**Groups Within Judaism at the Time of Jesus**

**The Great Majority**

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| * The vast majority of Jews were poor. * Jesus showed them the respect and care that most did not. * Jesus identified his mission as one to the poor, outcast, blind, oppressed & imprisoned.   A small faction of great majority: Tax collectors!! Jewish people reviled them, thought of them as traitors. |

**Sadducees Pharisees**

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| * Mostly priests who saw no harm in compromising the Jewish laws with the Greek and Roman laws to keep peace. * Torah: devoted to it. * Sanhedrin (a class of high priests): preserving the sanctity of the Temple. * Had a great deal of social power. * Wealthy   ­­­ | * Well-educated, lay, religious Jewish leaders whose main focus was keeping Jews faithful to the Law. * Sticklers for Letter of the Law (little room for compassion for “sinners”) * Strict dietary laws. No pork! * Cleansing rituals before entering holy space. |

**Scribes Essenes Zealots**

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| -Jewish scholars who assisted in writing and telling Jews about their religious traditions.  -Teachers  -Associated with Pharisees and Sadducees. | -Members of a Jewish sect who thought they were among God’s elect.  -Disliked “corruption” in the Temple – they sought a purer faith.  -Separated themselves from society. Lived in areas around the desert.  -They were waiting for the end of the world to claim their peace with God. | -Militant Jews who rebelled against Roman authority and battled for the recovery of Jewish independence. Wanted no presence of foreigners in their land, especially Romans.  -Waited for a “militant Messiah” who would deliver them from the Romans |