

Five Types of Judaism at the Time of Jesus

Pharisees

- A. Not professional hypocrites
- B. Emphasized keeping the Law (Torah) to the farthest degree
 - a. Did not keep the law to be saved but because it is the highest revelation of God
 - b. Believed the Oral Law was given on Mt. Sinai (later called the Mishnah)
 - c. “Modernized” the law
 - d. Erected “fence laws”
- C. Emphasis on personal holiness especially with reference to food
- D. Pharisees were lay people (except for the Scribes who were trained)
- E. Survived the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in AD 70

Essenes

- A. Ascetic tendency
 - a. Focused on ritual purity (Mikveh)
 - b. Celibacy (in certain communities)
 - c. Many Essenes lived out in the desert (Qumran)
- B. Believed the temple was polluted
- C. Apocalyptic movement
 - a. Dualistic
 - b. Ready to fight
 - c. Waiting for Messiah to come
- D. Dead Sea Scrolls
 - a. Believed to be written by Essenes

Sadducees

- A. priestly Jews
- B. emphasis is on the temple
 - a. operated temple
 - b. had to exchange money from pagan money to the shekel
 - c. temple police
- C. small but powerful aristocracy
- D. intermediaries between Roman government and the Jewish people
- E. strongly Hellenized
- F. did not believe in resurrection, angels, or an after life

Fourth Philosophy (Zealots)

- A. Emphasis on the God given land
- B. Revolutionaries
 - a. Nationalistic

Matthew 3:1-12 Now in those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, ² "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." ³ For this is the one referred to by Isaiah the prophet when he said, "THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, 'MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT!'" ⁴ Now John himself had a garment of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵ Then Jerusalem was going out to him, and all Judea and all the district around the Jordan; ⁶ and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, as they confessed their sins

Luke 3:1-20 Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, ² in the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness. ³ And he came into all the district around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins; ⁴ as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, "THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, 'MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT. ⁵ 'EVERY RAVINE WILL BE FILLED, AND EVERY MOUNTAIN AND HILL WILL BE BROUGHT LOW; THE CROOKED WILL BECOME STRAIGHT, AND THE ROUGH ROADS SMOOTH; ⁶ AND ALL FLESH WILL SEE THE SALVATION OF GOD.'" ⁷ ¶ So he *began* saying to the crowds who were going out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸ "Therefore bear fruits in keeping with repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father,' for I say to you that from these stones God is able to raise up children to Abraham. ⁹ "Indeed the axe is already laid at the root of the trees; so every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." ¹⁰ ¶ And the crowds were questioning him, saying, "Then what shall we do?" ¹¹ And he would answer and say to them, "The man who has two tunics is to share with him who has none; and he who has food is to do likewise." ¹² And *some* tax collectors also came to be baptized, and they said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?" ¹³ And he said to them, "Collect no more than what you have been ordered to." ¹⁴ *Some* soldiers were questioning him, saying, "And *what about* us, what shall we do?" And he said to them, "Do not take money from anyone by force, or accuse *anyone* falsely, and be content with your wages." ¹⁵ ¶ Now while the people were in a state of expectation and all were wondering in their hearts about John, as to whether he was the Christ, ¹⁶ John answered and said to them all, "As for me, I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ "His winnowing fork is in His hand to thoroughly clear His threshing floor, and to gather the wheat into His barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." ¹⁸ ¶ So with many other exhortations he preached the gospel to the people. ¹⁹ But when Herod the tetrarch was reprimanded by him because of Herodias, his brother's wife, and because of all the wicked things which Herod had done, ²⁰ Herod also added this to them all: he locked John up in prison.

Mark 6:17-29 ¹⁷ For Herod himself had sent and had John arrested and bound in prison on account of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip, because he had married her. ¹⁸ For John had been saying to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." ¹⁹ Herodias had a grudge against him and wanted to put him to death and could not *do so*; ²⁰ for Herod was afraid of John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he kept him safe. And when he heard him, he was very perplexed; but he used to enjoy listening to him. ²¹ A strategic day came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his lords and military commanders and the leading men of Galilee; ²² and when the daughter of Herodias herself came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his dinner guests; and the king said to the girl, "Ask me for whatever you want and I will give it to you." ²³ And he swore to her, "Whatever you ask of me, I will give it to you; up to half of my kingdom." ²⁴ And she went out and said to her mother, "What shall I ask for?" And she said, "The head of John the Baptist." ²⁵ Immediately she came in a hurry to the king and asked, saying, "I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter." ²⁶ And although the king was very sorry, *yet* because of his oaths and because of his dinner guests, he was unwilling to refuse her. ²⁷ Immediately the king sent an executioner and commanded *him* to bring *back* his head. And he went and had him beheaded in the prison, ²⁸ and brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl; and the girl gave it to her mother. ²⁹ When his disciples heard *about this*, they came and took away his body and laid it in a tomb.