

RLST 124I: Varieties of Ancient Judaism
Spring 2009
Handout #10 (May 28, 2009)
“Jewish Time and Space”

synagogue: lit., “congregation”; originally, term used to describe the community of Jews in a given locality (e.g., “the synagogue of Rome”); eventually also used to describe the physical building in which Jews convene for social and ritual purposes

proseuchē: lit., “prayer [house]”; a term used to describe the building in which Jews communally prayed
ark (*’aron qodes*): *Torah* shrine; a portable (and, later, architecturally embedded) case to hold the scrolls of the *Torah*

aniconism: principled avoidance of anthropomorphic representation in art (of humans or divine figures); often ascribed to rabbinic Judaism, as an interpretation on the 2nd Commandment (ban on “graven images”)

bet midrash: “house of study”; rabbinic school house, eventually overlapping with or appended to the synagogue

luni-solar calendar: the Jewish calendar operates on a lunar monthly cycle regularly calibrated to match the solar year

liturgy: literally, “service”; any regular, structured worship service or ritual

shema: the monotheistic confession of Jewish faith (Deut 6:4: *Hear O Israel, YHWH our God is one God*); with various other biblical passages and prayers appended, a central part of the rabbinic liturgy

’Amidah (*Shemoneh Esreh*; also *Tefilah* [= “Prayer”]): a series of 18 (later, 19) “benedictions,” or blessings, recited three times a day while standing; the heart of the rabbinic prayer liturgy

Birkat ha-Mazon: “Grace after the Meals”: benedictions recited after a communal meal

Jewish Annual Festivals

* an asterisk indicates that the foundation for the festival is found in the *Tanak*

Fall

*New Year’s-Day of Atonement (*Rosh Hashanah*,

Yom Kippur)

*Festival of Booths (*Sukkot*)

Winter

Rededication (*Hanukkah*)

Spring

*Festival of Lots (*Purim*)

*Passover (*Pesah*)

Summer

*Festival of Weeks (*Shavuot*)

Ninth of ’Ab (*Tisha B’av*)

mikveh (pl. *mikva’ot*): ritual bath used for ritual purification and (in later rabbinic period) initiation and conversion

kashrut (n.) / **kosher** (adj.) / **kasher** (v.): literally, “[to make/be] appropriate, fitting,” applied to food that meets the criteria of Jewish dietary laws either according to kind of foodstuff or manner of preparation

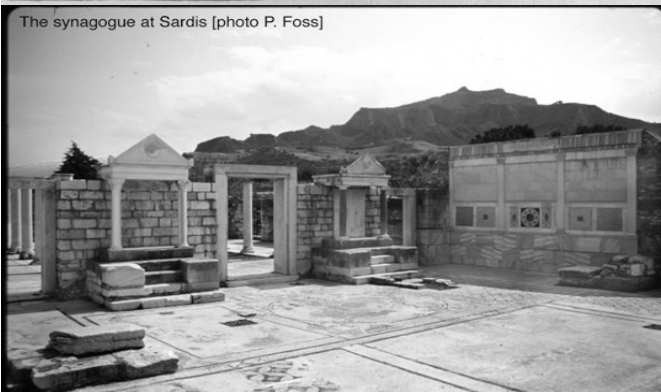
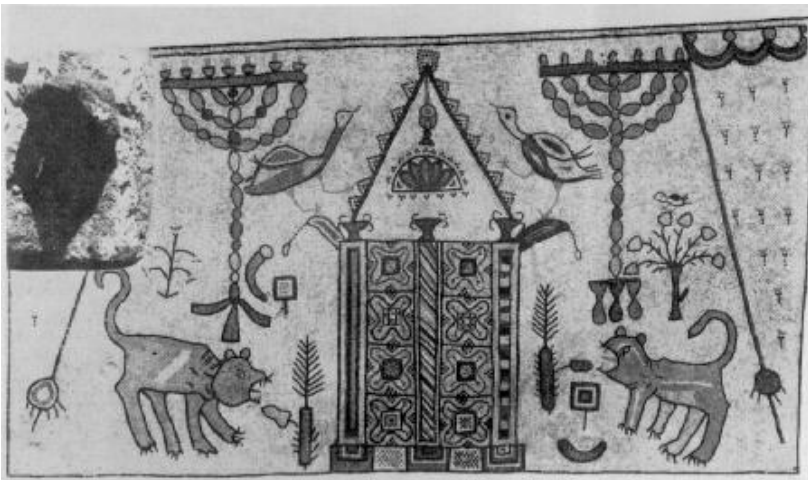
“You shall not boil a kid [*a goat*] in its mother’s milk” (Exodus 23:10, Exodus 34:26, Deuteronomy 14:21)

ketubah: literally, “document”: a marriage contract

kiddushin: literally, “sanctification”: Jewish wedding ritual

matrilineal descent: principle by which religion of the child is reckoned according to the religion of the mother: i.e., the child of a Jewish mother and gentile father is Jewish, but the child of a gentile mother and Jewish father is not Jewish

RLST 124I: Varieties of Ancient Judaism
Spring 2009
Handout #10 (May 26, 2009)
"Jewish Time and Space"-2



Figures (top to bottom):
Central Mosaic floor of *Bet Alfa* synagogue
(6th century CE, southern Galilee): "Zodiac"

Detail of center medallion of floor mosaic

Floor mosaic of *Beit Alfa*: "Temple sanctuary"

Remains of the synagogue of Sardis
(with Torah shrine [*ark*] to the left)
(western Turkey)