

New Testament History, Literature and Theology.

## **Session 2: Greek Historical Background down to Herod the Great**

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This is Dr. Ted Hildebrandt and his New Testament History, Literature, and Theology course, taught at Gordon College. This is lecture #2 on Alexander, Hellenism, and the Hasmoneans down to the time of Herod the Great.

### **A. Review and Summary [00:00-1:48]**

#### **A. Review, Rise of Greeks, Philip of Macedon and Alexander**

**[Short video: combine A-D; 00:00-8:06]**

Alright, welcome back. We've been discussing so far the Persian Empire and the transition from Babylon's, destruction of Nineveh in 612 BC, and in 586 BC destroying the temple, Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel, Ezekiel, then down 70 years of exile and then the return under the Persians with Cyrus. We've been working through the Persian Empire. We've talked about Cyrus the Great, the founder of the Persian Empire, a great man called "the Messiah" in the Old Testament. Cyrus was the founder of the Persian Empire, the warrior who began it. We talked about Cambyses, his son who was kind of a nobody who went down to Egypt. Darius was the organizer, created the Behistun Inscription on the side of a mountain. Darius is the guy who finished the second temple in 515 BC. Then you had Xerxes who's married to Esther, Artaxerxes for whom Nehemiah was his cup bearer, and then you've got the waning days of the Persian Empire as various people take over but they're nothing, the torch is gone. Finally, down to Darius III, and this is around 334-333 B.C., who dukes it out with Alexander the Great and this is when Alexander takes over.

#### **B. Introducing Alexander the Great and the Maccabees [1:48-4:10]**

So we're going to focus now on this shift from the Persian Empire, which pushes in from the East. Now the Greeks are going to come from the West and this is going to be where this massive transition of culture takes place from East to West: Israel being East. Now it's going to be switching over to Greece. Alexander is going to be the one who

does that. So let's ask some initial questions here on Hellenism. Hellenism means Greek culture. How did Alexander conquer the world in ten years? How did he do it? It's pretty impressive, young man that he was, he died about 32-33. He conquered the world, must have started when he was about 23 years old. What happened to Alexander's Empire? After he conquers the world in ten years, he dies. What happens then is that this young man, he's kind of unprepared for death, and his empire fragments. We're going to see that in the five sections that are very important for Israel's history later on. Why is the New Testament written in Greek instead of in Hebrew? What was the relationship between Alexander and the Greek language? I want to talk about that and how Alexander is going to spread the Greek language over the whole world at that point. How did the Jews get from Alexander to Roman rule? Alexander's going to come in about 333 BC but in the time of Jesus, you're going to see that it's all Roman rule. So how did the shift from Greek to Roman happen? And how did that shift take place between Greece being the dominant power and universal empire and Rome? So that's what we'll be talking about next.

Then as we discuss the transition, there will be these people called the Maccabees (as many of you have read in this class, an 1 Maccabees). So the Maccabees boys, we'll learn how the Maccabees played. We'll realize 1 and 2 Maccabees, are in the Apocrypha, and they narrate a history right around 165 BC. So Alexander is 333 B.C., about half way down, and the Maccabees, who are Jews, are going to come in and then they're going to fight with the Syrians at that time. I want to look at the Maccabees and gain some of that background. The Maccabees will actually play some role coming into the New Testament.

### **C. Review: Persia, Greece and Macedonia [4:10-5:52]**

This is a review map here. This is our Persian empire and you see all the way from the Indus River coming across Pakistan, Afghanistan, here's Persia proper, down into Mesopotamia where Iraq is today, Turkey, Israel, and Egypt, all under the domination or the hegemony of the Persian Empire. Greece is standing by itself, and now Greece is going to fight back. Athens is here in Achaia. Alexander is actually from up here in Macedonia. So Alexander first is going to have to come down here and unite Greece

because Athenians and the Spartans, right here, were fighting with each other all the time. So Alexander, actually his father Philip of Macedon, is going to help with some of this. Philip of Macedon and Alexander need to unite Greece before they can go after the Persians. So that's going to be kind of what happens next. Here's Greece, here's Athens, Corinth, right in the isthmus, and Sparta. Those three are really important. Corinth through the book of Corinthians, Athens, Paul will speak there, Sparta, the warriors, and Macedonia, up on the top. Philip of Macedon is Alexander's father. So the name of Philippi is actually named after Alexander's father Philip in Macedonia. Thessalonica and Berea are up there also. So Alexander is going to basically unite Greece here and then he's going to go over and actually defeat the Persians to the East here and go to Troy. By the way, this is where Troy is. Right there, up in Persia, or up in Turkey. It's where Homer's *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* take place.

#### **D. Philip of Macedon and Alexander the Great [5:52- 8:05]**

Let's talk about Alexander. First, before we talk about Alexander, we need to talk about Philip of Macedon. Philip of Macedon was Alexander's father. Philip was a military genius. He developed a fighting machine that Alexander's going to ride. I don't want to take anything away from Alexander. Alexander was brilliant. But Philip of Macedon trained his son to be a warrior. What happened is Philip of Macedon put this army that was unique in the ancient world. It could fight all year round. Usually in the ancient world, even from 2 Samuel chapter 11 with David, you get this thing that the kings went off to war in the spring. Because the spring was time you could harvest wheat and barley so your troops wouldn't starve. So you always went to war during harvest time. So you could just rip off food from the people as you're going and you didn't need supplies. Philip of Macedon figured out a way of supplying his troops all year round so that his troops could fight all year round rather than just in the spring and the fall. So Philip of Macedon builds the fight machine and he's going to hand it off to his son. Philip of Macedon also wanted his son educated in the best manner possible. So Philip of Macedon had Aristotle come up and teach his son. Alexander studied under Aristotle. Aristotle studied under whom? Do you remember that? Aristotle studied under Plato, and

Plato studied under Socrates. So you have Socrates, the kind of the old wise man, with Socrates going to Plato, Plato going to Aristotle. Aristotle is the master of logic, an Aristotelian logic and ethics, Nicomachean ethics. Aristotle then teaches Alexander. So Alexander is trained as a warrior, but he's also trained as a scholar. Alexander then is going to put those two things together and conquer the whole world in about ten to twelve years. So this is pretty impressive. So Philip of Macedon is assassinated in about 336 BC.

### **E. Alexander's defeating of the Persians [ 8:06- 10:17]**

#### **B. Alexander's exploits**

**[short videos: combine E-H; 8:06-18:03]**

Alexander has his background with Aristotle, as we said before, that was a really good thing for him, being educated. He crosses over into Turkey at the Granicus River, not important, but basically defeats the Persians up by Troy. So he comes across the northern part down into Turkey and defeats the Persians in 334. This is his first big victory there, at the Granicus River.

What's interesting to me is that after he defeats the Persians, he doesn't chase after them. He actually says, "hey, I'm over here in Troy." He's never been to Troy. So Alexander goes over and visits Troy where the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and Achilles took place. He pays honor to Troy. So Alexander takes time out, goes over, and visits Troy. Rather than chasing after the Persians directly, he also is brilliant in that he takes all the cities along the coast of Asia Minor or Turkey. He goes down the coast line and takes all the coastal cities. That way the Persians can't send boats to cut off his supply lines. This was a brilliant move. Alexander takes the coastal towns and the Persians can't cut off his supply lines then, and he's able to keep the store of supplies coming to his troops rather than pursuing the Persians directly. He comes over to Issus. Issus is right where Turkey meets with Syria, right at the corner of the Mediterranean, the north eastern corner. He defeats the Persians again at Issus in 333 BC, and this is where I pull the date from Alexander, 333, his victory at Issus. Now as he's over by Turkey and the corner there, what he does first, he doesn't just chase after the Persians back over to Persia, Iran, and

Iraq. What he does is, he goes down to the Egypt first. And why is that smart? He doesn't want the Persians to be able to sneak around his back and take his back out. So he's got to cover his back, so what he does is he goes down to Egypt first before he goes after the Persians over in Mesopotamia. So he defeats them in Issus and then heads down south to Egypt.

#### **F. Alexander and the defeat of Tyre [10:17- 13:35]**

As he's going down south, he comes down through Lebanon, where Syria and Lebanon are now, just north of Israel, and he comes to the city of Tyre. Now the city of Tyre has had some prophecies in Ezekiel chapter 26. The prophet Ezekiel had said that Tyre would be made flat as a pancake. The city of Tyre will be flattened and the fishermen would spread their nets there because it's so flat.

Now you ask in the ancient world, when a king destroys a city, usually they torch the city, they burn it down, and they kill the people. The city is left in ruins. A king is not going to take the time and effort to flatten the city. So usually the cities are torched, they're burned, the people are killed, and the king moves on, and you have all these ruins, sitting for sometimes hundreds of years. The ruins remain. That isn't what happened here. This is very unique. Alexander came down to Tyre, the people of Tyre said, "Alexander, we're not going to submit to you, who are you, Alexander." They said, "Hey, we've got this island, out in the Mediterranean sea, Alexander." They went out to the island and they say, "hey, Alexander, you can't get us, we're out here in the ocean. You don't have any boats you can't get us out here." Therefore Alexander is on the coast, saying, "Wait a minute, I have got to take the city. These people are offending me." So he basically said, "Okay, they've got the city of Tyre that was on the coast land" and Alexander then takes the stones from the city and throws them into the ocean. Takes more stones, and throws them in the ocean. He makes a causeway out to the island, fills in the ocean, goes out to that island, and where does he get the stones from for making that causeway, he gets them from the city, that was formerly called Tyre. He flattens the city, just like the Bible said, "It would be flat so the fisherman could spread his nets there." He takes the stones of the city, throws them into the ocean, and gets out to that island. And to this day, if you

go to Google Maps, and you go to Lebanon, just north of Israel, maybe 30-40 miles, you'll notice there's a little like zit or a pimple sticking out into the Mediterranean sea. That's Tyre and that's the causeway that Alexander built back then out to that island. You can see, it just kind of sticks out into the Mediterranean sea, you can see it on Google Maps even till this day. It remains there. By the way, you wouldn't want to be out on that island when Alexander gets out there. You wouldn't want to be in their shoes.

