scholarship, quoting older authorities and other passages of scripture in support of their teachings.

“Av, when I listen to a new teacher I try to figure out what school he follows.”

“Phil, most of the teachers agree about most meanings but here and there, they do have differences.”

“Not just differences outright disagreements, opposing viewpoints.”

“Sometimes they are really saying the same thing, but they hide that in their words.”

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<sup>23</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Av\\_Beit\\_Din](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Av_Beit_Din) <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shammai>

<sup>24</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oral\\_Torah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oral_Torah) These are descriptions of what the teachers were doing and the basis of their teaching. <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/view.jsp?artid=113&letter=O>

<sup>25</sup> Many readers are unfamiliar with Rabbinical writings Talmud, Mishnah.. They do not realize much of Jesus’ preaching is similar to the norm of the times. The great difference was the announcement the Kingdom of God was now present in himself. Christian ministers also base their message on what the Bible says. See <http://www.sacred-texts.com/jud/t03/psc09.htm> for Babylonian Talmud, Book 3: Tracts Tracts Pesachim, Yomah and Hagiga, tr. by Michael L. Rodkinson, [1918]. Also “Hillel and Jesus” James H. Charlesworth and Loren L Johns, editors, Fortress Press 1997.

“That’s why I listen to pick out the common, the basic ideas.”

“Sometimes it is either one way or the opposite. There is nothing in-between.”

“I wanted to hear Gamaliel but the crowd is too big. I can hardly hear his disciples repeating his words.”

“Let’s come back later. This fellow teaching next to him doesn’t have very many around.”

As Av and Phil walked from scholar to scholar a few conflicts were clear. There were the old ones between the Sadducees<sup>26</sup> and everyone else. Since they represented the established priesthood, they claimed to have the old truths. They rejected the Oral Law, traditions, claiming to hold the scriptures alone. However many scriptures did not support their teachings. One position was there was no resurrection from the dead, no life forever. “If they all came back there would be no room for them all to fit.” Av and Phil, most people, did not accept their ideas. Another reason for rejection may have been more important. Sadducees controlled the Sanhedrin. They were all about themselves, their rights, privileges, authority. They were the religious court and since they counted all government affairs to be religious, government as under their control. They divided the government bureaucracy between the different priestly houses. They collected the taxes and donations from the diaspora, distributed the funds, equipped and led the army, controlled the trade, conducted the affairs with Rome and other nations. They were the judges, all to their own advantage.<sup>27</sup> As far as Rome was concerned, the Chief Priest was King and they were ruling council. Judea was the Sadducees’ Kingdom.

There were conflicts between the House of Shammai and the House of Hillel<sup>28</sup>. Shammai had always disagreed with Hillel and his followers. Shammai felt they did not properly obey the Torah. He defended the strictest observance of the Torah and traditions. Each side had many supporters. On almost everything else in scripture and tradition they were in full agreement. An example of their difference, Hillel allowed for divorce for any reason and Shammai opposed divorce.

The teachers in the Courts presented the breadth of faith. Teachers would open up sections of Torah, creation, Noah, Abraham, Issac especially his obedient sacrifice, Joseph, the sojourn in Egypt, Moses, Passover redemption, the covenant at Sinai. The whole salvation history was covered by one teacher or another over the days. David, the royal covenant, the prophets, rebellion, exile and restoration, the Messianic promises. The scrolls were carefully considered. The ancient writings were taught in Hebrew. The newer Greek writings were taught in Greek. Singers sang old psalms and offered new works for consideration. It was a time of active

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<sup>26</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sadducees> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sanhedrin>

<sup>27</sup> Wellhausen, Julius (2001). *The Pharisees and the Sadducees*. Macon: Mercer University Press. ISBN 9780865547292. p43 [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julius\\_Wellhausen](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julius_Wellhausen) Almost everything we know of them is from their opponents and much later. Those writers focused on religious issues and ignored everything else, government bureaucracy. Actually we know little about Roman government bureaucracy.

<sup>28</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Houses\\_of\\_Hillel\\_and\\_Shammai](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Houses_of_Hillel_and_Shammai) Both are Pharisees, the top two positions of the Council are theirs. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pharisees>



creation of literary works.<sup>29</sup> The people felt God was speaking to them. They were the people of God listening to His voice, obeying Him. He was moving in their world. They expected to see Him, His Messiah, soon. They were looking for, living for the Kingdom of God.<sup>30</sup>

Other ideas were presented in the guest houses<sup>31</sup> and great houses of the powerful.<sup>32</sup> The "Pious Ones" did not teach in the Temple. They were located on the Western Hill. The political revolutionaries met by invitation in secure houses. Instead of traveling to Gymnasiums in Athens and Alexandria to study, people could get a sample of those ideas in the Gymnasium in Jerusalem.<sup>33</sup> Stoics, Peripatetics, Epicurians, Eclectics, Gnostics all had their proponents. Greek and Roman historians and literary authors were not as well represented. The mathematicians and engineers were welcome in the Roman garrisons. Legions were combat engineers, skilled, builders of siege engines and every other kind of structure. The great retaining walls and water works were prime attractions.

"Phil, it is so crowded here, we should go to the gymnasium and hear the Gnostics. They seem to always have something new."

"Av, I wish my Greek was better. I'm good enough in the market but scholars use words I do not understand."

"With a Greek name you should."

"It is getting late. Let's go tomorrow. I want to look then at the luxuries in the fair by Palace."

"Have you ever touched silk? It shimmers like light."

