In this course, we explore ancient Palestine from the destruction of Solomon’s Temple (586 B.C.) to the Muslim conquest (640 A.D). The slide-illustrated lectures introduce students to the relevant historical background, the major archaeological sites, and the material culture (pottery, coins, etc). The topics we cover include Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls, Herod’s fortress at Masada, ancient Jerusalem, and the development of ancient synagogues and churches. Special attention is devoted to the time of King Herod the Great and the world of Jesus.