

NEW TESTAMENT BACKGROUNDS

A Revision of Book I of
New Testament History

by

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SECTION I

HISTORY FROM NEHEMIAH TO ANTIOCHUS IV (400-168 B.C.)

1. Four centuries between O.T. and N.T.; Four periods in this time. 2. The high priests: Eliashib, Joiada, Jonathan; the Elephantine letters. 3. The priests: Jaddua; Alexander the Great and Jaddua. 4. Alexander and the Samaritans. 5. Alexander's place in Jewish history. 6. The priests: Onias I; Ptolemy takes Judea; The Ptolemies. 7. The priests: Simon I (the Just). 8. The priests: Eleazar and Manasseh; a. The Greek translation of the O.T.; b. Hellenism and the Jews. 9. The priests: Onias II; Contemporary civil power of Joseph. 10. The priests: Simon II; Judah conquered by Antiochus the Great. 11. The priests: Onias III; Antiochus IV treats the Jews with contempt; Kings of the Greek Kingdom of Syria. 12. The priests; Jason; Hellenistic corruptions. 13. The priests: Menelaus. 14. Wars between Antiochus and Egypt; Subsequent capture and pollution of Jerusalem by Antiochus. 15. Antiochus' campaign to destroy Judaism; Severe religious persecution; The end of Antiochus. 16. Silence of heathen historians on this period of Jewish history; Allusion to it by Tacitus. 17. State of the Jewish nation: held together by religion; increasing exclusiveness; oppression by the nobles. 18. The priests of the Jews after the captivity.

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WATCH FOR ANSWERS
TO THESE QUESTIONS:

1. How many centuries elapsed between the Old and New Testaments?
2. What are the four periods of history between the O.T. and the N.T.?
3. What Jewish official became the most important person in the state after the time of Nehemiah?
4. What are the Elephantine papyri?
5. Who is the last named high priest in the O.T.? What famous person is this priest supposed to have confronted?
6. What made Alexander the Great angry with the Samaritans? What did he do to punish them?
7. What was the grandiose goal in Alexander's mind as he set out to conquer the world?
8. What language came to be spoken nearly everywhere after the conquests of Alexander?
9. Who were the Ptolemies? What woman was the last of the Ptolemies?
10. How did the Jews regard the priest Simon I?
11. Under what Egyptian king was the Greek Septuagint Old Testament translated? Where?
12. What is *Hellenism*?
13. What kingdom took over Palestine from the Ptolemies of Egypt? Date?
14. By what titles (or nicknames) were the Syrian kings Antiochus III and Antiochus IV called?
15. What were some of the Greek customs which the Syrians and their sympathizers introduced at Jerusalem?
16. What terrible things did Antiochus IV do to the temple in Jerusalem and to its citizens?
17. What edict about worship did Antiochus IV issue throughout his dominion?

INTRODUCTION

18. What was the temple in Jerusalem converted into?
19. What food were some Jews forced to eat?
20. How many brothers of one family were slain before the king?
21. How did Antiochus Epiphanes die?
22. Do heathen historians tell much about the persecutions of the Jews by Antiochus?
23. Had the Jews become purified from their old idolatries by this time?
24. Were the Judean nobles on the side of the Jewish people or of the Syrians? Why?

1. *Four centuries between Old and New Testaments; four periods in this time.*

The interval of four centuries, from the close of the records of the Old Covenant to the events which heralded the birth of Jesus Christ, may be divided into four periods:—the continuance of the Persian dominion, till B.C. 331; the Greek empire in Asia, B.C. 331-167; the independence of Judæa under the Asmonæan princes, B.C. 167-63; and the rule of the house of Herod, commencing in B.C. 40, and extending beyond the Christian era to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

THE FOUR INTER-TESTIMAL PERIODS

1. PERSIAN rule; 539-331 B.C.
2. HELLENISTIC kingdoms 331-167 B.C.
 - a. Egyptian (Ptolemies)
 - b. Syrian
3. INDEPENDENCE (Maccabean) 167-63 B.C.
4. HERODIAN & ROMAN—63 B.C.-A.D. 70

The first two of these periods—a time of about 250 years—form almost a blank in the history of the Jews. They seem to have been content to develop their internal resources and their religious institutions under the mild government of Persia, and the Ptolemies of Egypt.

The last two periods also include the relations of Judæa to Rome. There is little that possesses any great intrinsic interest, except the struggle of the Maccabees for religion and liberty against Antiochus Epiphanes; but the whole period demands our notice as a preparation for understanding the state in which we find the Jews at the opening of the New Testament, their moral and political condition, their views and opinions, their sects and parties.

2. *The high priests: Eliashib, Joiada, Jonathan*

We do not know how far the princes of Judah retained any remnant of their patriarchal authority during the time between the Old and New Testaments; but from the time of Nehemiah, the HIGH-PRIEST became the most important person in the state; and the internal government grew more and more of a hierarchy. In the genealogies of the period, the Levites were recorded as the chief of the fathers. The high-priests from the time of Nehemiah to the end of the empire under Darius Codomannus were Eliashib, Joiada, Jonathan (or Johanan), and Jaddua (listed in Neh. 12:22).

ELIASHIB, the high-priest in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, was succeeded by his son JOIADA, and he by his son JONATHAN, or JOHANAN (John), down to whose time the heads of the tribe of Levi were entered in the Chronicles of Judah, which seemed therefore to have ended with his priesthood (Neh. 12:10-11, 22.23).

The high-priesthood of Jonathan, which lasted thirty-two years, chiefly in the long reign of Artaxerxes II. Mnemon (405-359 B.C.), was stained by the first of those

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acts of murderous rivalry, which afterward brought the state to anarchy. His brother, Joshua (Jesus), who was suspected of aiming at the high-priesthood through the favor of Bagoses the Persian satrap, was slain by Jonathan in the temple. The satrap punished the murder by a tax of fifty shekels on every lamb offered in sacrifice, and polluted the temple by his presence.¹ But even in so doing, the Persian taught the Jews the much-needed lesson afterward enforced by a far higher authority: "Am not I purer," he said, "than the dead body of him whom ye have slain in the temple?"

This crime forms the only memorable event in the annals of Judæa, from the government of Nehemiah to the Macedonian conquest, if we except a doubtful account that the country was chastised, and a number of Jews carried captive to Babylon, for their alleged participation in the revolt of the Sidonians under Artaxerxes Ochus (B.C. 351).

During this time (c. 408 B.C.) the Egyptians destroyed a temple built by Jews in Egypt on the island of Yeb (or Elephantine) at the first cataract.² These were probably the Jews who had fled to Egypt in the days of Jeremiah (Jer. 43). They wrote letters (the "Elephantine papyri") to the Persian governors of both Judea and Samaria, requesting authority to rebuild their temple. Apparently permission was never granted, and the Jewish Elephantine colony came to an end about 395 B.C.

THE KINGS OF PERSIA

1. 538-529 B.C.—Cyrus the Great
2. 529-522—Cambyses
3. 522-521—Gaumata (Pseudo-Smerdis)
4. 521-486—Darius I (Hystaspes)
5. 486-465—Xerxes I (Ahasuerus)

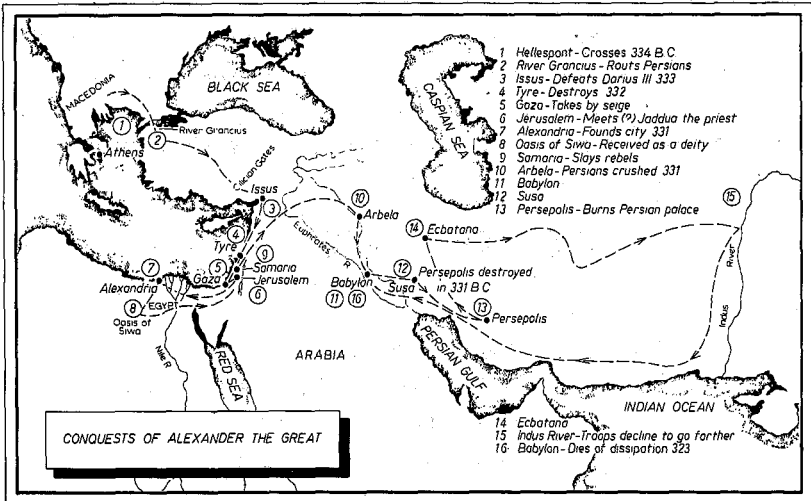
1. About 366 B.C. Josephus, *Ant.* XI, 7, 1.

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6. 464-424—Artaxerxes I (Longimanus)
7. 424-423—Zerxes II
8. 423-404—Darius II (Nothus)
9. 404-359—Artaxerxes II (Mnemon)
10. 359-338—Artaxerxes III (Ochus)
11. 338-331—Darius III (Codomannus)

3. *The priests: Jaddua; Alexander the Great and Jaddua.*

JADDUA, the son and successor of Jonathan, is the last of the high-priests mentioned in the Old Testament; and his is the latest name in the Old Testament, with the doubtful exception of a few in the genealogies prefixed to the Chronicles. Its insertion in the Book of Nehemiah is a guide to the time when Canon of the Old Testament was finally closed. Eusebius assigns twenty years to the priesthood of Jaddua. He was high-priest both under Darius Codomannus (338-331 B.C.) and after the fall of the Persian empire.



THE GREEK PERIOD

Josephus tells a romantic story of an interview between Jaddua and Alexander the Great. While Alexander was besieging Tyre, he sent to demand the submission of the Jews, who answered that they were the faithful vassals of Darius (B.C. 332.) After taking Gaza, Alexander marched against Jerusalem. Jaddua, by the command of God in a vision, hung the city with garlands, and went forth in solemn procession to meet the conqueror at Sapha (the *watch*), an eminence in full sight of the city and the temple. On seeing the high-priest in his state robes, the priests in their sacred dresses, and the people clothed in white, Alexander fell prostrate in adoration, and rising, embraced the high-priest. To the remonstrances of Parmenio he replied that he worshiped, not the priest, but the NAME engraved upon his frontlet, and that he recognized in him a figure that had appeared to him in a vision in Macedonia, and bidden him to conquer Persia. Entering Jerusalem, he offered sacrifice, and was shown the prophecies of Daniel relating to himself. He granted the Jews, not only in Judæa, but also in Media and Babylonia, the free enjoyment of their own laws, and exemption from the tribute during the Sabbatic year.²

This story raises problems concerning the date of the close of the O.T. canon. Jaddua was the last priest named in the O.T. (Neh. 12:11). If the last O.T. book was written about 420 B.C. (as the ancient Jews believed, and we agree), and Jaddua saw Alexander in 333 B.C., then Jaddua must have been very young when referred to in the O.T., and over ninety years old when he saw Alexander!

The story is discredited by the best critics,³ on account of its internal improbabilities, approaching to contradictions, and the silence of the historians of Alexander. The state-

2. Josephus, *Ant.* XI, 8.

3. Almost certainly Josephus confused the Jaddua of Neh. 12:22 in the time of Darius II, with another Jaddua, high priest in the time of Darius III. See *Biblical Archaeologist*, Dec. 1963, p. 121.

ment of Justin Martyr,⁴ that on Alexander's advance into Syria he was met by many Eastern princes with their diadems, affords some confirmation to the story of the high-priest's coming out to meet him in person. It is certain that Jerusalem and Judæa submitted to the conqueror, and there are traces subsequently of the privileges he is said to have granted to the Jews. Alexander's homage to Jehovah, and his pleasure at being named as the instrument of destiny, are points thoroughly consistent with his character. There is nothing improbable in his having received the submission of Judæa from the high-priest and princes about the time of the siege of Gaza.

At all events, Jerusalem was too important to have been passed over by Alexander himself, as it is by the historians.⁵ He enlisted Jewish soldiers, and removed a large number of Jews to Egypt, to aid in peopling his new city of Alexandria.

4. *Alexander and the Samaritans*

The Samaritans sought to win the favor of Alexander, and claimed the same privileges as the Jews, which Alexander refused to grant. Hence probably arose the rebellion while Alexander was in Egypt, in which they burned alive the Macedonian governor, Andromachus, and which Alexander punished by the destruction of Samaria. Palestine thenceforth remained quiet under Alexander, who died in 323.

In 1962 in the desolate terrain about nine miles north of Jericho, about 200 skeletons, with jewelry, food remains, clothes, coins, much pottery and numerous written documents were found in two caves. The writings indicate that the occupants were Samaritans. After killing Andromachus,

4. *Hist.* xi. 10.

5. This silence must not be overestimated. The neglect of the Macabæan war by the historians of the Greek kingdom of Syria, is an indication already of that somewhat affected contempt which at a later period was expressed by Tacitus (*Hist.* v. 8).

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the Samaritans fled to the desolate area when they learned that Alexander was returning in all haste to Samaria. Although the caves are in a very remote area (the Wadi Daliyeh), the Samaritans were discovered (or betrayed), and were mercilessly slaughtered to a man, and their remains thrown back into the caves. After this massacre Alexander established a Macedonian colony at Samaria.⁶

5. Alexander's place in Jewish history

The Macedonian conqueror must not, however, be dismissed without some further notice of his real place in Jewish history, and in the sacred history of the world—a place not dependent on any incidental circumstances, such as his visit to Jerusalem.

After the death of Alexander, his empire fell into four parts, each ruled by one of his generals: Ptolemy I in Egypt, Seleucus I in Syria, Cassander in Macedonia, and Lysimachus in Thrace. These four divisions had been symbolized in the prophecies of Daniel by the four-headed leopard and the four horns on the head of the he-goat, which grew up when its first single horn was broken (Daniel 7:6; 8:8).

In the prophetic visions of Daniel the influence of Alexander is necessarily combined with that of his successors. They represented the several phases of his character; and to the Jews nationally the policy of the Syrian kings was of greater importance than the original conquest of Asia. But some traits of "the first mighty king" are given with vigorous distinctness (Dan. 8:21; 11:3). The emblems by which he is typified (a he-goat) and a four-winged leopard) suggest the notions of strength and speed; and the universal extent and marvelous rapidity of his conquests are brought forward as the characteristics of his power,

6. *Biblical Archaeologist*, Dec. 1963, p. 110ff.

which was directed by the strongest personal impetuosity (Dan. 8:5, 6). He "ruled with great dominion, and did according to his will; and there was none that could deliver . . . out of his hand" (Dan. 8:7; 11:3).

The tradition of his visit to Jerusalem, whether true or false to fact, presents an aspect of Alexander's character which has been frequently lost sight of by his recent biographers. He was not simply a Greek, nor must he be judged by a Greek standard. The Orientalism, which was a scandal to his followers, was a necessary deduction from his principles, and not the result of caprice or vanity. He approached the idea of a universal monarchy from the side of Greece, but his final object was to establish something higher than the paramount supremacy of one people. His purpose was to combine and equalize—not to annihilate: to wed the East to West in a just union—not to enslave Asia to Greece. The time, indeed, was not yet come when this was possible; but if he could not accomplish the great issue, he prepared the way for its accomplishment.

The first and most direct consequence of the policy of Alexander was the weakening of nationalities, the first condition necessary for the dissolution of the old religions. The swift course of his victories, the constant incorporation of foreign elements in his armies, the fierce wars and changing fortunes of his successors, broke down the barriers by which kingdom had been separated from kingdom, and opened the road for larger conceptions of life and faith than had hitherto been possible. The contact of the East and West brought out into practical forms thoughts and feelings which had been confined to the schools. Paganism was deprived of life as soon as it was transplanted beyond the narrow limits in which it took its shape. The spread of commerce followed the progress of arms; and the Greek language and literature vindicated their claim to be considered the most perfect expression of human thought by

becoming practically universal. Greek came to be spoken nearly everywhere.

The Jews were at once most exposed to the powerful influences thus brought to bear upon the East, and most able to support them. In the arrangement of the Greek conquests, which followed the battle of Issus, 331 B.C., Judæa was made the frontier land of the rival empires of Syria and Egypt; and though it was necessarily subjected to the constant vicissitudes of war, it was able to make advantageous terms with the state to which it owed allegiance, from the important advantages which it offered for attack or defense. Internally also the people were prepared to withstand the effects of the revolution which the Greek dominion effected. The constitution of Ezra had obtained its full development. A powerful hierarchy had succeeded in substituting the idea of a church for that of a state, and the Jew was now able to wander over the world and yet remain faithful to the God of his fathers. The same constitutional change had strengthened the intellectual and religious position of the people. A rigid fence of ritualism protected the course of common life from the license of Greek manners; and the great doctrine of the unity of God, which was now seen to be a divine centre of their system, counteracted the attractions of a philosophic pantheism. Through a long course of discipline, in which they had been left unguided by prophetic teaching, the Jews had realized the nature of their mission to the world, and were waiting for the means of fulfilling it. The conquest of Alexander furnished them with the occasion and the power. But at the same time the example of Greece fostered personal as well as popular independence. Judaism was speedily divided into sects, analogous to the typical forms of Greek philosophy. But even the rude analysis of the old faith was productive of good. The freedom of Greece was no less instrumental in forming the Jews for

their final work than the contemplative spirit, of Persia, or the civil organization of Rome; for if the career of Alexander was rapid, its effects were lasting. The city which he chose to bear his name perpetuated in after ages the office which he providentially discharged for Judaism and mankind; and the historian of Christianity must confirm the judgment of Arrian, that Alexander, "who was like no other man, could not have been given to the world without the special design of Providence." And Alexander himself appreciated this design better than his great teacher; for it is said⁷ that when Aristotle urged him to treat the Greeks as freemen and the Orientals as slaves, he found the true answer to this counsel in the recognition of his divine mission to unite and reconcile the world.