In the market fairs merchants from far off lands regaled the crowds with tales of what they claimed to have seen. Rocs, enormous birds, magical jinns, flying carpets. For those interested they would talk about the pagan religions where they were. Reincarnation in the east, Elysium in the west. The people heard of lands in

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<sup>29</sup> The Torah-Law and Prophets were accepted Holy. Most of the rest the Old Testament was also accepted. The Greek writings are called second canon, deuterocanonical and apocrypha. Many more writings are known, some only by title or excerpts. Some of them were very popular. The first 90 Psalms had been collected in Psalm Books 1, 2, 3. Psalms 91 - 150 had not yet been codified. See [http://thesignofconcord.com/uploads/The\\_Psalm\\_and\\_Qumran.pdf](http://thesignofconcord.com/uploads/The_Psalm_and_Qumran.pdf) [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deuterocanonical\\_books](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deuterocanonical_books) The Hellenistic Jews of Acts 6 are all local Jews who normally used Greek.

<sup>30</sup> "In regard to 'the kingdom' whatever the Rabbis understood by it, the feeling was so strong, that it was said: 'any prayer which makes no mention of the kingdom is not a prayer at all.' Edersheim p. 156

<sup>31</sup> Synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called)—Jews of Cyrene and Alexandria Acts 6:9. The 480 guesthouses catered to the needs of their communities. <https://www.jerusalemerspective.com/2396/>

<sup>32</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jewish\\_schisms](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jewish_schisms) [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hellenistic\\_Judaism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hellenistic_Judaism) Adaptation to Hellenic culture did not require compromise of Jewish precepts or conscience. When a Greek gymnasium was introduced into Jerusalem, it was installed by a Jewish High Priest. And other priests soon engaged in wrestling matches in the palaestra. They plainly did not reckon such activities as undermining their priestly duties. Erich S. Gruen

<sup>33</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gymnasium\\_\(ancient\\_Greece\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gymnasium_(ancient_Greece)) [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hellenistic\\_philosophy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hellenistic_philosophy)

the far north where ice floated on the seas. They heard the latest news from Rome about the Emperor Tiberius and Sejanus, the speculation that he would overthrow the Emperor in his feeble old age.

Some merchants from Parthia came looking for the house of the Master of the Oil. They were carrying a letter to his sisters from their husbands. They were directed to Lazarus' home in Bethany. The family business was Sacred Olive Oil. Mary and Martha were overjoyed to get the letter. The merchants told them, they encountered their husbands in Parthia. Their husbands took a large shipment of Sacred Olive Oil with them to sell in the synagogues of the east. There was always surplus sacred olive oil, since they did not dare run out. The further east they went the higher the price they were able to get. That was fair. The further they went the more it cost them. They had been selling just enough oil to fund traveling further. The letter said they hoped to be able to get beyond the Oxus River to Bukhara<sup>34</sup>. There were reports there were people from the tribes of Naphtali and Issachar. God willing, they would buy silks there and return. They prayed, God willing, to be able to be back in Jerusalem by Sukkot. They thanked them for their prayers and asked that they would continue to pray the Lord of all nations would guide, guard and bless them. They kept their wives and children in their prayers.

Yeshua told parable after parable, repeating the themes of God's judgment of the rich and powerful and blessing of the poor. The people counted themselves the poor, the powerless of the land. Yeshua taught the kingdom of heaven would be like a great banquet for all people. The King would come back to his own land to gather His own. The rich would be cut down and the poor raised up. They were to love God and love all people. They felt he was talking about them as the people in that Kingdom and about himself as the Messiah. Yeshua did not teach like the others. He focused on what God intends for the people, the purpose behind the scriptures. Yeshua remained teaching until evening prayer. That was almost identical to the morning worship. Then he went to the Olive Press and up to Lazarus's home.

#### Questions:

- 1 What was morning prayer like in the Temple? It was nothing like any Church Service!
- 2 What and why did the people and leaders feel and react?
- 3 What was going on in the enormous Temple Courts?
- 4 How did the people learn of ideas and events far away from Jerusalem?
- 5 Why were Mary and Martha staying with Lazarus? Culturally this is most unusual. Businesses were family arrangements. If he was master of the sacred oil, this gives a reason for the husbands to be absent, and a way to introduce the far extent of the diaspora of the "ten lost tribes". .

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<sup>34</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_the\\_Jews\\_in\\_Tajikistan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_Jews_in_Tajikistan) <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transoxiana> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bukhara> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bukharan\\_Jews](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bukharan_Jews)

Jesus' Kingdom "Thy Kingdom come" is Spiritually accessed, entered by the gift of the spirit from above for all with the faith of Abraham, which is good news to be passed on to everyone. The Kingdom, the leaders, the people, sought was the Kingdom of Israel, for the physical descendants of Abraham, of which they were beneficiaries and stewards to manage.

The historical record has a great amount on the Temple and sacrifices, there is next to nothing on the order of service, what was done, by whom, in what order or a listing of words and actions. The service described in this chapter is a construct, interpolation, of many bits and pieces. The best account I found is by Alfred Edersheim , "The Temple" in 1874. The best popular source and greatly abridged is Leen & Kathleen Ritmeyer "The Ritual of the Temple in the Time of Christ, ISBN 965-220-452-8 Carta Jerusalem 2002 This is meant for non technical readers. The footnotes are links to the documentation.

Jesus' words are recorded in the Gospels. The reader is invited to read them there. This chapter is about how they were received and how they affected the people and events.

The Gospels record the events of Jesus' life. They do not include the background information everyone knew at the time they were written. This is one of a series of stories that includes that background faithful to what is known about the history and culture. I hope this provokes-in a good way-the reader to think deeply about the Scriptural account. Go to my web site for more. <http://thesignofconcord.com> . These are in the section titled "King of Kings". There is also a section titled "King of Kings Supplements" with additional information.

If you do not think this reflects the culture and historic situation, how would you tell the story?

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