

Dr. Robert C. Newman, Synoptic Gospels, Lecture 2, Intertestamental Backgrounds

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Let's start again. Share back some. Maybe just one, two, three, or... Yeah, you want to block the thing before... You remember how you... Oh, yeah, yeah.

The sound is not... Oh. I turned yours on. Did you turn this on? Do you remember you had something turned off? No, no, you're good there.

I didn't turn this one on. Turn that on, okay. And I didn't plug it in either, so look at this.

So, this is on now. And that needs to be plugged in. Oh, it plugs out of there, huh? Yeah.

Oh, that's where you... You put it on the same stuff as the video, I guess, right? There, okay. Okay, I think... All right. How's that? Yes.

One, two, three. One, two, three. Good afternoon.

We're continuing a twelve-part series course, if you like, on the Synoptic Gospels. In our first session, which we might call Unit 1, we looked at the historical Jesus, and basically a tour of very quick sketches, some non-Christian views of Jesus, and then of some acclaimed historical views of Jesus, which basically fell in the category of theological liberalism of one sort or another. And then, at the end, I pointed out where that was headed, looked a little bit at the arguments used for such a position against the miraculous, and then tried to respond to those.

We now move on to a second unit, which is rather different, but also relevant to the whole matter of the Synoptic Gospels, and that's looking at the Jewish background of the New Testament. To understand the New Testament, especially the Gospels, it's helpful to know a good deal about the Old Testament, but it's also helpful to know something of what went on during the four centuries that separate the end of the Old Testament narrative from the beginning of the New Testament narrative. It is this latter that we wish to look at here, called the Intertestament Period in Christian circles, but understandably, in Jewish circles, it's not called the Intertestament Period.

They typically call it the Second Temple Period. So, we want to think a little bit first about the ancient sources of information we have regarding the Intertestament Period. We have, first of all, some predictive passages in the Old Testament, and I'm going to come back in just a couple of minutes and take a look at Daniel's overview of

the period, sketched in terms of the image that Daniel sees in Daniel chapter 2, and then Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the wild beasts in Daniel chapter 7, I believe that is.

Besides that, we have some religious writings of the Jews, mostly during the Inter-Testament Period, that we call the Old Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha. These have been accepted by some Christian churches as a part of the Bible, Roman Catholic, and Greek Orthodox Church, except the material we call the Old Testament Apocrypha, and some of the smaller regional churches, Ethiopic Church and such, have accepted some of the other material that we now call the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha. So, religious writings of the Jews, mostly during the Inter-Testament Period, though we don't believe that they are inspired writings, do give us some insight into the culture, the religious ideas of some of the sects, and some of the Biblical interpretation of the period, and so would be helpful in that direction.

Besides that, we have two individual writers that we know by name and approximate dates that give us information on this period, and that is Philo of Alexandria, born perhaps around 20 BC and lived past 40 AD, a Jewish person living in the large Greek city in the northern delta of the Nile called Alexandria. This particular Jew, who would be what we call a Hellenistic Jew, had adopted a great deal of the Greek culture. He had studied Greek philosophy, and yet he was trying to be faithful to the Bible as well, so he tried to combine the Old Testament with selected ideas from Greek philosophy.

We see some partial accommodation to Hellenism there. In his position, he speaks of people who accommodated far more strongly than he did. He had a tendency to allegorize a lot of the laws, but he felt you should obey them, whereas there were other Hellenistic Jews who thought that having allegorized the laws, you did not need to obey them, literally.

So, he would be a moderate Hellenist, if you like. Moving north from him up to the Jerusalem area, we have the individual Josephus, often known as Flavius Josephus, though that's his Latin name. He was born in 37 AD and lived to sometime after 100 AD.

He would have been less Hellenized. He was a Jew involved on both sides of the Jewish War, 66-73, the revolt against Rome, which had rather disastrous consequences. He started out on the Jewish side, though he had visited Rome before that time and perhaps did not feel too optimistic about the chances of the Jews against Rome.

But when he, as a general for the defense of Galilee, was surrounded in the city of Jodapata by the Roman army, he and some others hid and drew straws for who would kill who. They were going to commit suicide. Somehow, Josephus wound up with the best, or next to best straw, and convinced the one other guy who was still

alive at that point that they should give themselves up to the Jews, give themselves up to the Romans.

When they did that, Josephus said, I have a message from God for the Roman general Vespasian. And when Vespasian heard him, Josephus said, God has told me that you're going to be the emperor of Rome. Well, Vespasian kept Josephus alive to see whether that would turn out to be true or not, and perhaps he was influenced by Josephus' prediction as well, and lo and behold, with some work of his own, he did wind up being the emperor in the course of the next two or three years.

And so, Josephus, who had become a slave and being captured and could have been put to death and probably would have been put to death otherwise, was now made a freedman and released, and in the course of about ten years after that, he accommodated his patron, Vespasian, by writing a history of the Jewish War. So, writing about 80-something A.D., he wrote the Jewish War. And then, about 25 years after that, he wrote a work called Antiquities of the Jews.

Josephus' Jewish War starts about the time of Alexander and then comes up to the end of the Jewish War, and the Antiquities goes all the way back to Genesis, kind of retells the Old Testament with some additions here and there and comes up to the outbreak of the Jewish War. So, there are two very important writings, both of which cover the Intertestament period. Besides the predictive passages in the Old Testament, the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, Philo and Josephus, we also have the very famous Dead Sea Scrolls, which is literature written or copied by a sect that had one of the headquarters, at least important encampment, if you like, of their group at the place we call Qumran, perhaps 20 miles southeast of Jerusalem, something like that.

We think it was probably some sort of the Essenes, which seemed to match in many, many ways, and of course, a great deal of what we have there are basically copies of Scripture that they had kept, and some, therefore some of the very earliest copies we have of the different books of the Bible in Hebrew, but also some of their own literature, and also some literature which may or may not have been their own. Some of the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, both Enoch and Jubilees, have been found fragmentary there anyway in Hebrew. So, their own literature at least gives us some information about that particular sect, how they interpreted the Bible, and things of that sort.

From a later period, starting perhaps 200 AD and running on to maybe 600 AD or so, we have the rabbinic literature, which is the writing down of what we might think of as the tradition of the rabbis, the tradition of the Pharisees, even, the sort of thing that Jesus speaks about, but which is probably totally in oral form at Jesus' own ministry, but came to be written down in the earliest part, the Mishnah, about 200 AD, and the Talmuds, one about 400 and one about 550. Those are all compilations,

if you like, of the oral tradition of the rabbis, and then some biblical translation, paraphrases, commentaries, etc., Midrashim. So, those give us some important information as well.

So, those are our basic ancient sources of information on the Inter-Testament period. We want to turn next to have a quick look at Daniel's overview of the period because we will use this as part of our way of structuring our discussion of the Inter-Testament period. In Daniel's chapter 2, Daniel is given a vision of a strange statue.

It's a statue that, in verse 32, is described as having a head of gold, and then its breast and arms, or the upper body, if you like, in verse 32 is described as being made of silver, its belly and sides in the same verse described as being of bronze, its legs of iron, verse 33, and then its feet part iron, part clay, verse 33. And then the action that we see in this, after a description of this image, we have one brief action that a stone cut without hands falls down and smashes the image and then grinds into a powder, and then the stone grows to fill the whole earth. The image is explained in Chapter 2, verses 38-45.

We're told in 45 that the image and the action tell us something will happen after Daniel's time. Then, in verse 38, Nebuchadnezzar's universal rule is represented by the golden head. In verse 39, there'll be another kingdom inferior. Maybe that's what it is. Lower down is actually the word, so it might just be a physical statement as it's further down, but the fact that you switch from gold to silver, which has universally been a cheaper metal than gold, may suggest that it is inferior in some way.

It suggests that the head represents not just Nebuchadnezzar personally but that empire if you like. The successor empire, represented by the silver, a third kingdom to rule over all the earth, we're told in verse 39, is represented by the bronze, a fourth kingdom, strong as iron, so that's clearly the iron legs, is going to be following that. And then, in verses 41-43, you get a little remark about the feet, which doesn't suggest it's a fifth kingdom, so it's apparently a continuation of the fourth, which would fit with the iron legs going into iron and clay feet.

But part strong, the iron, and part broken, the clay presumably, which is presumed here to be baked clay at this point, not wet clay. And then the stone falling and smashing the rest and growing is explained in verse 44: God will set up a permanent kingdom. Rather parallel to that, we have Daniel's four wild animals in Daniel chapter 7. This is actually a dream that Daniel had; the other one, which I didn't mention, was actually a dream that Nebuchadnezzar had.

Here, a group of animals are pictured in chapter 7, verses 3-14, and then a few more details are scattered through the explanation in verses 19, 20, 21-23. We're told, first of all, that there will be diverse beasts that will arise from the sea, in verse 3. The first of these is a lion with eagle's wings, but then the eagle's wings are plucked, and

the animal is lifted up, presumably on its hind feet, and is given a human heart, verse 4. Then the second beast is a bear; it's raised up on one side, and since we're not there to see it, I don't know exactly what that looks like, perhaps tilted like that or something. And it's gnawing on three ribs, which are in its mouth.

