Glossary

Allegory: In Christian biblical interpretation, a form of reading that takes elements in the written text as symbolizing other, spiritual realities; the premise is that such meanings were in God's mind even if not in the human author's. In the fully developed medieval framework, the *allegorical* referred to Christ and the Church, whereas the *tropological* referred to the moral life, and the *anagogical* referred to eschatological realities. But allegory can also be used for all "higher" meanings beyond the literal or historical sense.

Apocryphal: Literature that is not included in the official canon of Scripture in Judaism or Christianity.

Asceticism: A way of life characterized by discipline and avoidance of the pleasures of the body. In Christianity, it is often connected to a dualistic view of the world.

Byzantium/Byzantine: The ancient city renamed Constantinople when Constantine made it the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire. *Byzantine* is applied to the empire that survived until the taking of the city by the Turks in 1453 and is also used for the largest family of New Testament manuscripts (also called the *koine* tradition).

Canon: From the Greek term meaning "measure," the standard collection of texts regarded as scriptural and the normative writings of a community, Jewish or Christian.

Christ/Christology: The Greek term *Christos* means "anointed one" and translates the Hebrew term *messiah*; Christology is the understanding of the identity, nature, and functions of Jesus as Christian messiah.

Codex: The earliest form of the "book," with leaves or pages (usually of papyrus) folded and stitched (or glued) together so that writing appears on both sides, the *recto* and the *verso*.

Constantinople: The "New Rome" founded by Constantine the Great in 333; the religious and political rival of Rome from the 4th century forward.

Council of Trent: The Roman Catholic response to the Protestant Reformation, called the Counter-Reformation, was crystallized in a series of meetings between 1545 and 1563 that decisively shaped the Catholic Church for the next 400 years.

Creed: From the Latin *Credo*, "I believe," a formal statement of belief. Christians recite either the Apostle's Creed or the Nicene Creed in worship, but many other professions of faith were produced by branches of the Reformation.

Crusades: Between the 11th and 14th centuries, a series of military expeditions sponsored by popes and Christian kings in an effort to wrest control of the Holy Land from the Muslims. The "crusading spirit" got carried over into the internecine Wars of Religion among Christians after the Reformation.

Diaspora: Any place Jews lived that was not the land of Palestine or *eretz Israel*; after the failed Bar Kochba Revolt in 135 C.E., Judaism essentially became a diaspora religion.

Edict of Milan: The declaration of tolerance for Christianity enacted by Constantine in 313 that gave Christians freedom to practice their faith.

Ekklesia: Greek term that means basically "assembly" and gave rise to disputed translations of "church" or "congregation."

Enlightenment: The intellectual movement in Europe that presented the greatest threat to the "biblical world" because of its reliance on human reason more than on the assumed authority of revelation.

Essenes: A sect within Judaism in 1st-century Palestine, dedicated to the strict observance of the Law and identified by many (though not all) with the sectarians at Qumran who produced the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Gnostics/Gnosticism: Within Christianity, a movement of the 2nd–4th centuries that challenged the organizational form of the religion on the basis of new revelational literature that advanced a strongly dualistic understanding of reality and an individualized spirituality based on a higher form of knowledge (*gnosis* = "knowledge").

Gospel: The Greek term *euangelion* originally referred to the good news from and about God in the death and resurrection of Jesus; it gained the additional sense of a narrative about the ministry of Jesus.

Hellenism: In the broadest sense, the Greek culture that dominated the Mediterranean world after Alexander the Great; both Judaism and Christianity worked out their identity in the context of Hellenism.

Heresy: The Greek term *hairesis* means a "party" or "opinion." In Christianity, it means a misunderstood or distorted understanding of doctrine. Thus, *heresy* is opposed to *orthodoxy*, but which is what depends on the point of view of the speaker.

Hermit: An individual who lives in solitude for the sake of complete devotion to prayer and worship. Early Christian monasticism in Egypt and Syria tended toward the *eremitical* (living completely alone) or *semi-eremitical* style (living alone except for meals and worship).

