

Caitlin Zuschlag
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Section A

Chapter 4 Key Terms

Hebrew monotheism

Hebrews were tribal people from Mesopotamia. They worshiped a single all-powerful god called Yahweh or Jehovah. Revelations became the cornerstone of Western religious life. The god of the Hebrews transcended nature. Monotheism is the fundamental tenet of the three great world religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

The covenant

The bond between Jesus and the Hebrews.

Torah

In Hebrew Torah means "instruction." It became the earliest portion of the Bible. It includes Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

The prophets

"Those who speak for another." They denounced moral laxity, rekindled monotheistic fervor, and championed social justice. Prophets were divinely inspirational teachers.

Babylonian Captivity

The Babylonian Captivity was a long period of Jewish exile beginning in 586 B.C.E. Chaldean king Nebuchadnezzar attacked Jerusalem, raided Solomon's temple and took inhabitants into bondage. It was freed by Persians in 539 B.C.E. The Jews returned to Judah. They reconstructed their communities and rebuilt the Temple.

Pharisees/Sadducees/Essenes

The Pharisees were a scribal class of rabbis. They anticipated the advent of a spiritual redeemer who would usher the righteous to eternal salvation and the wicked to damnation. The Sadducees were a group of Jews who followed a strict and literal interpretation of the Torah; they envisioned the Messiah as a temporal leader who would rescue the Jews from political bondage to Rome. The Essenes were a minor religious sect living in small monastic communities near the Dead Sea, renounced worldly possessions and practiced a life of strict self-denial.

Mystery cults

The cults of Isis in Egypt, Cybele in Phrygia, Dionysus in Greece, and Mithra in Persia are known as mystery cults because their initiation rituals were secret. These cults embraced symbolic acts of spiritual death and rebirth. They had a ritual baptism and a communal meal at which the flesh and blood of the god was consumed. Mithraism was the most wide spread mystery cult.

Jesus/Paul

Jesus grew up in Nazareth during the reign of Octavian, a Roman emperor. He was born from Mary and Joseph. Mary gave a virgin birth. Paul was a Jewish telemarketer from Tarsus in Asia Minor. He received schooling in both Greek and Hebrew.

Gospels

Gospel means Good News. The Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) are the Christian writings that describe his life and teaching. The Gospels recount the revelations of God to Jesus. They were originally written in Greek and Aramaic. Paul is believed to have written 10-14 of the books in the New Testament.

Monasticism

Monasticism is the religious practice in which one renounces worldly pursuits in order to fully devote one's life to spiritual work. The origin of the word is from Ancient Greek, and the idea was originally related to Christian monks.

Latin church fathers

There were four Latin Church fathers: Jerome, Ambrose, Gregory, and Augustine. Saint Jerome translated the New Testaments of the Greek and Hebrew Bible into Latin. Ambrose fused Hebrew, Greek, and Southwest Asian traditions in formulating Christian doctrine and liturgy. He also wrote some of the earliest Christian hymns for congregational use. Gregory was vital to the development of the early church government. He established the administrative machinery by which all subsequent popes would govern the Church of Rome. He sent missionaries to convert England to Christianity. Augustine of Hippo converted to Christianity at the age of 33.

Christian symbolism

Christian signs and symbols contain deeper meanings than what they appear to have. In the discipline of iconography these symbols are studied and scrutinized. The most famous of the Christian symbols is the cross.

Byzantine culture

Byzantium was another name for the Eastern Roman Empire, which flourished for almost 5 centuries after the birth of Jesus before being destroyed by the Goths and other savages. Byzantine culture was very much like the Greeks. It was dominated by strong religious view, architecture, and meaningful artwork.

Five Pillars of Islam

The Five pillars of Islam are the basic rules governing Islamic religion. They are confession of faith, recitation of prayers five times a day, charitable contribution to welfare of the Islamic community, fasting from dawn to sunset during the sacred month of Ramadan, and pilgrimage to the city of Mecca.

The Quran

The Quran is the Holy Bible of Islam. It consists of 114 chapters that many Muslims commit to memory. The Muslim Holy Scripture reveals the nature of God, the inevitability of judgment, and resurrection. It is

the Muslim guide to proper worship, and for moral and social behavior. It provides a system of social justice and a universal ethic. Muslims consider the Quran the absolute and eternal word of God.

Muslim expansion

The Muslim empire ruled the central world from the 7th century to the 8th century. Muhammad's conquests were far spread and long lasting. Islam quickly became a large part of Northern Africa, Spain, and much of western Asia.

Synagogue/church/mosque

A synagogue is a Jewish house of prayer. A church building is a building or structure whose primary purpose is to facilitate the meeting of a church.

Music and liturgy

Muslims regarded music as a forbidden pleasure. Although many Muslim prayers incorporate singing and harmonic chanting, Muslims forbid the use of music for anything other than religious practices. Mosques are types of buildings dedicated for Islamic worship.

Buddha and Buddhism

Buddha urged his followers to form their own pathway to salvation. He taught that to arrive at nirvana (everlasting peace). There is an eightfold path that one must follow. They must do everything in life just right, not too much, and not too little. Buddhism rewarded his followers by allowing them to escape from the cycle of death and rebirth.