THE PTOLEMIES

The Ptolemies were a dynasty of Macedonian kings who ruled in Egypt 323-30 B.C.

PTOLEMY I (Soter)—323-285 B.C. Son of Lagus. Invaded Palestine four times (318, 312, 302, 301 B.C.). Palestine was ruled by the Ptolemies till 198 B.C.

PTOLEMY II (Philadelphus)—285-246. A period of material and literary splendor. LXX produced.

PTOLEMY III (Euergetes I)—246-221. Conquered the Syrian Seleucid kingdom. Apex of the Ptolemaic age.

PTOLEMY IV (Philopator) — 221-204. Immoral. Threatened by Antiochus III.

PTOLEMY V (Epiphanes)—204-181. Palestine lost to the Seleucids. He is the king praised by the Rosetta Stone.

PTOLEMY VI (Philometor) — 181-145. Antiochus IV invaded Egypt in 170 and captured Philometor, although he was later released. He was perhaps the best of the Ptolemies.

7. Plutarch, *de Alex.*, Or. 1, 6.

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PTOLEMY VIII (Euergetes II), brother of Philometor, was made king by the Alexandrians in 170 B.C. He was in constant rivalry with Philometor, who captured him in 154, when Euergetes invaded Cyprus. Euergetes was immoral, cruel, fat, foul, and tyrannical.

PTOLEMY VII (Philopator Neos), son of Philometor, was proclaimed king in 145, but Euergetes II took over the throne and ruled to 116.

PTOLEMY IX (Soter II) reigned in Egypt 116-108, with his brother **PTOLEMY X** (Alexander I) reigning as a rival, from Cyprus. From 108 to 89 the situation was reversed with Alexander in Egypt and Soter in Cyprus. Then Soter returned to rule in Egypt, 88-80 B.C.

PTOLEMY XI (Alexander II). Son of Alexander I. Ruled 20 days in 80 B.C., and was killed by the Alexandrians.

PTOLEMY XII (Philopator Philadelphius Neos Dionysus)—80:51. Called Auletes, meaning "flute-player." Son of Soter II. Exiled by popular hatred between 58-55, but restored himself by bribery and murder.

PTOLEMY XIII (Philopator)—51-47. Son of Philopator XII. Married his sister **CLEOPATRA VII**, age 17. In this time Egyptian history coalesces with Roman history. Ptolemy XIII was killed in the Alexandrian wars of Julius Caesar, 48-47.

PTOLEMY XIV (Philopator)—47-44. Brother of Ptolemy XIII. Associated as ruler with Cleopatra. Died probably by Cleopatra's contriving.

PTOLEMY XV (Philopator Philometor Caesar)—44-30. Son of Cleopatra (by Julius Caesar, she claimed). He was called "Little Caesar." In 30 Cleopatra died (suicide), and Little Caesar was murdered. Egypt was made a Roman province by Octavian.

6. *The priests: Onias I (330-309 B.C.);
Ptolemy takes Judea.*

Jaddua was succeeded, some time before the death of Alexander, by his son ONIAS I., who was high-priest from about B.C. 330 to B.C. 309, or, according to Eusebius, B.C. 300. In the division of the empire of Alexander, Palestine was treated, as it had always been considered by the Greeks, as a part of Syria; and so it fell to the lot of Laomedon, who was dispossessed, in 321-320 B.C., by Ptolemy, the son of Lagus, the powerful satrap of Egypt. Ptolemy took Jerusalem by assaulting it on the Sabbath, when the Jews would offer no resistance.⁸ He carried off a large number of Jewish and Samaritan captives to Alexandria, where he gave them the full citizenship; and many others migrated to Egypt of their own accord. In the wars that followed, Palestine was alternately the prize of victory to Antigonus and Ptolemy, till the peace which followed the battle of Ipsus assigned it to Ptolemy, with Phœnicia and Cœlesyria, as a dependency of the kingdom of Egypt, 301 B.C. It was subject to the first five Ptolemies for about a century 301-198 B.C. The sufferings inflicted upon Palestine and Phœnicia by the wars of the *Diadochi* (as the successors of Alexander were called in Greek) were almost confined to the maritime regions, where the strong cities, such as Gaza, Joppa, and Tyre, were the chief objects of contention. As in the old wars between Assyria and Egypt, Jerusalem lay out of the direct track of the combatants.

7. *The priests: Simon I (the Just) (300-292 B.C.).*

Just after the battle of Ipsus, the high-priesthood passed to SIMON I, THE JUST, son of Onias I. (about 300-292 B.C.). Jewish tradition makes him the greatest of this later line of priests. In the magnificent eulogy of Jesus

8. Josephus, *Contra Apion* I, 22; *Ant.* XII, 1

the son of Sirach, Simon is said to have fortified the temple, doubling the height of the wall, and to have maintained the divine service in the highest splendor. "When he put on the robe of honor, and was clothed with the perfection of glory, when he went up to the holy altar, he made the garment of holiness honorable."⁹ Other traditions make Simon the last survivor of the *Great Synagogue* of 120, who returned with Ezra from the Babylonish Captivity, and ascribe to him the final completion of their great work, the Canon of the Old Testament. They were succeeded by the *New Synagogue*, whose office was to interpret the Scriptures thus completed. Its founder was Antigonus Socho, the first writer of the *Mishna*. He is said to have received from Simon the Just the body of oral tradition handed down from Moses. To him also is ascribed the doctrine that God ought to be served disinterestedly, and not for the sake of reward; which was perverted by one of his disciples into the denial of all future rewards and punishments. That disciple was Zadok (or Sadduc), founder of the *Sadducees*. But the tradition rests on insufficient evidence, and the etymology is extremely doubtful.

The fondness with which Jewish tradition regarded the priesthood of Simon, as the best period of the restored theocracy, is indicated by the miraculous signs which were said to have heralded impending disaster at its close. "The sacrifices, which were always favorably accepted during his life, at his death became uncertain or unfavorable. The scape-goat, which used to be thrown from a rock, and to be dashed immediately to pieces, escaped (a fearful omen) into the desert. The great west light of the golden chandelier no longer burned with a steady flame—sometimes it was extinguished. The sacrificial fire languished; the sacrificial bread failed, so as not to suffice, as formerly, for the whole priesthood." (Milman.)

9. *Ecclesiasticus* 50.

8. *The priests: Eleazar (292-251 B.C.) and Manasseh (251-240 B.C.).*

Simon the Just was succeeded by his brother ELEAZAR, his son Onias being under age (292-251 B.C.). His long rule seems to have been profoundly tranquil, under the mild governments of Ptolemy I. Soter (the son of Lagus), and PTOLEMY II PHILADELPHUS, who succeeded his father in 285 B.C. and reigned till 246 B.C. Manasseh, the brother of Eleazar, was associated with him in the priesthood, and held it after him till 240 B.C.

a. *The Greek translation of the Old Testament (Septuagint).*

To the literary tastes of the Egyptian King Ptolemy II Philadelphus, and to the co-operation of Eleazar, the tradition preserved by Aristeas ascribes the Greek Version of the Jewish Scriptures, which is called the SEPTUAGINT, from its seventy or seventy-two translators.¹⁰ Much as there is erroneous and even fabulous in the tradition, there can be no doubt that that first portion of the translation was executed at this time by learned Jews and Alexandria.

b. *Hellenism and the Jews.*

The production of the Septuagint marks an important epoch in Jewish history; not merely the embodiment of the sacred writings in a form in which they might act upon the Gentile world, but, conversely, the growing strength of those influences which are denoted by the general name of *Hellenism* (derived from *Hellas*, the Greek name of Greece). The conquests of Alexander, and the kingdoms founded by his successors in Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt, had led to a most powerful infusion of Greek population, manners,

10. Josephus, *Ant.* XII, 2

literature, art, and religion throughout Western Asia, and Greek was rapidly becoming a universal language in that region. The Jews of Egypt, whose numbers from the successive migrations we have noticed, were now very large, had doubtless become so far *hellenized*, that a Greek version of the Scriptures may have been as much needed for their use as for Ptolemy's curiosity. Thus it happened, in the Divine Providence, that the growth of Oriental Hellenism prepared the way for the spread of Christianity, not only by imbuing half the world with a common civilization and a common language, but by providing in that language the sacred standard of divine truth by which the Messiah's claims were to be established, and the words of which he was to fulfill. But meanwhile that same Hellenism brought upon the Jews a new series of national trials. The Jews of Palestine appear to have been thus far singularly free from hellenizing tendencies; but the time soon came when their exemption was no longer preserved.

9. *The priests: Onias II (240-226 B.C.);
Contemporary civil power of Joseph.*

After the successive rules of his uncles Eleazar and Manasseh, ONIAS II, at length entered on the high-priesthood in 240 B.C. He endangered the long friendship with Egypt by neglecting to pay the annual tribute of twenty talents to PTOLEMY III. EUERGETES, who had succeeded his father in 246 B.C. The high-priest's unreasonable avarice led to the first interruption of that kindly policy which the first three Ptolemies had uniformly preserved toward Judæa, and he was too indolent to obey the summons to answer for his conduct, under the threat of invasion. An open rupture was only averted by the policy of the high-priest's nephew, JOSEPH, the son of Tobias, who forms a great contrast to his uncle. Joseph borrowed the money for his journey from some rich Samaritans, and traveled to Alex-

andria in the company of certain Phœnician merchants, from whom he learned the sum they intended to bid for the farming of the tribute to Palestine, Phœnicia, and Cœlesyria. Having succeeded in appeasing Ptolemy by representing the weakness of Onias, Joseph offered to double the sum of 8000 talents, at which the merchants proposed to farm the revenues; and, when asked for his sureties, named the king and queen themselves, secure in the progress he had made in the royal favor.¹¹ He obtained the contract. By a few severe examples, as at Ascalon and Scythopolis, he succeeded in discharging his office, and in establishing a civil authority side by side with that of the high-priest. His rule lasted for twenty-two years, and the power which he had set up in the state became a source of evils as great as the danger from which he had delivered it.

10. *The priests: Simon II (226-198 B.C.); Judah conquered by Antiochus the Great (the Syrian).*

Onias II. died in 226 B.C., and was succeeded by his son SIMON II.; and four years later the crown of Egypt passed to PTOLEMY IV. PHILOPATOR (222-205 B.C.). Meanwhile the rival kingdom of Seleucidæ, in Syria, had reached the climax of its power, and the throne had just been ascended by the most ambitious of its kings, ANTIQCHUS III. THE GREAT (223-187 B.C.). He made war on Ptolemy for the provinces of Phœnicia, Cœlesyria, and Palestine; but was defeated at the battle of Raphia, near Gaza, 217 B.C. After this victory, Ptolemy went to Jerusalem; and, not content with offering sacrifices, he entered the Holy of Holies, whence he is said to have been driven out by a supernatural terror. He gave vent to his resentment by a cruel persecution of the Jews at Alexandria, the first example of such a

11. It is recorded, as a proof of the good-will of Ptolemy Euergetes to the Jews, that he offered sacrifices at Jerusalem.

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measure for nearly 200 years. Its consequence was the alienation of the Jews both of Palestine and Egypt.

The death of Ptolemy Philopator, when his son PTOLEMY V. EPIPHANES¹² (205-181 B.C.) was only five years old, gave a new opening to the ambition of Antiochus the Great. That king, who had been occupied for the last twelve years in subduing a revolt in Asia Minor and attempting in vain to recover the provinces beyond the Tigris from the Parthians and Bactrians, formed a league with PHILIP V. OF MACEDON for the partition of Ptolemy's dominions. After a fierce contest, in which Judea suffered severely, Antiochus became master of Coelesyria¹³ and Palestine (198 B.C.). The Jews, who had again been ill-treated by Scopas, the general of Ptolemy, welcomed Antiochus as a deliverer. He granted them an annual sum for the sacrifices, and forbade foreigners to enter the temple.

11. *The priests: Onias III (198-171 B.C.); Antiochus IV treats the Jews with contempt.*

In the same year, Simon II. was succeeded in the high-priesthood by his son ONIAS III. (198-171 B.C.). The conquered provinces were restored to Ptolemy Epiphanes as the dowry of his bride, Cleopatra, the daughter of Antiochus; but the Syrian king did not give up their possession; and he took them back altogether by the treaty with Rome in 188 B.C. He lost his life in the following year. It is under his son and successor, SELEUCUS IV. PHILOPATOR (187-175 B.C.), that the writer of the *Second Book of Maccabees* places the attempt of Heliodorus to seize the treasures of the temple, and his miraculous repulse (II Macc. 3).

12. This is the king whose coronation decree, inscribed on the "Rosetta Stone," has afforded the foundation for the art of deciphering the Egyptian hieroglyphics.

13. *Coelesyria* is the broad valley between the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon mountains. The name is loosely applied to all of southern Syria.

Heliodorus was chancellor of Seleucus, and was sent to Jerusalem to confiscate treasures which one Simon, a Jewish temple guard, had told him were there. As Heliodorus demanded the money in Jerusalem, he saw "a horse with a terrible rider upon him . . . and he rushed fiercely and some at Heliodorus." Also two other "young men" (angels?) appeared and scourged him unceasingly, and only spared his life because of the prayers of Onias.

The story, of which Josephus knows nothing, illustrates the tendency of apocryphal writers to adorn their books with feeble imitations of the miracles recorded in the Scriptures. All we know for certain is, that Onias could scarcely maintain his favor with Seleucus against the machinations of Simon, who is said to have instigated the sacrilege; and the bloody feud thus commenced between the partisans of the high-priest and those of Simon hastened the calamities that followed the transfer of the supremacy of Syria.¹⁴

The accession of ANTIOCHUS IV. EPIPHANES¹⁵ (175-164 B.C.) secured the triumph of the Syrian party in Judæa. This prince, whose conduct, as well as his end, gained him the nickname of *Epimanes* (the madman) had been sent by his father, Antiochus the Great, as a hostage to Rome. He returned with a contempt for his subjects added to that love of oriental luxury which the kings of Syria had now acquired; but his vices might have been chiefly dangerous to himself had not his Roman education inflamed the ambition which he inherited from his father.

12. *The priests: Jason (175-172 B.C.); Hellenistic corruptions.*

Antiochus IV Epiphanes found the Jewish high-priest Onias III at Antioch, whither Onias had gone to clear him-

14. Simon is called a Benjamite. There are difficulties concerning the family to which he belonged. Could Simon have been the "Man of the lie" mentioned in the Dead Sea scrolls? See Sec. VI, 4, b.

15. *Epiphanes* means "the radiant one."

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KINGS OF THE GREEK KINGDOM OF SYRIA.

Kings.	Length of Reign.	Date of Accession.
1. Seleucus I. Nicator	32 years	Oct. 312.
2. Antiochus I. Soter	19 "	Jan. 280.
3. Antiochus II. Theos	15 "	Jan. 261.
4. Seleucus II. Callinicus	20 "	Jan. 246.
5. Seleucus III. Ceraunus	3 "	Aug. 226.
6. Antiochus III. the Great	36 "	Aug. 223.
7. Seleucus IV. Philopator	12 "	Oct. 187.
8. Antiochus IV. Epiphanes	11 "	Aug. 175.
9. Antiochus V. Eupator	2 "	Dec. 164.
10. Demetrius I. Soter	12 "	Nov. 162.
11. Alexander Balas	5 "	Aug. 150.
Demetrius II. Nicator (1st reign)		
12. Antiochus VI. Theos Tryphon	9 "	Nov. 146.
13. Antiochus VII. Sidetes	9 "	Feb. 137.
Demetrius II. Nicator (2d reign)		
Alexander Zebina	3 "	Feb. 128.
14. Seleucus V.	3 "	Feb. 125.
15. Antiochus VIII. Grypus	13 "	Aug. 125.
16. Antiochus IX. Cyzenicus	18 "	" 113.
17. Seleucus VI.	18 "	" "
18. Antiochus X. Eusebes Philippus	12 "	" 95.
19. Tigranes	14 "	" 83.
20. Demetrius III. Eucærus	14 "	" "
21. Antiochus XI. Epiphanes	14 "	" "
22. Antiochus XII. Dionysus	14 "	" "
23. Antiochus Asiaticus	4 "	69.

self from the accusations of Simon, which were backed by the hostility of Apollonius, the governor of Coele Syria. The Greek party was represented, not only by Simon, but by the high-priest's own brother, Joshua (Jesus), who went so far as to adopt the Greek name of Jason. By an enormous bribe in money and promises of annual tribute, Jason (175-172 B.C.) obtained the high-priesthood, while Onias III. was deposed and detained at Antioch. (II Macc. 4:1-9). For the first time, Greek customs were openly introduced into Judæa, with a success which shows to what an extent the Jews had already become hellenized in spirit. Not content with surrendering the privileges of free worship obtained from former kings, and neglecting the services of the temple, Jason built a gymnasium where the Jewish youth practiced the Greek athletic exercises, some of them

even obliterating the mark of circumcision (I Macc. 1:10-15; II Macc. 4:10-17). Jason also sent representatives to the quinquennial games of the Tyrian Hercules with large presents, which even his envoys scrupled to apply to the heathen sacrifices, but bestowed them for building ships. (II Macc. 4:18-20).