Inerrant: "Without error"; a conviction some Christians, above all, Fundamentalists, hold with respect to Scripture. Inerrancy is sometimes applied to every word and sometimes to a broader concept, such as "teaching on faith and morals."

Inspiration: The conviction that God's Holy Spirit is at work in the production of Scripture. In Judaism and Christianity, the conviction is a statement concerning the origin and authority of the text and is compatible with human authorship.

Jabneh/Jamnia: A city near Joppa where, according to tradition, a rabbinic council was held around 90 C.E. to determine the canon of the Jewish Bible.

Kabbalah: "Tradition," understood as an esoteric interpretation of Torah and of reality itself; the dominant form of mysticism in medieval Judaism, given greatest impetus by the Zohar ("book of splendor").

Karaism: The Jewish movement started in the 8th century by Anan ben David that challenged the complexity of the Talmudic tradition and called for a return to Torah alone.

Ketuvim: Hebrew term meaning "writings"; the designation for the third and most variable portion of TaNaK, including such works as Job and the Psalms.

Koine: The Greek noun means "common/standard." In language, it refers to the form of Greek used in the Hellenistic period. In text criticism, it refers to the large family of manuscripts also designated as *Byzantine*.

Lectio Divina: Latin that is literally "divine reading" but refers to the practice of individual reading of Scripture in a meditative manner within the monastic context.

Majuscule*/*Minuscule: Two forms of writing manuscripts in Greek. *Majuscule* uses only capital letters, and the letters are not linked. *Minuscule* uses only small (non-capital) letters, often linked together to form *cursive* ("running") script; this is the form in which most manuscripts after the 9th century C.E. were written.

Manuscript: A text written by hand with ink and stylus on a prepared surface, whether parchment or vellum or, more commonly, papyrus.

Marcionism: A Christian heresy named from Marcion of Sinope (d. 160) who advanced a radical dualism: Creation was the work of an evil God (of the Jews), and Jesus revealed a hidden God who called humans from the prison of materiality. Marcion thought that only 10 of Paul's Letters and an edited version of Luke's Gospel should be "canonical."

Masoretic text: The official form of the Hebrew text of the Jewish Bible, supervised for centuries by rabbis called the *Masoretes*, who stabilized the consonantal text by inserting vowel markings and accents.

Merkavah: Literally, "throne-chariot"; a form of Jewish mysticism already, in the early rabbinic period, focused on the divine presence symbolized by Ezechiel's description of God's glory in the opening of his prophecy.

Messiah: In Hebrew, the "anointed one," whose role was to deliver the Jewish people from danger and restore them as a people; the concept is both individual and communal. In Christianity, it is applied to Jesus; in Judaism, it has had several referents.

Midrash: Derived from the Hebrew term *darash*, "to seek," the noun refers to forms of biblical interpretation (and contemporary application) beyond *peshat*, or the simple, literal, historical sense. When applied to legal texts, it is called *halakhic midrash*, and when applied to non-legal texts, it is called *haggadic midrash*.

Mishnah: The authoritative collection of legal opinions (*halakha*) compiled by Judah ha Nasi (Judah the Prince) c. 200 C.E., which formed the basis of the Talmud.

Monophysitism: A Christian heresy that so emphasized the divinity of Christ that it insisted he had only "one nature" (*mono-physis*), namely, the divine, and was less than fully human.

Nestorianism: A Christian heresy stemming from a Syrian teacher called Nestorius (d. 451) that emphasized the humanity of Christ and denied his

full divinity and, thus, opposed calling Mary "Mother of God" as the Orthodox insisted.

Neviim: Hebrew term meaning "prophets," the designation for the second section of TaNaK, consisting of the Former Prophets (narrative works) and Latter Prophets (poetic works).

New Testament: The 27 compositions in Greek that form the traditional Christian canon and, with the "Old Testament," form the Christian Bible.