Then, in verse 6, we're told that the third beast is a leopard, but it's a strange one; it's got four wings, and it's got four heads. And then in verses 7 and 8, and then further in the explanation, we're told of a fourth dreadful, terrible beast with iron teeth and bronze claws, and ten horns, and then an eleventh horn comes up, and it roars against the saints. In verses 9 through 14, we're told that the Ancient of Days comes, apparently a picture of God, and that thrones are set up, and that the fourth beast is destroyed, and his dominion is given to one like a son of man who comes and presents himself before the Ancient of Days.

And he's given an eternal universal kingdom. In verses 17 through 26, the animals are explained, but very quickly. In verse 17, we're told that the four beasts represent four kings who will arise from the earth, and as you go on through the discussion, it's clear that kings and kingdoms are being used interchangeably. So, the fourth kingdom is pictured as diverse from the others, and we're told that its horns represent kings and that the eleventh horn wears out the saints for time, times, and half a time, presumably three and a half times.

There is some discussion of that. And then the son of man receiving the kingdom, etc., where it's explained as the saints will take the kingdom and possess it forever. Well, those are the two visions, if you like, in chapters 2 and 7 of Daniel.

The general interpretation over the centuries, though it's been modified some by theological liberalism in the last couple of centuries, is that the kingdoms represented are Babylon, which operated from about 609 when the Babylonians destroy the Assyrian kingdom, down to 539 when Cyrus takes the Babylonians, and he succeeds with his kingdom, which is a combined kingdom of his own kingdom, Persia, with the Medes that he had joined with, and they rule over Israel from 539 to 331 B.C., and then Greece 331 B.C. to 30 B.C., and then Rome 30 B.C. to 476 A.D. And so, in the image, the gold head represents Babylon, the silver arms and breast represent Medo-Persia, the bronze abdomen represents Greece, the iron legs represent Rome. In the vision of the beasts, the lion with the wings represents Babylon, and the idea of standing on his feet and putting the human heart in him may, in fact, connect us with the incident of Nebuchadnezzar losing his mind and becoming like a beast for a while, and then restored. The bear eating ribs and raised up on one side; some have suggested that raised up on one side represents the fact that the Persian side of it is greater than the Median Empire side of it.

I would take that to be pure speculation, were it not that a later vision, which we're told represents Medo-Persia, has the animal with a big horn on one side and a

smaller horn on the other side. And so, the Persian side is the big horn, so I think that's probably correct then. The leopard with the four heads is taken to be Greece, and we'll see from this later description in Daniel 8, which we're not going to discuss, that the kingdom there, which we're explicitly told is Greece, is an animal with a single horn in its head which is broken and replaced by four horns.

So, presumably, the four heads and four wings here represent this four-fold division of the kingdom when the original unified kingdom is damaged if you like. That presumably leaves Rome then to be the terrible ten-horned, actually eleven-horned, eventually beast, and we're not going to chase into that further, nor at this point go into the question of liberals' claim that they make the second kingdom Media replace Greece by Persia and Rome by Greece in order to make it come out in the Maccabean period. Off our subject, huh? What we're going to do is in our discussion now of the Inter-Testament period, we're going to divide it up in terms of who is in control over Israel at the time of these.

Well, Babylon is already off the scene by the time we get to Inter-Testament. You remember the return is pictured in Zechariah and Haggai, actually in Nehemiah, etc., but I mean the prophets Zechariah and Haggai. So, we'll pick up with Medo-Persia and then so Palestine under the Persians or Medo-Persians, and then Palestine under Greece, and then Palestine under Rome, except that there's a brief independence period from Greece to Rome under the Hasmoneans or Maccabees, so we're going to put it in.

Palestine under the Persians, Palestine under the Greeks, Jewish independence under the Hasmoneans, and then Palestine under Rome. So that's the way we're going to go, so let's take a look at that. So, our next category then will be Palestine under the Persians, 539 to 331 B.C. The dominance of the Persian empire starts with the rise of Cyrus, Cyrus way back in 559 B.C., so this is 30 years before he manages, 20 years before he manages to conquer Babylon, and inherits a small kingdom named Anshan, which basically is Persia, but he then defeats the Medes in 550 and that gets the Babylonians very concerned about that.

The king at that time, Nabonidas, who had been, what should we say, giving Cyrus some money under the table to support his rebellion against the Medes and trying to weaken the Medes, suddenly realizes that Cyrus, having defeated the Medes, he's now bigger danger than the Medes were. But then Cyrus first moves northwest and takes Asia Minor in 546 and then comes back and takes Babylon in 539. So that's a very quick sketch of the rise of Cyrus; there's a lot more detail, most of which I don't now remember but have studied.

Several important things happened then, such as the Persians coming into the Empire. First of these is the return of the Jews under Cyrus in 539 to 530 BC. Unlike the Assyrians and the Babylonians, Cyrus tries to avoid offending other religions.

Unlike the Assyrians and the Babylonians, Cyrus decided to end the deportation policy. Both of those two empires had the idea that the best way to keep a subject people down was to deport their people and scatter them among people of other languages. That way, they were less likely to be able to organize a revolt. Well, Cyrus ended that and so allowed the various people to return to their territories if they wished to.

So, the Jews are allowed to return. We see a sketch for us in Ezra 1 verses 2-4. Not a whole lot of them do, but some do.

And so, we now begin to have, for the first time in about, not quite 70 years at this point, only about 50 years at this point, Jews are returning now to what we're here calling Palestine. I'm not trying to get into the Palestinian-Jewish debate, but I'm basically using that as a generic term for the land and Israel or the Jews as a term for the people. The second important thing that happened then under the Persians was the rebuilding of the temple or the building of the second temple in Jewish terminology.

Solomon's temple, the first temple, and this temple, the second temple. Cyrus initially allowed the rebuilding to start but then stopped due to opposition from neighbors. See a sketch of this in Ezra 6 and in Ezra 4. But then, when Cyrus died, there was an interregnum and some fighting back and forth, and eventually, Darius, Darius I here, came to power in 521 and will reign till 486, so quite a long time of reign.

And because the Jews had shown loyalty to Darius in succession instead of rebelling as many of the other people had, the Jews were allowed to rebuild their temple. And so, they began to rebuild their temple starting about 520 or so, and the temple is completed around 515 under the leadership of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, and you see references to that in both of those. Then, under the governor Zerubbabel, who was a descendant of David, and the high priest Jeshua, who presumably descended from the high priestly line,

So, we have the return of the Jews, and they're back in their land now for the first time in the Goodman years. It's actually something like 70 years from the first deportation to the first return and 70 years from the destruction of the first temple to the building of the second temple. So that's basically why captivity is treated as 70 years long.

A third event of some significance among the Jews, actually two events if you like, are the revival in Judah under Ezra, and the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem under Nehemiah. These take place during the reign of the Persian king Artaxerxes I. The first of these events back around 4... well, Artaxerxes begins to reign about 465,

and Ezra, around 458, is sent from Babylon back to Jerusalem, and he restores the people to the observance of the law with the permission of the Persian king. And then some years later, around 445, Nehemiah, who had at that point become the king's cupbearer, so a pretty intimate officer in the royal court, if you like, was sent by the Persian king as governor to rebuild the walls.

Rebuilding the walls is pretty important. We tend to think of a village as a little town and a city as a big town, but in the time when before airplanes and major artillery and all that sort of thing, the difference between a village and a city was not so much size; it was a fortification. So, a village might be quite large, but if it's unfortified, it's a village.

A city might be quite small, but if it was not just a fort, if it was a place where lots of people lived, and it was fortified, it was a city. So essentially, Jerusalem becomes a city again with the completion of the city walls there in 445 BC. So those are kind of the three major, which we say are four major events of the Persian period, allowing the Jews to return, allowing them to rebuild the city, and then to rebuild the temple, and then the revival in Judah, and rebuilding the walls.

Another rather important event, and we're not sure exactly when this occurs and such, it's much vaguer, is the rise of the Aramaic language as a significant thing in Jewish history. The Aramaic language had been around for a long time before this. It was the old language of the area that has traditionally been called in English, Syria, but that's pretty confusing with Syria and Assyria.

So, the Hebrew word is Aram, and that's being picked up in some Old Testament circles as well. In any case, it's the upper Euphrates Valley. And the language had been around; you see a reference to it in when Laban and Jacob part, they build this pile of stones, and Jacob gives it the Hebrew word for a pile of stones that serves as a witness, which is a technical term for in Hebrew called galid, whereas apparently in Aramaic there's not.

So, there's a phrase that is used to jagar saha dutha or something like that is used to represent this stone of witness, this cairn of witness, if you like. Well, then, after Jacob and Laban's time, that would be, what, 1800 or something like that B.C., it becomes a diplomatic language of the ancient Near East as Syria conquers the whole of the Fertile Crescent. They basically adopted Aramaic as the trade language through that area; Babylonians continued it, the Persians continued it, etc.

