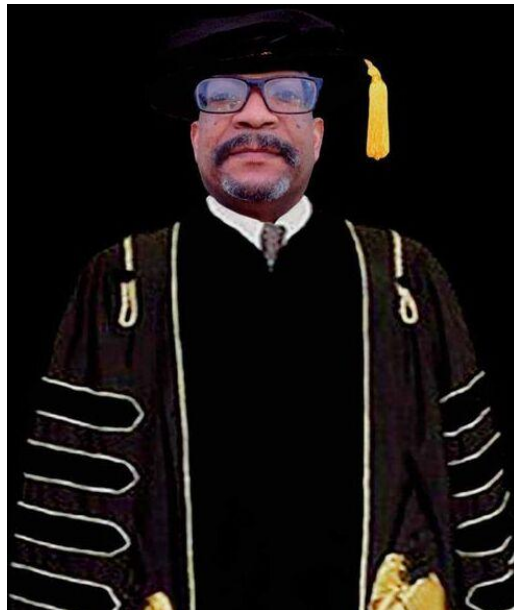

JESUS MASTER OF LAW:

A Juridical Science of Christianity and the Law of Equity

The Tenth Anniversary!



by

*Prof. Dr. Roderick Andrew Lee Ford, Litt.D., D.Jur., LL.D.
Senior Fellow and Chancellor of St. Clements University*



SPECIAL DEDICATION



St. John's Center for Law & Religion

[St. John's University School of Law Names the Denise '90 and Michael '91 Mattone Center for Law and Religion | St. John's University](#)

January 28, 2025

St. Johns School of Law
Center for Law and Religion
Attn: Mark L. Movsesian, Director
8000 Utopia Parkway, Queens NY 11439

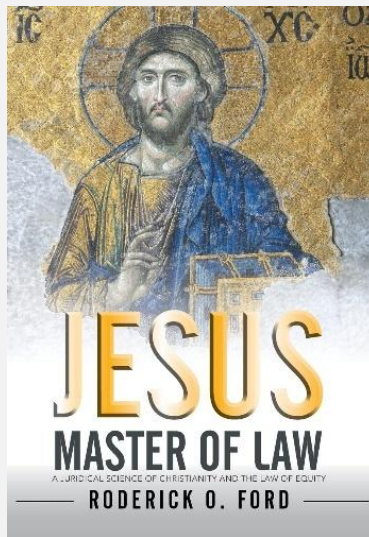
Dear Mr. Movsesian:

It has now been **10 years** since the St. Johns University's Center for Law and Religion announced the release of my publication:

Jesus Master of Law: A Juridical Science of Christianity and the Law of Equity (2015).¹

You may purchase an original copy at Amazon here:

<https://www.amazon.com/Jesus-Master-Law-Juridical-Christianity/dp/1503534049>



¹ See St. John's University's Center for Law and Religion's announcement of that release at <https://lawandreligionforum.org/2015/01/28/ford-jesus-master-of-law/>.

Special thanks go out to my Roman Catholic friends at the St. Johns Centre for Law and Religion for helping to promote my book, *Jesus Master of Law: A Juridical Science of Christianity and the Law of Equity!*

Ever since I was a law student at the University of Illinois (more than 30 years ago, *believe it or not!*) I conceptualized myself as being a member of the Black Church, as well as an African American law student who was *desperately seeking* to understand and articulate the Judea-Christian foundations of African American-oriented civil rights.

Jesus Master of Law (2015) is thus an encyclopedic work which reflects that ongoing research. It demonstrates my most mature thoughts upon this subject matter up to the year 2015.

Now it is ten years later following publication.

What, if anything, would I add or change in *Jesus Master of Law*?

For one thing, I would delete several sections of some of the redundant materials. This book would easily be 100 pages shorter in length.

Next, in addition to the long historical analysis devoted to the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of England, I would add a *new chapter* on Judaism, the Jews, and the Jewish approach to the Torah and to secular law.²

² See, e.g., **Jewish Virtual Library**, "Israel Judicial Branch: Beit Din & Judges From Bible to Modern Times" <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/beit-din-and-judges-in-israel-from-bible-to-modern-times>

See, e.g., **Exodus 18: 25-26** ("And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. And they judged the people at all seasons: the hard causes they brought unto Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves.")

See, e.g., **Deuteronomy 16: 18-20** ("Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, throughout thy tribes: and they shall judge the people with just judgment. Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the

During the three years of conducting the research for this work, I did not know, at that time, that by describing Jesus of Nazareth as a “**Master of Law,**” that I was unwittingly and actually describing the usual and typical role of the **first-century Jewish rabbi**.

Indeed, “[o]ur rabbis,” wrote distinguished Alan Dershowitz in *Abraham: The World’s First (But Certainly Not Last) Jewish Lawyer,* “**have served as advocates, judges, and lawmakers, resolving disputes among quarreling Jews for centuries.**”³

Coincidentally, and perhaps providentially, both my own book *Jesus Master of Law* and Professor Dershowitz’s *Abraham: The World’s First (But Certainly Not Last) Jewish Lawyer* were published in 2015.

