From Judaism to Christianity

1. The development of an after-world in the Hellenistic empire
   1. Traditional Jewish perception of the afterworld, and heaven (e.g. story of Jacob’s ladder)
   2. The Maccabee revolt against Greek rule, destruction of the Jerusalem temple (165) and development of a kingdom in heaven.
2. Development of the idea of a messiah (Christ—in Greek), and the apocalypse (final judgment day)
3. Jewish denominations under the Roman empire:
   1. Saducees: (the fundamentalists: a literal adherence to the Bible)
   2. Pharisees: the interpretation of the Bible as well as adherence to laws.
   3. Essenes: God’s final judgment and the ritual initiation of baptism to cleanse the initiate of their sins.
   4. Radicals: who believed apocalypse would happen any day and the Romans should be overthrown.
4. The teachings of Jesus of Nazareth: Jesus came from a Pharisee background, but was also influenced by the Essenes. Jesus (6 BC-30 AD) did not preach anything new, but did not bury his teachings under legalistic reasoning, as many Jewish rabbi did. He was put to death because of fear that people would take him as the Messiah.
   1. Love, tolerance, and obedience to laws (in contrast to open resistance)
   2. (because) ultimate justice was to be carried out in heaven.
   3. Importance of human intentions (available in Judaism, but further developed here)
5. The execution of Jesus:
   1. Explanation one: the popularity of Jesus threatened the power of the ruling Jewish religious authority. So they had Jesus arrested and crucified by the Roman governor of Syria Pilate.
   2. Explanation two: the popularity of Jesus made the Jewish leaders gravely concerned about social order in Judea, currently under Roman rule. To prevent Roman persecution of the Jews because of civil unrest, they handed Jesus over to Pilate.
   3. Black (Good) Friday and Easter Sunday (resurrection)
6. Nazarethans after Jesus
   1. Spreading the teachings to Jews in the diaspora
   2. Contact with Non-Jews and modifications of teachings (e.g. dietary laws, and circumcision law)
   3. Jesus’s teachings on intentions and the spirit of the laws prevailed over specific laws.
   4. Paul of Tarsus.
   5. From Jesus (a Jewish rabbi) to Christ (Hellenized form of the Messiah, also indicating the difference that had hence developed between Jesus’s followers, and believers in Judaism).