But anyway Alexander takes Tyre but it took Alexander, was it six or eight months, six or eight months out of ten years he's going to conquer the whole world, he spent six or eight months taking Tyre, just that one place. Actually in doing so, he is fulfilling the Scripture in some sense. There's an entire prophecy in Ezekiel and some multiple fulfillment things you have got to work with. Many times things happen and it was layered, it was layered. It's more complex than when I'm making it out, I realize that. But Alexander had a big part in flattening that city.

Now, by the way, is Alexander going to get along with the Jews? Yeah, the Jews run out and say, "hey, Alexander, look at that, you took down Tyre, just like our Bible says. Ezekiel said it would be flat, you flattened it." And Alexander says, "hey the Jews are pretty good people." So Alexander didn't mess with the Jews. He just went down to Egypt, the Jews were mostly up in the mountains, he didn't have to worry about them, and so he goes to down into Egypt.

#### **G. Alexander in Egypt [13:35- 14:21]**

When he goes down to Egypt, he gets to a place called Siwa and this is the place, remember, Cambyses had trouble with. What happens here is people began to say that when he got to Egypt, the Pharaoh was considered a god. In Egypt, the Pharaoh was considered a god or the son of a god whereas in Mesopotamia, the king was a representative of the god. And so there were two different structures. Alexander gets in Egypt, the king is a god, so he starts getting this in his head. His head starts getting bigger at this point. At Siwa some people think, that's where he the first got the idea that he was divine. He then takes Egypt, he goes back then, he's got to go back, out of Egypt, cross Israel, up through Syria, and he goes over and takes Babylon.

## **H. Intercultural Marrying and Globalization [14:21- 18:03]**

Now when he takes Babylon, he ends up marrying this Afghan woman called Roxanne. Now this is important because he's Greek but yet he's marrying a Afghan woman. Alexander is one of the first people to have this notion of globalization. So what he does is he makes what's called an Opis banquet. In this Opis banquet, basically he invites people from all the different countries that he had dominated. He invites them to this culturally diverse banquet where all these people come from all these different countries to eat in Alexander's presence. So this is the notion, of conquering the whole world. Globalization starts Alexander, doing this. But what's the problem? His troops are saying, "we've been away from home for eight or ten years now, man, we're getting tired of this." Alexander says, "hey, don't think about going back to Greece, intermarry with the people here." Well, the Greeks don't want to hear that. These guys say, "I've got a wife and kids at home, I don't want to intermarry with anybody here." So Alexander says, "no, intermarry." So his troops start getting a little bit antsy because of the intermarriage. Frankly, Alexander is drunk quite a bit, that's why I call him "Alexander the Grape" because he ends up drinking a lot, and he's drunk and again, his troops lost respect for Alexander in some sense just because he's doing this intercultural thing rather than saying Greek is the best. So things start pointing down. He takes all the way over to the Hindu Kush Mountains, and basically over through Afghanistan, over in Pakistan, and Alexander takes that whole area. Now my son tells me that he takes Afghanistan but the Afghans say "no, no one's ever conquered us." The rumor has it that how he took Afghanistan was he married one of the Afghanistan princesses and so therefore, they didn't fight. Instead, they kind of formed this alliance, rather than being conquered by Alexander. So I don't know. I've got to research that more in terms of the historicity, but that's at least the Afghani's side of the thing. Alexander didn't conquer them, he intermarried with them. So that's interesting as well. Nevertheless, Alexander did dominate that whole area all the way over to the Indus River and basically the Persian Empire. So in ten years Alexander takes the whole bailiwick. Now, there are these cultural amalgamations. Now you've got Greek culture, you've got Egyptian culture,

you've got Mesopotamian culture, you've got Aryan culture in Iran, and beyond to Afghanistan. So there's this movement beyond the Greek polis, "polis" means city, like "metropolis." The Greeks are city-states, and basically you've got movement now beyond the city-state to this whole universal Empire. Alexander is putting this together, this notion of globalization where Greek could be spoken in Athens and you could speak the Greek language over in Babylon and you could speak the Greek language down in Egypt. Therefore, the whole world began to speak the Greek language, and be aware of Greek culture. This then becomes very important for the New Testament. With the language often times comes the world view, a way of looking at the world through the language that one speaks. So what you have is this switch then from an Eastern, Semitic, Hebrew and Aramaic language over to a Western, Hellenistic, what's called Koine Greek.

## **I. Greek Language and God's Language [18:03-22:52]**

### **C. Greek Language, Alexandria, CLAPS**

**[short videos: combine I-K; 18:03-29:18]**

Let me just go off on that a little bit. I've had the privilege of teaching Greek here at Gordon College for over a decade. Koine Greek, what you had in Greece before Alexander was a dialectal Greek. So you had Attic Greek in Athens, you had Sparta, each city-state had their own little dialect of Greek. Now the problem with that is when you want to combine an army of troops, you need to speak the same language. The people in your army need to speak the same language so when you go off to war, you're on the same page. So what Alexander did was he combined the Greek language. He was from up in Macedonia, he combined the language into what's called Koine Greek. Koine Greek comes into vogue from about 300 BC to about 300 AD. What's right in the middle of that. The New Testament. From about 300 BC to about 300 AD, is Koine Greek. Now what is Koine Greek? Koine simply means "common" and what happens is Alexander breaks them out of the city-state dialects, and he makes a universal Greek, a common Greek so these troops can speak.

It's very interesting; scholars even up until the 19<sup>th</sup> century into the 1880s-1890s didn't know what Koine Greek was. Some people thought that the New Testament was



written in what they called a “Holy Spirit Greek.” They didn’t know what kind of Greek it was. Then all of a sudden, in around the 1880s-1890s, they started finding these papyri, and the papyrus was written in the same language that the New Testament was written in. What they discovered was that the New Testament was written in the common, what I call “street Greek”, the common Greek. It wasn’t written in classical, high Greek. It was written in the common language of the people.

That’s a big thing for me to say what language does God speak? God always speaks the same language. God speaks the language of the people. God speaks the language of the people. When his people spoke Hebrew, how did God communicate with them? He communicated in Hebrew. When they switched to Aramaic? He switched to Aramaic. By the way, Jesus spoke Aramaic. It is probably his native language. Jesus will say “*Eloi Eloi lama sabachthani*” “*Eloi Eloi*,” “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” “*Talitha kum*” “Little girl, get up.” Jesus will have many Aramaic phrases and you’ll catch these phrases of Jesus speaking Aramaic to the people this day. So Jesus spoke Aramaic? Probably is his native tongue. He also probably spoke Greek, and possibly some other languages as well. Many of the people in that culture are multi-lingual largely because Israel is the land between, and therefore, you’re going to have a lot of commerce and trade. Whenever you have commerce and trade people learn four and five different languages. So Jesus, would probably have known Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic, possibly some Latin and some other regional dialects.

So Koine Greek then takes over. The New Testament will be written in the language of the people. I always ask people, what is the language of people today? It seems to me the language of today, if God were going to speak in the language of today, it is digital. The alphabet now is not 26 letters; the alphabet is 1 and 0, the digital medium. Digital 1 and 0 allows you to speak in text. The 1 and 0 allow you to speak in images. You can make pictures and you guys make pictures in Photoshop and in various things. It’s all because of the 1 and 0, the new alphabet, the digital alphabet. You can make out of that same 1 and 0, you can make sound, and so many of you listen to mp3s on your iPods or whatever. So basically the 1 and 0 allows you to express sound. The 1

and 0 also allows you to do what we're doing right now with this video you're watching right now, is all 1's and 0's, that same digital medium. So for me, it seems, how would God communicate today? He would use the digital medium, use the language of the people to communicate the word of God today. So as God used Greek back then, Koine Greek, common Greek, so it seems to me, Christians today should use a digital medium for the glory of God and the good of others to communicate the word of God and in the digital medium. That's one reason why, for example, if you're in this class, you know, that I did the work on the DASV, the Digital American Standard Version, and put that whole thing together, the Digital American Standard Version, largely because the digital allows it to be online and so many different contexts, phones, tablets, and computers. So anyways, the language of the people, Koine Greek, switched over to Greek, that's going to have a major impact then.

#### **J. After Alexander's death: CLAPS [22:52- 27:16]**

Now, Alexander dies. He dies as a young man. His child is too young, they do some stuff with his wife, but basically his generals take over. The kid's too young. I mean, Alexander was only what, 32 or 33. So what's going to happen is we've got four generals and then there's going to be like a fifth guy who comes in here. This is narrated actually very interestingly in Daniel chapter 11. There's a prediction of this very thing kind of thing happening. There's this movement from the polis, from the city to the *oikoumene*, the civilized world. This movement is from a very provincial *polis*, city, to this *oikoumene*, the whole civilized world. Cassander was one of his generals who got Macedonia, that's back in Greece, that's no big deal. He dies. We're not really worried about that. Thrace, also back by Macedonia goes to Lysimachus. So we're going to be working through this CLAPS acrostic. So here's your C L. Both these guys, not important for us in the New Testament period. This guy is important, Antigonus. Notice he gets Syria and Mesopotamia. So he gets Syria and Mesopotamia and I believe he also got Turkey. So he's got Turkey, Syria, and Mesopotamia. Antigonus gets this huge territory all the way from Turkey, over to Mesopotamia and beyond. So this Antigonus gets the biggest piece of the pie. Now whenever generals get the biggest piece of pie, are

the other generals going to be jealous? That's what's going to happen. So who gets Egypt? Egypt, the bread basket, a guy named Ptolemy gets it. He is the son of Lagi. So Ptolemy will be over in Egypt for numbers and numbers of decades. I often tell people, I'm going to teach you Egyptian history. I'm going to teach you the Ptolemaic period. I want you to memorize all the Ptolemaic rulers of the Ptolemaic Egypt. Here's how it goes. Ptolemy I, Ptolemy II, Ptolemy III, Ptolemy IV... Ptolemy... I think it's down to XXIV or something like that, twenty-four Ptolemy's straight in a row. So anyways that's the history of Egypt at this point with the Ptolemy's. I've got a friend, Dave Matthewson, who is a phenomenal New Testament scholar, and Dave says "P-tolemy, P-tolemy," he pronounces the P. I do it more like "pneumonia" where the P goes silent. So I'd say "(p)Tolemy" except I've heard it said both ways, some people say "Ptolemy," other people say just "(p)Tolemy." I'm one of the "(p)Tolemy" guys because I can't get my mouth spitting like that, "P-tolemy." But anyways, so Ptolemy is going to take over Egypt.