Somewhere along the line, it's adopted by the Jews, and their best guess is it was during the Babylonian exile that some of the Jews put in an area where the people around them didn't speak Hebrew, and yet, and obviously, a number of them spoke their own native languages, but there was this trade language available, and so they learned to speak Aramaic. In Nehemiah 8 verses 7 and 8, it appears that a lot of the

returning Jews from the Babylonian exile at this point, so the sons, grandsons, great-grandchildren, etc., of the people who were exiled, didn't even really know Hebrew anymore. And so, there's some translation being given when Nehemiah reads from the law in the situation there back in Israel.

When we get near the end of the Intertestament period, you begin to get oral translations of the Old Testament into Aramaic for the benefit of people in the synagogue services who could not understand Hebrew. And that stayed oral for a while, and they were called Targums, from a verb meaning to translate, basically, and they're still in use at the time of Jesus, and in fact, they become one of the major languages of the Rabbinic Talmuds in 400 A.D. and 550 A.D. So that is the Aramaic language, and that is important, and that arose sometime around this Persian period. Another feature of the Persian period, or the Babylonian end of the Persian period, is the rise of the synagogue.

The synagogue becomes a place of worship for those unable to attend the temple, and it features prayer and Bible study but no sacrifice. So, worship is a non-sacrificial worship. The date of the origin is obscure.

The common view is it's Babylonian captivity because that's when people who didn't have a temple anymore couldn't go there. There are a couple of remarks in the Old Testament that suggest there were places of worship throughout the land that don't appear to be high places, and so may suggest that already while Israel was still in the land before the captivity, you were still, you know, two or three days walk from Jerusalem, and if you wanted to get together or something for worship, there might be some local place to do something like that. So, it may even predate the Babylonian exile.

We don't know. In any case, we do know that it continued alongside the Second Temple. So, the Second Temple stood from 515 B.C. to 70 A.D., and we have this synagogue existing then.

One of the rabbinic passages mentions something like there were 100 synagogues in Jerusalem. What's going on there? Well, obviously, local places of fellowship of some sort. We see from various remarks, including the New Testament, that some of those were synagogues for people from particular regions.

Synagogue of the Freedmen or synagogue of people from, you know, it would come back from Antioch or something of that sort. Well, with the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 A.D., this returns to be the only place of Jewish worship after the destruction of the Second Temple, and that's what it's remained to this day. So, the various Jewish places of worship that you see scattered around the world, even though they may be called temples, something or other in some places, they are in fact synagogues of one sort or another.

Well, we've got one more topic to say a word or two about under the Persian period, and that is the Intertestament Temples. The rebuilding of the Jerusalem Temple takes place here, and that's called, as I say, among the Jews, the Second Temple or the Second Jerusalem Temple, built in 515 and destroyed by the Romans in 70 A.D. That was the Orthodox Temple in the sense that at least they seemed to stay with the biblical views of the nature of God, that sort of thing, and continued the Mosaic regulation in one way or another. However, somewhere along the line, a temple was developed up in the area we call Samaria, often called the Mount Gerizim Temple, because it was situated on one of the two mountains in which the Israelites at the covenant renewal ceremonies every seven years, one group was to stand on one mountain, and the other on this mountain, and one shouts the blessings and the other shouts the curses, etc.

The date of its building is uncertain, suggesting 450 B.C. down to 330 B.C., somewhere in that period. It was built by the Samaritans, but picked up some help from priests who were unhappy with what was going on in Jerusalem and came north, etc. It was destroyed by the Hasmoneans or Maccabees 128 B.C., but is still a holy site in New Testament times, John 4.20. You can see the woman say, here on this mountain, we worship, etc.

And that's what, perhaps around 30 A.D. or something of that sort, and yet it was still viewed as holy then, and it's still viewed as holy today. There's a small group of Samaritans that still exist; I don't know the current numbers; they were down to a few hundred in the stuff I'd seen from the 70s. So, we still have worship activities there, actually still have Passover service there, and still have sacrifice there.

So, they had continued sacrificing off and on, at least through the intervening period, but we're talking about one sacrifice a year versus at least two a day in the Jerusalem temple. Besides these two temples, there's a temple developed in Egypt, which is usually called the Elephantine Temple, to distinguish it from a temple further north in Egypt. This seems to have been founded perhaps around 525 B.C. and lasted until about 390 B.C. We think we have records of this, really only from papyri that have survived from that period.

I think it was built for the benefit of Jewish soldiers who had been hired as mercenaries, or perhaps enslaved as mercenaries, by the Persians when they conquered Egypt. And so, they lived here, well, down or up, depending on whether you're thinking of a map. It's south on the map but up the Nile River at the first cataract on the Nile, the Elephantine.

They lived there. They might have been some refugees from the time of Manasseh, we don't know. There are some hints that they were probably polytheistic, that they were carrying on some of the troubles that were going on we see already in

Jeremiah, where Jeremiah comments that the Jews that had taken him down into Egypt were still worshipping the Queen of Heaven.

And so apparently that is something of that sort that is going on here. I mentioned one other temple which actually comes from later than the Persian period, but since this is where we're going to discuss the temples, we'll stick it in here. That's the later Leontopolis Temple, also in Egypt, founded about 160 B.C., and then destroyed by the Romans in 72 A.D. It was built in the Maccabean period by a high priest named Onias III, who had been bumped out of the priesthood by Antiochus Epiphanes.

We'll come back and talk about him later. And so, this fellow fled to Egypt, and a temple was built down there by probably the Egyptian Jewish community, but after the Jewish War, the Romans did not want any places that would function as a center for rebellion against Rome, and so they destroyed it. Well, that is a very quick tour of Palestine under the Persians.

We turn to look then at Palestine under the Greeks from about 331 B.C. to about 160 B.C. That's the period when the Maccabees will eventually get their independence from the remains of the Greek Empire. We start with Alexander, later known as Alexander the Great, who ruled from about 336 to 329 B.C. He was the son of a Macedonian ruler named Philip, and his father, Philip was assassinated when Alexander was only 20 years old, not assassinated by Alexander, and yet Alexander at age 20 had already had some experience as a general in Philip's army, and so within a couple of years he was able to establish his control of his father's kingdom, and one of the projects his father had had, Philip had had, was Philip identified himself as a Greek, even though he was Macedonian, the territory north of Greece, and so did Alexander. One of Philip's projects he had in mind was to revenge the Greeks against the Persians who had invaded a century or so earlier than that, a century and a half earlier than that.

So once Alexander's got control of Macedon and Greece again, he invaded Asia Minor in 334 B.C. with only 35,000 men. Well, that sounds like a lot of men, but when the Persians invaded Greece a century and a half ago, they had over a million men, according to historians. So, what are you going to do with 35,000 men? Well, certainly, one advantage was the Persians themselves were back in their empire a thousand miles away, and they had lots of soldiers in Asia Minor, but they were all garrison troops scattered over 50 or 100 fortified areas, so it was not easy to collect them.

Alexander was able to win a victory that year at the Granicus River in western Asia Minor, and that really opened Asia Minor to his taking control of the area. There were a lot of Greeks living in Asia Minor, and they weren't happy with the Persians, and there were a lot of other people living there. The Persians were not the native people there.

So, Alexander was able to get a lot of support once he won this crucial battle, and then he had about a year to consolidate his control in Asia Minor and then head east, according to Herodotus. I believe it is. The story is he went to a place, a Gordian, where there was a chariot with an elaborate knot on the tang of the chariot to hook the crossbar to it, and there was a legend that whoever could untie this knot would become ruler of the world. Well, Alexander fooled around with it for a few minutes and clearly had no success.

Alexander was not an example of patience; he whipped out his sword, whacked through the rope, and said who knows whether he actually said this or not. Thus, I untie all Gordian knots or something of that sort. Well, he does come to conquer the world as understood at the time. So, the next battle is at Issus on the other end of Asia Minor, and by this time, the Persians have pulled together a big army and come to fight him. There's a big battle at Issus, and Alexander wins in a spectacular way, which opens Syria, Palestine, and Egypt to him.

The Persian king barely escapes; his royal family actually does not escape; they're taken captive and have to go all the way back to the capital of Persia to put together another army again. So, Alexander's got a couple of years, and he then comes down and takes Palestine and Egypt and such. There was a rather interesting incident there, which liberals fiercely deny, but Josephus says it really occurred that Alexander was not too happy with the Jews because the high priest had refused to send him troops as he was taking northern Syria because the high priest said he had made a vow to the king of Persia that he would not fight against the king of Persia.

So, Alexander, not terribly happy, was headed that way, and the high priest put on his dress robes, we'll say, and had everybody pray, and a procession of people went out to meet Alexander. When Alexander met them, Alexander said he had seen this man in a dream when he was back in Greece and told him that he should treat him well, etc. And then, according to Josephus, Alexander was shown the prophecies in Daniel about him.

That, of course, is not popular in liberal circles since they think that Daniel wasn't written for another 150 years. But in any case, that's the story, and what isn't any speculation about is that Alexander, for some reason, treated the Jews very, very well and didn't treat the people around them all that well. So, there we are.