In retrospect, I wish that I had been afforded the privilege of reading Professor Dershowitz’s book, *Abraham*, before I published *Jesus Master of Law* in 2015; because in *Abraham*, Dershowitz vividly depicts Jesus of Nazareth within the Jewish sacred law tradition, while even explicitly describing **Jesus as “a talented ‘lawyer,’** employing legal logic to defeat older rabbis in disputations.”⁴

Moreover, Professor Dershowitz’s *Abraham* goes on to describe the Jewish lawyer in general as an “Abrahamic idol smasher, advocate, collaborator, rescuer, and deal maker,” while concluding, “**whenever the downtrodden need legal representation, you will often find a Jewish lawyer refusing to stand idly by, repairing the world, showing compassion, and seeking justice.**”⁵

righteous. That which is altogether just shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live, and inherit the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.”)

³ Alan Dershowitz, *Abraham: The World’s First (But Certainly Not Last) Jewish Lawyer* (New York, N.Y.: Schocken Books, 2015), pp. 82- 121.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 131.

Professor Dershowitz' eloquent description of the Jesus of Nazareth within Jewish legal experience, which he set forth in *Abraham*, is what I have always wanted the Black Church, Black clergymen, and Black lawyers and judges to take note, and to follow suit; and the publication of *Jesus Master of Law* was largely with that objective in mind – i.e., to make the Black Church, the Black Pastor, and the Black Lawyer more *Jewish!*

As I re-read *Jesus Master of Law*, ten years later, I am very satisfied, because I stepped out on faith, not really knowing if I had hit the mark, or committed a strike out! But I am happy to say today that my legal research in *Jesus Master of Law* has been completely vindicated. I have since received several new materials into my hands that completely vindicates my research.

For instance, *Jesus Master of Law* sets out to demonstrate the Christ (i.e., *Logos* or “reason”)⁶ is the manifestation of “general equity jurisprudence,” and this proposition is forcefully demonstrated in several other sources that reach the same conclusion: see, e.g., Goldwin Smith's *A Constitutional and Legal History of England*, stating:

What is equity? The basic **idea of equity** was, and remains, the application of a moral governing principle to a body of circumstances in order to reach a judgment that was in accord with Christian conscience and Roman natural law, a settlement that showed the common denominations of humanity, justice, and mercy.... ‘**Equity had come not to destroy the law but to fulfill it.**’⁷

And see, also, Alan M. Dershowitz, *Abraham: The World's First (But*

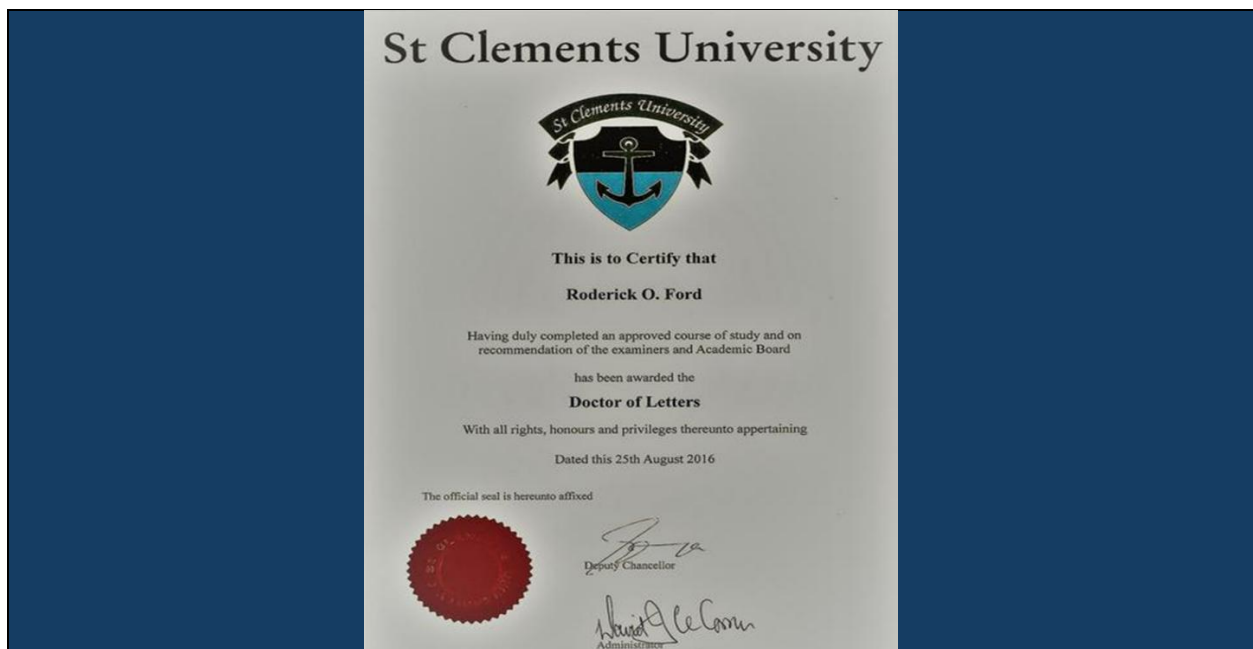
⁶ See, e.g., Bertrand Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy* (New York, NY: Touchstone, 2007), p. 309 (“For Christians, the Messiah was the historical Jesus, who was also identified with the *Logos* of Greek philosophy....”); and p. 289 (“It was this intellectual element in Plato's religion that led Christians – notably the author of Saint John's Gospel – to identify Christ with the *Logos*. *Logos* should be translated ‘reason’ in this connection.”).