So Ptolemy is going to be in Egypt, Antigonus' going to be in Syria, and Israel is right between Antigonus and Ptolemy. Now what Ptolemy's going to do is he's going to say Antigonus' got too big of a piece, so Ptolemy's going to commission one of his generals named Seleucus, and Seleucus is going to go up and attack Antigonus. So Ptolemy's general Seleucus is going to go up and he's under Ptolemy. Ptolemy's going to send him up there and take out Antigonus. Seleucus is basically going to go up and take Syria from Antigonus. So now what you have is Seleucus in Syria, and Ptolemy in Egypt. What's in the middle, between Syria and Egypt? What's in the middle? As it is today, Egypt down south, Syria in the north, Israel's in the middle. So Seleucus and Ptolemy, those two guys are going to be going back and forth in Israel. For the next hundred years, this is after 300 down to about 200 B.C. The Ptolemies are going to rule Israel from 300 to 200 BC. Largely, the Ptolemies are going to be tolerant. They'll be kind to the Jews. They'll actually support the Jews in some ways. So the Ptolemaic period is 323 to 198 BC, so basically 300 to 200, a hundred year period. The Ptolemies, are going to be tolerant toward the Jews and that's a good thing. They're going to rule over Egypt, and

they're going to rule over Palestine. The Ptolemy's will have control over Palestine for about a hundred years here. Ptolemy will take the title "king," so he moves from general and three or four takes the title of king, that's not really important for us.

### **K. Alexandria [27:16- 29:18]**

But Alexandria gets built. The city of Alexandria on the coast, up in the delta area there, little bit to the west, will be built about 200 BC. Alexandria will be a center of learning. Alexandria will be one of the great centers of learning. When you think of different areas of countries, each area is kind of known for things. If I were to say to you, and you're an American, I say politics, what city comes up when you say politics? Washington D.C., unfortunately. If I said to you stock trading, if I said to you stock trading, what city comes to mind? New York City. If I said to you high tech, what place comes to mind? Silicon Valley on the West Coast. Silicon Valley is where Adobe, Apple, Google and all those companies are. If I said to you movie, what places make movies? It's Hollywood, LA, movie, the movie center. If I said education in America, what city would you say? It's Boston. Harvard, MIT, Gordon College! Boston area. There's 48 colleges here. You've got Brandeis, you've got Tufts University, you've got all these, you know, as well as Harvard and Harvard and MIT. Gordon College being kind of outside of Boston is one of good things for Gordon College. Alexandria was one of the educational centers. They're going to have one of the biggest libraries in the world. They're going to gather books from all over the world in Alexandria. It's going to be a phenomenal library, the Library of Congress of the ancient world. There is no other place like it. It was the center for education, built about 200 BC. Now what's important for us as far as Israel is concerned? Let's just take a step back and look at this.

### **L. Judaism and Greek Culture Interface: Religion [29:18-31:01]**

#### **D. Judaism and Greek Culture**

**[short videos: combine L-O; 29:18-35:36]**

Let's look at areas of cultural interface between Judaism and Greek culture. Judaism and Greek culture have to face each other now. So what you've got is different

areas that when we talk about culture, what are the different aspects of culture? One of those areas is going to be for the Jews, in particular, it's a big one, is called religion. And so religion, the Jewish people, you know they do circumcision. The Jewish people eat Kosher, they eat certain foods; they don't eat other foods. They do certain things that are unclean and other things that are clean. So the Jews have their very ethnic markers. They have their own Jewish markers that mark them as being Jewish. And they worship Jehovah. They worship one god, Jehovah, or Yahweh, and the Lord, God. The Greeks on the other hand, you know, Zeus and multiple gods, and the gods fighting each other and duking it out. So the Greeks will have many gods and they will have regional gods, city gods, and big gods, and the Greeks and Jews will have priests. The priests will be part of the religion, sacrificial system, temples and temple-states and city-states with temples in them and so you will have the temples and the priesthood and all this stuff around the religion, supporting the religion of these various areas. The time of the New Testament, you're going to see emperor worship come in where there will be Roman temples to the emperor in various towns like Ephesus and other places. So religion will play a big factor especially in the ancient world.

#### **M. American Culture [31:01- 32:14]**

Now of course, in modern culture, everybody tried to put religion down, to silence religion and try to export religion from our culture. Nevertheless, it is a huge part of our culture and usually in our culture it is spoken of in derogatory terms. If somebody says they're evangelical, that's thumbs down in our culture. You aren't allowed to pray in school much anymore, the Ten Commandments taken out of schools, prayers, young girl suing because there is a prayer on the wall that they don't like because they're an atheist. So there's been a real attempt in American culture to silence religion. You can almost have overt sexual relations in public, but yet, but yet religion is supposed to be private. Religion has been now put into the bedroom while all sorts of promiscuity has been pulled out of the bedroom. It's kind of where American culture is, kind of an interesting reversal there I think. Of course, I'm being sarcastic, you've got to be aware of that. I'm

over-stating things using hyperbole, but there's been a real effort to delete religion from American culture by secular progressives.

### **N. Military and Political Aspects of Culture [32:14-34:20]**

Military you've got generals, you've got armies, and in the New Testament we're going to see Gaul guys called "centurions." Centurions will be over the legions and Rome and you'll have the Roman legions in there I think in Jerusalem there's a block that's got a X on it from the Roman 10<sup>th</sup> legion that was stationed in Jerusalem. The centurions are over a hundred soldiers. Jesus will run into a centurion who will ask him to help his servant. And so we'll have this whole military construction where the armies will be infiltrating while Greek armies, Roman armies, various times into Palestine. So the military is part of how a culture is defined. Then these generals will also retire. When these military leaders retire they'll get certain benefits. So you'll see military people in Corinth, you'll see military people in Philippi.

Political, you'll have the king or emperor, and so there will be these political structures. You'll have kings, emperors, and governors, and senators in Rome. You'll have this political structure that will also be part of the culture as well as the courts. The courts will do various things and we'll see Paul going into the Roman court and happen to defend himself before Agrippa and various people like Felix, Festus, and Agrippa in Israel. So there's kings, there's governors, provincial rulers, there will be provincial rulers, and then there will be these larger senators. So there is a whole political structure from the emperor on down. And then as far as the culture there will be slaves. There will be slaves and freemen, huge amount of slavery, things like that. So not racial slavery like we have but people enslaved, some of the slaves will have good times, some of them more bad times. They go into the mines. It'll be really wicked slavery. Some of the slaves were to the higher-up people, slaves would actually able to buy their own freedom. So there was quite a bit of variety in the levels of slavery. But you'll have slaves, you'll have free people, various levels or strata of society built off the political.

### **O. Economic aspect of Culture [34:20-35:36]**

Economic, and that's actually taxes. Rome, all the empires, what do they want? They want your tax money. This doesn't change until this day. What does the government want for you? They want to provide all these wonderful services for you. Rome will want to provide peace and harmony for all the universe. What is it? They want your money, your taxes. So that's what the name of the game is and even till this day. As I look at you folks, I'll say 15 trillion dollars going on 16 trillion dollars, you and your grandchildren will be paying for the rest of your life due to the wonderful benevolences of our government. Now I'm sorry if you can hear the sarcasm in my voice. That's a bunch of baloney. Government likes power, and therefore it gains that through money, dominating the people in that way, so be careful with that stuff. You've got merchants, traders who will basically be connecting across the empire, people with commerce and things going back and forth. Egypt will send boats to Rome with food, Rome will send commercial goods all over the ancient world. The ancient world will send goods to Rome back and forth, that's part of the benefit of the empire's economic prosperity. Peace and prosperity are brought about as a result of the empire. So those things are involved in the culture.

**P. Jewish reactions to Hellenism: Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, Zealots**

**[35:36- 42:09]**

**F. Intro. To Jewish sects, Hellenism**

**[short videos; combine P-R; 35:36-46:38]**

Now the problem: how do the Jews react to Hellenism? What is the Jewish reaction to Hellenism when Hellenism takes over? First of all, some of the Jews when Hellenism comes on, they will basically say, "we don't want to need the Hellenism." And so they'll basically call for a reform these will be the **Pharisees**, the Pharisees will pull back and say, "no, no, we don't want Greek culture, we're Jews, and therefore we don't want it." They will separate. So basically Jews will separate themselves from Hellenistic culture. These are the Pharisees. They're more conservative, and they want to conserve their own traditions. Does that sound familiar? Tradition—Fiddler on the Roof, they'll want to preserve their traditions and therefore they want to reject Hellenism because

Hellenism is seen as compromising of the religion. So the Pharisees were strict, they wanted to separate to preserve their ideology of Judaism. So that was the Pharisaic reaction. Hellenism is coming in, the Pharisees say, “no, we want to preserve so we’re going to separate, we’re going to keep our traditions.” So the Pharisees will reform themselves and say, “no, we don’t want to be part of it.”

The **Sadducees**, on the other hand, are “sad-you-see.” The Sadducees will say, “no, no, no, Hellenism is coming in, we need to assimilate with them.” If you want to beat somebody, you assimilate, become part of them. So we want to become part of this Hellenistic culture. So the Sadducees are much more willing to give in. Some of them would go out in the gymnasiums and wrestle. Now what was the problem with wrestling in the gymnasiums in those days? In those days, the guys wrestled in the nude. Now the problem is you’re a Jew, it’s clear you’ve been circumcised, and so some of the Jews actually would try to have operations to reverse the process of circumcision, so they could wrestle against the Greeks and look like the Greeks. The Sadducees were also wealthy. These are a lot of your upper crusted people, we want to assimilate with the Greeks. A lot of the Sadducees were wealthy whereas a lot of the Pharisees were actually on the poor side. They were Jewish people, they wanted to hold on to their culture very tightly, whereas the Sadducees immigrated and became some of the political leaders were wealthy. So they’re going to be assimilating and again you can see why there’s a conflict between the Sadducees and the Pharisees. Two different ways of reacting against Hellenism: one against Hellenism, the other accepting of Hellenism. By the way, we have that same kind of cultural reaction even today in terms of how do Christians respond to secularism? Some Christians, will almost embrace and see how close they can get to secularism so they can be cool and things in various ways with the current culture. Others will pull back and say, “no, we don’t want part of secularism, we want to keep our traditions.” So you get the same type of things with the conservatives and assimilators even till this day, compromising even till this day.