Old Testament: The term used by Christians for the writings of the Jewish Bible (read by the first Christians in the form of the Septuagint), to which the writings of the New Testament were appended to form the Christian Bible.

Opus Dei: Literally, "the work of God," referring to the round of public prayer carried out by choir monks and consisting largely of the recitation of the Psalms and other passages of Scripture. Also called the *Divine Office*.

Ora et labora: The ideal balance of the monastic life as depicted in Benedict of Nursia's *Rule for Monks*: "prayer and work."

Palimpsest: A manuscript on which an original text has been written over (*palin* = "again") with another. The most famous example is Codex Ephraemi rescriptus, on which the original Greek of the New Testament was covered by the sermons of Saint Ephraem.

Papyrus: The writing material produced from the papyrus plant. The writing surface is made by pressing split papyrus reeds together, horizontal on vertical. The horizontal surface (*recto*) is smoother and receives print more easily than the vertical side (*verso*).

Patristic: From the Latin *pater* ("father"), the term used to designate the literature produced in Christianity between the 1st and 6th centuries by the "fathers of the Church."

Persecutions: The series of efforts—some local, some general—to eliminate the Christian movement through force, reaching a climax in the persecution of Diocletian in 303. After the empire became Christian, heretics and Jews were also persecuted. In the period of the Reformation, dissident Christians in various countries were persecuted by the form of Christianity in power.

Peshat: Hebrew term used by medieval Jewish commentators for the literal, historical sense of the Bible. See also ***pesher***.

Pesher: Hebrew term meaning "interpretation" and used at Qumran for its sectarian interpretation of the Prophets and Psalms with reference to the experience of the community. See also ***peshat***.

Pharisee/Pharisaism: The 1st-century Jewish sect in Palestine that was committed to a close fellowship based on the strict interpretation of Torah, which was enabled through *midrash*. The Pharisees regarded such interpretation as the Oral Torah. Their convictions became standard for Judaism after the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E.

Pilgrimage: The practice of traveling (often in groups) to a place considered as holy to gain benefit from the power present through the influence of the saint or martyr commemorated at that place.

Pistis Christou: A Greek phrase found in the Letters of Paul whose translation is debated among scholars today: Should it be understood as "Christ's faith" (in God) or (the Christian's) "faith in Christ"? Both are legitimate renderings of the Greek, but the theological implication is significant.

Presbyter: Greek term for a community official used by the New Testament that could be translated (controversially) either as "priest" or "elder."

Pseudepigrapha: Literally, "things falsely written," referring to literature that is produced in a name not the author's own, usually a famous person of the past, as in the First Book of Enoch. Such literature is also termed *pseudonymous*.

Purgatory: In Roman Catholicism, a place or time of purgation after death for the cleansing of the soul of venial sins.

Reformation: The broad term used for efforts to reform the Church in the 16th century. Usually used with reference to Protestantism (associated with Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Cranmer, and others), but it can also be used for the Roman Catholic Counter-Reformation (see also **Council of Trent**).

Renaissance: Literally "rebirth"; the intellectual and cultural movements in Europe from the 14th through the 16th centuries that ended the medieval period and provided a transition to the modern era.

Sachkritik: German for "content criticism." The principle enunciated by Martin Luther that even the New Testament needs to be tested on the basis of its ability to proclaim the truth of the Gospel. In Luther's view, the Letter of James fell short.

Sacra Pagina: Latin for "sacred page," a term that was used for Scripture within the monastic context, suggesting a reading carried out more for the sake of wisdom than knowledge.

Sadducees: One of the sects or parties in 1st-century Palestinian Judaism made up primarily of the priestly class, whose piety centered in the worship of the Temple and who recognized only the five books of Moses as Scripture.

Samaritans: Inhabitants of the ancient northern kingdom of Israel (Samaria) and rivals of the Judeans (Jews) who worshipped at their own temple at Shechem and recognized only the five books of Moses as authoritative.