⁷ Goldwin Smith, *A Constitutional and Legal History of England* (New York, N.Y.: Dorset Press, 1990), pp. 208-209 (paraphrasing Matthew 5: 17).

Certainly Not Last) Jewish Lawyer, stating:

The legal advocate is different from the illegal idol shatterer. The advocate is committed to the rule of law. He or she would never knowingly violate the law or the Code of Professional Responsibility, though legal advocates might stretch the facts and the law in the interests of zealous advocacy and the rights of their clients, as Abraham did when he argued with God over the sinner of Sodom. But in doing so, the advocate remains respectful of the judge and the law, seeking to have the law applied in the interest of his client. The advocate has a stake in the law and is willing to preserve and improve it but not to denounce or destroy it. **As Jesus put it, 'Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.'**⁸

Finally, for this publication *Jesus Master of Law*, I was awarded the *Doctor of Letters: Christian Theology- Law and Religion* from St. Clements University in 2016:



⁸ Alan Dershowitz, *Abraham: The World's First (But Certainly Not Last) Jewish Lawyer*, *supra*, p. 89. (paraphrasing Matthew 5: 17).

That the *Christian religion* is, among other things, a system of secular jurisprudence – namely, the law of equity – is the fundamental proposition set forth in my book, *Jesus Master of Law*; and that same proposition has been affirmed and re-affirmed several times.⁹

Again, the St. Johns School of Law’s Center for Law and Religion’s support was greatly appreciated.

RODERICK ANDREW LEE FORD

St. Clements University
Turks & Caicos Islands
January 28, 2025

⁹ John Norton Pomeroy, LL.D., *A Treatise of Equity Jurisprudence: As Administered in the United States of America* (San Francisco, CA: A.L. Bancroft and Co., 1881), pp. 2-10, 53 discussing “Aequitas in the Roman Law.”

See, also, George L. Clark, *Equity: An Analysis and Discussion of Modern Equity Problems* (Columbia, Missouri: E.W. Stephens Pub., 1919), § 3. The English Courts before Equity.

See, also, John Witte, Jr. and Frank S. Alexander, *Christianity and Law: An Introduction* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

Exhibit A

St. Johns University's
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Advertisement for

Jesus Master of Law

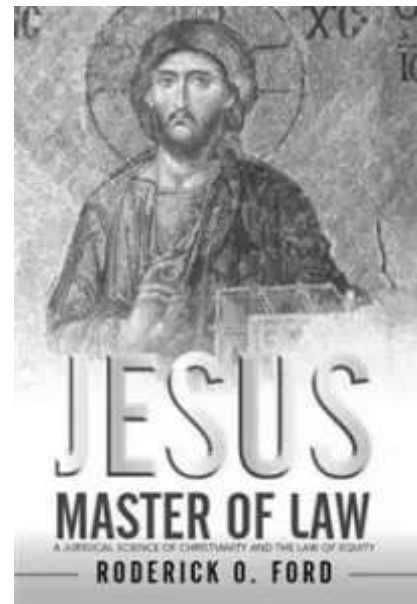


Posted on January 28, 2015 by

Ford, “Jesus Master of Law”

THIS JANUARY, XLIBRIS PUBLISHING RELEASED “JESUS Master of Law: A Juridical Science of Christianity and the Law of Equity” by Roderick Ford (The Labor Ministry). The publisher’s description follows:

Here, Jesus of Nazareth is presented as we have never witnessed him before—as a legal advocate, as a jurist, and as an interpreter of the Law of Moses. This bold book is an original and revolutionary conceptualization of Jesus as not only a profound religious thinker but also as a preeminent legal theorist. Here we find in Jesus’s teachings and parables the analytical and moral reasoning, which is the foundation of Anglo-American common law, Western civilization, and modern, worldwide, and secular jurisprudence. *Jesus Master of Law* reminds us that laws, both secular and sacred, can be applied to achieve justice only when they are interpreted through the proverbial prism of righteous and moral objectives.



Posted in Books, Scholarship Roundup · Tagged Christianity, Legal History, Religion and the Common Law, Religion and Western Civilization, Secularism



JESUS

MASTER OF LAW

A JURIDICAL SCIENCE OF CHRISTIANITY AND THE LAW OF EQUITY

RODERICK FORD

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