Now here’s another group that’s not mentioned much in the New Testament. Some people think John the Baptist may be one of these. Basically this one, when



Hellenism comes out this group says, “we want to separate so much so that we’re going to withdraw from culture.” These people then become monks, basically, out in the desert and these are what’s called the Dead Sea Scroll community. The Dead Sea Scroll says we don’t want to assimilate with Hellenistic culture, and we don’t want to live within them and try to keep our traditions in the midst of it. The **Essenes** thought (the Essenes are the Dead Sea Scroll people) the Pharisees were too loose. So they look down on the Pharisees saying they were giving in to things. So these people will go off and form their own community down by the Dead Sea. They went down to the Dead Sea and they copied Scripture. They copied Scripture put them in jars, put them in these caves, and all of a sudden, in 1948, a little boy throws a rock in there, the kid goes in, and he brings out the Dead Sea Scrolls. After 2000 years being in there, it’s absolutely incredible, one of the greatest finds of the 20<sup>th</sup> century found by a boy in 1948, the Dead Sea Scrolls, which now you can read in English translation. We’ve got a friend, Dr. Marty Abegg, who’s worked very heavily on the Dead Sea Scrolls. It’s one of the greatest finds of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Dead Sea Scrolls, largely is a result of this community. The Essenes said, “Hellenism’s coming out, we’re going to withdraw into the desert and be our own group.” Then they looked apocalyptically to the future when some great Davidic king would come and make things right. So they basically withdrew from the culture and then looked to the future when the apocalypse would come and the end of the world would come and then they would be justified and the evil world will be destroyed. Kind of the chaos, the apocalypse. “The Apocalypse Now” kind of thing with the Essenes, they looked to the future for the saving of that.

And then, here’s another approach. Hellenism tried to come in. The Pharisees say “no, we’re going to keep our traditions, thank you, we don’t want your stuff.” The Sadducees say, “oh yeah, let’s integrate with them, let’s be part of the Greeks.” The Essenes say, “no, no, we’re going to go off and be our own little community.” The **Zealots** said, “we’re going to attack Hellenism and we’re going to kill the Greeks, and their Greek culture.” The Zealots would actually attack, get physical, and go after this pagan culture that was coming in. They would actually defend the religion, their culture,

with a sword. Many take Paul as being a Zealot, Paul was going out killing Christians because he thought, “hey, this is transgressing Judaism and these people are wicked because of what they are doing violating Judaism.” Therefore he would go out after them. Paul was the Pharisee of the Pharisee, we know that from Philippians, he was a Pharisee of the Pharisees, but he seems to have Zealot tendencies as Dr. David Matthewson would say.

So, these are four responses in Judaism to Hellenism. Hellenism with the Greeks with Alexander taking over the world is coming into Judaism and Judaism responds in these four ways: **Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, and Zealots.**

### **Q. Hellenism—Allegorism [42:09-44:23]**

Now, let’s talk some more about Hellenism. Hellenism had a thing called allegorism. What is allegorism? This is a method of interpretation. When you interpret the Bible in a certain way, (now many of us will interpret the Bible literally as we possibly can and it depends on the genre). But the allegorism says, “the book says this, but it really means something else.” So they turn these stories into allegories. And largely the Greeks used allegories because they didn’t like the gods, Zeus beating up on other gods, and anyways, they had all these god fights. Some of the Greeks said that’s really kind of backward that these gods are fighting among each other all the time. So what they would do is they take the fighting of the gods and turn them into allegories about various concepts. So allegory is to take something and turn it into an allegory. An allegory would be Pilgrim’s Progress where you’ve got Pilgrim meeting these people who are personifications of various attributes. So Pilgrim’s Progress or the Narnia series by C.S. Lewis would be more allegorical ways of understanding them. Now what is hermeneutics? This is important. The concept of hermeneutics is how you interpret literature. How you interpret? What methodology do you use to interpret? Do you use the allegorical? Do you see something you don’t like? You turn it into something else. Hermeneutics is the study of interpretation, how you interpret. So we have, for example, at Gordon College, we have a whole course if you want to be a biblical studies major, which is the best, we have a whole course on hermeneutics, on how you interpret Scripture. You interpret poetry

differently than you interpret historical narrative. You interpret a parable differently than you interpret a historical text like the book of Acts. You interpret the book of Revelation, actually, Revelation is really hard to interpret. Apocalyptic literature is really hard to interpret. How do you interpret the symbols of the book of Revelation? Those are all hermeneutics. How do you interpret the different genres of Scripture?

### **R. Anthropomorphisms [44:23- 46:38]**

Anthropomorphism, what is an anthropomorphism? The Greeks and early Christians, to be honest, and also the Jews, felt anthropomorphisms were offensive. Now what are anthropomorphisms? “Anthropo-“ means like anthropology. Anthropology means men or humankind. “-morphism” is like morph, when you say somebody morphs into something, it’s changing a form. So anthropomorphism is when you take the form of God and put it in human terms. You morph God into human terms. So it says, “the eyes of the Lord run to and fro.” Does God have eyes like we do? I can just see in this room. I can’t see what’s outside this room. Are God’s eyes like our eyes? But yet it says, “the Lord’s eyes run to fro.” The hand of the Lord is a mighty hand. He has an outstretched arm and the mighty hand. God is said to have a hand. The feet of God are talked about. In what sense does God have feet? Does he have feet to walk? I mean, how are his hands used? Does he actually use his hands to encompass things? So these are human attributes, human physical attributes, hands, fingers, eyes, nose, mouth, ears, hair, and head are described on God. That was offensive to the Greeks because of the split that they had between that which is physical; there was a kind of dualism that said that which is physical is bad and that which is spiritual is good. This dualism that took place later on in Gnosticism and I don’t want to read that back in, but largely, Gnosticism later were street forms of this. Basically this dualism is the spiritual world was good and the physical was bad. Therefore whenever God was described in physical terms, they found that offensive. So they used allegorism as a way of getting rid of the physical features of the gods and described them more in terms of ideals, Platonic ideals, Platonism playing in the back of the forms from the *Republic* book VII and other places. The forms, these ideals were what were held up.

## **S. Koine Greek and the LXX [46:38-51:49]**

### **F. Koine Greek**

**[Short videos: combine S; 46:38-51:49]**

Now, another feature of Hellenism was this unified Greek language, this Koine as they called their Greek language, the common Koine. Here's how you spell Koine, K-O-I-N-E, Koine Greek. It was common Greek. It was like what I call "street Greek" and it was from 300 BC to 300 AD. Here's the problem. They're in Alexandria in Egypt. They're wanting to collect all the books of the world. One of the most famous books of the world is the Hebrew Scriptures, the Torah. The law, the prophets, and the writings, is what makes up the Tanak. The law, the prophets, and the writings are the three sections of the Jewish Old Testament. The Torah is the law, the instructions. So Ptolemy commissioned in Egypt, he said, "you know we need a copy of the Jewish Scripture but nobody here can really read Hebrew." So he said, "we have got to get it translated from Hebrew into Greek." So what happened was they translated it from Hebrew into Greek and it's called the Septuagint. The 'Sep-tuagint' or the 'Septu-agint,' it's pronounced various ways by various people I've heard. It's abbreviated like this: LXX. Now do you notice LXX is what, X and X is the Roman numeral for 10 and 10 and then L is 50, so this is 70. "Septua" means 7. "Penta" means 5, "hex" means 6, hexagon, and octagon is 8, and a septagon is 7. So "septua" means 70. Now somebody asked me in class, what does this 70 stand for? Well, rumor has it that when Ptolemy hired these guys, he hired 70 guys for 70 days, and these 70 guys for 70 days translated the whole Old Testament. I just want to tell you, I've been a translator, and when this is in the 2000's, no 70 translators can translate the whole Old Testament in 70 days. That's absolutely absurd. So that rumor of 70 translators in 70 days translating the whole Old Testament, that's crazy. But my guess is they got a good start on it. You get 70 translators, they can do a lot of work, but they're translating from Hebrew into Greek. It is around 250 to 150 BC, this gives us the Septuagint translation. This is about 150-200 years, let's just say 200 years before Christ, you've got a Greek Bible. What is the importance of this Septuagint? This is really important.

Once you've got the Bible in Greek, well, let's just take the Hebrew bible. You've got a Hebrew Bible in Jerusalem. The Tanak is the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings. You've got a Bible in Jerusalem in Hebrew. Who can read that book? If you take that book to Egypt, can they read it? The answer is: no. They don't read Hebrew. If you take it up to Turkey, can they read it? No, they can't. Take it over to Greece, they can't read it. You take it over to Mesopotamia, they can't read it. It can only be read in Israel because of the Hebrew language barrier. Now, Ptolemy gets it translated, the Hebrew Bible into Greek, now you take the Greek Bible, can the Greek Bible go down to Egypt, can people in Egypt read it? Yes, they can. Can people in Greece read it? Yes, they can. Can people in Turkey read it because it's in Greek? Yes, they can. Mesopotamia, can they read it? Yes, they can. You take it all the way to Rome, can Romans read it? Yes, they can. So now all of a sudden, the Bible, the Old Testament, is allowed to spread throughout the whole world and people can read it now. This is incredible.

By the way, this sets it up, so now people when they read the Old Testament all over the world, are they going to be aware that the Old Testament tells them that there is a coming Messiah who's going to be the son of David who's going to rule? So now all of a sudden the world can know the Old Testament stories that set up for Jesus Christ's coming in 150-200 years later. So the Septuagint was a wonderful thing to allow Judaism to be spread all over so people understood things. Now the gospel could spread because now wherever Paul would go, he would go into the synagogues and they would have the Greek Bibles that the people there could read. Therefore the gospel could spread on the back of the Septuagint. And so Septuagint is incredible. By the way, when Paul and others in the New Testament quote, a lot of the times they'll quote out of the Septuagint. So when they do quotes, they won't be quoting from the Hebrew text, they'll be quoting from the Septuagint Greek text. So that was done under the Ptolemy's around 200 when the Ptolemy's were good friends with the Jews. Ptolemy's were tolerant. The Seleucids were not tolerant. Egypt translated the Septuagint and they were tolerant to the Jews. They ruled from about 300 to 200.

