

“Biblical History – Part II” Inter-Testament Period

Greek Rule continued:

1. After the death of Alexander the Great (323 B.C.) the Hellenistic Empire was divided among his four leading generals (History does not record Alexander having any heirs):
 - _____
 - _____
 - Lysimachus
 - Cassander
2. Two of these general are important to our study for history records their dynasties as being the significant ruling nations/empires until the Romans conquer them.
 - The **Ptolemaic** Empire/Dynasty
 - 1) Centered in _____ and its capital was _____
 - 2) The rulers that succeeded each other were known as Ptolemies
 - 3) The last known ruler of this dynasty was _____ and she died in 30 B.C.

- The **Seleucid** Empire/Dynasty
 - 1) Centered in _____ and its capital was _____
 - 2) The rulers were called Seleucus or Antiochus
 - 3) The Seleucid Dynasty ended when Pompey (the Roman General) made Syria a Roman province.
3. Palestine was sandwiched between these two groups (Ptolemies of Egypt & Seleucids of Syria)
- The continual rivalries that existed between these two empires brought warfare and bloodshed to this region of Palestine during certain periods. **You can actually read about this in Daniel 8, 11.**
 - The Ptolemies dominated first (320-198 B.C.) and the Jews fared generally well during this time. The _____ was translated during this period.



- The Seleucids gained control of Palestine in 198 B.C. when they defeated Egypt under Antiochus III (the great)
- The successor to Antiochus III was **Antiochus IV** who was also called Epiphanes (**Antiochus Epiphanes**) the “shining one”.
 - 1) A/E deposed Onias III the Jewish High Priest (called the Prince of the covenant in Daniel 11:22) and appointed a new High Priest (Jason) in Jerusalem. He does this with the intent of Hellenizing Jerusalem.
 - 2) During the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes; Jerusalem became like a Greek city with Greek theatres, gymnasiums, games and pagan deities.
 - 3) The Jews who opposed this “Hellenization” are called “Hasidim” which means piety. These are fairly close to what the _____ are within Christianity.
 - 4) Antiochus Epiphanes feared that there would be a revolt in Jerusalem so he sent an army of 20,000 men to Jerusalem in 168 B.C. to “Lay down the Law”—This is when Judaism was outlawed and Heathenism (worship of Greek gods) was enforced (Remember this is one of those factors which guided the canonization of the O.T.)
 - 5) In 167 B.C.; Antiochus Epiphanies set up an altar to Zeus over the altar of burnt offerings in the Jewish temple in Jerusalem. He also sacrificed a pig on the altar in the Temple in Jerusalem. This event is known as the “**abomination of desolation.**” Something similar to this will occur just prior to the Christ’s second coming. (Matthew 24:15)

4. The Maccabean Revolt (167 B.C.) & Hasmonean Dynasty (142-37 B.C.)
 - The family which gave rise to the revolt and led it were called the Hasmoneans or the Maccabees.
 - 1) Maccabees comes from the nickname of one of the greatest Hasmoneans, **Judas “Maccabeus” which means “Judas the Hammer”**).—retold in the book of Maccabees.
 - 2) Judas Maccabeus led a highly successful revolt against Syria and they eventually won!
 - 3) **What followed in Palestine was called the “Hasmonean Dynasty” (142-37 B.C.)**...They regained religious freedom, and rededicated the temple.—this is the basis of the celebration of _____.
 - The Hasmonean Dynasty was full of internal strife and selfish ambition. Therefore, this period gave rise to the sects we see in our New Testament: _____, _____ and the _____.
 - The Hasmonean’s pretty much alienated many of the “Religious Hasidics”—who became part of the Pharisees and Essenes. The more Aristocratic and politically minded supporters of the Hasmoneans’ became the Sadducees.
 - 1) **The term Pharisee** literally means “_____ Ones”, which initially meant those who separated themselves from the Hellenization to preserve Biblical Law. **They were descendants of the Hasidim**. They started out with good intentions, but later became those whom Jesus confronted as pushing the minute details of the Law. They were popular with the common people.