Anyway, Alexander finally wins after he takes Egypt. There's a story about Egypt as well, that Alexander goes out to Amnon in the desert in Egypt, west of the Nile. There's an oracle there and he receives a favorable oracle again that he will control the world.

So, how many of these stories are true? We don't have time machines. So, anyway, in 331, he has now moved towards Persia's center, if you like, and there's a big battle at Gaugamela, and here Alexander's army destroys the Persian army, destroys the Persian Empire, and the Persian king heads for cover east toward the eastern end of his empire, and Alexander and his troops follow them, and eventually, just before they catch up with him, the people following the Persian king assassinate him and surrender to Alexander. Alexander had delusions of empire, which is probably not a bad approximation, and decided to conquer as much land as he could, but his troops finally, when they got into what we now call India, said enough.

And so they head back to Babylon, and Alexander dies in Babylon at age 33, having conquered all this territory. Well, Alexander's agenda had been to conquer as much of the world as he could, but also to mix the Eastern and Western cultures and to spread Greek ideas and attitudes and such all over his conquered territory, including the Greek language. That's Alexander.

Well, Alexander is dead now, in 323, at age 33, and that brings us to a struggle for succession. Alexander's son is still a baby, and Alexander's brother is mentally incompetent. So, the generals under Alexander band together to try to keep the throne for the son, but they fall to fighting each other, and while all of this is going on, the brother dies, the baby dies, and once the baby is dead, then there's nothing to stop the... a winner takes all thing if it can possibly be worked out.

Well, it never works out that way. There's not a sufficiently dominant winner to take everything. So, eventually, the empire is broken into several pieces.

These are usually counted as four. Lysimachus taking the area of Thrace north of Macedon, Cassander taking Macedon, Seleucus taking a big piece, Asia Minor and Mesopotamia, so, you know, a whole big swath of there, and Ptolemy taking Syria and Egypt. Well, for Jewish background, it's only these latter two, Seleucus in the north and Ptolemy in the south, that will be important.

It's only those two that come to dominate Israel at one time or another. Well, that brings us to the Ptolemaic dynasty, which continued until 30 B.C. when Cleopatra committed suicide but had control of Palestine only from 301 B.C. to 198 B.C. While the various generals are fighting for control, there's one point when a fifth general, whom we've not mentioned here, named Antigonus, looks like he might get the whole thing, but the other generals gang up on him. If you've ever played the war game Risk, you realize that sometimes it's necessary to do things like that to keep one person from winning the game, and that's basically what the generals do, and while the generals are out fighting Antigonus, Ptolemy sneaks in and grabs off Palestine.

Ptolemy is noted for reasonably favorable treatment of the Jews, both in Palestine and also the Jews who wound up in Egypt because a large number of Jews had settled in Alexandria by this time. So, there are still some problems here and there, but that's basically the situation, and that's from a little over a century, 301 to 198. The Seleucid dynasty did not last as long.

It falls to Rome in 63 B.C., but it does control Palestine from 198 B.C. to about 160. The rulers of the Ptolemies are pretty invariably called Ptolemy, and the historians today call them Ptolemy I, II, III, IV, V, but in antiquity, they all had a second nickname, so Ptolemy Soter, Ptolemy the Savior, if you like, not understood quite in Christian terms. Ptolemy Fatso, that was another name, probably not to his face, but various of those.

The Seleucid rulers tended to have two or three names that you see rotate back and forth. One of them is Seleucus, and one of them is Antiochus. In the long series of wars, they finally had wars between the Seleucids and the Ptolemies, and the Seleucids finally got Palestine from the Ptolemies.

And then we jump on to, I don't know, 6th, 8th, 9th ruler of the Seleucids is a fellow called Antiochus IV, known better as Antiochus Epiphanes. He viewed himself as a manifestation of the god Zeus. The Jews called him Antiochus Epiphanes, crackpot, or something of that sort, madman.

Anyway, he favored Hellenistic Jews. Stop and back up for a moment. The Ptolemaic dynasty controlled Egypt, which consisted primarily of Egyptians, some Jews, and others in Alexandria, and then the Greeks overall.

And you didn't have so much ethnic diversity, which was a huge problem. But in the Ptolemaic dynasty, in the Seleucid dynasty, which covered all these different nationalities through Asia Minor and down the Tigris-Euphrates River and almost over to India, you did. And so, the Seleucids, in trying to unify their empire, tried to push Hellenism on all the people who wanted to cooperate with the empire and become wealthy and that sort of thing.

So, when Antiochus IV became Seleucid ruler, he favored the Hellenistic faction among the Jews in Jerusalem. And they, perhaps fawning on him to a certain extent, want to establish Jerusalem as a Hellenistic city, which will be named Antioch. And he permits that.

Well, that's pretty much a disaster for the Orthodox Jews to have that happen. We will come back to the problem there because that will eventually lead to the Maccabean Revolt. Antiochus IV was later attempted around 168 B.C. to abolish Judaism.

And we'll discuss all that in our next section. Well, so that's a little bit of the infighting that led to the spread of Alexander's empire over almost all of the Middle East. Then it's breaking into pieces with his death.

And then the pieces fighting it out, and particularly the northern piece, the Seleucids, over and fighting the southern piece, the Ptolemies, for the control of Israel, Palestine, whatever you want to call it. A very important feature of this time period, in regard to Israel, the Jewish background, is Hellenism. Hellenism comes from the Greek word Hellas, which is the Greek's own name for Greece.

Our name, Greece, comes from Latin and comes from the name that the Romans had given to some Greeks living down on the bottom of the Italian boot. They called them Greike. Well, I'm not sure how the ending goes there.

Greikos, I guess. Hellenism means Greek-like. And so, it's the name for Greek culture as it developed in the east after Alexander.

So, an attempt to Grecianize the Syrian culture, the Jewish culture, the Egyptian culture, etc., would be Hellenism, if you like. Well, that obviously had a significant influence on Judaism, so that by New Testament times, we see Ptolemy as a pretty thoroughly Hellenized Jew, Josephus a slightly Hellenized Jew, and there were guys further over than Philo, if you like. It appears perhaps that Hellenism was somewhat influenced by Judaism, and that's argued over some.

But one of the features of Hellenism was what historians of religion call syncretism. It comes from a Greek verb that means mix. So, syncretism is a place where two, three, or four religions come in contact, and their ideas get mixed with one another.

Probably the communist idea right around us in the last decade or century, anyway, has been the New Age movement, which is a syncretism between Christianity and, say, Buddhism or Hinduism. Adopting elements from each, if you like, would be an example of that. You see it very much in the Syrian temple at Baalbek in Lebanon today, which I had a chance to visit just before things fell apart in 1975 or 6, whenever they fell apart. I was there in 4. That was a temple that was on the site of Baal worship, and that's where the name Baalbek came from, the Baal of the Bekah Valley.

But when the Greeks came in, the god Baal had been re-identified as Zeus, and then when the Romans came in, the god Baal Zeus had been re-identified as Jupiter, etc., and so you had all of that sort of thing going on. That probably even is an explanation for some of the polytheisms that you see around the world, is that two cultures have come together, one has a chief goddess, one has a chief god, and they do some compromise or something. We don't know.

We weren't back there and don't have time machines, but certainly, something of that sort has happened in history. Well, that's obviously going to cause a problem for the Jews when Hellenism is pushed in a religious way in Palestine, and there are certainly people willing to do that. There are, of course, various schools of philosophy back in Greece, and those come to have influence in the East as well.

We, of course, hear of Paul in Acts speaking at the Areopagus in Athens, and talks about the Epicureans and such, and the Stoics, and Josephus is Philo is influenced by Stoic and Platonic type ideas, the early Christians, particularly the early Christian philosopher-theologians are influenced by Stoicism and such as well. I'm not going to give you a tour of those philosophies right here, but much of the impact of Hellenism in the East was the political benefits that when Alexander's successors took all these areas, they were going to basically refound a lot of the existing cities as Greek cities, and in a Greek city the people who had the impact were the citizens. Citizens weren't just people who lived in the city, though they didn't need to do that in general; they were people who had the right to vote in some sense, who had the right to hold offices, etc., in the city, and there would be lots of other people in the city who were just resident aliens, or slaves, or something of that sort that were much the lower levels, etc.

So, if you're a Jewish boy and you want to get ahead, and you're living in Alexandria, or you're living in Antioch, or something of that sort, there'll be a temptation at least to adopt whatever features of Hellenism are needed in order to be acceptable in the society. So, we see that going on. Somehow, for instance, Paul's family had become Roman citizens, and they were already citizens of Tarsus, so somewhere back, several generations back up the line, his family had been important enough to get citizenship in Tarsus and then citizenship in Rome.

And that may have had to do with the fact that perhaps there were tent makers and that the Romans needed tent makers for their campaigns. I have no idea just how that might have happened, but the effect was such that Paul was born a citizen, whereas the military officer there in Jerusalem had to buy his citizenship. Obviously not as prestigious at that point.