## **T. Antiochus III and IV [51:49-57:10] |**

### **G. Syrian Antiochus, Buying the Priesthood**

**[short videos: combine T-U; 51:49-60:04]**

Around 198 BC, the Seleucids from Syria went down into Israel and conquered Israel. So the Seleucids around 200 come down into Israel and they are not tolerant of Israel. So there's going to be some real conflicts now. The Syrians are going to try to force the Jews to become Hellenistic, to become Greek. So the Syrians are going to force their way down under Seleucids' rule and try to force the Jews. When you force one culture to become another culture, it doesn't work. There are rough edges, there are going to be huge clashes. And that's exactly what happens.

Antiochus III, the Great, took over and he's the one that conquered Israel from the hands of the Ptolemy's. Ptolemy's were tolerant. Egypt is rather provincial to be honest. In many generations Egypt keeps to themselves. They don't want to conquer the world, Egypt wants just to be left alone basically. So the Syrians came down, took Israel, and the battle of Panion in 198 BC, Palestine gets taken away from the Ptolemy's who were good to the Jews. Romans are starting to enter the picture. The Romans are starting to flex their muscles. What does Rome want? Rome wants food from Egypt. What do they want from Palestine and Syria? Particularly Syria, they want money. They want taxes. Now where are the Syrians going to get money for Rome? The Syrians really can't fight Rome. The Syrians aren't strong enough. So they need money to pay the taxes to Rome, so they're not going to take it from their own people very much. They're going to want to take it from the Jews. You conquer a group of people and you take all their wealth and then give it to the Romans. So that's basically what's going to be happening here. Roman taxing is putting pressure on Syria and so they're going to go after Israel.

Now this guy Antiochus IV is an incredibly evil person. Antiochus IV is going to be in the Book of Daniel chapter 11 and other places. He's going to be a foreshadow or be an adumbration of the antichrist. This guy when you read about the antichrist, there will be little shadowings that go back to this guy as very anti-God. Antiochus IV, he's the son of Antiochus III as you would expect, he takes over about 175, rolls down to 163 B.C.

He calls himself Epiphanes, Antiochus Epiphanes, Antiochus the Illustrious. The people misnamed him in kind of play on words, “Epimenes,” which means Antiochus the Madman. So there was a real clash. He always wanted to see himself as the Illustrious but the people saw him as a madman. What did he do? He tried to forcibly Hellenize the Jews. What he did was he forced Greek deities to be set up in the temple areas. Now what does that do to the Jews? The Jews have one God, Jehovah, now he’s setting up pagan deities in the Temple Mount. The Jews totally felt violated by that pagan deities on Temple Mount.

He required that people not circumcise their children. So now, a mother of twins has twin boys, she’s told by God that those boys need to be circumcised on the 8<sup>th</sup> day as it says in the Old Testament. The woman has a choice. Does she obey God or does she obey Antiochus? Antiochus Epiphanes says no circumcision. She instead follows God. She circumcises her boys and Antiochus ties the two baby boys around her neck and throws her off a cliff. The two babies and the mother are killed. Antiochus is a madman. This guy is trying to force the Jews into Hellenism. It was really ugly and wicked.

He offers pigs on the altar. If you know anything about Jewish backgrounds, you know they don’t eat ham, they don’t eat pork. Pig was considered unclean. So a Jewish person does not eat pork. It’s considered unclean, and therefore, this was not kosher. It didn’t have K on the can. But pigs were offered on the altars that totally violated the altar which was to be made to sacrifice to God. Now it becomes a place for pigs that which is unclean, totally defiling the altar. The Scriptures, the Syrians realize the importance of the book and the Syrians would burn the Scriptures whenever they found them. So the Syrians were very anti-Jewish, the Jews have faced this kind of persecution through thousands of years. Hitler’s Germany was just one, Esther faced it back in her day, and now Antiochus Epiphanes is doing something similar. However, Antiochus Epiphanes is pushing down from Damascus in Syria. When he runs across certain Jews, he’s going to have some problems because there’s going to be certain Jews that aren’t going to take it. They’re going to fight back.

#### **U. Buying the Priesthood [57:10-60:04]**

Now you've got some Jews who set up like this. Onias wanted to be high priest. So now you've got these Syrians pushing down so Onias tries to buy the high priesthood for money. So now you've got the high priesthood rather than coming down from the line of Aaron and Zadok and being high priest, now the high priesthood is up to highest bidder. Onias spends money on it. Jason gets a gym built and adopts Hellenism, and so Jason, even the name "Jason," it is a very non-Jewish name. So therefore this guy takes over the high priesthood. Finally, Menelaus, this guy is a louse, basically he's from the tribe of Benjamin. He takes over and uses the Jewish temple treasure and pays it to the Syrians so that he can be high priest. He's out of the tribe of Benjamin. In order to be a priest, you had to be of what tribe? The tribe of Levi and a descendant of Aaron somehow. He is not even the right tribe and yet he takes over the high priesthood. So the high priesthood now is violated. Jewish people come to offer their sacrifices, they've got this weirdo guy from Benjamin who is high priest now. It totally violates the Jewish culture.

So there's all these really anti-Jewish attempts at destroying the Jewish culture and inculcate them with and basically brainwash them into Hellenism. Well, the Jews are going to react strongly against that. In the altar area and the Temple Mount, he even sets up an image of himself, and that's called the abomination of desolation, spoken out by Daniel the Prophet several hundred years, over 350 years before this time. Daniel is going to talk about the abomination of desolation, by the way, and Jesus will also refer to the abomination of desolation spoken out by Daniel the Prophet. This abomination of desolation is done by Antiochus Epiphanes. He sets up apparently an altar with an image of himself and enforces people to worship him. So he sets up and requires people to worship him, and that imagery then is said to happen in the end times. There will be one, the antichrist, who will come and demand worship from all people. So here what we've got with Antiochus, is like Cyrus. As you have Cyrus being a kind of foreshadowing of Jesus Christ the Messiah, and Jesus fulfilling that, here you've got Antiochus Epiphanes being the forerunner of the antichrist with the abomination of desolation. So you've got both these people echoed in the New Testament. So this abomination of desolation,



desecrating the Temple Mount that was supposed to be for Jehovah God almighty, now desecrated with the image of this evil man and people made to worship.

## **V. The Maccabees [60:04-61:53]**

### **H. Maccabees**

**[short videos: combine V-Z; 60:04-69:07]**

Who steps in? The big Macs enter at this point. This is the book of Maccabees about 167 BC. I'm not big on the dates but I'm just trying to give you a fix of when it was. The Ptolemies are off at 200. The Ptolemies are defeated. Now what happens with the Maccabees? These are the Big Macs. First of all, there's the father, Mattathias. He's an old man. The Syrian legate comes out to his town meeting and basically says, "hey, Mattathias, I want you to offer up this thing. It's unclean, I don't know if it was a pig. "I want you to offer this thing that's unclean on the altar, you're the high priest there, you're the priest in the area. So offer this on the altar and then we're cool with you. We won't mess with you. You've adopted Greek culture, you're cool, just offer this thing that's unclean on the altar." Mattathias replies, "hey, I'm an old man, I've never offered anything unclean, I'm not going to do this." Well, this kid looks at Mattathias, "hey, Mattathias, you're an old man, if you get killed, you've lived your whole life. I'm a young kid, I've got my whole life before me." So this young kid takes that which was unclean, goes up, and he's going to offer it on the altar. Mattathias the old man grabs the young kid who is Jewish and kills him on the spot before he can offer it on there. So Mattathias then revolts against the Syrian legate but Mattathias, the old man, gets killed fairly quickly, but he's got five sons. His five sons are called the Big Macs, and they are the Maccabees. His five sons and Mattathias then revolt against the Syrians. These five boys then put together basically a guerilla warfare, going after the Syrians who are trying to force them into Hellenism.

## **W. Judas Maccabeus [61:53-64:04]**

The first one is really an important guy. He's probably the most important. He's Judas Maccabeus. Judas Maccabeus, he is called the Maccabee, "Maccabee" means hammer. Judas Maccabeus was a warrior. They called him the hammer because he

hammered stuff. He lives for about 6 years, he's going to get killed, but he's a warrior. He leads the Maccabees in revolt. This Judas Maccabeus is the one who leads the revolt against the Syrian Antiochus Epiphanes and his generals, Lysias, Gorgias, and others. Judas Maccabee attacks, goes up to Jerusalem, and actually takes Jerusalem. He takes Jerusalem and he purifies the temple. He takes it, throws down all the defiling images of Antiochus and all these wicked things. He takes that all out and they purify the temple. By the way, they were only supposed to have 7 days of light with this olive oil, and rumor has it that God multiplied the oil to make it last an 8<sup>th</sup> day, which is really kind of interesting because this purifying of the temple and the multiplying of oil for the lights then becomes what's known as the Feast of Lights. The Jews to this day celebrate the Maccabean purification of the temple in 167 BC. It's called the Feast of Lights in the New Testament. Actually Jesus celebrates this purifying of the temple. Today you guys know it as Hanukkah. You say, "Happy Hanukkah." When does that happen? Around our Christmas time in December. That Feast of Hanukkah was started by Judas Maccabeus when he purified the temple and there was some multiplication of oil and the Feast of Lights was started. The Jews celebrate Hanukkah till this day. So Judas Maccabeus was, actually, quite a guy, he's definitely a general, a leader, and just actually did tremendous things.