- 2) **The Essenes** were a smaller sect, most of them lived in _____ communities (*Qumran—Dead Sea Scrolls*). They gave up all property, did not marry and were even pickier about the Law than the Pharisees! (This is why they withdrew from society, so they wouldn't have to mingle with sinners). Some think that John the Baptist was an Essene!

- 3) **The Sadducees** wielded more _____ influence than the Pharisees because *they made up most the* _____ which controlled a fair amount of local matters affecting daily Jewish life. They only regarded the Torah as authoritative. They did not believe in the resurrection (*that's why they're Sad-U-Cee*). They were basically interested in keeping their favored, aristocratic position.

- 4) The **Sanhedrin** is the name given to the council of _____ Jewish sages who constituted the **Supreme Court** and **legislative body of ancient Israel**. The make-up of the council included a chief justice (Nasi), a vice chief justice (Av Beit Din), and sixty-nine general members who all sat in the form of a semi-circle when in session.

Roman Rule & Occupation

1. Rome subjugated Palestine in ____ B.C. and therefore dominated Palestine during the New Testament Period.



2. There are several Roman Emperors worth noting because of their influence during New Testament history:
- _____ (27 B.C. to 14 AD)
 - 1) Instituted the “Pax Romana” which is Latin for Roman _____.
 - 2) This was the ruling Emperor when Jesus was born.
 - 3) Also during his reign began the concept of Emperor Worship.
 - _____ (AD 14-37); who was Caesar during Jesus’ public ministry and death.
 - _____ (AD 54-68); who was the Emperor who persecuted _____ and during his reign is when _____ and _____ were martyred.
3. The Romans allowed Palestine to be somewhat “self ruled” – although they controlled the appointment of who was in charge.
- A little history of who controlled Judea in the days preceding the birth of Jesus:
 - 1) Judea conquered Edom (called Idumea by the Romans) during the Maccabean period and the Edomites were forced to convert to Judaism and integrate into Jewish culture.
 - 2) At some point Antipas was appointed governor of Edom
 - 3) Later Antipas’ son (Antipater) was able to establish relations with the Romans. After the Romans conquered Judea; Julius Caesar appointed Antipater as procurator of Judea in 47 B.C.

- 4) Antipater appointed his sons (Phasaël & Herod) as governors of Jerusalem and Galilee. This did not sit well with the Jews for Herod was an Edomite and not a natural Judean.
 - 5) After Antipater was murdered in 43 B.C.; his sons were able to maintain control and were elevated to the position of tetrarch (provincial governor) by Marc Anthony.
 - 6) Herod the Great (Antipater's son) was appointed "King of the Jews" by the Roman Senate and he began ruling sometime around 37 B.C. and did so until approx. 4 B.C.
- ***This is where we get the Herodian Dynasty from (Herodian because the guys who ruled were name Herod).***
 - ***Herod the Great started it all (tried to have Jesus killed at birth).***
At his death, his son's (Archelaus—Judea, Samaria; Antipas--Galilee, Philip) all had Herod in their name. ***Jesus stood trial before Herod Antipas (Luke 23).***
 - Misrule by the Herod's led to Roman Governors to oversee the affairs of the Jews...one such ***governor was Pontius Pilate who sentenced Jesus to death.***
 - The Jews revolted against Rome in A.D. 66-74—***this revolt climaxed with the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in A.D. 70.*** And the capture of Masada in A.D. 74 (Masada is where the last rebels and their families (over 900) committed mass suicide before the Romans came in.

4. What were some of the benefits of Roman rule of Palestine?
- The benefit of “Pax Romana” may well have provided the means for the circumstances described in Luke 2 to occur.
 - The roads built by the Romans for purposes of troop movement and commerce may well have provided the means for the early spread of the Gospel.
 - The conquered territories and lands by the Roman created Roman friendly cities as the Empire expanded.
 - These Roman friendly cities became havens for Christian communities and eventually the establishment of churches.
 - There was a flip side in that persecutions against Christians also existed, but that persecution actually brought about the continual spread of the Gospel.