So, Hellenism is pretty important, and we're going to see that in connection with the whole Hasmonean revolt. Another important feature of the Greek period here in Israel is the translation of the Bible into Greek, what we call the Septuagint translation of the Bible into Greek. The version got started probably around 250 B.C., so less than a century after Alexander had taken the area.

We have a work we call the Letter of Aristeas, which comes probably from about a century after that, and it gives us a narrative of the origin of the Septuagint. We're told here that Ptolemy II, the second ruler down in Egypt of the Greek people who came to control Egypt after the death of Alexander, wanted to build the biggest

library in the world. So, he got this fellow for his librarian, and the librarian told him that they were trying to collect all kinds of works to put in the library, and the librarian said, well, we should have a copy of the Jews' law.

Apparently, according to the story, at least, it did not exist in Greece at that point, so Ptolemy funded sending delegates up to Jerusalem to get 72 Jewish elders who would come down to Egypt and translate the law. So, the story goes in that they did come down, and they translated the law, and the result was the Septuagint translation. However, the story gets better if you like, as time goes on.

Some of the later additions to the story is that the translation covers the whole of the Old Testament, though in fact, as the letter of Aristeas goes, it calls it the Jewish law, and that's a little tricky because the term law could mean the whole Old Testament, or it might just mean the Torah, the Pentateuch, if you like. A later addition that surely would have shown up in the letter of Aristeas, if it were true, is that the translator divided into 36 pairs and worked independently, and they produced 36 identical versions of the story of the Old Testament, which probably lies behind the idea that a number of people had that the translation itself was an inspired translation. There's some skepticism regarding the details of the story, and particularly later additions, but the general opinion of the story today is that the translation into Greek that we call the Septuagint was apparently made at Alexandria, which is where the story puts it, and that the Pentateuch, the five books of Moses, appears to have been translated as a unit and was probably around 250 BC, so we've got a pretty unified style all through that, and the way of handling different translation matters there, which is not the case for many of the other Greek parts of the Old Testament as we have it.

The scrolls may well have come from Jerusalem, and possibly the translators too, and that has to do with some details about the text of the Old Testament that working out matters regarding a Babylonian-type version of the Old Testament and a Jerusalem version and a Samaritan version and things of that sort. And given the date 250, then presumably Ptolemy II allowed the work, and he may have given aid to it, so we're in a situation again without any time machines, but it looks like at least a substantial note of the story is true. The Septuagint translation of the Bible is very, very important for a number of reasons.

It appears to be the longest translation of any ancient writing known in antiquity, that is rather striking. It gives the text of the Old Testament a century or so before the oldest Hebrew text that we have from most of the Old Testament. It set the pattern for Greek theological terms as used in the New Testament as well as in the Old Testament, put the Old Testament in the universal language of the Mediterranean world at that time, at least of the East Mediterranean world at that time, and it became the Old Testament of the early church.

Obviously, once the gospel spread substantially beyond Israel, the majority of people were not native Hebrew speakers. Are we doing on time? Okay. We move on then from Palestine under the Greeks to Jewish independence under the Hasmoneans 160 BC down almost a century to 63 BC.

We start out again with Antioch IV, Antioch's Epiphanies, and the Abomination of Desolation. Antiochus IV had actually come to the throne by usurping the throne from his underage nephew in 175 BC. He tried even harder than the earlier Seleucids had done to unify this diverse empire by means of Hellenism, so he favored the Hellenistic Jews in Jerusalem, and they re-founded Jerusalem as Antiochia, or what we would say Antioch today.

He deposes the Orthodox high priest, a fellow named Onias III, for Onias's brother Jason who was much more favorable to Hellenism and that surely caused some problems, but nowhere near what the problems caused when he later deposes Jason for a Menelaus who is not in the high priestly families, apparently a priest, who had bribed Antiochus to get the office. Menelaus had offered a big price, but as it turns out, ironically, wasn't able to raise the money after Jason had already been deposed and such. But that's the danger of depending upon unpaid bribes, I suppose.

Meanwhile, Antiochus is off fighting in Egypt to try to get control of the Ptolemy side of the empire. Antiochus, like many of the guys who control these two big pieces anyway, had a desire to take the other big piece and get nearly as much empire as Alexander would have. So, he goes down into Egypt and in 168 BC, it looks like he's going to defeat the Ptolemies when the Romans show up.

And a Roman fellow who had known Antiochus from, maybe not childhood, but teenage years, I think they'd both been Antiochus had been a hostage in Rome at that point, comes to Antiochus and says, the Roman senate says you need to move out of Egypt and go back home. And Antiochus says I'll think about it. The Roman pulls out his staff and draws a circle in the sand around Antiochus, and says, stand there while you think about it.

So, Antiochus does back down, and he's not happy then as he's coming out of Egypt having been overawed, if you like, by the Romans. And he finds out that a rebellion is going on in Israel, and he's headed into that area. Namely, it's Jason who has rebelled against Menelaus, etc. And so Antiochus IV decides to try to destroy Judaism.

He forbids circumcision, he forbids observing the kosher food laws, he tries to destroy scripture, he rededicates the temple to Zeus, and he considers himself, you remember, a manifestation of Zeus, sets up a statue which may have resembled himself. We don't have any pictures of the statue, and we don't know exactly what Antiochus looked like. That sets off what we call the Maccabean Revolt.

So, we turn to look at the Maccabean Revolt, 167 BC to about 134. Well, the Seleucids have put down their opposition in Israel, they think, and the government, Seleucid government, then sends out officers to go through all the towns of Judea enforcing Antiochus' decrees and commanding pagan sacrifice. When they get to the little village of Modin, there's an aged priest, Mattathias, there.

The whole village is brought out to do the pagan sacrifice, and one of the Jews in the village starts to sacrifice, and this aged priest, Mattathias, kills the guy. Well, that would be a pretty disastrous thing to do except that there are more villagers there than the official and his troops, and so they kill the official and the troops, and naturally, that's going to get back to headquarters fairly quickly, and so Mattathias and his five grown sons call for an armed resistance and flee to the mountains, to the caves, etc. That's the origin of the revolt.

That leads us to one of Mattathias' sons, Judah. The third son of Mattathias had a military name, the Maccabee, meaning the hammer or the hammer, so kind of like Stonewall Jackson or something of that sort or Tippecanoe or one of those military names that generals sometimes get. Well, Judah then leads a military campaign and manages it by ambush techniques and by knowing the terrain in a way that the Seleucids don't destroy several Seleucid armies. The Seleucids basically are working in terms of a buildup, and they don't want to send more troops than they need, but they always underestimate how many they need, so as they gradually build up, Judah succeeds, and as Judah begins to succeed, more and more Jews flock to his standards.

So, Judah's forces grow with the success, and they match the Seleucid escalation. Finally, we'll call them the Maccabees, the followers of Judah, who take Jerusalem, except for the citadel, the main fortress. I don't think that's actually the fortress Antonia that you would see in the New Testament time maps, but it is a predecessor to that.

They take Jerusalem, pin up the remaining Seleucids and some of the Hellenistic Jews in the citadel, they cleanse the temple, remembering it had been a site of worship of Zeus for a while here, and they rededicate the temple and that is in December of 164 BC and that becomes the origin of Hanukkah, the Feast of Dedication. Meanwhile, Antioch IV dies in 163, and Lysias takes over as regent for the person who is going to become king when he gets old enough Lysias would rather get out of this thing so he offers peace terms that are acceptable to some of the very pious Jews though not to the Maccabees and so splits the opposition against himself. So just a few years later, the Seleucid forces came back, and Judah and his forces, heavily outnumbered, were killed in battle in 160 BC.

Well, that's not the end of Mattathias' kids. Judah was the third son and there are still two sons left at this point out of the five. The other two have already died.

One of these is Jonathan, who will become ruler of Israel from 160 to 142, and the other one is Simon, who will become ruler from 142 to 134. The Seleucid empire, by this point, has been weakened by division over the question of the succession after Antiochus, and so Judah and Simon, in turn, are able by diplomacy to gain strength until Judah, the land of Judea, becomes virtually independent. It turns out that both Jonathan in 142 BC and Simon in 134 BC were murdered by opponents, but not before Simon gained the hereditary priesthood and the rule of Israel for his family.

With Simon's death, then, his son comes to rule, and so when you've got two successive father-son things ruling, that can be counted as a dynasty. I probably could have counted it already from Jonathan, but the Hasmonean dynasty is typically dated then from 134 BC to 63 BC. The first guy is Simon's son, who has a slightly more complicated name, John Hyrcanus, and he ruled from 134 to 104 BC.

Very successful. The Seleucid dynasty became weak, and John became rather strong militarily.

He is able to greatly expand the Judean territory. So, he picks up the coastal cities that had long been lost to the Jews. Remember, when they came back from Babylonian captivity, they basically settled in the hill country around Jerusalem, etc.

So, he takes the coastal cities, and he takes the territory of the Edomites Idumea to the south and the territory of the Samaritans, Samaria to the north. So, it has become a very significant territory at this point. During his reign, 30 years, we first hear in Josephus of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. the Pharisees apparently had been in favor initially but made a suggestion that was not PC if you like by suggesting that John should resign from the high priesthood because his mother gave birth to him while she was a captive.