#### **X. Eleazar Maccabeus [64:04-65:51]**

Now, we've got to get down to some of his brothers. The next brother, actually this guy's not really important but it's always sad when you read the book of Maccabees. Basically what happens is the Syrians come down, now they're on camels. The Syrians come down out of Damascus on elephants and they attack this place called, it's not important, but they are at Bethzur. Eleazar Maccabee looks up and he says, "okay, they're on elephants, we're on the ground with our little sticks and stones and spears. They're on elephants with guys shooting bows and arrows down at us. We're dead meat. We have got to take this guy out." So what he does is he says, "I want to take out the biggest elephant," because who probably was riding on the biggest elephant? Yeah, the general, the biggest general would be on the biggest elephant. So Eleazar he gets himself

under the elephant so they can't shoot him, and then when he's under the elephant, he starts stabbing the elephant from underneath. He picks the biggest elephant and he goes after it. He stabs from underneath but the problem is when you're stabbing the elephant from underneath, yes indeed, he killed the elephant, but when the elephant is stabbed underneath and gets killed, the elephant falls flat and poor Eleazar was crushed under the elephant. So he is, one of the great heroes in the Maccabean revolt. I just like this guy because he has so much courage. He goes after the biggest elephant and singlehandedly kills the elephant. But then, of course, he gives his life when the elephant crushes him. So that's Eleazar, I call him the Elephant man. Sorry about that, but it's in the Book of Maccabees, it's really interesting.

#### **Y. Jonathan Maccabeus [65:51- 67:06]**

Judas was the fighter. Judas was the general. Judas is the one that went to war against the Syrians and the Seleucids and Antiochus. Jonathan comes along after Judas has thrown out the Syrians. Jonathan plays more of a diplomatic role. So you have this military punch followed up by a diplomat. As a diplomat, Jonathan takes over and the Syrians allow him to become high priest. So now Jonathan, a Maccabee, becomes the high priest. He's in the priestly line as his father was a priest so everything is cool. Jonathan then tried to make do diplomacy and try to make good times with the Syrians. By the way, the Syrians don't want to fight that much because frankly, the Syrians have to pay the Romans taxes. So rumor has it, the Syrians go down to Egypt and the Romans show up and draw a circle around him and say, "hey, you got to pay us taxes." He says, "I don't want to." The Roman said, "before you leave the circle, you're going to have to agree to pay the taxes." So basically Jonathan then tries to make peace with them and becomes the high priest and tries to work diplomacy. Jonathan treacherously is killed, however.

#### **Z. Simon Maccabeus [67:06-69:07]**

Then Simon, the youngest brother takes over. Simon is the dynasty builder. Simon and his descendants build the dynasty out of the Maccabees that is called the Hasmonean dynasty. Simon is the head of that Hasmonean dynasty. So Simon is one of

the five Maccabees boys, and he then basically through his descendants, father-son, father-son, father-son, produces a dynasty. His dynasty will go all the way down to the time of King Herod the Great. So we're going to look next at this Hasmonean dynasty. These are all Maccabees, then. So the Maccabees threw off the Syrians; Judas fights them, Jonathan diplomat-tizes them, and Simon then sets up a dynasty that will go on for over a hundred years. So Simon then sets up the Hasmonean dynasty. This is what the book of Maccabees is about. If you are in this class, you realize we read the book of Maccabees and all the warfare going on there. It's a really interesting history. By the way, the book of Maccabees is not accepted in the Protestant canonical text. It's considered the apocrypha. The Roman Catholics accepted it, the Protestants don't. It is interesting history. I would say that it's not the word of God but is interesting history and it's actually factually accurate. So I always think it's important to read that history to get a background for the New Testament. The Maccabees are going to play a background for this reaction against being forcibly re-culture-ized in another culture. That same battle is going to take place against Rome. Actually John in the book of Revelation is going to describe the same struggle or tension, between Rome and culture dominating Christianity. You're going to see different reactions to it then.

## **AA. Hasmonean Dynasty [69:07-70:55]**

### **I. Hasmoneans**

**[short videos; combine AA- AD; 69:07-83:20]**

Let's talk about the Hasmonean dynasty. Then we'll try to get down to Herod. Here's some questions that come up. Who are the Hasmoneans? Okay, what we said is they're descendants of the dynasty that comes out of Simon Maccabeus. So we know that one already. Where did the Pharisees and the Sadducees come from? We actually talked about who the Pharisees were and their idealistic backgrounds or ideals, but when did that actually happen? When did the Pharisees and the Sadducees actually come into being? Why did the Pharisees and the Sadducees hate each other besides the conflict of ideals?

There are other historical roots as well. What was Herod the Great like? Herod the Great is going to be king at the time when Jesus is born. The magi are going to go to Herod the Great, and the magi are going to say, “where is he that’s been born king of the Jews?” Herod’s going to say, “wait a minute, I thought I was the king of the Jews.” Now they say “where is he that has been born king of the Jews?” Then he’s going to send them out to Bethlehem of Judea. So then he sends the magi down to Bethlehem and things like that. Who was Herod the Great? What was he like? Why did everybody hate Herod the Great? Herod the Great had major problems. Why did people hate him? Why did he kill the infants of Bethlehem? How does Rome get into the picture? We’ve got Greek culture now through the Seleucids and the Ptolemy’s, initially with the Ptolemy’s and then later with the Seleucids. We’ve got Hellenism, or Greek culture, dominating Israel. How did Rome get into the picture in Israel? This all happens during these Hasmonean years. Then was Jesus an Essene from Qumran or the Dead Sea Scrolls? Who are the Essenes and what is Jesus’ relationship and John the Baptist and other people. So let’s look at the Hasmoneans, first of all.

#### **AB. Hasmoneans: John Hyrcanus [135-104 BC] [70:55-75:14]**

The first guy that comes in the Hasmoneans dynasty is a guy named John Hyrcanus. John Hyrcanus, you see his name here. He goes from about 135 to 104 BC. I’m going to use PECC to kind of do his thing. So it’s about right before 100 BC, John Hyrcanus, he’s one of, he’s the first of Simon’s descendants. Simon was one of the five Maccabees boys. One of his sons, John Hyrcanus, is now going to take over Israel. This is when the parties get started in Israel. John Hyrcanus is one of the parties. The Pharisees are the strict ones who want to keep their traditions, the Hasidim, and the Sadducees become the Hellenists, these parties polarize under John Hyrcanus, the parties polarize. This is when the Pharisees and the Sadducees actually are born historically, probably there’s forerunners before this, but this is when they really become separate parties and things start to happen. John Hyrcanus expands the territory of Israel. So he’s an expansionist. He takes over and expands the boundaries of Israel. He’s a strong king. Now, this is kind of ironic, isn’t it? Remember the Jews were commanded not to be

circumcised and they violated that? John Hyrcanus comes along and he says there's this group of people called the Idumeans. Now who are the Idumeans? Idumeans live, here's Israel, the Idumeans live to the south and to the east, the southeast of them. The Idumeans were formerly called "Edomites." Do you notice the D and the M? The Edomites and the Idumeans, are pretty much the same thing, with slight modifications. Who are the Edomites from? The Edomites were from Esau. Do you remember Jacob and Esau? The Edomites were Esau's descendants. In the Old Testament, what did the Edomites do? Whenever you see an Edomite in the Old Testament, the Edomite is killing a Jew. The Edomites like to kill the Jews, the Jews sometimes kill back the Edomites as David did. So the Edomites and Jews went at it. The Edomites killed a lot of Jews, an Edomite killed the priests at Nob. When John Hyrcanus takes over, he goes to the Edomites and says, "hey, we're Jewish, we rule your territory, you guys all have to be circumcised." Now, being circumcised on the 8<sup>th</sup> day as a child is one thing, but when you are a 35-year old man and someone says, "hey, buddy, you've got to be circumcised." I just want to tell you, that's not good when you're 35 years old. So now John Hyrcanus, rather than leaving the cultures be by themselves, which is what he should have done, he forces them to become Jewish with circumcision. So this is ironic. The Jews were forced not to be circumcised and they resented it, and now he's forcing people to be circumcised when he's on top. So you can see how when a person's on the bottom, they want all this freedom. When they get on the top, then they began to dominate. You begin to see this pattern sometimes that people on the bottom, when they get on the top, are the worst tyrants. And so therefore, Proverbs tells us don't let a slave become a king because of this kind of thing. You'll get these dominant tyrants coming and taking over, and being really cruel because they don't understand things and they were dominated. So John Hyrcanus is like that.

John Hyrcanus makes a mistake with his kids. His kids are trained in Greek. He gets his kids trained in Greek culture. He wants his kids to be progressive. He has them trained in Greek culture. As a result, he's going to lose his kids. Greek culture is going to dominate his kids rather than Judaism, the religion that he should have been training them

in. So that's basically John Hyrcanus: P is for parties, E is for expansion, Circumcision and Children, PECC. Aristobolus is going to be one of his kids... he's not going to be very important.

**AC. Alexander Jannaeus [102-76 BC] [75:14-78:57]**

The one that's going to be important is this guy, Alexander Jannaeus. This is the next big Hasmonean ruler coming down from Simon Maccabee, John Hyrcanus, Aristotobolus is nobody, and then Alexander Jannaeus. He's going to be F CAPE. He goes from 102 down to about 76 BC. So we're getting down to 76 BC, we're getting closer and closer to the New Testament times. Alexander Jannaeus, he had some problems. He favored the Sadducees more. So he's out at the Feast of Tabernacles, which is in the fall, usually in September or so, and he's at the Feast of Tabernacles. At the Feast of Tabernacles, the Jews come, and all the people come, and they're going to worship with a little palm branch, and they're also going to have a little citron in their hand. They're going to come to worship. Alexander Jannaeus is going to go up and he's going to take the holy water and he's supposed to pour the holy water on the holy places. So he's supposed to pour the holy water on these holy places. Alexander Jannaeus thinks, this holy water is a bunch of baloney. So Alexander Jannaeus just pours it out on the ground and defiles the holy water. Now you've got all these traditional people there with these citrons in their hand and the king just pours the water, defiling the water out on the ground. What do all the people do? Well, the people in that part of the world like to throw things, don't they? Has anybody ever seen when President Bush got a shoe thrown at him? Do people like to throw? They throw rocks and actually that's what they do most of the time, they throw rocks at people. These guys all got their citrons in their hand, the king defiles the water, all these people start pelting the king with these citrons. Now, by the way, when the king gets pelted with citrons, he didn't like this. What's the king going to do? These people are poor people down here, he is the mighty big king so what does he do? He gets the Pharisees and he crucifies about 800 Pharisees. Is that really a wicked bad thing to do? Is that a way to win friends and influence people? Crucifying Pharisees? He's of the Sadducee type, you see why there's going to be a conflict between Pharisees

and Sadducees. It's not only that their ideals are different, but those ideals work out in this kind of conflict with 800 Pharisees being crucified by Alexander Jannaeus. So this guy is a bad dude in terms of diversity. He tries to assimilate all groups. When you try to forcibly assimilate groups, does that work again or are you making enemies and big problems? So this forcible assimilation is a big problem. Ironically, when the Pharisees beat up here, who did the Pharisees go to for help? The Pharisees go to the Syrians for help. Now, don't you find that ironic? The Syrians before were forcing the Jews to be Hellenized, and now the Pharisees who are more traditional are being beat up by the Sadducees, and they go to the Syrians because the Pharisees are poor people and the Sadducees are rich people and basically they need help, they need military help. So who do they go to? They go to the Syrians, their former enemies. They go back to their enemies now and so there's this flip around where your enemy becomes your friend and fights this common foe, the Sadducees. So this is kind of ironic. Alexander Jannaeus again tries to expand territory and does so. So that's Alexander Jannaeus, kind of some brutal stuff there.