Scholasticism: Term used for the methods of argumentation and debate in the great medieval universities, such as Paris and Oxford. From the 12th century, Scholastic philosophy and theology forged a synthesis of Christianity and Greek philosophy (especially Aristotle in the form of translation).

Scribe: Someone who writes. In ancient Judaism, scribes were men associated with the Pharisees as advocating the *midrashic* reading of Torah; in Christianity, the term was used for those who copied manuscripts.

Scriptorium: The place where manuscripts are copied in monastic communities from Qumran to Cluny.

Scroll: The form in which most ancient manuscripts of Torah appear: Pieces of parchment or vellum are stitched end to end to form a long strip that can be rolled over a staff, with writing on one side only; the scroll is read by "unscrolling"—exposing new sections of text by turning the staff.

Sefirot: In Kabbalism, the emanation or radiation of the divine splendor throughout creation, in contrast to the divine being in itself (*Ein-Sof*). The human task is gathering these divine elements back to their source in a process called *tikkun ha olam* ("mending the world").

Septuagint: Abbreviated as LXX because of the tradition concerning 70 translators, the version of the Jewish Bible in Greek that was completed c. 250 B.C.E. and was used heavily by the first Christians as their "Scripture."

Sod: Literally, "secret"; in Jewish biblical interpretation, the finding of esoteric meanings in the exoteric text, beyond *peshat* and *darash*. An early example is *Merkavah* mysticism, and a later example is *kabbalah*.

Sola Fide: Part of the slogan connected to Martin Luther; "by faith alone" challenges the medieval Catholic system of canon law and Scholastic theology on the basis of Paul's teaching that humans are made right with God by faith rather than by works of the law.

Sola Scriptura: Latin, meaning "by Scripture alone"; part of the slogan connected to Martin Luther but widely shared by reformers, namely, that all Christian thought and practice should be measured exclusively by Scripture rather than human tradition.

Synoptics: The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, so called because their literary resemblance and interdependence enables them to be printed in three columns that can be viewed simultaneously (syn-optic).

Talmud: The compilation of rabbinic learning and lore based in the study of Torah. Its basis is the Mishnah of Judah ha Nasi (in Hebrew), to which is added the Gemara, or commentary and discussion, of the rabbis in succeeding centuries (in Aramaic). The Talmud appears in two versions: the Babylonian Talmud, more authoritative for Jewish life for centuries, and the Talmud of the Land of Israel. The Talmud itself was the basis for further commentary through the centuries.

TaNaK: Proper name of the Jewish Bible (also Tanakh), an acronym formed from the three main parts of the Bible: Torah, Neviim (Prophets), and Ketuvim (Writings).

Targums: Aramaic translations/paraphrases of Torah that were first delivered orally in the worship of the synagogue and, eventually, found their way into writing; the earliest "version" of the Jewish Bible besides the Septuagint.

Teacher of Righteousness: Figure spoken of in the Dead Sea Scrolls as the source of the sectarian interpretation of Scripture practiced at Qumran; possibly the founder of the community.

Textus Receptus (TR): The Greek text of the New Testament on which many Reformation-era translations (including the Authorized or King James Version) were based; it is the Erasmus edition of 1516 emended by the Complutensian Polyglot and further improved by Theodore Beza.

Torah: Jewish designation for the first five books of the Bible and, by extension, to the entire tradition of lore and learning derived from the Bible as a whole.

Uncial: A form of Greek script called *majuscule* (written entirely in capital rather than small letters); the style in which the great codices of the 4th–5th centuries were written.

Vulgate: The translation/revision of the Latin version of the Bible carried out by Jerome by the commission of Damasus I at the end of the 4th century, which became the standard text used throughout Western Christianity and the official version of the Roman Catholic Church.

Zealots: A party or sect (sometimes called the *Fourth Philosophy*) in 1st-century Palestinian Judaism who sought military victory over Rome and the reestablishment of a Jewish nation.