Suggestions on whether he was legitimate or not. He decided to go with the Sadducees instead. So, the Sadducees kind of become the in party at that time and they will be that off and on down to even New Testament times.

Well, in 104, he dies, and one of his sons is Aristobulus, and he reigns for about a year. He kills several brothers, too, I suppose, to strengthen his take on the throne. Not uncommon, I'm afraid, among this kind of situations.

And he takes the title king. So, from Judah is just a general if you like. Jonathan is a general if you like.

Simon is not only a general, but he's also the high priest. Even though he belongs to the priestly family, he's not in the high priestly line if you like. But now, Aristobulus takes the title of king, and his successor does not resign from that title if you like. But Aristobulus doesn't last long.

He dies within a year from fear. He assassinated all his brothers from drink and probably from disease of some sort. One of his brothers is still alive, having been in prison, and so when Aristobulus dies, Aristobulus' widow releases this brother, Alexander, from prison and marries him.

So, John Hyrcanus's widow and John Hyrcanus's brother Aristobulus then become the royal pair if you like. And so, Alexander Jannaeus, then, is the name of the younger brother who ruled from 102 to 76 BC. He continued the expansion of the kingdom until it was nearly as big as that of David Solomon.

So, we're getting a rather powerful local kingdom here that is really carved out of the Seleucid Empire, which has been falling apart all of this time. During his reign, the Pharisees revolted against him and called for the Syrians, who were the remnant of the Seleucids, to come in and help. And Alexander is about to lose when the Pharisees get second thoughts.

Would it really be better to have the Syrians, the Seleucids, in control of the territory so they defect back again? Well, Alexander wins but has mixed feelings about the Pharisees after all. Yes, if they hadn't come back, he would probably have lost, but if they hadn't revolted in the first place, he wouldn't have ever gotten into the problem, so he crucified a bunch of the Pharisees. Well, he died in 76 BC, and his wife, the one who had been Aristobulus's wife, and then his wife came to be the ruling queen for a short period from 75 to 67.

Her name is Salome Alexandra, and she is successful. She has two sons, and they're called Hyrcanus II. John Hyrcanus would be Hyrcanus I and Aristobulus II.

Hyrcanus is the milder and older of the two, and he's made high priest because Salome can't be high priest and Aristobulus is given military command. Unfortunately, Aristobulus is a person who is very, we say, ambitious, and he wants to rule. When Salome Alexandra died in 66, we came to the crucial event that led to the end of Hasmonean independence.

She dies. She is succeeded by Hyrcanus II, who is supported by the Pharisees, but Aristobulus II, supported by the Sadducees, takes the throne away from him. Hyrcanus flees to a neighboring nation, opens a civil war, and calls on the Romans for aid. At this point, the Romans are growing strong in the Middle East. If you like the Near East, I guess we'd call it, and they're anxious to come in and help out.

Well, before we run on to that then, we come back and look at some of the features of this time period and one of the important ones is the three groups that we hear about in Josephus and the New Testament the Pharisees and Sadducees we hear about in both and the Essenes which we hear about only in the Josephus material. The origins of these three groups are somewhat obscure but all three apparently rise during this period the Maccabean period so 168 to 63 a century or so. The Pharisees and the Essenes apparently rise from the very pious group that joined with Judah in the Maccabean Revolt a group we call the Hasidim.

The Hasid is a noun for one who is faithful to the covenant. You'll see this rather regularly in the Hebrew the Old Testament *hesed*, which from the perspective of a human towards God, means faithfulness to the covenant, and from the perspective of God to the humans, it also means faithfulness to the covenant, but that comes across as loving-kindness mercy things of that sort because the covenant is a merciful covenant, not something that the humans beat out the features of in you know in discussion with God or something of that sort. Well, a little bit about the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes. Let's look first of all at their theology. We think the name Essene comes from Hasid, okay? The problem is that the Greek does not really have a hard h sound, so lots of things get lost. So, in Hebrew, you've got *hallelujah*, and in Greek, you've got *alleluia*, etc. So, we think that there's an argument over where that comes from, so if that's right, the Essenes are the faithful ones, okay. They're what we might call super Pharisees. Okay, they got the Pharisees one better, and in fact, they decided that the temple was really ruled by people who were not sufficiently orthodox, so they would no longer mess with the temple.

In a great anachronism, we can say their view of the relationship of God's sovereignty to human responsibility is Calvinistic. Okay, I understand that's not a term in existence at that time. There are sources of authority in the Old Testament, but some secret books, and we think we now know what some of the secret books are. They would be things like the *Manual Discipline*, the *book of Enoch*, and the *book of Jubilees*. Some of those kinds of works would probably fall in that category. We're not sure what their view about survival is. Some think that they believed in resurrection, which would not be terribly surprising. Some think that they believed in the immortality of the soul but not resurrection, so I put a question mark on that question in my notes here.

They had a great emphasis on angels, and that seems to have come from *Enoch* and the *Jubilees*, where we get the names of a bunch of other angels and some history of their activity not quite as elaborate as *Milton's Paradise Lost* but still a good bit of information there, and they had a great deal of emphasis on eschatology. Contrast those with the Pharisees. Their name, we think, comes from *parash*, Separate, okay? So they were the separatists, not really separatists compared with the Essenes because they didn't leave society but a great emphasis on ritual purity and on building a hedge about the law, the idea being if you don't want people walking in

your fields, you put a hedge around the thing that they can't get through so if we don't want people transgressing the law we build some extra laws that put it around the outside so you have to stop work before the sabbath a half hour before the sabbath or things like that would be kind of categories that would fall in the hedge around the law kind of trend. Their view on sovereignty and responsibility is also what we'd call today Calvinistic.

Their view on sources of what should we say revelation, if you like, would be the Old Testament plus the oral tradition, okay? So they believed that Moses had given lots of other information at the time, and that was an oral tradition, so in that sense, they resemble Catholicism a little bit that the bible plus the tradition of the church if you like, or even the papal statements obviously the Pharisees had no person equivalent the pope if you like the Pharisees definitely believed in resurrection okay not so sure about the Essenes Pharisees definitely did they definitely believed in angels but at least we don't hear about names and lots of angels or anything of that sort so don't seem to have had the emphasis that the Essenes did and they believed in eschatology as well, but their emphasis is more on the last judgment than on details of what might happen there.

Well that brings us down to the Sadducees. There is some arguments about where the name came from; probably the commonest view is the suggestion it came from the Hebrew Tzedek righteous. They were the righteous ones. When most groups pick names for their own group, most are favorable names, okay? So we call the Mormons the Mormons, you know, but they call themselves the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We call another group the Quakers. They call themselves the Friends Society of Friends, okay? So, usually, the group's own name is more favorable. Some people think maybe it came from Zadok but don't know the Sadducees were more pragmatic than even the Pharisees and tended to be somewhat compromising, and in that way, they were able to work with whatever powers were around, so they got along better with the Roman government etc. we think in terms of God's sovereignty and human responsibility we'd have to call the Pharisees Arminians, okay? There is a big emphasis on human responsibility and human freedom, etc. What was the source of revelation? Origin, I believe it is, claims that they only held to the Pentateuch, but the evidence we've got suggests more the whole testament, and they were suspicious of the oral tradition of the Pharisees so at least of anything in a different tradition and probably weren't into the Essene secret books either and I think that probably fits better the evidence we've got.

What about the resurrection question? The New Testament tells us they didn't believe in resurrection but doesn't tell us what they did believe in. Josephus says they believe in no survival. When you're dead, you do not exist anymore.

And that really fits Jesus' response to them better on this whole resurrection question than the idea that they believe, say, in the immortality of the soul or

something of that sort. They apparently did not believe in angels, and we don't know exactly what that meant because we don't have any of their writings. Okay, whether it meant they believed angels don't show up today or something, or whether they believed that there never were, and there's some other explanation.

So, you might say, how could they not believe in angels if they believed in the Old Testament? Well, theological liberals and Protestants can believe in lots of things or not believe in lots of things that the Bible explicitly says are or aren't, and they don't go that way. Emphasis on eschatology. No, the Sadducees believed that since you don't exist after you die, there's no judgment.

The judgment is in this life. If you're prosperous, God is favorable to you, and so they are attracted to and tend to the upper class, wealthy people, etc. Well, that's the theology of these three groups quickly taking theology in a rather broad sense.

What about their influence and survival? As far as we can tell, there weren't a lot of Essenes, and they tended to be withdrawn from society, so obviously not quite so able to have as much influence. The Pharisees, on the other hand, were popular but not apparently actually a large group, so they just were a very influential group. The Sadducees were certainly smaller than the Pharisees and probably smaller than the Essenes, but they were the richest people and such.

The Essenes, being withdrawn from society, were withdrawn from politics. The Pharisees had some political influence, but they were dominant religiously. Josephus tells us that their way of reading things was the way that the people went, and the Sadducees took their lives in their hands to oppose that too much.

The Sadducees, however, were dominant politically, realizing that that meant they were under the Romans, so they couldn't do anything they wanted. Influence and survival of the Essenes: they wrote or copied the Dead Sea Scrolls, so their influence picked up again when they became known here in 1948, but there's some evidence that some of their scrolls were found in the early medieval period so we have a Jewish group that found some of those and decided that the oral tradition of the rabbis was wrong and went the other way. Their name has slipped my mind at the moment, so maybe we'll come back before I finish this section.

The influence of the Pharisees on survival is pretty substantial. They survived the destruction of Jerusalem to become the dominant group among the surviving Jews, and the rabbinic literature is by the heirs of the Sadducees, so that's the material that has come to dominate Orthodox Judaism over the whole centuries. For the Sadducees, as far as we know, none of their known writings survive.

We don't actually know the names of any of their writings, but none of the writings that survived that period are known to be Sadducees. Some of them might be, but as

I say, we don't know quite enough about them to say. The Essenes, Qumran, were destroyed in 68, so in the middle of the Jewish war, some Essenes survived.

Some, in fact, were apparently at the last stand at Masada in 72, and some of their material showed up in Cairo Geniza, the place for hiding documents, old documents in the synagogue. What we call the Damascus document is pretty surely theirs and a copy of that was found in the Cairo Geniza about a century before, no, not that long, 70 years, 60 years before the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. The Pharisaic group survived the destruction in AD 70 to dominate Judaism, and it looks like the Sadducees were more or less destroyed with the temple, not to say every last person was, but something in that direction.

Well, our last category is Palestine under the Romans. That's actually our next to last category now that I think about it. From 63 BC to 135 AD, where we'll stop this discussion, but actually going on from there all the way up till the Muslims come in in the 600s, is Palestine under the Romans.

The Hasmonean dynasty ends in 63 BC. You remember Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II had fallen out. Aristobulus had grabbed the throne, we might say.

Hyrcanus had run for cover and had called on the Romans. Now, the Romans intervene in the dispute, and they're able to put down Aristobulus, and Judea now loses much of its conquered territories. Hyrcanus is not made king, okay, he would have been king otherwise. He's made ethnarch, okay, rulers of a people group, we might say, of Judea, although Judea at this time does include Idumaea, Perea, Galilee, etc., so a demotion from king.

This time period is characterized by what we might call the Roman Peace, the Pax Romana, from about 30 BC, when Augustus established control over the empire for about two centuries, to about 170 AD. Two centuries of peace over the Roman Empire, that's not to say there weren't some revolts and such, beginning with Augustine. The great growth and prosperity of the Roman Empire reached their peak in the second century AD.

The Pax Romana is very important to the spread of Christianity, so we have this Roman peace over the whole area. Some other features related to Roman rule that were important for the spread of Christianity were that the Romans built impressive road systems over that whole area. No Roman, no extensive road system to match it until the development of automobiles in the 20th century, and lack of national boundaries.

I mean, there were obviously ethnic groups in here and there, but there was no need for passports or the ancient equivalents of that to go from place to place within the empire. So very important, humanly speaking, for the spread of Christianity. We

should say a word about the Herod family because they become important at this point.

I hadn't really heard anything about them before this, but it starts with Herod's father, whose name was Antipater. He was an Idumean, that is, an Edomite, but was an advisor to Hyrcanus II, and because Hyrcanus was rather mild-mannered and unambitious, Antipater appears to have been the power behind the throne. When the Romans took over, he was made procurator for Judea for aiding Julius Caesar.

Procurator meant the fellow who was responsible for the emperor's affairs in a particular territory or country. Antipater, as would be characteristic of many rulers of one sort or another, made his own sons administrators under him, and those sons were Phasael, someone that probably very few of you've heard about, and Herod, who nearly everybody has heard about by this point. But Antipater was assassinated in 43 BC, and this led to the rise of the Herod that we call Herod the Great, who was important from 37 BC to his death.

I have down here 4 BC. There's some argument over that, but that's still the standard date. With the death of Antipater, the Romans appointed Herod and Phasael joint tetrarchs of this territory.

Tetrarch is another word. You can see the arch on the end of it, ruler, and tet for here, quarter. It was a term used for a sub-territory in something, so they were tetrarchs of Judea, I guess, Herod and Phasael, but the territories, as I say, included Galilee and Samaria and Idumea, as well as Judea.

Well, just about this time, the Parthians on the east end, just outside the Roman Empire, invade the eastern end of the Roman Empire, and they briefly take Palestine, and they kill Phasael. They capture Phasael, actually, and put him in prison, and Phasael bashes his head out to avoid, I don't know, torture or something of that sort. Herod manages to flee and manages to make it to Rome in 40 BC, and the senate there appoints him king of the Jews.

Well, that doesn't cost them a whole lot, and the idea is they found somebody who's pretty ambitious, and they will allow him to borrow a lot of money from various people. He doesn't get a big stipend from the Romans. The Romans were fairly cheap in operating their society.

We won't go into that here, but so he's allowed at least to borrow money. He's got this authority, if you like, from the Senate, and so he goes back and returns with an army and takes Jerusalem in 37 BC. So, he now becomes the king of the Jews, 40 in name, 37 in fact.

There's a problem, though. The Romans, if you remember any of Roman history from this period, and you probably don't, I never had anything in school anyway at that point; with the assassination of Julius Caesar, we have a triumvirate, and it's Mark Antony and the guy who's going to be called Augustus eventually, and Lepidus, I believe, is the third guy and the eastern part of the is under Antony, and Antony is very much under the influence of Cleopatra, and Cleopatra would like Judea, so Herod's throne is very insecure until Antony and Cleopatra both committed suicide in 31 BC, and thereafter he's in pretty good shape until his own death. However, he has terrible family troubles all during this period.

He kills his favorite wife, Mariamne, who was a descendant of the Maccabees and gave him his, what shall we say, his connection with the Maccabees, because otherwise he's just basically an appointee of the Romans, if you like, and then in the course of time he kills three of his sons, two of them are sons of Mariamne, and he's afraid they're going to try and get the throne before he's ready to give it up, and don't know for sure whether he was right about that or not, and then he kills a third son who is jealous of the other two sons and got them killed and such, so it got so bad at one point that Augustus, commenting on Herod's kosher food activity, says it's safer to be one of Herod's pigs than one of his sons, and there's a little play in Greek between a who's pig and who's son, so that's the situation there. Well, Herod, however, does have some accomplishments. He is not called the great because he murdered his wife and three sons or anything of that sort.

He's called the Great because he ruled a very large territory. He refurbished the Jerusalem Temple, starting in 19 BC and continuing through the rest of his life, and then going on to 66 AD. They were working off and on in that temple and basically had just gotten it finished in time for its destruction after the Jewish revolt.

He did a number of building projects elsewhere in Israel at Caesarea on the coast in Sebastia, which had been the city of Samaria earlier, etc. So, if you go back to Jerusalem today and look at the archaeology, some of the most prominent ruins, at least those above the surface, are often Herodian ruins of one sort or another. Some of the walls around the city of Jerusalem, such as the tomb of Abraham, are in Bethlehem.

No, Hebron, Hebron, thank you, not Bethlehem, etc. fall in that kind of category. The killing of Bethlehem's children, very explicit in the Gospel of Matthew, but although we don't have an explicit statement about that in the other historical records of Herod, it fits his character very much.

He killed three of his own sons and they would have succeeded to him, one or the other of them, but he was just unhappy that they wanted to succeed too fast. So, you can see how a non-Herodian claimant of the throne he would have considered

very, very dangerous. Well, when Herod finally died, he had prepared a will which, however, had to be validated by Augustus in Rome.

So, in his will, he specified that his son Archelaus would be king and would rule over the major part of his empire and under his territory and that Antipas would rule over Galilee and Perea, and Philip would rule over some of the areas north of that, Eritrea, Trachonitis, and those guys headed off to Rome to get validation. Jesus has a parable about a nobleman who goes off to a far country to receive a kingdom return, and that's something that would have resonated with his hearers because something of that very sort had happened just a little bit earlier. Well, Archelaus has several people in the Herod family who oppose his becoming king, so Augustus gives him the title of Ethnarch, but he will be turned into a king if he does a great job.

He doesn't do a great job, and so he gets deposed in about 10 years. The other two brothers, however, do a fairly decent job in their territories, and so Antipas rules until 39 AD, Philip rules until 34 AD, but Archelaus only until about 6 AD. Herod has two descendants besides these, a grandson and great-grandson, I guess, who rule as well.

These are descendants through Mariamne and, therefore, through one or both of the sons who Herod killed. One of them is Herod Agrippa I, and he actually gets the title king of the Jews for a short period, 41 to 44 AD, but then dies, and his death is narrated for us in both Josephus and Acts. Then his son, Herod Agrippa II, became a king but not the king of the Jews. He's the king of another territory, and he lived until about 100 AD.

So that's the end of the Herod dynasty, and then, finally, at that point. Well, we do have one more section here. I want to say a little word about it. Well, it's actually two more sections.

I never keep track exactly. Okay, yeah, two more sections. One rather important one for this period, the Roman rule, is Messianic expectation at the end of the New Testament period.

There was for some reason, Josephus mentions it, Suetonius mentions it, and Tacitus mentions it. There was considerable excitement over the idea that someone coming from Israel would rule the world at about this time. So, this was strong in the first century AD, and was influential in the Jewish revolt, and my suggestion is it had something to do with Daniel's 70-week passage, that they probably didn't have enough information to know exactly when that ran out, but it was pretty clear it would run out in what we call the first century AD.

I have a little discussion of that in a chapter called The Time of the Messiah in a book, Evidence of Prophecy, and I think there's also a research report on that on our Hebrew website with the same title.

Regarding messianic expectations at the end of the New Testament period, what did the people expect? What kind of Messiah did they expect? What kind of person did they expect? Well, as we look through the material we've got, we see that the views change with time. The early extra-biblical materials on the Messiah pictured the Messiah as being more than human, though there's no clearer view of his deity in any of the extra-biblical materials. There are some even more than hints in the Old Testament itself, and obviously, the New Testament goes that way, but the other extra-biblical material seems to go into an angelic direction of some sort but not much further than that. The later rabbinic material seems to tend to minimize the Messiah in one way or another.

The Old Testament data regarding Messiah posed various paradoxes regarding the office, his activity, the type of coming, the type of being, etc., and I suggest that these are solved by the New Testament and by Jesus their candidate if you like and have another article on that the New Testament model of the Messiah which goes by I think it's the nature of the Messiah in this book The Evidence of Prophecy but New Testament model of the Messiah in our chapter that's on the IBRI website IBRI research report. We also find from the intertestamental period various views on the messianic period, how it would relate to the time period we're living in now, how it would relate to the state after the resurrection, and things of that sort, and it shows us that there's a certain sense in which the views of the Jews in trying to interpret what we call the Old Testament the Hebrew Bible regarding eschatology have some similarity to the views of Christians today trying to interpret the New Testament regarding eschatology.

One could even claim that their views of the messianic period have a vague resemblance to ball mill, pre-mill, and post-mill they're not very close, okay, but something in that direction. For instance, the various views viewed the time period we're in, and they give the title this age, and then the days the Messiah and then the age to come and in some views of the end of the age you had basically a messianic period only so you have the this age and the time of the Messiah and so you had some kind of a millennium we might say on earth but not clear what would happen after that. Other views had an eschaton only this age the age to come, and so that would resemble in some way an all-millennial position if you like but the commonest view was this age was the time of the Messiah, and the age to come, which would be now the millennium and the eternal state if you like and so what would fit this kind of pre-millennial eschatology of some particular sort.

The order of events the Jewish interpreters this time are basically taking all the Old Testament prophetic data that appears to be eschatological and trying to figure out

how to sort it. It's a little bit like putting pieces together in a puzzle, but you don't have the picture, okay? You just got the pieces, so you look at the pieces, and you say does this piece have that color on it this piece will they match, etc? So it's a tougher job, and yet, as you see it put together, they pick up a lot of things that at least pre-millennial Christians would say they got right. They really saw stuff in the Old Testament that we might have only noticed in the New Testament or something of that sort. So, for instance, they saw that there would be certain signs preceding the end there'd moral decay there'd be calamities there'd be signs in heaven there'd, be a forerunner okay, and then the messianic kingdom would be established, and the messianic kingdom would include the return of Israel from exile where perhaps a pre-millennialist today would say perhaps there's going to be substantial return first and then the millennium but even in that view you generally feel there'll be some return after that as well. There'll be the punishment of the nations okay and the messiah will rule and there was various views on what the messiah would have to do with establishing the kingdom whether it'd be established first and then he would be brought in or whether he'd be involved in establishing it and you even got into models where there were two messiahs one who would be establishing it and one who would actually rule we're not going to go off there and that probably even posts intertestamental period anyway.

Then there are the days of the Messiah, what we Christians would call a millennium, and variable features in that, as put together by different interpreters, what would be the place of the nations? Would they be included in this, or would they be kind of under Israel, etc. But usually, the time of the messiah was seen as marvelous in one way or another more miraculous than this age if you like. The length is uncertain, and some go with 40 years, while others go over a thousand. It was typically seen as ending with the rebellion of Gog and Magog, so that's interesting. That phrase of course, shows up in Revelation but also shows up in Ezekiel, and so they're trying to do that, and then what about the age to come, what Christians would perhaps call the eternal state they saw a resurrection they saw a judgment, and they saw an eternal state of either punishment or reward so in that way similar to what we see here.

Well, here are two more things to say a little bit about quickly here: the end of the Jewish state and Palestine after the fall of Jerusalem. Both Rome and Israel and at least some of the Jews contributed substantially to the end of the Jewish state. The Roman procurators who controlled Palestine from 86 to 66, except for the period of 41 to 44 when Herod Agrippa was in control, was not basically a very good time for Israel.

It began with the replacement Archelaus in six deposed a Jewish request for misgovernment, and so the Romans brought in their governors called prefects or procurators. At 86, when this takes place, there's a revolt of the zealots regarding the

census, and that was kind of a sign of things to come. The zealots gradually grew stronger as the Roman-Jewish relations deteriorated over this 60-year period.

Then in about 40 AD the Roman emperor Gaius better known to us as Caligula has delusions of grandeur and orders that his own statue be erected in the Jerusalem temple. Fortunately, he dies before the order is carried out, but the Roman procurator at the time really risked his life in delaying that, and then Caligula got assassinated by people in Rome who were interested in other things anyway. The procurators continue except for Herod Agrippa in 41 to 44 until the outbreak of the Jewish revolt.

In general, the procurators did not understand the Jews. They were frequently antagonistic to the Jews. Anti-semitism was fairly common in the Greco-Roman world, and such, and so they tended to aggravate conditions and, in that way, strengthened the zealots who were against them.

So, the zealots became more popular if you like as the situation grew worse. The last two of the Roman procurators Albinus and Florus were especially wicked men. Well, that led to the first Jewish revolt in AD 66 to 73.

It actually was started by an incident between the Jews and the Gentiles in Caesarea and was spread and fanned by the procurator and by the zealots to inflame the whole country. Initially, the moderate Jews were able to take leadership, and that's how Josephus got in, but gradually, they lost out to the more radical zealots. The revolt ended in the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple in AD 70 and the Jewish state, and then the mopping-up operation was completed with the fall of Masada in AD 73.

Palestine, after the fall of Jerusalem, ran from 70 to 135, where we'll break off. One of the important figures here is Rabbi Yohanan Ben-Zachai. He was in Jerusalem during the siege and realized that this was going to be a disaster, and so with the connivance of his disciples, he pretended to get sick and, I think, probably of some very contagious disease and pretended to die and they carry him out in a coffin and since it's contagious disease nobody's going to look in the coffin and once they get out of range of the walls he gets out of the coffin and they flee to the Romans etc.

Yohanan got permission from the Romans to establish a rabbinic school and a Sanhedrin at the coastal city of Jamnia, Yavneh's Old Testament name, and there he rebuilt Judaism without a state or temple along the lines of Pharisaism and that will eventually lead to the codification of the oral law the Mishnah and then later the Talmuds. Around AD 90, the Jewish Christians were excluded from the synagogues by adding a curse on the Nazarenes to the synagogue liturgy somewhere 90 to 100 AD, and so after that point, there was obvious tension already between the Christians and the Jews over this question of whether Jesus is the Messiah or not but that that

kind of splits things so the Christian Jews are no longer worshipping with the non-Christian Jews. One last remark here in this time period is the Bar Kokhba or second revolt in AD 132 to 135.

The Jews at this point had lost their state but there were still lots of Jews living in Israel, though a lot of them had been carried off as slaves, particularly those who were taken in Jerusalem but we go on, you know, 73 to 132 is almost 60 years huh and the Romans are preparing to build a pagan city on the side of Jerusalem and it will be named Aelia Capitolina. Capitolina in honor of the chief gods of the Roman pantheon, and Aelia is the family name of Hadrian, the Roman emperor at that time and the Jews realized that if that happened, they weren't going to get Jerusalem back anytime in the foreseeable future so one of the chief rabbis at that time a rabbi Akiba recognized a philosophical Ben-Kosiba as who was apparently willing to lead the revolt as Messiah and fulfillment of the numbers 2417 a star will arise out of Jacob so he comes to be known as Bar Kokhba, son of a star kind of a play on his own name Ben-Kosiba. The revolt is initially successful. The Romans actually controlled their empire with a very small army, and so it was spread all over the place. So, when there was a revolt broke out typically, it was successful for a while until the Romans organized and brought their legions in, and that's what happened here, but it was eventually put down with very considerable slaughter.

After that, the Jews were forbidden to come near Jerusalem except on the day of atonement, and after that, Jerusalem ceased to be a missionary religion. Well, I think that gives you a kind of a tour, if you like, of the Jewish background running from the end of the Old Testament to up through actually past the end of the New Testament to give you a little feel for what was going on in that time period. So that's where we will stop today.

That was a long one, yes, but that's really the whole second unit, okay? So, we've done two units.