#### **AD. Salome Alexandra [78:57-83:20]**

When Alexander Jannaeus passes off the scene, his wife is going to take over. And so this is different now. We've had John Hyrcanus under Simon, Simon the Maccabees, John Hyrcanus, Aristobolus didn't count, and John Hyrcanus, Alexander Jannaeus, and now, Alexander Jannaeus' wife is going to take over and her name is Salome Alexandra. Her acrostic is HA MEPS. She basically is going to do what? She's got two sons, she's a mother, she says, does a mother always try to split up things that are fair. You've got two sons, you've got two daughters, everything's got to be split up fair. So the mother's got to split it down the middle. You say, "what if one kid weighs 240 pounds and the other daughter weighs 100 pounds." Question is do you have to be fair? Do you split it down the middle? Well, this kid needs more food, this kid doesn't need much food. So fair doesn't always mean splitting in the middle. But you know, Salome Alexandra, she's going to split things down the middle. So what she does is she's got two sons, one named Hyrcanus. This is easy to remember, Hyrcanus gets the high priesthood. So she says,



“okay, Hyrcanus, you get the high priesthood.” It’s nice they both start with the letter ‘h.’ “So Hyrcanus, you get the high priesthood.” “Aristobolus,” her other son, “you get the army.” Aristobolus and army, they kind of go together. So she splits it up basically between her two sons. Hyrcanus gets the high priesthood, Aristobolus gets the army.

Now what has she just done? She’s divided the power structure into two like that, both her sons get half, but what’s the problem though? You’ve got one with the army and the other one high priesthood. Question. As soon as she passes off the scene, what are those two brothers going to do? Do brothers fight? Yes. So these two brothers are going to fight. One of them is going to have the army and the other ones going to have the high priesthood. And so probably if you’ve got the armies, it’s going to do you favor. So this becomes a problem now. She sets that up, by the way she split things up. She married Aristobolus and then she married to Alexander Jannaeus. So she married the brothers in a row. We’ve seen that with Jesus. Does anybody remember Jesus and the Sadducees? You know, there was a woman who was married to a man, her husband dies, she has no children, then she’s married to the next brother, and to the next brother, and next brother, finally all seven have had her. In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife shall she be? That’s in Matthew chapter 22 or 23. Whose wife shall she be in the resurrection? Here you see, Salome Alexander did marry the one brother and married the next brother on down. So she married the two successively.

She pushes education and tries to get the people educated. That’s a good thing. So she links up with the Pharisees. She’s more conservative than her husband who was not, he was more linked with the Sadducees. She links more with the Pharisees. But then she splits it with her sons. The Sadducees under her are more abused. So she links more with the Pharisees, so now the Sadducees come under hard times under her. Now, what happens next? We said she’s going to pass off the scene, and now what are the brothers going to do? What do you figure? Hyrcanus II, he takes the high priesthood. Aristobolus and the Sadducees, get the army. Aristobolus takes the army and they march then against the high priesthood of Hyrcanus II. Aristobolus then takes over. Hyrcanus, he’s got the high priesthood. He doesn’t have the military gear to fight his brother. So what happens

is he goes to Aretas, who is kind of down with Idumea over in Edom and these guys are called Nabateans at the time, they were traitors who came in down the southern part of Israel. He goes to Aretas the Nabatean for help down south and he tries to get military help from there. So what you've got is these two brothers duking it out. Aristobolus versus Hyrcanus, the army versus high priesthood. High priesthood doesn't have power so what he does is he grabs Nabateans and tries to get the Nabateans to fight on his side. And they fight.

### **AE. Rome [83:20-85:57]**

#### **J. Rome and Herod**

#### **[short videos: combine AE-AG; 83:20-94:41]**

Who steps in? Who doesn't want fighting? Who wants peace in the empire? The one that wants peace in the empire is Rome because when they have peace, they can collect taxes and everything goes well. When they've got two brothers duking it out, they can't get tax money out of them, what are they going to do? So what happens is Rome in 63 BC, and this is a big transition, the two brothers, Aristobolus and Hyrcanus are duking it out in 63. Rome steps in and says back off, brothers, no more fighting, each to your corner, you know, take a time out here. Basically Rome in 63 BC steps in and takes over Palestine. So 63 Rome takes over, a Roman general named Pompey comes in, walks in the holy of holies in the Temple Mount, looks around, apparently didn't see anything, says, "hey there's nothing in here," walks around the holy of holies, then walks on out. That's Pompey, 63 BC, goes into the holy of holies. Antipater's boys, who are Idumeans, Idumean from the south, his boys are trained in Rome. So Antipater says, "hey, these Jews are always fighting each other, why don't you make one of my boys king of the Jews? So I realize we're Idumean." Did Idumeans and Jews didn't get along too well anyway? Antipater has an in with Rome. So what he does is he makes a request to the Roman government. Now, the Roman government structure we've got various things and I don't want to spend a lot of time on this and things, but the senatorial provinces, you've got the structure from Rome. You've got the emperor, at the top of the pile. You've got the Senate underneath, or however the configuration there was back and forth, the

emperor, the Senate, and then you've got the senatorial provinces. You've got the legions, the Roman legions and the various generals, and the Roman legions and centurions, and then you've got common people and you've got slaves in the empire. So you've got the imperial provinces, you've got legions, army legions that answer to the emperor, and then you've got this kind of client state setup. This client state setup is where Israel would be a client state to Rome. So that would be like a patron and a client, and Israel as a client then that had to pay taxes. And what did they benefit? They benefitted by being afforded peace and harmony. Rome would make it so it's peace and harmony so they can trade. And what they'll do is they had to pay taxes and had to be nice and not fight. So basically you had this Rome and then these client states going down.

#### **AF. Herod the Great [85:57-90:52]**

Now, Herod, Herod was Antipater's son. Herod then was put in Rome. This is Herod the Great, he dies as we said before in 4 BC. Actually Jesus was born about 5 BC and this is Herod the Great. This is the one that's recorded in the Bible. Around the time just before this, you had Julius Caesar and what's called the First Triumvirate. Julius Caesar, do you remember Caesar gets it stuck and you have got "Et tu, Brute." Brutus killed him. And so you've got Julius Caesar becoming the supreme leader. He is assassinated about 44 BC. This is just before the time of Herod the Great. This is the First Triumvirate with Julius Caesar. Herod, is about 37 BC, Herod is made king of the Jews. So Antipater makes a plea with Rome saying, "hey, make one of my sons, head of this provincial area." And so Rome says, "okay, we'll take Herod and we'll make your son Herod king of the Jews." He's called Herod the Great. We're going to see why he's great and why he's not so great. But Herod was made king of the Jews.

By the way, when he's made king of the Jews, can you see why Herod got a little upset? The magi come from the east following the star, they come to Jerusalem, and they ask: "Herod, where is he who has been born king of the Jews?" Was Herod born king of the Jews or was he made king of the Jews by Rome? So now the magi come in and ask, "where is he who's been born king of the Jews?" Herod gets a little bit upset about that. I'm the king of the Jews, you know? So if you can't be a Jew, and you're an Idumean.

You're of the stock of Edom from Esau's descendants, Esau becomes Edomite and Edomite becomes Idumean. You're an Idumean, you're Herod, if you can't be a Jew, then the next best thing you can do is to marry a Jew. So what he does is Herod, Herod is kind of a fox, he marries Mariamne. Mariamne is a Hasmonean. Now what's a Hasmonean? A Hasmonean means she is of the line of Simon the Maccabee, John Hyrcanus, Alexander Jannaeus, all the Maccabees down. The Hasmoneans were the leaders of Israel going back to the Maccabees. The Hasmoneans who were the leaders of Israel. So he marries this princess of the Jews that goes back to the Maccabees. So he's very smart. He marries Mariamne.

Now there's going to be some problems. There's a woman in Egypt at the time and her name is called Cleopatra. Cleopatra is in Egypt. Cleopatra hates Herod's guts. Is there anything worse than the scorn of a woman who's in power? So what she does is she says, "Okay, Herod, I don't like you, you're a jerk," and he probably was. So she sends him on these all wild goose chases out in the desert. And she says, "Herod, I want you to chase the Bedouin for there's some Bedouin out in Arabia. You got to go out in the desert and chase these guys out in the desert." Herod says, "what is this, I'm chasing these Bedouins? These Bedouins are nobodies. They ride on camels in the middle of the desert. I don't want to be doing that. I want to be sitting in my palace with my royal, entourage around me." "No," she says, "you have go out and chase these guys." So Herod is sent on all these wild goose chases by Cleopatra. On one of the wild goose chases. Herod says to one of his guys, "If I don't come back, you kill Mariamme (his wife). Now apparently because the woman's Jewish and the guard was apparently Jewish, the guard told Mariamne that, "Herod said if he didn't come back, he's going to kill you." Does that make real good for a husband and wife relationship? The husband goes off to war, if he doesn't come back, the wife has been told that she's going to be killed. Needless to say, their relationship starts fracturing and Herod ultimately ends up killing Mariamne, okay. She was one of the only people he trusted. I saw a play in Jerusalem where Herod is running around like a crazy man. Herod was paranoid. Well, actually, is it paranoia when people actually do want to kill you? Maybe that isn't paranoia. But he

was running around like a crazy man, “Mariamne, Mariamne, come back, come back,” and he’s the one who killed his wife. Herod kills his own wife, the wife that he supposedly loved and so that shows you the kind of guy he was.

#### **AG. Herod’s Harbor at Caesarea and Building projects [90:52-94:41]**

Cleopatra is married to Mark Anthony. You’ve got Mark Anthony and Cleopatra in Egypt. This is a Second Triumvirate, and then you’ve got Augustus coming out of this, Augustus Caesar, calls himself savior, and he is the good news, the announcement basically in the book of Luke. The time of Augustus Caesar is when Jesus is born. Then Herod the Great is king, and Augustus is Caesar, and this is kind of the setting for the New Testament. Two other things I want to say about Herod. Herod was a major jerk. He killed his wife, and I’m going to show you something else that did worse or as bad as that.

Herod was one of the great builders of the ancient world. Herod was an incredible builder. Along the coast line of the Mediterranean, there was only one port at Joppa. We call it Tel Aviv today. Just up the street he says, “I want to build, my own harbor up at Caesarea.” So he goes up the coast a ways from Joppa or Tel Aviv, and he builds a place called Caesarea on the Mediterranean Sea. But in order to do that, because the sand is going up and down, he takes these huge stones and he drops them into the ocean to form his own harbor. Remember, he makes a harbor out where there was no harbor before just by dropping these huge stones into the ocean and forming a harbor for him. Now how do you connect rocks under water? Well, normally, if you’re above water, you use a thing called cement. Herod, and I think it was known in Rome, figured out a way of congealing cement under water. So Herod got underwater-cement and developed and connected the rocks with underwater cement. By the way, those huge stones and you can see on a satellite image, to this day. You can see the harbor that Herod built. It’s absolutely incredible. By the way, who is in prison at Caesarea that Herod had originally built? Paul will spend a couple years, at Caesarea as he is awaiting trial in Jerusalem and then ultimately gets shipped to Rome from there. So Caesarea becomes a big thing on the coast line. Herod built that harbor and all sorts of stuff. Herod was a builder. Herod was

an incredible builder. By the way, talking about the temple, Herod extended the Temple Mount, took the small temple that was built in the time of Ezra-Nehemiah, and he remodeled it and made it one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. A huge temple on a huge platform, and that platform, by the way, is still used by the Dome of the Rock on the Al Aqsa Mosque even till this day. That platform of Herod is still in existence and still being used, with people walking on that platform till this day. So Herod rebuilds the temple and that's why Jesus said "Destroy this temple and I'll raise it up in three days," and the people just freaked out. Herod took 46 years, how are you going to do this? By the way, to this day, and if you get my program "Get Lost in Jerusalem," you can go up to the Western Wall where what they call the Wailing Wall. The Jews prefer calling it the Western Wall now. It's the last part of the second temple that's left. When you go up to the stones and you're going to see there these huge stones, you can tell a Herodian stone just by the frame that it has around it. So I can walk up to that wall and I can pick out which stones Herod put there and which ones Herod didn't put there because Herod's stones were so well-crafted. They were so well-crafted that you could not get a razor blade between the stones they so well fit together. Herod was an incredible builder, He rebuilt the temple, it's that second temple that Jesus is going to come into. Jesus is going and throw out the money changers out of Herod's temple.

#### **AH. Masada [94:41- 100:09]**

#### **K. Masada, Herod's sons**

**[short videos: combine AH-AI; 94:41-1:02:55 end]**

Now the last one here that he built was Masada. He actually built some places over in Jordan and down by Bethlehem, too, the Herodian down by Bethlehem and other places. Herod was paranoid. He thought people were trying to kill him. The problem is, were people trying to kill him? Very likely, they were. So Herod was scared, so what he did was he went down to a place called Masada. And I just want to tell you the story of Masada lest the story be lost. In America, we have the Alamo. And the Alamo will never happen again, like the last of the Alamo. The Alamo's when their back was to the wall, the Alamo went down. Herod built Masada. Masada is a mesa that goes up from the Dead

Sea, it's down by the Dead Sea, it's really hot down there, and it goes up about 1200 feet, straight up, and there's, I don't know, 30, 40, or 50 acres on the top of this mesa. There's a snake path that goes up the front of it, and it is 1200 feet up, and then there's this thing on top. Herod carved out cisterns on the top and he had those cisterns full of water. So he filled, and I'm not talking just, you know, 100 gallons, 200 gallons, these are tens of thousands of gallons of water he had put up there. He also put up store rooms and he's got huge buildings of store rooms where he stored grains of wheat and barley. So there was food, and there was water. Hey, you've got food and water, can you live a long time with food and water provided? So what happened is Herod built Masada with palaces on the north end. Well, Herod dies, Jesus comes and goes, and the temple is destroyed in 70 AD by the Romans. The Jews at the time of the Romans, destroyed Jerusalem and some Jews then ran down to Masada and these Jews climbed up on the top of Masada, I think there were about 900 Jews, on top of Masada. And they said, "we will not submit to Rome." They thumbed their nose at Rome, and would not submit. They were at the top of Masada. The Romans come down to the Dead Sea and they were going to attack and all of a sudden, they look up, and think, "holy cow, this thing's 1200 feet high, man, what are we going to do?" And the people up on the top have all the water they want to drink; the people at the bottom are next to the Dead Sea. What's the problem with the Dead Sea besides being 1270 feet below sea level and being 33% salt? You drink that water, you're dead shortly. There's no water, you have got to go back to En Gedi and other places to get the water. They don't have enough water.

So basically the Jews are up on the top, laughing at them, saying, "Romans, the sun's going to cook you, man." And Josephus, the Jewish historian, narrates this. This is about 73 AD. The Romans destroyed the temple in 70 AD and I want you to know that date, 70 AD the temple is destroyed. This is about 3 years after that. You don't thumb your nose at Rome even if you're 900 people and you've got all the water and food you want up. It's 1200 feet straight up, you don't thumb your nose at Rome. Rome sends an architect down there, and the architect says okay we're going to have to take that mountain and push it up the side over here to make a ramp up to it so we can all battle

ramps up to knock the walls down. And then we can get up there. We have got to make this ramp.” How are you going to make this ramp? It’s 1200 feet straight up. The Romans start bushel, after bushel, after bushel of dirt, after dirt, after dirt, and they make a ramp up the back side of the mountain of Masada. They make a ramp up the low side of Masada. It’s still like 800, 900 feet, straight up, they make it. They have to take down another mountain, but they do it. They do it using Jewish slaves and other people like that but then they do it. They put things up there so that they can hoist up a battering ram. They hoist up a battering ram up after, I think, some rumor has it that it took them like 3 years to build this ramp. They’re out in the desert building this thing for three years. Other people say they did it quicker. So you’re pulling the battering ramp up here. The Jews then have fire here, and the Jews fire down on the battering ramp trying to set it on fire. But they’ve got iron on the front of it, and they were battering it out and they bring it up on the wall and they start banging on the wall.

The Jews up there realized that the next day the Romans are going to break through. The next day the Romans are going to break through. They’ve got 900 people up there. They’ve been up there, safe, the Romans couldn’t get them but the Romans are finally coming through. They’re going to batter it down. Well, the next day comes, the Romans sat for the night, they come up the next day, and the battering ramp goes, and they bashed through the wall. But you know what? There was no noise up there that day. When the Romans walked in on the top of Masada, there was nobody to greet them there. There were 900 dead Jews. They had all killed themselves and committed suicide. There were 900 Jews, dead, on the top of Masada. What do the Romans get out of that? 3 years of working in the hot desert and what did they get? There were 900 dead Jews, in the middle of the desert. That was the story of Masada. The Jews say till this day: Masada will never happen again. And even today, you can see the Air Force jet buzzing the top of Masada. Masada will never happen again. Masada was built by Herod the Great. Herod the Great was one of the great builders of all time. Absolutely, absolutely incredible.

#### **AI. Herod and his sons [100:09-102:55]**



Now, one more thing about Herod. Caesar said of Herod. “I’d rather be Herod’s *hus* than his *huis*. I’d rather be Herod’s *hus* [pig] than his *huis* [son].” Herod would not eat or kill pigs in deference to the Jews. However, what did Herod do to his own sons? He was paranoid that somebody was going to try to kill him. Who would try to kill him? Usually it is an in-house type things. So what Herod did was Herod ordered that his sons be killed.

I remember when my son and I were walking down from Jerusalem, we came down, actually we drove down to New Testament Jericho. New Testament Jericho is separate from Old Testament Jericho. New Testament Jericho was covered over with all the barbed wire. So my son and I climbed through the barbed wire, and I had my son stand in the cistern, he stood in a pool down at New Testament Jericho. You know why I did that? Because Herod did what to his son in that pool? Herod sent his son down to the pool at Jericho and then told his guards to basically hold the kid under water and drown him in the pool. So basically me, being the nasty father that I am, I had my son get down in the pool, I snapped the picture, he didn’t know what was about, but I was trying to re-dramatize that. There was no water anywhere around there now. But anyways it was just something, then we got back through the barbed wire and took off.

But “I’d rather be Herod’s pig [*hus*] than his son [*huios*].” Herod protected the pigs out of respect to the Jews. He did not kill pigs and eat pigs out of respect to the Jews. He didn’t kill pigs. But he killed his own sons because of his paranoia and things. This is Herod the Great.

What is Herod the Great going to do in the New Testament? You guys have started on the book of Matthew. And the book of Matthew chapter 2: Wise men, infants, Egypt to Nazareth. What is Herod going to do? Herod is going to kill his own sons and in Matthew chapter 2, he’s going to kill the infants of Bethlehem who are under two years old and under, he’s going to kill them. Was that a big thing for Herod? Herod killed his own wife and killed his own sons. To kill probably 12 kids in the town of Bethlehem. It’s a small town. To kill babies under two is that a big deal? It’s insignificant in terms of the nastiness of Herod. It’s not even mentioned in the external history books. But that’s how

the New Testament starts. The mighty king Herod killing infants and Jesus, God's son, spared the killing of Herod, and the King of the Jews is going to rule on the throne of David forever and ever. Well, we'll pick it up there next time. Thanks for the afternoon and all the best.

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