13. *The priests: Menelaus (172-168 B.C.).*

In three years, however, Jason was in his turn undermined by MENELAUS (172-168 B.C.),¹⁶ whom he had sent to Antioch with the tribute, and who obtained the high-priesthood by flattering the king's vanity and offering a higher bribe. He arrived at Jerusalem, "having the fury of a cruel tyrant and the rage of a wild beast," while Jason fled to the Ammonites (II Macc. 4:23-26). Unable to raise the money he had promised, Menelaus was summoned to Antioch. He sold some of the vessels of the temple to the Tyrians in order to bribe Andronicus, who governed Antioch during the king's absence in Cilicia. The deposed high-priest, Onias, who was still at Antioch, charged Menelaus with the sacrilege, and fled for sanctuary to the sacred grove of Daphne. At the instigation of Menelaus, Andronicus enticed Onias from the sanctuary and put him to death (171 B.C.). Antiochus, who returned about this time, was moved to pity by the blameless character of Onias; and, perceiving doubtless the treasonable schemes of Andronicus, he put the murderer to death. Meanwhile a great tumult had broken out at Jerusalem in consequence of the sacrileges committed by Lysimachus, the brother and deputy of Menelaus. Lysimachus was killed, and Menelaus was accused before Antiochus, when he reached Tyre on

16. According to Josephus, this was a younger brother of Onias III and Jason, who had changed his own name, Onias, to Menelaus (*Ant.* xii. 5, 1); but in 2 Macc. iv. 28, he is made the brother of Simon the Benjamite. If so, his usurpation carried the high-priesthood out of the house of Aaron.

his way to attack Egypt; but Menelaus escaped through bribery, and his accusers were punished for the insurrection (II Macc. 4:28-50).

14. *Wars between Antiochus and Egypt; subsequent capture and pollution of Jerusalem by Antiochus.*

We must here glance at the relations of Syria toward Egypt. PTOLEMY VI. PHILOMETOR was an infant when he succeeded his father in B.C. 181; but the government was ably conducted by his mother Cleopatra, the sister of Antiochus Epiphanes. Her death (173 B.C.) led to the war with Syria, and Antiochus successfully conducted four campaigns against Egypt (171-168 B.C.), from which he only retired on the haughty mandate of the Roman ambassador, M. Popillius Lænas. During the second of these campaigns (170 B.C.), a report was spread of the king's death. Jason attacked Jerusalem at the head of 1000 men and drove Menelaus into the citadel; but, after great cruelties against the citizens, he was compelled to fly to the land of Ammon. Thence he fled to Egypt, and afterward to Sparta, where he sought protection on some claim of kindred, and there he "perished in a strange land" (II Macc. 5:5-10). Meanwhile his attempt had the most extraordinary consequences in the history of the Jews.

Antiochus was led to believe that Judæa had revolted, an idea no doubt encouraged by Menelaus, in order to get rid of his own enemies. The king returned from Egypt in a state of fury; took Jerusalem by storm, slaying young and old, women and maidens. Forty thousand fell in the conflict, and as many were sold into slavery. Guided by Menelaus, he entered the temple, profaned the altar by the sacrifice of a swine, and having caused part of its flesh to be boiled, he sprinkled the broth over the whole sanctuary, and polluted the Holy of Holies with filth. He

carried off the sacred vessels and other treasures to the amount of 1800 talents, and returned to Antioch, leaving a savage Phrygian named Philip as his governor at Jerusalem, and Andronicus at Gerizim, where the Samaritan temple seems to have been profaned in like manner (I Macc. 1:20-28; 2:11-23). Menelaus, who is stigmatized as the worst of all the three, is not again named in the *Books of Maccabees*. His subsequent death under Antiochus Eupator was regarded as a judgment for his crimes (163 B.C.) (Josephus, Ant. XII, 9, 7).

15. *Antiochus' campaign to destroy Judaism; severe religious persecutions; the end of Antiochus.*

Two years later (168 B.C.) Antiochus vented upon Judæa the exasperation of his dismissal from Egypt. Policy too, as well as passion, may have urged him to destroy a province now thoroughly disaffected and likely soon to fall into the power of Egypt. Apollonius, the old enemy of the Jews, was sent to Jerusalem at the head of 22,000 men, with orders to slay all the male adults, and to seize the women and children. Pretending that his mission was friendly, he waited till the Sabbath and then fell upon the unresisting people. A frightful massacre took place: the city was pillaged and set on fire; its fortifications were dismantled; and a tower was erected on Mount Zion, overlooking both the temple and the city, from which the garrison sallied forth upon all who dared to resort to the deserted sanctuary. Then followed one of the severest persecutions recorded in the history of religion (I Macc. 1:29ff.; II Macc. 5:24-26). Antiochus issued an edict for uniformity of worship throughout his dominions, and committed its execution in Samaria and Judæa to an old man named Athenæus, one of those fanatics who have been produced by heathenism, as well as by religions that

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claim a more earnest faith (II Macc. 6:1). A strong element of such fanaticism may be traced in the character of Antiochus himself. While his quick and versatile Greek temperament, trained in Roman ideas of power, and corrupted by oriental luxury, led him to indulge in all the vices and feasts for which despotism supplied the means—at one time rioting through the streets of Antioch with his boon companions, at another going through a mock canvass for the Roman magistrates, and pretending to hold them—he was all the while a munificent and bigoted supporter of the Greek worship. “The admirers,” says Dean Milman, “of the mild genius of the Grecian religion, and those who suppose religious persecution unknown in the world before the era of Christianity, would do well to consider the wanton and barbarous attempt of Antiochus to exterminate the religion of the Jews and substitute that of the Greeks.”

The Samaritans submitted without resistance, and their temple on Mount Gerizim was dedicated to Zeus Xenius. At Jerusalem Athenæus began his work by converting the sanctuary into a temple of Zeus Olympius. Its courts were polluted by the most licentious orgies; the altar was loaded with abominable offerings; and the old idolatry of Baal was reestablished in the obscene form in which it had been carried to Greece—the phallic revels of Dionysus. The copies of the Book of the Law were either destroyed, or profaned by heathen and doubtless obscene pictures (I Macc. 3:48).

The practice of Jewish rites, and the refusal to sacrifice to the Greek gods, were alike punished with death. Two women who had circumcised their children, were led round the city with the babes hanging at their breasts, and then cast headlong from the wall. A company of worshipers were burned by Philip in a cave to which they had fled to keep the Sabbath. The favorite test of con-

formity was the compulsion to eat swine's flesh; and two particular cases of heroic resistance make this one of the brightest pages in Jewish and Christian martyrology. A chief scribe, named ELEAZAR, a man of noble person and ninety years of age, when a piece of swine's flesh was thrust into his mouth, spat it out, and willingly offered his body to the torments. When some of the officers, for old acquaintance sake, besought him to provide some meat, and eat it as if it were the unclean food, he made a reply which contains the whole justification of the martyr's constancy to death: "It becometh not our age in anywise to dissemble, whereby many young persons might think that Eleazar, being fourscore years old and ten, were now gone to a strange religion, and so through mine hypocrisy, and desire to live a little time, should be deceived by me, and I get a stain to my old age, and make it abominable. For though for the present time I should be delivered from the punishment of men, yet I should not escape the hand of the Almighty, neither alive, nor dead." He concluded by declaring his resolve, "to leave a notable example to such as be young to die willingly and courageously for the honorable and holy laws." His tempters, incensed at his obstinacy, grew doubly cruel, and, as he was expiring beneath their blows, he cried—"It is manifest unto Jehovah, that hath the holy knowledge, that whereas I might have been delivered from death, I endure sore pains in body by being beaten; but in soul am well content to suffer these things, because I fear Him" (II Macc. 6). Thus was he "tortured,"¹⁷ not accepting deliverance, that he might obtain a better resurrection;" and he is included, with the other martyrs of the age, in the "cloud of martyrs," "of

17. Heb. 11:35-36. The very word chosen by the apostle "tortured" expresses the kind of torture inflicted on Eleazar and other martyrs of this time. It refers to torture on a wheel-shaped instrument, across which people were stretched and then beaten with clubs or thongs. The whole passage clearly shows that the writer had them in his mind, though their history is not recorded in the canonical Scriptures.

whom the world was not worthy," "who obtained a good report through faith."

"Others had trial of mockings and scourgings." Such was the fate of the seven brethren who, with their mother, were brought into the king's own presence, and, having refused to eat swine's flesh, were put to death with insults and torments, of which the horrid details may be read in the original text. From the eldest to the youngest, they displayed not only constancy but triumph; and the mother, after encouraging each in his turn, herself suffered last (II Macc. 7). The atrocities committed at Jerusalem were rivaled in the country. But at this very crisis, when the worship and the people of Jehovah seemed doomed to extinction, a new light arose for both; and the result showed how needful was the baptism of fire to purify the people from the corruptions of Hellenism.

Meanwhile the persecutor himself became a signal example of the retribution which awaits despotic power and unbridled passion; and, before relating the resurrection of Judæa under the Maccabees, we may anticipate the short period of four years to notice the fate of Antiochus Epiphanes. He was in the eastern provinces when he heard of the revolt of Judæa and the defeat of his general Lysias. Hastening back to avenge the disgrace, he attacked a temple at Elymais, the very place where his father had lost his life in a similar attempt. The mortification of being repulsed seems to have brought to a climax the madness which despotism usually engenders; and he died in a raving frenzy at Tabæ in Persia, 164 B.C. His end was regarded, by Greeks as well as Jews, as a judgment for his sacrilegious crimes; and he has left to history a name as odious as that of Nero, with whose character he had many points in common.

16. *Silence of heathen historians on this period of Jewish history; allusion to it by Tacitus.*

It is very remarkable that this great persecution, and the subsequent history of the glorious regeneration of Judæa under the Maccabees, should have been passed over by the Greek and Roman historians. From Polybius we might have expected a just appreciation of its importance, and an impartial summary of its facts; but of this portion of his work only a few fragments remain, and the silence of Livy, who closely follows his history of Syria, seems to imply that of his great authority. Appian's meagre summary of Syrian history takes no notice of the Jews. Diodorus gives a very brief account of them, repeating the current prejudices, not as his own belief, but as arguments used by the counselors of Antiochus to urge the extirpation of the Jews. The contemptuous summary given by Tacitus is even more significant than the silence of the rest and shows how far prejudice can lead even the most careful writers from the truth. He speaks as follows:—"During the dominion of the Assyrians, the Medes, and the Persians, the Jews were the most abject of their dependent subjects. After the Macedonians obtained the supremacy of the East, King Antiochus endeavored to do away with their superstition and introduce Greek habits, but was hindered by a Parthian war from reforming a most repulsive people."¹⁸

The spirit of this passage may explain the indifference of other authors. The uncompromising devotion of the Jews to their religion and their national traditions, and their claim to be worshipers of the only true God, excited among the heathen, and especially those who laid claim to philosophy, the same affected contempt and unaffected resentment which led Gibbon to sneer at Palestine as a country no larger nor more favored by nature than Wales.

18. *Teterriman gentem*, Tac. Hist. v. 8.

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The keen inquiries of Herodotus, who visited Egypt and Tyre at the very time when Ezra and Nehemiah were regulating the restored state, produced nothing but the notice of Necho's victory over Josiah and capture of Cadytis (probably Gaza), the mistake "that the Syrians of Palestine" learned circumcision from the Egyptians, and the mention of them as serving with the Phœnicians in the fleet of Xerxes.¹⁹

The silence of the historians of Alexander and his successors about the Jewish people is the more remarkable, as they have to mention Judæa as the scene of war; it is matched by the Romans even when they come into contact with Syria and Egypt; nor is it even broken when (if we may believe the historian of the Maccabees) Rome formed an alliance with Judas Maccabæus.

A century later when Pompey penetrated into the temple, the sacred city suggests even to Cicero nothing better than a nickname for his distrusted leader; nor does Tacitus notice the very advent of Christ with half the interest he shows in the relations of the Herodian princes to the Cæsars. Surely we can not but see in all this a divine purpose, that the outer, like the inner life, of the chosen people, should lie hidden from the world at large, and pursue a course apart from the ordinary current of warlike and political conflict, till from their bosom should emerge the band of lowly and unworldly men, who were to proclaim a "kingdom not of this world."

17. State of the Jewish nation: held together by religion; increasing exclusiveness; oppression by nobles.

In preparation for that event, the Jewish people had a history of its own, for which we could wish to possess

19. Herodotus ii. 104, 106, 159, iii. 5, vii. 89.

more abundant materials. They had resumed the ordinances of their religion, purified from their old idolatries by the Captivity, and with their zeal constantly stimulated by antagonism with the Samaritans. Politically, they were subject first to Persia, and then to Egypt; but, as long as their tribute was paid, their relations to their sovereign were kindly, and they were left to the government of their high-priests and patriarchal princes till the great Syrian persecution. The extinction of royalty, after it had served its purpose by giving an image of Messiah's kingdom, removed the chief influence which had led to apostasy in Israel and to idolatry in Judah; and the very dependence which debarred them from political freedom gave them the better opportunity for religious organization. The band by which the "people of God" were held together was at length felt to be religious and not local; and all the more so from the existence of large portions of the nation separate from the rest, in the great Eastern "dispersion," or in the new community formed in Egypt. The Jews incorporated in different nations still looked to Jerusalem as the centre of their faith. The boundaries of Canaan were passed; and the beginnings of a spiritual dispensation were already made.

But this process could not work unmixed good. "In the darkness of this long period, Judaism, with its stern and settled aversion to all polytheism, to Gentiles influences, gradually hardened into its rigid exclusiveness. . . . Conflicting opinions, which grew up under the Asmonæan princes into religious factions, those of the Pharisees and Sadducees, began to stir in the religious mind and heart of the people. The old Nazaritism grew toward the latter Essenism." (Milman).

The Jews restored to Palestine resumed their agricultural life on a land rendered doubly fertile by having "enjoyed her Sabbaths as long as she lay desolate, to fulfill

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threescore and ten years" (II Chron. 36.21); and it may be observed in passing, that the ordinance of the Sabbatic year, which had been so systematically neglected before the Captivity, was observed in the Maccabæan age. How the land was divided among the returned families we are not told; but thus much seems clear, that it soon fell chiefly into the hands of the nobles, who, becoming rapidly enriched through the fertility of the soil, resumed that course of oppression toward the poor which the old prophets had so vehemently denounced as the crying sin of their class. An order which thus sets itself above the social bonds of mutual kindness is prone to maintain its consequence against popular discontent by foreign influence; and, just as the princes of Judah headed the idolatrous and Egyptian party in the last days of the monarchy, so now they were the leaders of the Syrian and hellenizing party. Their influence, was resisted, as formerly by the prophets, so now by the priests, who headed the glorious uprising of the nation in defense of their religion. The issue of that contest proves that the nation was still sound at heart at the time of the Syrian domination.

18. *High Priests of the Jews after the Babylonian captivity.*

A. During the Persian Period

Jeshua. Joiakim.	Eliashib. Joiada.	Johanan. Jaddua.
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B. During the Ptolemaic and Seleucid Period

Onias I. Simon the Just. Eleazar. Manasseh.	Onias II. Simon II. Onias III. (Joshua, or) Jason.	Onias, or Menelaus. Jacimus, or Alcimus.
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C. During the Maccabean Period

Jonathan, brother of Judas Maccabeus (Asmonean).	Simon. John Hyrcanus. Aristobulus.	Alexander Jannæus Hyrcanus II. Aristobulus II.
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NEW TESTAMENT BACKGROUNDS

D. During the Time from Roman Conquest through Herod the Great

Hyrcanus II. Antigonus. Ananelus.	Aristobulus (last of Asmoneans, murdered by Herod.) Ananelus restored. Jesus, son of Faueus.	Simon, father-in-law to Herod. Matthias. Jozarus, son of Simon.
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E. New Testament Times

Eleazar. Jesus, son of Sie. Jozarus (second time). Annas (John 18:13). Ishmael, son of Phabi. Eleazar, son of Auanus. Simon, son of Kamith. Caiaphas, called also Joseph. (John 18:24)	Jonathan, son of Ananus. Theophilus, brother of Jonathan. Simon Cantheras. Matthias, brother of Jonathan. Ellioneus, son of Cantheras. Joseph, son of Camei. Ananias, son of Nebedeus.	Jonathan. Ismael. Joseph. Ananus, son of Ana- nus, or Ananias. Jesus, son of Gamaliel. Matthias Ophilus. Phannias.
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SECTION II

THE MACCABEAN WAR (168-106 B.C.)

1. Revolt of Mattathias. 2. Judas Maccabaeus; His two initial victories. 3. Measures of Antiochus to destroy the Jews; Judas wins two victories. 4. Judas defeats Lysias, takes Jerusalem, and purifies the temple; the "Feast of Dedication." 5. Judas' wars with neighboring nations. 6. Judea invaded by Syrians; Bethsura captured. 7. Treachery of Antiochus Epiphanes; He is succeeded by Demetrius I. 8. Hellenizing priesthood of Onias IV; he builds a temple in Egypt. 9. Judas Maccabaeus wins decisive victory. 10. Alliance of Jews with Rome. 11. Defeat and death of Judas Maccabaeus. 12. Jonathan succeeds Judas Maccabaeus; his victory and peace. 13. Rival Syrian kings seek support of the Jews; Jonathan becomes high priest. 14. Jonathan defeats Syrians; Demetrius II, new king of Syria. 15. Jonathan made prisoner; his death. 16. Accession of Simon Maccabaeus; his triumphs and peace. 17. Last Syrian war against Judea; victory of the Jews; death of Simon Maccabaeus. 18. Succession of John Hyrcanus; victories and complete independence of Judea. 19. Dissension among the Jews; John Hyrcanus favors Sadducees over Pharisees. 20. Peaceful death of John Hyrcanus contrasted to deaths of his family. 21. Review of the Maccabean struggles in the light of patriotism and religion. 22. Religious and social progress during the Maccabean wars. 23. Literature and arts during the Maccabean revolt. 24. The Maccabeans at a glance.

THE MACCABEAN PERIOD

WATCH FOR ANSWERS
TO THESE QUESTIONS:

1. What is the origin or meaning of the names *Maccabean* and *Asmonean*?
2. What was the occupation of Mattathias?
3. What were the names of Mattathias' five sons?
4. Where did Mattathias and his sons first take refuge from the persecution at Jerusalem?
5. What did Mattathias do to the king's commissioner?
6. Who were the Assideans (or Chasidim)?
7. Who became leader after Mattathias died?
8. What command did Antiochus give to Lysias about the Jewish nation?
9. Where did Judas win some of his early victories?
10. What acts did Judas do in cleansing the Jerusalem temple?
11. What feast commemorates Judas' cleansing of the temple?
12. What city did the Syrians capture by using war elephants?
13. What Syrian king broke his peace treaty with the Jews?
14. Where did the priest Onias IV build a temple?
15. Where did Judas win his most glorious victory (over Nicanor)?
16. With what foreign power did Judas seek to make alliance? Was this alliance actually made?
17. Why did many of Judas' men desert him before his last battle?
18. Who succeeded Judas Maccabaeus as leader?
19. Did Jonathan bring peace to Judea or not?
20. What other office did Jonathan acquire, besides being king?
21. Where did Jonathan defeat the Syrians?
22. How was Jonathan made prisoner? By whom?

NEW TESTAMENT BACKGROUNDS

23. Who succeeded Jonathan as priest-ruler of Judea?
24. What strong tower (at last!) was taken by Simon?
25. Was Simon's reign mostly in peace or war?
26. Who slew Simon Maccabaeus?
27. Who succeeded Simon Maccabaeus?
28. Did Syria ever subjugate Judea again after the time of John Hyrcanus?
29. What did John Hyrcanus do to Idumea and Samaria?
30. What did John Hyrcanus do to the temple on Mt. Gerezim?
31. What religious sects had developed among the Jews by the time of John Hyrcanus?
32. Which religious sect did John Hyrcanus come to favor?
33. Did John Hyrcanus die in war or peacefully?
34. How many of the first generation of the Maccabean family (Mattathias' sons) died for their land and faith?
35. What religious doctrine was brought to distinct prominence by the suffering and martyrdom of the Maccabean period?
36. Did the Maccabeans consider that there were prophets among them?
37. Was the Mosaic law followed in the Maccabean period?
38. How important was the interruption of the succession to the high-priesthood during the Maccabean period?
39. What dialect or language was commonly used among the Jews of this period?
40. Which of the Maccabean rulers first issued coins?

1. *Revolt of Mattathias.*

The persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes called forth a glorious resistance, which ended in establishing the independence of Judæa under the Maccabæan or Asmonæan

princes.¹ An aged priest named MATTATHIAS, the son of Simeon (or Simon), son of Johanan (John), son of Chasmon, of the course of Joarib (the first of David's twenty-four courses), and of the house of Eleazar, Aaron's elder son, had escaped from Jerusalem at the beginning of the persecution.² He took up his abode at his own city of *Modin*³ with his five sons, John, Simon, Judas, Eleazar, and Jonathan, besides other kindred. For a time they mourned over the desolation of Jerusalem and the sanctuary; but the nearer approach of danger roused them to exertion. The king's officers, headed by Apelles, came to Modin and called first on Mattathias, as the principal man of the city, to earn honors and rewards by obeying the royal edict. But Mattathias indignantly refused, for himself, his sons, and all his kindred. Others were prepared to be more compliant; and one of them advanced to the altar to contrast his obedience with the example of rebellion. Mattathias could forbear no longer. He rushed forward, and slew first the apostate, and next the king's commissioner, on the altar itself, which he then pulled down; just as his ancestor Phinehas had slain Zimri.⁴ Having proclaimed throughout the city that all who were zealous for the law and covenant should follow him, Mattathias fled with

1. It may be well to explain these names at once. *Maccabee* was originally the surname of Judas, the third son of Mattathias. Its most probable etymology is from *Maccabah*, a *hammer*, like Charles *Martel*. *Asmonoean* (or rather *Chasmonoean*) is the proper name of the family, from Chasmon, the great-grandfather of Mattathias.

2. I Macc. 2:1; Cf. II Macc. 5:27

3. Modin (or Modi'im) is not mentioned in either Old or New Testament, though rendered immortal by its connection with the history of the Jews in the interval between the two. It was the native city of the Maccabaeian family (I Macc. xiii. 25), and as a necessary consequence contained their ancestral sepulchre (ii. 70, ix. 19). Mattathias himself, and subsequently his sons Judas and Jonathan, were buried in the family tomb, and over them Simon erected a structure which is minutely described in the Book of Maccabees (xiii. 25-30), and, with less detail, by Josephus (*Ant.* xiii. 6, 6). The site of Modin lies about 18 miles N.W. of Jerusalem, nearly on a line between Jerusalem and Joppa, on the edge of the coastal plain of Philistia.

4. I Macc. 2:15-26, 54; Comp. Num. 25:7-8, 14.

his sons to the mountains; and was joined by "many that sought after justice and judgment." The destruction of a thousand of the fugitives, who would not break the Sabbath by fighting, led Mattathias and his friends to declare the lawfulness of self-defense upon the Sabbath. Among their first adherents were the Assidœans (*Chasidim*, *pious*, or *holy*), a sect or society who had bound themselves by a special vow to the observance of the law.⁵ Issuing from their mountain-fastnesses, they broke down the heathen altars, and killed many of the worshippers, while others fled to the Syrians; they circumcised children by force, and recovered many copies of the law. But the work was too arduous for the aged Mattathias. After a noble exhortation to his sons, encouraging them by the examples of the ancient worthies, from Abraham to Daniel, and having appointed his son Judas his successor, he died, and was buried at Modin, in the sepulchre of his fathers (167 B.C.) (I Macc. 2:49-70).

2. *Judas Maccabæus; his two initial victories.*

JUDAS, the third and most warlike of the sons of Mattathias, and hence surnamed MACCABÆUS (the *Hammerer*), proved to Judæa what Alfred was to England, and Bruce to Scotland. His noble character, which the historian de-

5. *Chasidim* (i.e. the *pious* "puritans"), was the name assumed by a section of the orthodox Jews (1 Macc. ii. 42; 1 Macc. vii. 13; 2 Macc. xiv. 6), as distinguished from "the impious" "the lawless" "the transgressors", that is, the hellenizing faction. They appear to have existed as a party before the Maccabæan rising, and were probably bound by some peculiar vow to the external observance of the Law (1 Macc. ii. 42). They were among the first to join Mattathias (1 Macc. l. c.); and seem afterward to have been merged in the general body of the faithful (2 Macc. xiv. 6). The name *Chasidim* occurs frequently in the Psalms (e. g. Ps. lxxix. 2—1 Macc. vii. 17; exxxii. 9, etc.); and it has been adopted in recent times by a sect of Polish Jews, who take as the basis of their mystical system the doctrines of the Cabalistic book *Zohar*. Some historians see in the *Chasidim* the prototype of the sect of the Pharisees.

cribes in glowing terms, commanded the cheerful submission of his brethren and friends. He carried on his father's course of operations in which he seems already to have been the chief leader under him.⁷ Venturing privately into the towns, Judas and his friends gathered an army of about 6000 worshippers of Jehovah.⁸ After training his followers by night attacks and surprises⁹, he defeated the army of Apollonius, who marched against him from Samaria, slew the general, and ever afterward wore his sword.¹⁰ Another great host, led by Seron, the governor of Cœlesyria, was routed in the passes of Beth-horon, after a noble address of Judas before the battle. The Syrians fled, with the loss of about 800 men, down the pass to the plain of the Philistines, just as the Canaanites had fled Joshua over the same ground.¹¹

3. *Measures of Antiochus to destroy the Jews; Judas wins two great victories.*

Antiochus was the more enraged at the news as his finances were in disorder. The hellenizing policy, which he had pursued as rashly in other provinces as in Judæa, had created wide-spread disaffection, and Armenia and Persia, in particular, had refused to pay tribute. He called out all his forces; and, having exhausted his treasure in giving them a year's pay in advance, he marched into Persia to recruit his finances, leaving half his forces to Lysias, a noble of the royal blood, whom he made his lieutenant west of the Euphrates, and guardian of his infant son, Antiochus. Lysias, having been commissioned to extirpate *the whole* Jewish nation, gave his orders to Ptolemy

7. 1 Macc. iii. 1-9; comp. 2 Macc. v. 27, where he alone is mentioned as escaping from Jerusalem to the mountains.

8. 2 Macc. viii. 1.

9. 2 Macc. viii. 5-7.

10. 1 Macc. iii. 10-12.

11. 1 Macc. iii., 13-24.

Macron, the governor of Coelesyria, who sent forth Nicanor and Gorgias, with 40,000 infantry and 7000 cavalry. Judas assembled his 6000 men at the ancient sanctuary of Mizpeh (Jerusalem being still in the hands of Philip), and after solemn religious services, he proclaimed, like Gideon, that all who were timid, as well as those who were exempt by the law from military service, might leave the camp, and encouraged the rest for the battle of the morrow.¹²

During the night, Gorgias marched out of the Syrian camp at Emmaus, with 5000 foot and 1000 chosen horse, to surprise the Jewish camp. Hearing of the movement, Judas left his camp, and appeared at day-break in the plain, with his army now weeded to 3000 men, who "had neither armor nor swords to their minds." This Syrian army under Nicanor was routed, and pursued to Ashdod and Jamnia, with the loss of 3000 men. Judas recalled his little army to meet Gorgias, who, finding the Jewish camp deserted, had advanced into the mountains. Learning the victory of the Jews by the smoke of Nicanor's camp, the followers of Gorgias fled. Besides the rich spoils of the Syrian camp, "much gold and silver, and blue silk and purple of the sea, and great riches," there were found a number of merchants from the maritime cities, who had been attracted by Nicanor's promise to sell his prisoners for slaves: these, by a just retribution, were themselves sold into slavery. Having kept the Sabbath which followed the victory with great thanksgivings, Judas crossed the Jordan, and defeated Timotheus and Bacchides, slaying above 20,000 Syrians, and taking many of the strongholds of Gilead (167 B.C.).¹³

12. 1 Macc. iii. 27-60.

13. I Macc. 4:1.

4. *Judas defeats Lysias, takes Jerusalem, and purifies the temple; "Feast of Dedication."*

In the following year Lysias, with an army of 60,000 chosen foot and 5000 horse, advanced to Bethsura,¹⁴ where he was met by Judas with only 10,000 men. After his usual fervent prayers and an animating harangue, Judas fell upon the Syrians, and defeated them with the slaughter of 5000 men; and Lysias retreated to Antioch to gather fresh forces. This victory gave the patriots possession of Jerusalem, except the Syrian tower, and Judas employed the respite from incessant war in cleansing the temple, the deserted courts of which were overgrown with tall shrubs, and the chamber of the priests thrown down. The sacred vessels were replaced from the Syrian booty, and the sanctuary was dedicated anew on the 25th of Chisleu, exactly three years after its profanation (Dec. B.C. 166). A festival was kept for eight days, with rejoicings similar to those of the Feast of Tabernacles; the solemnity was made a perpetual institution, and this is the "Feast of the Dedication" mentioned by St. John as being kept in the winter.¹⁵ During this solemnity, Judas had to employ a part of his forces to keep in check the Syrians, who still held the tower on Mount Zion. He afterward secured the temple against attacks from that quarter by the erection of a strong wall and towers, well manned. He also fortified and garrisoned Bethsura.¹⁶

Modern Jews still commemorate the purification of

14. Beth-zur (*house of the rock*) was a town in the mountains of Judah (Josh. 15:58), a fortress of Rehoboam (2 Chr. 11:7), and a place of great importance, as we shall see repeatedly, in the Maccabean wars. The identification of the site of Beth-zur under the almost identical name of *Beitsur*, by Wolcott and Robinson explains its impregnability, and also the reason for the choice of its position, since it commands the road from Beersheba and Hebron, which has always been the main approach to Jerusalem from the south.

15. I Macc. 4, II Macc. 10:1-8; John 10:22.

16. I Macc. 4:60-61.

the temple by Judas during *Hanukkah*, or the Feast of Lights.

5. Judas' wars with neighboring nations.

These successes roused the old jealous enmities of the surrounding nations, who began to massacre the Jews that dwelt among them; but Judas was as prompt to chastise as to deliver. He made a descent on Joppa, and burned many houses and ships, to avenge the treacherous murder of 200 Jews, who had been decoyed on board the vessels in the harbor, and there drowned; and another treacherous massacre at Jamnia was punished by the conflagration of the town and ships, whose flames were seen from Jerusalem, a distance of twenty-five miles.¹⁷ He had returned to Judæa from a campaign against the Idumæans and the Ammonites, when letters arrived announcing the extreme danger of the Jews in Gilead and Galilee. Judas divided his forces, sending his brother Simon into Galilee, while he marched with Jonathan into Gilead. Both expeditions were successful, and future dangers were guarded against by the removal of the Galilean and Transjordanic Jews to Jerusalem. In the mean time, Joseph and Azarias, who had been left at Jerusalem with strict orders not to fight, were tempted by the news of these victories to attack Gorgias at Jamnia. They were routed with the loss of 2000 men; but this heavy blow increased the confidence of the people in the Maccabæan brothers as their only worthy leaders; and another slight reverse confirmed the prudence by which Judas regulated his valor. He revenged the defeat, not without considerable loss. When they proceeded, after ob-

17. 2 Macc. 12:9. Jamnia or Jabnia (in Hebrew *Jabneel*) is an important place in the Maccabæan war. It was on the northern boundary of Judah, between Ashdod and Joppa, not quite at the sea, though near it (Josh. 15:11). At the time of the fall of Jerusalem, Jabneh was one of the most populous places of Judæa, and contained a Jewish school of great fame, whose learned doctors are often mentioned in the Talmud.

servicing the Sabbath in Adullam, to bury the dead, small idols were found in the clothes even of some of the priestly race. A sin-offering was sent to Jerusalem, not only to atone for the guilt of these men, but for the dead, in whose resurrection the Maccabæan Jews, no doubt the Chasidim, had full faith.¹⁸ He finished the campaign by reducing Hebron, and overrunning the Philistine country and Samaria.¹⁹

6. *Judea invaded by Syrians; Bethsura captured.*

About this time Antiochus Epiphanes died, in the manner already described. His young son, ANTIOCHUS V. EUPATOR (164-162 B.C.), was placed on the throne by Lysias, and a new campaign was undertaken for the relief of the Syrian garrison, who were now besieged in the citadel of Zion. The king and Lysias laid siege to Bethsura, while Judas hastened to its relief. The Syrian army numbered 80,000 or 100,000 foot soldiers, 20,000 horsemen, and 32 elephants. These beasts, now for the first time mentioned in Jewish warfare, are described as escorted each by 1000 foot soldiers and 500 horsemen; each bore a tower containing 32 men, an exaggeration significant of the alarm caused by the strange sight: and it was believed that they were provoked to fight by the sight of the blood of grapes and mulberries. But the courage of the Jewish patriots was stimulated by the noble example of ELEAZAR, surnamed Avaran, the fourth of the Maccabæan brothers, who crept under an elephant and killed it, but was crushed to death by its fall. Nor did his self-devotion ensure the victory: Judas was compelled to retreat to Jerusalem, and Bethsura capitulated on favorable terms. The fall of the fortress is ascribed to famine, in consequence of the dearth of corn

18. 2 Macc. 12:44. "For if he had not hoped that they that were slain should have risen again, it had been superfluous and vain to pray for the dead."

19. 1 Macc. 5.

in the Sabbatic year—an incidental proof of the observance of that institution by the restored Jews (163 B.C.). The same cause reduced Jerusalem, which was next besieged, to the last extremities of famine, but drove the besiegers also to straits.

7. *Treachery of Antiochus Eupator; he is succeeded by Demetrius I.*

Meanwhile, however, the army which Antiochus Epiphanes had led into Persia returned under Philip, who claimed the guardianship of the young king. Upon this Lysias advised Antiochus to make peace with the Jews. The king was no sooner admitted into the city, than he broke the terms just made by pulling down the new wall of Judas; after which he retired to Antioch, and recovered the capital from Philip. His triumph was brief, for Demetrius, the son of Seleucus IV.—whose rightful inheritance had been usurped by his uncle, Antiochus Epiphanes—returned from Rome, where he had been a hostage, overthrew and put to death Antiochus and Lysias, and became king by the title of DEMETRIUS I. SOTER²⁰ (162-150 B.C.). With more subtle policy than his predecessor, Demetrius availed himself of the divisions among the Jews. The common people appear to have become discontented under the austere yoke of the Assidæans, and impatient of the long sacrifices demanded in the cause of patriotism; and for the first time the hellenizing party was headed by a high-priest, Onias IV, who, unlike the usurpers, Jason and Menelaus, might plead a legitimate title.

8. *Hellenizing priesthood of Onias IV; he builds a temple in Egypt. Alcimus priest in Jerusalem.*

Onias III., whose death at Antioch by the artifices of

20. I Macc. 6.

Menelaus has been related, left a son of the same name, who, though he never exercised the high-priesthood at Jerusalem, may be called Onias IV., to avoid confusion. During the usurpation of Jason and Menelaus, Onias seems to have supported an alliance with Egypt, whither he at length fled, and was protected by Ptolemy Philometor. As the legitimate heir to the high-priesthood, he formed the project of reviving in Egypt the worship which had been desecrated in Judæa. Egypt seemed well fitted to form a new centre of hellenistic Judaism by the great number of Jews who had settled there at various times, and by the possession of the Septuagint version of the Scriptures. Onias therefore built a temple, of which he and his family became high-priests; so that there were now three temples, the true one at Jerusalem, the Samaritan on Mount Gerizim, and the hellenistic in Egypt.²¹

One consequence of the secession of Onias was that, on the execution of Menelaus by order of Antiochus Eupator (about 163 B.C.), the high-priesthood of Jerusalem passed out of the line of Jozadak, the father of Jeshua, in which it had remained since the return from the Captivity. Antiochus appointed Joakim²² (Jacimus), who, as Josephus says, was indeed of the stock of Aaron, but not of this family. ALCIMUS, for such was the Greek name which the new high-priest adopted, became the head of the hellenizing party, and courted Demetrius, who sent an army under Bacchides to set up the high-priest at Jerusalem. Their overtures of peace could not deceive Judas; but the Assidæans trusted to the sacred character of the high-priest, who repaid their confidence by killing sixty of them in one day.²³

21. Josephus, *Ant.* XIII, 3. *Wars*, I, 1, 1; VII, 10, 2. The site of this temple is uncertain.

22. A name equivalent to *Eliacim* (*God hath set up*), in Greek *Alcimus*. Joseph. *Ant.* XII, 9, 5, I *Macc.* 7:14.

23. I *Macc.* 7:1-18.

9. *Judas Maccabæus wins decisive victory.*

Bacchides returned to Antioch, leaving the high-priest as governor; while the indefatigable Judas went through the cities of Judah rallying the patriots. Alcimus again repaired to Antioch for help; and Nicanor, who was sent to restore him, was defeated by Judas at Capharsalama. He retired to the citadel of Zion, where his refusal to listen to the overtures of the priests until Judas was delivered up to him, and his ferocious cruelties, reunited the patriots in resistance and prayer for his overthrow. A battle ensued at ADASA, near Bethhoron, where Judas gained his most glorious victory, on the 13th of Adar (end of February, 161 B.C.), a day which was kept as a national festival. Nicanor was slain, and his head and hand were exposed as trophies at Jerusalem. The independence of Judæa was won, though it was not finally secured till after several years of contest, and the death of all the Maccabæan brothers. Meanwhile the land enjoyed a brief interal of rest.²⁴

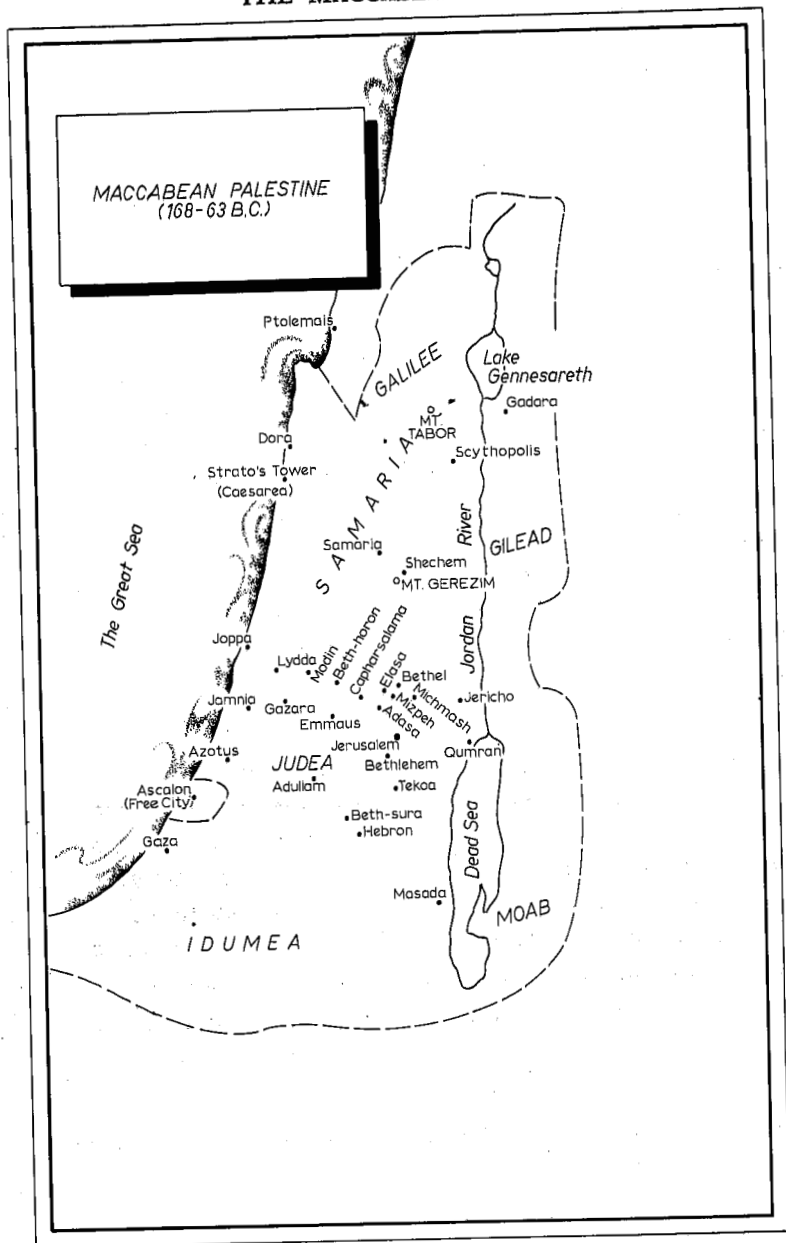
10. *Alliance of Jews with Rome.*

It is at this juncture that the name of ROME first appears in Jewish history. The imagination of Judas was captivated by the successes she had gained against the Gauls and Spaniards, and especially over those Greek powers with which he was so fiercely struggling. He had heard of their defeats of Philip, Perseus, and Antiochus the Great, and of their power to set up and cast down kings; but he seems to have been most attracted by their republican form of government.²⁵ He sent to Rome Eupolemus the son of John, with Jason the son of ELEAZAR, to propose a league against Syria; and the envoys brought back a letter, inscribed on brazen tablets, containing the articles of alliance between

24. I Macc. 7:19-50; II Macc. 15:36.

25. I Macc. 8:1-16.

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the Romans and the Jews.²⁶ But before they reached Judæa, the career of Judas was closed; gloriously indeed, but in a manner which we can scarcely doubt that one of the old prophets would have regarded as a judgment for seeking strength from a heathen alliance, as the only error of his life.

11. *Defeat and death of Judas Maccabæus.*

Demetrius had sent his whole force, under Bacchides, to restore Alcimus and avenge Nicanor. The treaty with Rome seems to have offended the extreme party of the Assidæans; and Judas had only 3000 men to oppose to the enemy's 20,000 foot and 2000 horse. Their camp was at "Berea" (probably Beeroth), and his at "Eleasa."²⁷ His men, terrified by the disparity of numbers, continued to desert, till only 800 remained. These urged Judas to fly, and wait for a better opportunity. His reply shows that prophetic instinct which has often warned a hero of coming death:—"If our time be come, let us die manfully for our brethren, and let us not stain our honor!" He took post, with his chosen warriors, over against the right wing of the Syrians, where Bacchides commanded. He defeated this wing, the strength of the Syrian army, pursuing them to Azotus. But the Syrians on the left, scarcely meeting with opposition, fell upon the rear of the victorious Jews. The odds were overwhelming; and the disaster was crowned by the death of Judas, whereupon his followers fled. His brothers, Jonathan and Simon, recovered his body, and buried him in his father's sepulchre at Modin, amidst the

26. I Macc. 8:17-32.

27. I Macc. 9:1-5. The Vulgate has *Laisa*. The position is very uncertain. Some propose to identify it with *Laish*, and even with *Adasa*. It seems to have been on the west slope of the mountains of Judah, above Ashdod (v. 15). The attacks of the Syrians during this war were chiefly made from that side.

lamentations of all Israel, as they cried, "How is the valiant man fallen that delivered Israel!"²⁸

The best eulogy of Judas Maccabæus is the simple record of his deeds, of which his historian assures us that they were too many to be written.²⁹ "Among those lofty spirits," says Dean Milman, "who have asserted the liberty of their native land against wanton and cruel oppression, none have surpassed the most able of the Maccabees in accomplishing a great end with inadequate means; none ever united more generous valor with a better cause:" none, we may add, more completely gave God the glory. There is at least one worthy tribute to his honor in the splendid oratorio of Handel. His death occurred in 161 B.C.

12. *Jonathan succeeds Judas Maccabæus; his victory and peace.*

The triumph of Bacchides and the "impious" faction was aided by the distress of a great famine, and the friends of Judas were hunted down on every side. But, as before, this want of moderation compelled resistance. JONATHAN, surnamed Apphus (the *wary*), the fifth and youngest son of Mattathias, was chosen leader as the most warlike of the three surviving brothers; Simon aiding him with his counsel. They established themselves in the wilderness of Tekoah, where their first exploit was to avenge their eldest brother JOHN (Johanan), surnamed Gaddis, who was treacherously killed by the Arabs, while conveying some of the effects of the patriots to the care of the Nabateans. Incensed by this deed, Bacchides, on a Sabbath, attacked their position in the marshes of the Jordan; but they escaped by swimming across the river, having slain 1000 of the Syrians (161 B.C.). Bacchides now occupied himself with fortifying Jericho, Emmaus, Beth-horon, Bethel, and other

28. I Macc. 9:6-22.

29. I Macc. 9:22.

strong cities in Judah, and he placed in them hostages from the chief families. Alcimus had set to work with equal ardor to pull down the walls round the temple, when he was struck with a palsy and died in great torment. Upon this, Bacchides returned to Antioch, and the land had rest for two years.⁸⁰ A last attempt of the hellenizing party to call in the aid of Bacchides proved their ruin; for, enraged by a defeat which he suffered from Jonathan, Bacchides put to death many of the faction who had invited him, and gave up the enterprise. Before he retreated, however, he accepted the invitation of Jonathan to make peace; restored his prisoners and hostages; and promised not again to molest the Jews, a promise which he kept. Jonathan established himself at the fortress of Michmash, so renowned in history of his great namesake, the son of Saul. There he governed the people, and "destroyed the ungodly men out of Israel."⁸¹ This state of things lasted for about six years (158-153 B.C.).

13. *Rival Syrian kings seek support of the Jews;
Jonathan becomes high priest.*

The claim of Alexander Balas, a pretended son of Antiochus Epiphanes, to the crown of Syria, led to a new advancement of Jonathan and the Jews (153 B.C.), who were courted by both rivals. Demetrius wrote first, authorizing Jonathan to raise an army, and commanding that the hostages in the tower of Zion should be delivered to him. This was at once done, and Jonathan began to repair the fortifications of Jerusalem. Meanwhile all of the hostile party fled from the fortified cities, except Bethsura. Next came the letter from Alexander, nominating Jonathan to the *high-priesthood*, which had been vacant since the death of Alcimus, and sending him a purple robe and

80. B.C. 160-158; I Macc. 9:23-57.

81. I Macc. 9:58-73.

a crown of gold. Jonathan assumed these insignia at the Feast of Tabernacles (153 B.C.), and thus began the line of the priest-princes of the Asmonæan family.³² Demetrius, in despair, now made new and unbounded offers: freedom for all the Jews of his kingdom from tribute, from the duties on salt, and from crown-taxes; and exemption from the payment of the third of the seed and the half of the produce of fruit-trees. The three governments of Apherema, Lydda, and Ramathem,³³ including the port of Ptolemais (*Acre*), were to be taken from Samaria and annexed to Judæa forever, under the sole government of the high-priest. An army of 30,000 Jews was to be raised at the king's expense, to garrison the cities and act as a police. Jerusalem, with its territory, was declared holy, free from tithe and tribute, and a place of asylum. A large annual sum was promised for the works of the temple and the fortifications of the city, and the revenues of Ptolemais were assigned for the ordinary expenses of the sanctuary. All Jewish captives throughout the Syrian empire were to be

32. It does not appear that any direct claimant to the high-priesthood remained since Onias IV the younger, who inherited the claim of his father Onias III, the last legitimate high priest, had retired to Egypt. A new and glorious succession of high-priests now arose in the Asmonæan family, who united the dignity of civil rulers, and for a time of independent sovereigns, to that of the high-priesthood. Josephus, who is followed by Lightfoot, Selden, and others, calls Judas Maccabæus "high-priest of the nation of Judah" (*Ant.* xii. 10, 6), but, according to the far better authority of 1 Macc. x. 20, it was not till after the death of Judas Maccabæus that Alcimus himself died, and that Alexander, King of Syria, made Jonathan, the brother of Judas, high-priest. Josephus himself too calls Jonathan "the first of the sons of Asamoneus, who was high-priest" (*Vita*, 1). It is possible, however, that Judas may have been elected by the people to the office of high-priest, though never confirmed in it by the Syrian kings. The Asmonæan family were priests of the course of Joarib, the first of the twenty-four courses (1 Chr. xxiv. 7), and whose return from captivity is recorded in 1 Chr. ix. 10; Neh. xi. 10. They were probably of the house of Eleazar, though this can not be affirmed with certainty; and Josephus tells us that he himself was related to them, one of his ancestors having married a daughter of Jonathan, the first high-priest of the house. This Asmonæan dynasty lasted from B.C. 153, till the family was damaged by internal divisions and then destroyed by Herod the Great.

33. Comp. I Macc. 11:34.

set free, and all the feasts were to be holidays for them. More moderate offers might have been a better proof of good faith. The Jews had more confidence in Alexander, who was moreover favored by Rome; and, after he had defeated and killed Demetrius (150 B.C.), he gave Jonathan a magnificent reception at Ptolemais, on his marriage with Cleopatra the daughter of Ptolemy Philometor.⁸⁴

14. *Jonathan defeats Syrians; Demetrius II, new king of Syria.*

Three years later (147 B.C.) the younger Demetrius (who afterward reigned as Demetrius II. Nicator) attempted to recover his father's kingdom; and his adherent Apollonius, governor of Cœlesyria, advanced to Jamnia and sent a challenge to Jonathan. A battle was fought near Azotus, in which the infantry of Jonathan stood firm against the Syrian cavalry, who attacked them on all sides, till the fresh forces of his brother Simon routed the wearied horsemen, who fled to the temple of Dagon at Azotus. Jonathan burned the city and temple, with the men in it to the number of 8000; and after receiving the submission of Ascalon he returned to Jerusalem.⁸⁵

A new enemy now took the field against Alexander, in the person of his father-in-law, Ptolemy, who marched into Syria, professedly as a friend. Jonathan met him at Joppa, and was favorably received, in spite of the accusations of his enemies. We need not here relate the alliance of Ptolemy with the young Demetrius, nor the defeat and death of Alexander, followed by the death of Ptolemy and the accession of DEMETRIUS II. NICATOR to the throne of Syria (146 B.C.). Jonathan's political tact not only brought him safe through this revolution, but gained new advantages for his country. During the confusion, he had laid

84. I Macc. 10:22-66.

85. I Macc. 10:67-89.

siege to the tower on Zion, for which act his enemies accused him to the new king, who summoned him to Ptolemais. Leaving orders to press the siege, he went with a body of priests and elders, carrying splendid presents. He gained great favor with Demetrius, who confirmed him in the high-priesthood; and a present of 300 talents to the king secured for Judæa most of the privileges which had been promised by Demetrius I.

The unpopularity of Demetrius, in consequence of his disbanding the Syrian troops and replacing them by mercenaries whom he had brought with him from Crete, opened the door to the schemes of TRYPHON, who claimed the throne for Antiochus, son of Alexander Balas. Jonathan seized the opportunity to obtain from Demetrius a promise of the evacuation of the long-contested tower, and sent him a body of 3000 Jews, who saved his life in a tumult at Antioch. But the immediate danger was no sooner past, than Demetrius became estranged from Jonathan, and failed to fulfill his promises.⁸⁶

15. *Jonathan made prisoner; his death.*

The defeat of Demetrius by Tryphon placed ANTI- OCHUS VI. THEOS on the throne (144 B.C.). Jonathan was confirmed in all his honors, and his brother Simon was made captain-general of the country from the Ladder of Tyre to the borders of Egypt. Gaza and Bethsura were reduced, and Jonathan defeated the partisans of Demetrius near the lake Gennesareth⁸⁷ (Sea of Galilee), and again in the region of Hamath, and advanced as far as Damascus; while Simon secured Ascalon and took Joppa.⁸⁸ Having renewed the alliance with Rome, and also, if we may trust our leading authority, with the Lacedæmonians,⁸⁹ Jonathan

86. I Macc. 11:1-53.

87. I Macc. 11:54-74.

88. I Macc. 12:24-34.

89. I Macc. 12:1-28.

summoned the elders to fortify the cities of Judæa, to heighten the walls of Jerusalem, and to block out the tower on Zion by a great mound from the city and the temple. They were engaged on this work when Tryphon, who was plotting an usurpation, and regarded Jonathan as his chief obstacle, enticed him to Ptolemais, with a guard of only 1000 men, who were slain, and Jonathan was made prisoner.⁴⁰

The enemies of the Jews now rose in every quarter; but Simon was acknowledged as leader, and marched to Adida to meet Tryphon, who was advancing to invade Judæa. When Tryphon found with whom he had to do, he opened negotiations. Pretending that Jonathan had been seized for money due to the king, he promised to release him on the payment of 100 talents of silver and the delivery of two of his sons as hostages. Simon expected treachery; but, lest his motives should be mistaken, he accepted the terms. Tryphon verified his fears; and, after being foiled by Simon in all his attempts to advance to Jerusalem and relieve the Syrian garrison, he marched into Gilead, still carrying Jonathan with him, and killed and buried him at Bascama. On his retiring to Antioch, Simon removed the bones of Jonathan to Modin, where he built a stately monument, with seven obelisks for Mattathias, his wife, and their five sons; the whole forming a sea-mark for passing ships.⁴¹

16. *Accession of Simon Maccabæus; his triumphs and peace.*

SIMON, surnamed Thassi, the second son of Mattathias, and the last survivor of his brethren, was high-priest from 143 B.C. to 135 B.C. His wisdom and valor had aided Judas and Jonathan through the long contest, which now needed only one last effort to secure its fruits. Tryphon, occupied

40. I Macc. 12:35-52.

41. I Macc. 13:1-30.

with his own schemes of usurpation, seems to have renounced all attacks upon Judæa, except predatory incursions as he found opportunity. Simon employed himself in restoring the strongholds, and sought the friendship of Demetrius, who granted the independence of Judæa. The first year of Simon became an epoch from which people dated contracts and other instruments.⁴² After taking Gaza, he broke off the last and heaviest link of the Syrian fetters by the reduction, through famine, of the tower of Jerusalem.⁴³ It was purified and solemnly entered on the 23d of the second month (May, 142 B.C.), which was made an annual festival. John, the second son of Simon, was made captain of the host, and was posted at the fortress of Gazara.⁴⁴

Neither the capture of Demetrius by the Parthians, nor the completion of Tryphon's usurpation by the murder of Antiochus Theos, disturbed the peace which Judæa enjoyed under Simon. "Then did they till their ground in peace, and the earth gave her increase, and the trees of the field their fruit. The ancient men sat in all the streets, communing together of good things, and the young men put on glorious and warlike apparel. He provided victuals for the cities, and set in them all manner of munition, so that his honorable name was renowned unto the end of the world. He made peace in the land, and Israel rejoiced with great joy. . . . He beautified the sanctuary, and multiplied the vessels of the temple." While his internal government was just and firm, he opened up a commerce with Europe through the port of Joppa, and renewed the treaties with Rome and Lacedæmon. The letters in favor of the

42. 1 Macc. 13:33-42. It was not, however, till the fifth year of his son, John Hyrcanus, that the final recognition of Jewish independence was made by Syria.

43. The leveling of the hill on which the tower had stood, so that it should no longer command the temple, has affected the topography of Jerusalem.

44. 1 Macc. 13:43-53.

Jews, addressed by the Roman Senate to the states and islands of Greece and Asia Minor, and to the great potentates of Asia, including even the Parthian Arsaces, are a striking evidence of the wide diffusion of the Jewish race.⁴⁵ A lasting memorial of Simon's services and of the gratitude of his country was inscribed on tablets of brass and set up in Mount Zion.⁴⁶

17. *Last Syrian war against Judea; victory of Jews; death of Simon Maccabaeus.*

Tryphon's usurpation was at length challenged by ANTIOCHUS VII. SIDETES, second son of Demetrius I., and brother of the captive Demetrius II, who made unbounded promises to the Jews. He quickly defeated Tryphon, and besieged him in Dora,⁴⁷ whither Simon sent him 2000 men, with abundance of money and arms. But Antiochus, from jealousy of Simon's power and wealth, refused the proffered aid, and sent Athenobius to demand Joppa and Gazara,⁴⁸ besides 1000 talents for the places taken and the tribute withheld from Syria. Simon refused, but offered 100 talents as a compensation for Joppa and Gazara; and Antiochus commenced the *last war* which the Maccabees had to wage with Syria. While the king pursued Tryphon, who had escaped from Dora, his general, Cendebeus, appointed commander of the sea-coast, took up his post at Jamnia, and harassed the Jews with constant attacks.⁴⁹ Simon, being now too old to take the field, sent

45. I Macc. 14:1-34; 15:15-24.

46. I Macc. 14:25-49.

47. Dora, one of the seacoast cities which acquired a peculiar importance in the Maccabean, Herodian, and Roman periods, was the ancient DOR, a royal city of the Canaanites (Josh. 11:1-2; 12:23). It lay twelve miles south of Mt. Carmel.

48. Gazara is almost certainly the same place as the hill more anciently called GEZER (I Kings 9:15-17). It is a large mound on the north end of the Shephelah, overlooking the plain at Philistia, about eighteen miles southeast of Joppa.

49. I Macc. 15.

his two eldest sons, Judas and John, with 20,000 men and some horses, who gained a complete victory over the vast forces of Cendebeus. After this success, it might have been expected that Simon would have died in a peaceful old age; but he was not exempted from the violent end of all his brothers. On a trip through the country with his sons Judas and Mattathias, he arrived at Jericho, where he was received by the governor, Ptolemy the son of Abubus, his own son-in-law, and a man of great wealth. In pursuance of a design to make himself master of Judæa, Ptolemy caused Simon and his two sons to be slain treacherously at a banquet. John, who was at Gazara, warned in time, slew the men who were sent to kill him⁵⁰ (135 B.C.).

With the death of the last of the sons of Mattathias, we lose the authentic record of the *First Book of Maccabees*, and Josephus becomes almost our only guide. The acts of John Hyrcanus were written in the *Chronicles of his Priesthood*, a work older than the *First Book of Maccabees*.⁵¹

18. *Succession of John Hyrcanus; victories and complete independence of Judea.*

JOHN HYRCANUS, the second son of Simon, under whom he had been commander of the army, succeeded his father in the priesthood and government, which he held for thirty years (135-106 B.C.). He at once went from Gazara to Jerusalem; and after the people had accepted him for their leader, he marched against Jericho. Ptolemy, who held a strong fort near the city, tried to deter him from an assault by savage cruelties to his mother and brothers. They were scourged upon the walls, whence Ptolemy threatened to throw them headlong; and though John's mother exhorted him to disregard their sufferings, the intended effect was produced. John retired; the siege, after

50. I Macc. 16.

51. I Macc. 15:24.

being protracted for a year, was abandoned; and Ptolemy fled to Philadelphia beyond the Jordan, after which we hear of him no more. Meanwhile the army of Antiochus proved too strong for John. He was besieged in Jerusalem, and was compelled by famine to give up the city, on the conditions of dismantling the fortifications and returning to a tributary state (133 B.C.). The moderation of Antiochus on this occasion, and his respect for the Jewish religion, gained him the surname of *Eusebes* (the *Pious*). Hyrcanus was treated by him with favor, and attended him on the expedition which the king made against Parthia ostensibly to release his imprisoned brother Demetrius Nicator (128 B.C.). The death of Antiochus in this campaign gave an opportunity for recovering the independence of Judæa, which was never again subjugated by Syria. The latter monarchy indeed became, till its absorption into the Roman empire (65 B.C.), the victim of such dynastic revolutions, that its history is henceforth as unimportant for us, as it is intricate to follow. The Jews once more entered on a course of conquest, limited indeed, but most gratifying to their pride in the humiliation of their ancient and more recent enemies. After carrying his arms into the region east of Jordan, where he took two cities, Hyrcanus subdued both Idumæa and Samaria, the hated rivals of Israel before and after the Captivity. The Idumæans were compelled to adopt the Jewish religion, and to receive circumcision; and the conquest was so complete that the kingdom of Idumæa disappears from history: and yet the unconquerable race of Edom soon proved the inheritance of its forefather's blessing by giving a new dynasty to Judæa. In Samaria, John Hyrcanus completed his triumph by destroying the hated schismatic temple on Mount Gerizim. The sanctuary on Mount Zion thus regained its pre-eminence in the Holy Land, and the Jews once more imposed upon the Samaritans the sacred law, "that Jerusalem is the place

where men ought to worship." The reduction of Samaria was effected by Aristobulus and Antigonus, the sons of John Hyrcanus, in the 26th year of his rule (109 B.C.). The city of Samaria was utterly destroyed, and its site converted into pools of water from its own abundant springs. Most of Galilee submitted to the authority of the high-priest, who again renewed the alliance of his family with Rome. Of his buildings at Jerusalem, the most important was the *Tower of Baris*, at the N.W. corner of the enclosure of the Temple. It was afterward the *Antonia* of Herod.

19. *Dissension among the Jews; John Hyrcanus favors Sadducees over Pharisees.*

Thus the Holy Land under the name of Judæa was restored to its ancient limits, and the people enjoyed their worship under a race of priest-princes who held their authority in submission to the divine law. But no human affairs ever reached the climax of prosperity without taking the downward turn; and it was taken with frightful rapidity by the successors of John Hyrcanus, who displayed a personal ambition unknown to the pure patriotism of the Maccabees, and were soon engaged in fierce contests for the supreme power. Then began those family murders, which form the most horrid feature of Oriental despotism, and which reached their climax under Herod. One chief source of these evils was the rupture of the religious unity of the nation, by the rise of the opposing sects of the PHARISEES and SADDUCEES, which, springing from a doubtful origin, and from causes long at work, had become established during the government of John Hyrcanus. Toward the end of his reign, Hyrcanus, provoked by an insult from one of the leading Pharisees, joined the party of the Sadducees, a step which left a heritage of trouble to his successors. "The cause of this rupture," says Dean

Milman, "is singularly characteristic of Jewish manners. During a banquet, at which the chiefs of the ruling sect were present, Hyrcanus demanded their judgment on his general conduct and administration of affairs which he professed to have regulated by the great principle of justice (the *righteousness* which was the watch-word of the Pharisees) and by strict adherence to the tenets of their sect. The Pharisees with general acclamation testified their approval of all his proceedings; one voice alone, that of Eleazar, interrupted the general harmony:—'If you are a just man, abandon the high-priesthood, for which you are disqualified by the illegitimacy of your birth.' The mother of Hyrcanus had formerly it was said, though according to Josephus falsely, been taken captive and thus exposed the polluting embraces of a heathen master. The indignant Hyrcanus demanded the trial of Eleazar for defamation. By the influence of the Pharisees he was shielded, and escaped with scourging and imprisonment. Hyrcanus, enraged at this unexpected hostility, listened to the representations of Jonathan, a Sadducee, who accused the rival faction of a conspiracy to overawe the sovereign power; and from that time he entirely alienated himself from the Pharisaic councils."

20. *Peaceful death of John Hyrcanus contrasted to deaths of his family.*

John Hyrcanus died exactly sixty years, or the space of two complete generations, after his grandfather Mattathias (106 B.C.). As he began a new generation of the Maccabæan house, so was he the first who escaped the violent end to which his father and uncles had succumbed. His death marks the transition from the theocratic commonwealth under the Maccabæan leaders to the Asmonæan kingdom, which was established by his son Judas, or Ari-

stobulus, whose Greek name is but too significant of the hellenizing character of the new era.

The only two of the first generation of the Maccabæan family who did not obtain to the leadership of their countrymen like their brothers yet shared their fate—Eleazar by a noble act of self-devotion, John, apparently the eldest brother, by treachery. The sacrifice of the family was complete; and probably history offers no parallel to the undaunted courage with which such a band dared to face death, one by one, in the maintenance of a holy cause. The result was worthy of the sacrifice. The Maccabees inspired a subject-people with independence; they found a few personal followers, and they left a nation.

21. *Review of the Maccabean struggles in the light of patriotism and religion.*

The great outlines of the Maccabæan contest, which are somewhat hidden in the annals thus briefly epitomized, admit of being traced with fair distinctness, though many points must always remain obscure from our ignorance of the numbers and distribution of the Jewish population and of the general condition of the people at the time. The disputed succession to the Syrian throne (153 B.C.) was the political turning-point of the struggle which may thus be divided into two great periods. During the first period (168-153 B.C.) the patriots maintained their cause with varying success against the whole strength of Syria; during the second (153-139 B.C.), they were courted by rival factions, and their independence was acknowledged from time to time, though pledges given in times of danger were often broken when the danger was over. The paramount importance of Jerusalem is conspicuous throughout the whole war. The loss of the Holy City reduced the patriotic party at once to the condition of mere guerrilla bands,

issuing from "the mountains" or "the wilderness," to make sudden forays on the neighboring towns. This was the first aspect of the war⁵²; and the scene of the early exploits of Judas was the hill-country to the N.E. of Jerusalem, from which he drove the invading armies at the famous battle-fields of Beth-horon and Emmaus (Nicopolis). The occupation of Jerusalem closed the first act of the war (166 B.C.); and after this Judas made rapid attacks on every side—in Idumæa, Ammon, Gilead, Galilee—but he made no permanent settlement in the countries which he ravaged. Bethsura was fortified as a defense of Jerusalem on the south; but the authority of Judas seems to have been limited to the immediate neighborhood of Jerusalem, though the influence of his name extended more widely.⁵³ On the death of Judas, the patriots were reduced to as great distress as at their first rising; and as Bacchides held the keys of the "mountain of Ephraim," they were forced to find a refuge in the lowlands near Jericho, and after some slight successes Jonathan was allowed to settle at Michmash undisturbed, though the whole country remained absolutely under the sovereignty of Syria. So far it seemed that little has been gained when the contest between Alexander Balas and Demetrius I. opened a new period (153 B.C.). Jonathan was empowered to raise troops; the Jewish hostages were restored; many of the fortresses were abandoned; and apparently a definite district was assigned to the government of the high-priest. The former unfruitful conflicts at length produced their full harvest. The defeat at Eleasas had shown the worth of men who could face all odds, and no price seemed too great to secure their aid. When the Jewish leaders had once obtained legitimate power, they proved able to maintain it though their general success was checkered by some reverses. The solid power of the na-

52. II Macc. 8:1-7; I Macc. 2:45.

53. I Macc. 7:50.

tional party was seen by the slight effect which was produced by the treacherous murder of Jonathan. Simon was able at once to occupy his place and carry out his plans. The Syrian garrison was withdrawn from Jerusalem; Joppa was occupied as a sea-port; and "four governments"⁵⁴ probably the central parts of the old kingdom of Judah, with three districts taken from Samaria⁵⁵ were subjected to the sovereign authority of the high-priest.

The war thus brought to a noble issue, if less famous, is not less glorious than any of those in which a few brave men have successfully maintained the cause of freedom of religion against overpowering might. For it is not only in their victory over external difficulties that the heroism of the Maccabees is conspicuous: their real success was as much imperiled by internal divisions as by foreign force. They had to contend on the one hand against open and subtle attempts to introduce Greek customs, and on the other against an extreme Pharisaic party, which is seen from time to time opposing their counsels.⁵⁶ And it was from Judas and those whom he inspired that the old faith received its last development and final impress before the coming of our Lord.

That view of the Maccabæan war, which regards it only as a civil and not as a religious conflict, is essentially one-sided. If there were no other evidence than the book of Daniel, that alone would show how deeply the noblest hopes of the theocracy were centred in the success of the struggle. When the feelings of the nation were thus again turned with fresh power to their ancient faith, we might expect that there would be a new creative epoch in the national literature; or, if the form of Hebrew composition was already fixed by sacred types, a prophet or psalmist would express the thoughts of the new age after the models

54. I Macc. 11:57; 13:37.

55. I Macc. 10:38, 39.

56. I Macc. 7:12-18.

of old time. Yet in part at least the leaders of Maccabæan times felt that they were separated by a real chasm from the times of the kingdom or of the exile. If they looked for a prophet in the future, they acknowledged that the spirit of prophecy was not among them.⁵⁷ The volume of the prophetic writings was completed, and, as far as appears, no one ventured to imitate its contents. But the Hagiographa,⁵⁸ though they were already long fixed as a definite collection, were not equally far removed from imitation. The apocalyptic visions of Daniel served as a pattern for the visions incorporated in the book of Enoch. Two books resembling Proverbs—*The Wisdom of Solomon* and *Ecclesiasticus*—appeared during this time.

22. *Religious and social progress during the Maccabean wars.*

The history of the Maccabees does not contain much which illustrates in detail the religious or social progress of the Jews. It is obvious that the period must not only have intensified old beliefs, but also have called out elements which were latent in them. One doctrine at least, that of a resurrection, and even of a material resurrection,⁵⁹ was brought out into the most distinct apprehension by suffering. "It is good to look for the hope from God, to be raised up again by him," was the substance of the martyr's answer to his judge; "as for thee, thou shalt have no resurrection to life."⁶⁰ "Our brethren," says another, "have fallen, having endured a short pain leading to everlasting life, being under the covenant of God."⁶¹ And as it was believed that an interval elapsed between death and judg-

57. I Macc. 9:27.

58. The *Hagiographa* is the Greek name for the third part of the Hebrew Bible, consisting of Psalms, Job, Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah, Chronicles, and five short books (Song, Ruth, Lam., Eccl., Esther).

59. II Macc. 14:46.

60. II Macc. 7:14; comp. 6:26; 14:46.

61. II Macc. 7:36.

ment, the dead were supposed to be in some measure still capable of profiting by the intercession of the living. This much is certainly expressed in the famous passage, 2 Macc. xii. 43-45, though the secondary notion of a purgatorial state is in no way implied in it. On the other hand it is not very clear how far the future judgment was supposed to extend. If the punishment of the wicked heathen in another life had formed a definite article of belief, it might have been expected to be put forward more prominently,⁶² though the passages in question may be understood of sufferings after death, and not only of earthly sufferings; but for the apostate Jews there was a certain judgment in reserve.⁶³ The firm faith in the righteous providence of God shown in the chastening of his people, as contrasted with his neglect of other nations, is another proof of the widening view of the spiritual world which is characteristic of the epoch.⁶⁴ The lessons of the captivity were reduced to moral teaching; and in the same way the doctrine of the ministry of angels assumed an importance which is without parallel except in patriarchal times. It was perhaps from this cause also that the Messianic hope was limited in its range. The vivid perception of spiritual truths hindered the spread of a hope which had been cherished in a material form; and a pause, as it were, was made, in which men gained new points of sight from which to contemplate the old promises.

The various glimpses of national life which can be gained during the period, show on the whole a steady adherence to the Mosiac law. Probably the law was never more rigorously fulfilled. The importance of the Antiochian persecution in fixing the Canon of the Old Testament deserves notice. The books of the law were specially

62. II Macc. 7:17, 19, 35, etc.

63. II Macc. 6:26.

64. II Macc. 4:16, 17; 5:17-20, 6:12-16; etc.

sought out for destruction;⁶⁵ and their distinctive value was in consequence proportionately increased. To use the words of 1 Macc. "the holy books in our hands" were felt to make all other comfort superfluous.⁶⁶ The strict observance of the Sabbath⁶⁷ and of the Sabbatical year,⁶⁸ the law of the Nazarites,⁶⁹ and the exemptions from military service,⁷⁰ the solemn prayer and fasting,⁷¹ carry us back to early times. The provision for the maimed, the aged, and the bereaved,⁷² was in the spirit of the law; and the new feast of the dedication was a homage to the old rites,⁷³ while it was a proof of independent life.

The interruption of the succession to the high-priesthood was the most important innovation which was made, and one which prepared the way for the dissolution of the state. After various arbitrary changes, the office was left vacant for seven years upon the death of Alcimus. The last descendant of Jozadak (Onias), in whose family it had been for nearly four centuries, fled to Egypt and established a schismatic worship; and at last, when the support of the Jews became important, the Maccabæan leader, Jonathan, of the family of Joarib, was elected to the dignity by the nomination of the Syrian king,⁷⁴ whose will was confirmed, as it appears, by the voice of the people.⁷⁵

23. *Literature and arts during the Maccabean revolt.*

Little can be said of the condition of literature and the arts which has not been already anticipated. In common

65. I Macc. 1:56, 57; 3:48.

66. I Macc. 12:9.

67. I Macc. 2:32; II Macc. 6:11; 8:26.

68. I Macc. 6:53.

69. I Macc. 3:49.

70. I Macc. 3:56.

71. I Macc. 3:47; II Macc. 10:25.

72. II Macc. 8:28, 30.

73. II Macc. 1:9.

74. I Macc. 10:20.

75. I Macc. 14:35.

THE MACCABEAN PERIOD

intercourse the Jews used the Aramaic dialect which was established after the return: this was "their own language;"⁷⁶ but it is evident from the narrative quoted that they understood Greek which must have spread widely through the influence of Syrian officers. There is not however the slightest evidence that Greek was employed in Palestinian literature till a much later date. The description of the monument which was erected by Simon at Modin in memory of his family⁷⁷ is the only record of the architecture of the time. From the description of this monument it is evident that the characteristics of this work—and probably of later Jewish architecture generally—bore closer affinity to the styles of Asia Minor and Greece than of Egypt or the East; a result which would follow equally from the Syrian dominion and the commerce which Simon opened by the Mediterranean.⁷⁸

The only recognized relics of the time are the coins which bear the name of "Simon," or "Simon Prince (*Nasi*) of Israel," in Samaritan letters. The privilege of a national coinage was granted to Simon by Antiochus VII. Sidetes;⁷⁹ and numerous examples occur which have the dates of the first, second, third, and fourth years of the liberation of Jerusalem (Israel, Zion); and it is a remarkable confirmation of their genuineness that in the first year the name Zion does not occur as the citadel was not recovered till the second year of Simon's supremacy, while after the second year Zion alone is found. The privilege was first definitely accorded in 140 B.C., while the first year of Simon was 143 B.C.;⁸⁰ but this discrepancy causes little difficulty as it is not unlikely that the concession of Antiochus was made in favor of a practice already existing.

76. II Macc. 7:8, 21, 27; 12:37.

77. I Macc. 13:27-30.

78. I Macc. 14:5.

79. I Macc. 15:6.

80. I Macc. 13:42.

No date is given later than the fourth year, but coins of Simon occur without a date which may belong to the last four years of his life. The emblems which the coins bear have generally a connection with Jewish history—a vine-leaf, a cluster of grapes, a vase (of manna?), a three-branched flowering rod, a palm-branch surrounded by a wreath of laurel, a lyre, a bundle of branches symbolic of the feast of tabernacles. The coins issued in the last war of independence by Barocochba repeat many of these emblems, and there is considerable difficulty in distinguishing the two series.

A student of this period of the history of the Jews can not but feel how difficult it is to comprehend it as a whole. Indeed, it seems that the instinct was true which named it from one chief hero. In this last stage of the history of Israel, as in the first, all life came from the leader; and it is the greatest glory of the Maccabees that, while at first they found that everything depended upon their personal fortunes, they left a nation strong enough to preserve an independent faith till the typical kingdom gave place to a universal Church.

SUCCESSIVE MACCABEAN RULERS

24. *The Maccabeans at a glance.*

1. Mattathias (168-167 B.C.)
2. Judas (son of Mattathias) (167-161)
3. Jonathan (brother of Judas) (161-143)
4. Simon (brother of Jonathan) (143-135)
5. John Hyrcanus (son of Simon) (135-106)
6. Aristobulus I (son of Hyrcanus) (106-105)
7. Alexander Jannaeus (brother of Aristobulus I) (105-78)

SECTION III

THE ASMONEAN (MACCABEAN) KINGDOM (106-37 B.C.)

1. Change for worse in Jewish history. Aristobulus I becomes King. 2. Aristobulus captures Iturea. Horrible deaths of Antigonus and Aristobulus. 3. Alexander Jannaeus becomes King; his Kingdom invaded. 4. Conquests by the defeats of Alexander Jannaeus. 5. Queen Alexandra plots resistance against the Pharisees. 6. Alexandra dies, and Aristobulus II becomes king and priest. 7. Rise of Antipater the Idumean. Aristobulus besieged in the temple. 8. ROME intervenes in Asia; SYRIA conquered. 9. Two Judean factions appeal for Roman backing. 10. Aristobulus resists Romans but is captured; Pompey takes Jerusalem. 11. Hyrcanus II restored to power; the five Sanhedrins. 12. Escape and defeat of Aristobulus and Antigonus. 13. Crassus plunders the temple. 14. Antipater made procurator of Judea. 15. Family of Antipater; early boldness of Herod. 16. Death of J. Caesar; Cassius' oppression of Judea. 17. Herod and Phasael triumph; they receive the government of Palestine. 18. Parthian invasion of Judea. Death of Phasael; Mutilation of Hyrcanus. 19. Antigonus last ruler of Asmonean Kingdom. Herod made King of Judea. 20. Herod's war with Antigonus; capture of Jerusalem; end of Asmonean dynasty.

WATCH FOR ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS:

1. Did the Asmonean (Maccabean) kingdom develop for the better or the worse?
2. What caused the death of Aristobulus, son of John Hyrcanus?
3. Was Alexander Jannaeus liked by the Jews?
4. Who succeeded Alexander Jannaeus as civil ruler?
5. Who took over the government and priesthood after the death of Queen Alexandra?
6. What nationality was Antipater?
7. Who was Antipater's son?
8. What foreign empire took over Syria in the days of Aristobulus II?

THE ASMONEAN KINGDOM

9. What Roman general entered and conquered Jerusalem? Date?
10. To what country did the Romans annex Judea?
11. Whom did the Romans restore to nominal power over Judea?
12. What did the Syrian Crassus do to the Jerusalem temple?
13. Who appointed Antipater ruler over Judea?
14. What Judean princess did Herod marry?
15. Who gave the government of Palestine to Herod?
16. What people temporarily drove Herod from Judea to Rome?
17. What was the name of Herod's fortress on the west side of the Dead Sea?
18. Who was the last Asmonean ruler?
19. Who appointed Herod as King of Judea?
20. What was the date of Herod's capture of Jerusalem?

1. *Change for worse in Jewish history.*

Aristobulus I becomes king.

No successive pages of history present a more painful contrast than those recording the liberation of Judæa by the Maccabees and its misgovernment by the posterity. In the prosperous reign of John Hyrcanus, we see the seeds of that unholy ambition and religious discord which broke out immediately upon his death. Hyrcanus had left the civil government by will to his wife—an example, among many soon to be met with, of the rise of those female influences which have always played an important part in eastern despotisms—but it was seized, with the high-priesthood, by his eldest son Aristobulus who imprisoned his mother and starved her to death. ARISTOBULUS I. (106-

105 B.C.) assumed the diadem¹ and the title of king and founded the Asmonæan monarchy which lasted just 70 years; but the whole period was one of internal dissension, and for nearly its latter half the interference of the Romans made the royalty little more than nominal.

2. *Aristobulus captures Iturea. Horrible deaths of Antigonus and Aristobulus.*

The brief reign of Aristobulus is marked by one important conquest and a series of domestic tragedies. He subdued Ituræa (afterward called Auranitis), a district east of Jordan at the foot of the Anti-Lebanon mountains; and the inhabitants submitted to circumcision under the threat of banishment. A dangerous illness compelled him to return, leaving behind his favorite brother Antigonus, his other three brothers having been shut up in prison. Antigonus soon completed the conquest and came back to Jerusalem. His appearance in arms to pay his devotions in the Temple was used by the queen Alexandra and the women of the court to rouse Aristobulus' jealousy. Aristobulus summoned him to come unarmed into his presence, and stationed soldiers in the subterranean passage from the Temple to the tower of Baris (later called Antonia) with orders to dispatch him if he appeared in arms. Antigonus was drawn into the trap by treacherous messengers who told him that the king wished to see his splendid armor. The king repented immediately of this slaughter of his brother, and being horror-struck at the crime, vom-

1. This word *diadem* is now used in a vague poetical sense, but it once had a specific meaning among the nations of antiquity. The diadem was a fillet of silk, two inches broad, bound round the head and tied behind, the invention of which is attributed to Liber. Its color was generally white; sometimes, however, it was of blue, like that of Darius; and is sown with pearls or other gems, and enriched with gold (Rev. 9:7). It was peculiarly the mark of Oriental sovereigns (1 Macc. xiii. 82), and hence the deep offense caused by the attempt of Cæsar to substitute it for the laurel crown appropriated to Roman emperors.

ited blood; the slave who bore away the basin slipped upon the spot where Antigonus had been killed, and the blood of the two brothers was thus mingled upon the pavement—too true an emblem of the later history of the Asmonæans. The king compelled his attendants to tell him the cause of the consternation that he saw around him, and, on hearing it, expired in an agony of remorse.² He was doubly obnoxious as a Sadducee, and for his leaning to the Greek party, whence he obtained the epithet of "Greek-lover"; and it is possible that his character has been darkened by party hatred. His three brothers were released from prison after his death.

3. *Alexander Jannaëus becomes king. His kingdom invaded. His victories.*

ALEXANDER JANNAEUS (105-78 B.C.), the eldest surviving brother of Aristobulus I., secured the succession of the throne and priesthood by putting his next brother to death on a charge of aspiring to the diadem. The internal commotions both of Syria and Egypt invited him to conquer the cities of Palestine which had not yet submitted: Ptolemais, Gaza, Dora, and the tower of Straton. On his besieging Ptolemais, the people asked aid from Ptolemy Lathyrus, who was now King of Cyprus, having been driven from the throne of Egypt by his mother, Cleopatra. The large force with which Ptolemy came to their relief excited the fears of the citizens and they refused to admit him. He marched into Judæa, defeated Alexander's army with great slaughter, and ravaged the country with horrible cruelties. Judæa was rescued by an army which Cleopatra sent to its aid under two Alexandrian Jews, Chelchias

2. Josephus Ant. XIII, 12.

and Ananias;³ and the queen resisting the advice of her counselors to seize the country was content with the capture of Ptolemais. When the foreign armies had retired, Alexander took Gadara east of Jordan but was defeated before Amathus. He next laid siege of Gaza and after a desperate struggle took and utterly destroyed the city.

4. *Conquests by and defeats of Alexander Jannaeus.
He is honored at his death.*

Meanwhile the Jewish factions were tending rapidly to civil war. The Pharisees incited a tumult against Alexander. As he was officiating at the Feast of Tabernacles, the people pelted him with citrons and revived the insults upon his father's birth. Alexander called in his guards and 6000 of the people were killed. To prevent the recurrence of such tumults, the court of the priests was railed off from the outer court of the temple, and Alexander enrolled a bodyguard of Pisidian and Cilician mercenaries. He then resumed his projects of conquest and subdued Gilead and Moab. Three years later he had advanced against Gaulonitis, a district in the north of Batanea, when he was defeated with the total loss of his army by the Arabian king, Orodes.

The whole Jewish nation now rose in rebellion and a civil war ensued for six years. Alexander's mercenaries at first gave him the upper hand; but, when he asked the people on what terms they would submit, they called out to him to cut his throat. At length, by the aid of Demetrius Eucærus, one of the rival kings of Syria, Alexander was defeated, and his mercenaries cut to pieces, he himself flying to the mountains. By an unexplained reaction of public feeling, he soon recovered all he had lost; and, having

3. The influence acquired by the Jews in Egypt is further proved by the circumstance that Ananias succeeded in dissuading Cleopatra from seizing Alexander when he came to offer his congratulations at Ptolemais.

finished the civil war by the capture of Bethsura, he brought his prisoners in triumph to Jerusalem. Then was seen the incredible spectacle of a high-priest, the great-grandson of Simon the Maccabee, sitting at a banquet with his wives and concubines to gloat his eyes upon the crucifixion of 800 of his enemies and the massacre of their wives and children. The nickname of "Thracian" expressed the impotence of public indignation; his opponents fled the country to the number of 8000; and the remainder of his reign was undisturbed by the open revolt.

It may have been at this time that a number of devout priests withdrew to the lonely Essene colony at Qumran on the N.W. corner of the Dead Sea (where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found). See the section on the Essenes in this book.

Alexander spent some years in extending his dominions to the east of Jordan and defending them against the Syrians and Arabians. He died of a fever at the siege of Ragaba after advising his wife to convene the leaders of the Pharisees, and, having placed his dead body at their disposal, to offer to govern by their counsels. This last propitiation of his inveterate enemies was entirely successful. Alexander's remains were honored with a splendid funeral; his widow Alexandra succeeded to the civil government and his eldest son, Hyrcanus, to the high-priesthood.

5. *Queen Alexandra plots resistance against the Pharisees.*

ALEXANDRA (78-69 B.C.) gave up all real power to the Pharisees who recalled the exiles of their own party and demanded justice on those who had advised the crucifixion of the 800 rebels. But a strong opposition was organized under Aristobulus, the younger son of Alexander, secretly favored by his mother. She sent the ac-

cused persons to garrison some of the frontier towns, and dispatched Aristobulus on a secret expedition against Damascus in which his success gained him the favor of the army.

6. *Alexandra dies. Aristobulus II deposes Hyrcanus II, and becomes king and priest.*

The result was seen when Alexandra, dying at the age of 73, was succeeded nominally by HYRCANUS II. who already held the high-priesthood (69 B.C.). Aristobulus fled from Jerusalem before his mother breathed her last; and collecting an army from the garrison he defeated the forces of the Pharisees at Jericho and advanced upon Jerusalem. Hyrcanus took refuge in the tower of Baris which he surrendered after a short siege, yielding the civil and pontifical crowns to his brother who permitted him to retire into private life.

7. *Rise of Antipater the Idumean. Aristobulus besieged in the temple.*

ARISTOBULUS II. (69-63 B.C.) had scarcely achieved his victory over the Pharisees when a new enemy arose in the person of ANTIPATER whose son Herod was destined to raise a new throne on the ruins of the Asmonæan dynasty. Antipater was by birth an Idumæan (or Edomite) noble, the son of Antipas who had been governor of Idumæa under Alexander Jannæus. Brought up at the royal court, he embraced Judaism, at least in name, and became the bosom friend of Hyrcanus whose feeble mind he now easily bent to his own ambitious schemes. Persuading him that his life was in danger from his brother, Antipater induced Hyrcanus to fly to ARETAS, king of the Nabatæans of Arabia Petræa, a new power which had been growing up around the rock-hewn city of Petra. They soon re-

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turned with an army of 50,000 men under Aretas who defeated Aristobulus and besieged him in the Temple, his late refuge. The passover came round, and the besieged had no lambs to offer. We have seen a Syrian king, Antiochus Sidetes, furnishing victims during a former siege; but the allies, though partisans of a high-priest, mocked the besieged by promising to supply them if they would let down baskets over the wall with the price of the victims, and then, taking the money, they left the baskets to be drawn up empty or placed in them swine instead of the lambs.

Another striking incident of the siege relieves the monotonous story of these civil discords. Onias, an aged man in the camp of Hyrcanus, was required to offer his prayers which had proved effectual during a great drought; and he besought God since His people were on one side and His priests on the other not to hear the prayers of either for each other's hurt. For this impartial patriotism he was stoned to death.

8. *Rome intervenes in Asia; Syria conquered by Rome.*

Amid such scenes it was time for the appearance of that stern arbiter—the Iron state of Nebuchadnezzar's vision (Daniel 2:33, 40)—to which Providence had assigned the work of crushing the effete despotisms of Asia and reducing the civilized world under one government in preparation for the coming of the Christ. ROME, though never wanting a pretext for interference with other states, might plead her alliance of a century before with the Asmonæan princes as making her intervention a duty. Her supremacy in Western Asia had long been disputed and imperiled by Mithridates, whose son-in-law, Tigranes, king of Armenia, had seized Syria in 83 B.C. and remained master of the country till Lucullus defeated Tigranes and restored

the last of the Seleucidæ, Antiochus XIII, in the first year of Aristobulus, 69 B.C. Three years later the conduct of the Mithridatic war was committed to the famous Pompey; and while he defeated Mithridates and plunged in pursuit of him into the regions south of Mount Caucasus, his lieutenant Scaurus was sent to take possession of Damascus and settle the affairs of Syria. After deposing Antiochus XIII. and conquering Syria for Rome (65 B.C.), Scaurus received at Damascus the envoys of Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, who now occupied the positions in which we left them at Jerusalem. Both offered the large bribes of 400 talents, and Scaurus decided in favor of Aristobulus, who was master of the treasures in the Temple (64 B.C.).

9. *Two Judean factions appeal for Roman backing.*

Aretas retired at the Roman's command; and Aristobulus, falling on his rear, gave him a signal defeat. The same year, Pompey himself, having reduced Cœlesyria, appeared at Damascus to receive the homage and presents of the neighboring kings. Aristobulus sent him a golden vine worth 500 talents; but Pompey took care to hold the balance in suspense between the prince who had possession of Jerusalem and his feeble rival. He returned to Syria and came again in the following spring to Damascus to hold a formal court for deciding, not only between the two brothers but between them and the Jewish people who now ventured to complain of the hierarchical kingdom as a usurpation. Hyrcanus was represented by the wily Antipater who had taken care to enforce his argument from the right of the elder brother by bribing more than a thousand of the most distinguished Jews to appear before the tribunal as his adherents. In contrast with his venerable band, there appeared on the part of Aristobulus "a troop of insolent youths, splendidly arrayed in purple, with flowing hair and rich armor who carried themselves as if

they were the true nobles of the land." (Milman). The orators of his party pleaded that the imbecility of Hyrcanus rendered him unfit to govern. The Roman behaved to both with that cold and ambiguous reserve which Cicero has drawn as a leading trait of his character, and while studiously courteous to Aristobulus, he left reason to suspect that his decision would be in favor of Hyrcanus whose incapacity was sure to give a pretext for converting protection into conquest.

10. *Aristobulus resists Romans, but is captured.
Jerusalem is taken and its walls demolished.*

From the fear that the Romans would favor Hyrcanus, or from the consciousness of a bad cause, Aristobulus no sooner saw the departure of Pompey on an expedition to secure the rock-hewn city of Petra, the great trading capital of the Arabs, than he began to prepare for resistance. The rapid return of Pompey disconcerted his plans; and Aristobulus, unable to disobey the mandate to come forth from the stronghold of Alexandrion, was compelled to sign orders for the surrender of all his fortresses. The restless prince still tried the last resource of fleeing to Jerusalem and attempting to defend the city. The Roman legions advanced along the high-road from the East through Jericho where Pompey's admiration was excited by the palmgroves that gave name to the city and the odoriferous shrubs which yielded its far-famed balsams. Once more Aristobulus came forward to offer the surrender of Jerusalem; and he was detained while Pompey sent forward his legate, Gabinius, to take possession of the city. On its unexpected resistance, Pompey threw Aristobulus into chains and advanced with his whole army. He was admitted by the party of Hyrcanus who had now gained the upper hand. The friends of Aristobulus shut themselves up in the Temple, which held out for three months, and was at

last taken by assault with the slaughter of 12,000 Jews. The priests who were engaged about the daily sacrifice calmly continued their service, and many of them were slain at the altar. The Temple was profaned by the entrance of the Roman general, the images on whose standards had long been indicated by Daniel's prophecy of "the abomination that maketh desolate" (63 B.C.); but, as on former occasions, a long respite filled with golden opportunities followed the first step of the threatened judgment before the desolation was completed. Pompey entered the Holy of Holies, where he was amazed to find no statue or other symbol of the Deity. He left the sacred vessels and the vast treasures untouched,⁴ and ordered the Temple to be purified. He conferred the high-priesthood and principality upon Hyrcanus, limiting his territory to Judæa proper, and forbidding him to assume the crown. He imposed a tribute, and demolished the walls of Jerusalem. Aristobulus was carried off, with his two sons and two daughters, to grace the victor's triumph; but Alexander, the elder son, escaped on the way; and Antigonus, the younger, as well as Aristobulus himself, made their escape from Rome at a later period. Meanwhile, the Jews regarded Pompey's sacrilege as the fatal turning-point of his history; and when the civil war broke out, they warmly embraced the party of Cæsar.

11. *Hyrcanus II nominally restored to power. Central government in Judea broken up into five Sanbedrins.*

HYRCANUS II. (63-40 B.C.) was restored to power which was merely nominal; for Judæa was really governed by Antipater in complete subservience to the policy of

4. It excites natural surprise to find the Temple, at this stage of Jewish history, still in possession of treasures which have been computed at two millions sterling. The explanation is to be found in the offerings sent by the pious Jews from every province of the Roman empire.

Rome. In fact, Judæa seems to have been annexed by Pompey to the newly-formed province of Syria, though under a separate administration, both judicial and financial. The progress of Alexander, who soon appeared at the head of 10,000 foot and 1500 horses, left Hyrcanus no choice but Roman protection. Gabinius, the proconsul of Syria, besieged Alexander in the fortress of Alexandrion; but the interest of Alexander's mother with the Romans obtained her son an amnesty on condition of his surrendering that and his other fortresses. The celebrated MARK ANTONY acted in this campaign as the lieutenant of Gabinius. The intervention of Gabinius led to a new settlement of the civil government. He deprived the high-priest of the supreme power which he divided among five "Great Sanhedrins," seated at Jerusalem, Jericho, Gadara, Amanthus, and Sepphoris, and modeled on the Great Sanhedrin of 71 members, which had administered justice at Jerusalem from the time of the Maccabees. Thus the desire of the Jews for emancipation from the temporal power of the high-priest was gratified at the expense of the loss of a central seat of government. This state of things lasted till the restoration of Hyrcanus to the principality by Julius Cæsar, 44 B.C.

12. *Escape and defeat of Aristobulus and Antigonus.* *Defeat of Alexander.*

The new settlement was but just made when Aristobulus, having escaped from Rome with his youngest son Antigonus, gathered a new army and again occupied Alexandrion; but they were speedily defeated by Gabinius and sent back to Rome where Aristobulus remained a prisoner, but Antigonus was again released through his mother's intercession. When Gabinius marched with Mark Antony into Egypt, Alexander seized the opportunity for another revolt and shut up the small Roman force, who had been

left behind, in Mount Gerizim (56 B.C.). At the head of 80,000 men he met Gabinius after his return from Egypt, but was utterly defeated near Mount Tabor, and only saved his life by flight.

13. *Crassus plunders the temple.*

In 55 B.C. CRASSUS received Syria as his share in the partition of provinces by the first Roman triumvirs. In the following year he reached Jerusalem on his disastrous expedition against the Parthians who had complete power beyond the Euphrates and had begun to threaten Syria. The high-priest only whetted his insatiable avarice by the surrender of a secret treasure; and Crassus pillaged the temple of all the wealth which was collected by the annual offerings of the faithful who were dispersed over the world, and which Pompey had spared. His plunder is said to have reached the enormous amount of 10,000 talents, or more than two millions sterling; and his fatal overthrow by the Parthians was viewed by the Jews as the punishment of one more of their oppressors, for Gabinius had already been driven into exile.

14. *Antipater made procurator of Judea.*

On the outbreak of the great Civil War of Rome, Julius Cæsar freed Aristobulus and sent him to Judæa, but he was murdered on the journey by the partisans of Pompey, and his son Alexander was executed by Scipio at Antioch. Antigonus alone was left; and his claims were superseded by the timely aid which Antipater gave Cæsar in his Egyptian campaign (48 B.C.). His services were rewarded by the restoration of his puppet Hyrcanus to the sovereignty, with the title of Ethnarch, and by the remission of tribute in the Sabbatic year. ANTIPATER was made the Procurator of all Judæa, and a Roman citizen; and the aggrandize-

ment of his family occupies the few remaining years of the Asmonæan dynasty.

15. *Family of Antipater. Early boldness of his son Herod.*

Antipater had four sons:—Phasael, Herod, Joseph, and Pheroras, and a daughter named Salome. He made Phasael governor of Jerusalem, and Herod, who was only fifteen years old, governor of Galilee. HEROD soon distinguished himself alike by energy in his government and defiance of all Jewish laws and powers. He put down the banditti by a severity in which we see the germs of his later cruelties. His execution of their leader roused the jealousy of the Sanhedrin, who cited him to answer before them for his assumption of the power of life and death. Confident in the popularity his success had earned, and bearing a menacing letter from Sextus Cæsar, the governor of Syria, Herod appeared before the Sanhedrin in arms and royal purple. The only man who dared to rebuke his presumption and to warn the court against submission, Sameas, was one of the only two whose lives Herod spared when the warning was fulfilled. Hyrcanus adjourned the trial, and permitted Herod to escape to Damascus to Sextus Cæsar, who made him governor of Cœlesyria. It required all the influence of Antipater to dissuade his son from marching in arms upon Jerusalem.

16. *Death of Julius Cæsar. Cassius' oppression of Judea.*

The death of Julius Cæsar (44 B.C.) was a great blow, not only to the party of Hyrcanus and the family of Antipater, but to the whole Jewish nation to whom he had granted protection in their religion. Cassius assumed the government of Syria with the intolerant rapacity of a pro-

consul of the old school. Judæa was assessed at 700 talents, half to be raised by Antipater and his sons, and half by Malichus, a courtier of Hyrcanus. Malichus being unable to raise his portion would have fallen a victim to the resentment of Cassius⁵ had not Antipater made good the deficiency from the treasures of Hyrcanus. Malichus repaid the obligation by poisoning Antipater; but Herod not long afterward procured the murder of Malichus in the presence of Hyrcanus who was forced to approve the deed as performed by the authority of Cassius whose favor Herod had completely won.

17. *Herod and Phasaël triumph. They receive the government of Palestine.*

The departure of Cassius from Syria seemed to give the stricter Jews the opportunity of throwing off the domination of the Herodians, for so we may call the party since the death of Antipater. But Phasaël put them down at Jerusalem, and Antigonus himself was repulsed from Galilee by Herod. Their hopes revived with the battle of Philippi (42 B.C.); and Hyrcanus placed himself at their head. He was won back, however, by Herod who offered to marry his granddaughter Mariamne⁶ and so allied himself to the Asmonæan family. Herod also defeated Antigonus, though supported by the Roman governor of Damascus; and his presents and flattery secured the favor of Mark Antony to whom the second triumvirate had given the dominion of the East. Antony committed the two governments of Palestine to Herod and his brother Phasaël, under the title

5. This great "liberator" of his country sold the people of several defaulting villages into slavery.

6. She was the daughter of Alexander, the son of Aristobulus, and of Alexandra, the daughter of Hyrcanus, and so the last representative (except Antigonus and her brother Aristobulus) of both the surviving branches of the Asmonæan house. By the marriage, which took place in B.C. 37, the same year in which Antigonus was put to death, Herod adopted her claims as his own.

of tetrarchs, and issued various decrees in favor of Hyrcanus and the Jewish nation (41 B.C.).

18. *Parthian invasion of Judea. Death of Phasaël.
Mutilation of Hyrcanus.*

A last ray of hope from the East gilded the fall of the Asmonæans. While Antony was spending his time in dalliance with Cleopatra, Syria revolted and called in the aid of the Parthians under Pacorus the king's son (40 B.C.). Antigonus, the surviving son of Aristobulus, offered the Parthian general 1000 talents and 500 women of the noblest families if he would restore him to the throne. Supported by a Parthian force, Antigonus marched upon Jerusalem, where the two factions came to open war, and Hyrcanus was only upheld by Herod's energy and severity. At length Hyrcanus and Phasaël were induced, against the advice of Herod, to submit their cause in person to Barzaphernes, the Parthian commander in Syria. Herod fled to Masada, a strong fortress on the west side of the Dead Sea, where he placed his mother, his sister, and his betrothed bride, Mariamne, under the care of his brother Joseph and an Idumæan force, while he betook himself to Rome. Foiled in the main object of securing Herod's person, the Parthian general threw Hyrcanus and Phasaël into chains. The latter committed suicide in prison. The former was mutilated of his ears, in order to disqualify him from continuing high-priest. He lived for some years longer, and was at last put to death by Herod on a charge of treason.

19. *Antigonus, last ruler of the Asmonean kingdom.
Herod made king of Judea.*

ANTIGONUS, the last ruler of the Asmonæan house, held a nominal sovereignty for three years (40-37 B.C.). The Parthians ravaged the country, and Herod soon re-

turned in a new character. He had artfully advocated with the triumvirs the claims of young Aristobulus, the brother of Mariamne, who was the grandson both of Aristobulus and Hyrcanus.⁷ But his real wishes were doubtless well known to his former friend Anthony; with his usual address he secured the favor of Octavian; and the result was a decree of the Senate appointing him king of Judæa.

20. *Herod's war with Antigonus. His capture of Jerusalem. End of the Asmonean dynasty.*

All this was done at Rome in the short space of a week, and Herod landed at Ptolemais after an absence of only three months. Antigonus was now left to himself, his Parthian allies having retired on the advance of Ventidius, the legate of Antony. He was besieging Masada, which Herod speedily relieved with the aid of a Roman force under Silo. The treachery of this general, whose object was to make all the gain he could of both parties, compelled Herod, after considerable successes, to retire from before Jerusalem. Fixing his head-quarters in Samaria, he employed his energies in clearing Galilee of robbers. The next year's campaign was indecisive; but, after the expulsion of the Parthians from Syria, Antony placed a sufficient force at Herod's disposal. Having gained a great battle over Pappus, the general of Antigonus, Herod formed the siege of Jerusalem in the spring of 37 B.C.; while he sought to recommend himself to the Asmonæan party by completing his marriage with Mariamne. The siege lasted six months; the sufferings of the besieged being increased by the scarcity of a Sabbatic year. The city was at length taken on a Sabbath; and such was the fury of the Roman soldiery under Sosius, that Herod had to entreat that he might not be left king of a depopulated capital. Antigonus

7. His father was Alexander, the elder son of Aristobulus, and his mother was Alexandra, the daughter of Hyrcanus.

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was sent in chains to Antony, who put him to death at Herod's instigation. The last king of the Maccabæan line was the first sovereign who ended his life beneath the rods and axe of the Roman lictor; and the Jewish historian so far sympathizes with Rome, as to forget the shame of his nation in contempt for the weakness of its last native ruler. Thus ended the Asmonæan dynasty (37 B.C.), in the 130th year from the first victories of Judas Maccabæus, and the 70th from the assumption of the royal title by Aristobulus I. We shall soon see how the sole remaining scion of the long line of heroes, priests, and princes, the young Aristobulus, was cut off by Herod.

SECTION IV

HEROD THE GREAT (37-4 B.C.)

1. Herodian family seeks to establish great, worldly, independent Kingdom. 2. HEROD the GREAT: His cruelty and total domination of the land. 3. Resistance to Herod, Herod and the high priesthood. Murder of Aristobulus. 4. Herod resists Cleopatra. 5. Herod avoids the battle of Actium, and wins the favor of Octavian. 6. Extent and divisions of Herod's Kingdom. 7. Herod's domestic tragedies—Murders of Mariamne and Alexandra. 8. Government of Herod; his Hellenizing practices; building Antonia, Sebaste, and Cæsarea. 9. Herod courts Augustus and Agrippa; his munificence. 10. