



Discovering Jesus in His Jewish Context

BIBL 302 / 602
May 10-21, 2026

Instructors: [Baruch Kvasnica](#), PhD, and additional expert lecturers

Course Coordinator: Aude-Line Hizgi, ahizgi@jerusalemseminary.org

Enroll here:

Note: This is a general planned syllabus; further details will be provided to the registered students

Course Description:

“Discovering Jesus in His Jewish Context” is a 12-day course in Israel in which participants have the opportunity to rediscover Jesus (Yeshua) and the Land of the Bible in profound ways by engaging the geography, archaeology and Jewish context of Jesus and the Land of the Bible.

The program allows Bible teachers, pastors, mission workers, and theology students to learn about the land of the Bible with first hand experience. Participants will gain a deeper understanding of the biblical text, the Jewish roots of the Christian faith, and the social and religious context during the time of Jesus and the early church. Students will learn to read the Bible afresh through the prism of ancient Jewish and Christian perspectives. Two goals of this course are to root the Christian story in the Land of the Bible and bring the Bible to life in new and powerful ways, with the ultimate goal to know Jesus and the Bible of the 1st century (the Older Testament) better in order to follow Him more fully as Messiah. The course is designed to challenge the student’s conceptions and deepen their understanding of the NT within its context and the application for today.

The course also uses the modern Jewish context as a case study to look at how the message of Jesus can reach different cultures today. As part of the program, participants will meet local Messianic and Arab believers, gaining an understanding of outreach and ministry needs in the Land and an inside perspective of the theological and political challenges that local believers

face. Taught by Jerusalem Seminary and Caspari Center faculty and a network of local expert lecturers, “Discovering Jesus” provides an invaluable experience for those studying and communicating the Word of God.

Course Structure:

This course will have three parts:

1. pre-trip section that will consist of one live zoom session (April 12th, 2026);
2. 10-day week study-tour in the land
3. series of lectures in person during the study-tour

Learning Outcomes:

Students will be able to:

1. Articulate the value of the perspectives of literature, language, and the land for understanding the life of Jesus.
2. Demonstrate the ways in which the Land of the Bible functions not only as a “Fifth Gospel” (to quote Jerome) but also as an integral part of the story of the Bible.
3. Assess the complexities of the realities of the Land of the Bible today.
4. Evaluate the place of space in theology, the potential role(s) of the Land in spiritual formation.
5. Defend the value of both study and practice, the integral place of knowledge and interpersonal relationships.

Textbooks:

- A “**Compilation of Readings,**” generally tied to the lectures, will be provided upon arrival.
- **Satellite Bible Atlas (SBA): Historical Geography of the Bible, 2nd edition** (2013) by William Schlegel. A physical copy of the SBA will be provided at the beginning of the course, but it can be purchased *prior* to the course [here](#) or digitally through Accordance [here](#).
- **Satellite Bible Atlas (SBA) Companion: The Land and the Bible.** Free for [download](#) and available on the Jerusalem Seminary “Discovering Jesus in His Jewish Context” Course Page.

Recommended Resources:

- *At the Feet of Rabbi Gamaliel: Rabbinic Influence in Paul's Teachings.* David Friedman. Messianic Jewish Publishers: 2013.
- *Besorah: The Resurrection of Jerusalem and the Healing of a Fractured Gospel.* Mark S. Kinzer and Russell L Resnik. Cascade Books, 2021.
- *The Carta Bible Atlas, 5th Edition.* Y. Aharoni, M. Avi-Yonah, A. F. Rainey, Z. Safrai and S. Notley (Jerusalem: Carta, 2011).
- *Introduction to Messianic Judaism: Its Ecclesial Context and Biblical Foundations.* Edited by David J. Rudolph and Joel Willitts. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2013.
- *Israel Matters: Why Christians Must Think Differently About the People and the Land.* by Gerald R. McDermott. Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2017.
- [*Jerusalem Perspective Online*](#) - a popular magazine devoted to better understanding Jesus' life and teachings, together with the language, land and culture of his day.
- *Jewish Believers in Jesus: The Early Centuries.* Edited by Oskar Skarsaune and Reidar Hvalvik. Hendrickson, 2007.
- *Jesus-believing Israelis: Exploring Messianic Fellowships.* Edited by David Serner and Alexander Goldberg. Caspari Center for Biblical and Jewish Studies: 2021.
- *Jesus the Jewish Theologian.* Brad H. Young. Baker Books: 1993.
- [*Journal of the Jesus Movement in Its Jewish Setting \(JJMJS\)*](#)
- *In the Shadow of the Temple: Jewish Influences on Early Christianity.* by Oskar Skarsaune. Downing Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002.
- *Mapping Messianic Jewish Theology: A Constructive Approach.* Paternoster: 2009.
- [*Mishkan Journal*](#) - an international journal that explores critical issues facing Jewish evangelism, Hebrew-Christian/Messianic-Jewish identity and Jewish-Christian relations.
- *Nazarene Jewish Christianity: From the End of the New Testament Period Until Its Disappearance in the Fourth Century.* Ray A. Pritz. Brill: 1988.
- *Paul the Jewish Theologian: A Pharisee among Christians, Jews, and Gentiles.* Brad H. Young. Baker Books: 1995.
- *Sitting at the Feet of Rabbi Jesus: How the Jewishness of Jesus Can Transform Your Faith.* By Lois Tverberg. See her more recent work *Reading the Bible with Rabbi Jesus: How a Jewish Perspective Can Transform Your Understanding.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016
- *We Have Found the Messiah: Jewish Believers in Antiquity* ([*Mishkan Issue 45*](#)) . Oskar Skarsaune. Caspari Center for Biblical and Jewish Studies: 2005.
- *Understanding the Jewish Roots of Christianity: Biblical, Theological, and Historical Essays on the Relationship between Christianity and Judaism.* Edited by Gerald M.McDermott. Lexham Press, 2021.

Course Expectations (for Audit):

- Participate in 10-days of in-the-land lectures and excursions.
- Fulfill feedback at the end of the course.
- If Possible:
 - Attend the live session (April 27th, 2026)
 - Read or listen to course lesson materials on the Jerusalem Seminary website, if time allows.
 - Complete a pre-trip quiz (available April 1st, 2026)

Course Requirements (for Credit):

A student's final grade will be totaled from the following percentages:

- Read, View or Listen to **Course Lesson Materials** on the Jerusalem Seminary website.
- Read the books of Deuteronomy, Matthew and Acts
- **Attend the live Zoom session (20%)**
- **Complete the quiz (10%)**
- **Actively Participate in the physical study-tour course (30%)**
- **Write a 10-12 page research paper** on a topic approved by the instructors (Robert Morehouse and Yuval Gabay). Due 11 June 2026 **(40%)**.
- Final Grades will be based on the scale of:
90-100 A, 80-89 B, 70-79 C, 60-69 D, and under 60 is no credit.

Pre-Trip Coursework:

Read:

1. **Deuteronomy, Matthew and Acts.**
2. **If possible acquire the Satellite Bible Atlas (SBA):** Historical Geography of the Bible, 2nd edition (2013) by William Schlegel.
3. ***Understanding the Jewish Roots of Christianity: Biblical, Theological, and Historical Essays on the Relationship between Christianity and Judaism.*** Edited by Gerald M.McDermott. Lexham Press, 2021.

Legal Disclaimer: This syllabus is subject to modifications which may be announced prior or during the course.

Basic Course Itinerary (10th-21st May 2026)

(Note: Readings and Details on Full Student Syllabus)

- Day 1: Arrival
- Day 2: Laying Foundations
- Day 3: The Jewish Context of NT
- Day 4: Parting of the Ways
- Day 5: A Different Judaism
- Day 6: Messianic movement
- Day 7: The Galilee of Jesus the Jew – Day 1
- Day 8: The Galilee of Jesus the Jew - Day 2
- Day 9: Jewish Reading of NT
- Day 10: From Jewish Roots towards Contextualization
- Day 11: Working Together for the Kingdom
- Day 12: Checkout and Departure

General Resource List (*select portions or chapters available on JS website):

- *Ancient Israel: From Abraham to the Roman Destruction of the Temple*, Fourth Edition. Hershel Shanks (editor) Washington DC: Biblical Archaeological Society, 2019.
- *The Carta Bible Atlas*, 5th Edition. Y. Aharoni, M. Avi-Yonah, A. F. Rainey, Z. Safrai and S. Notley (Jerusalem: Carta, 2011).
- More resources on the full student syllabus

To apply please start [here](#)!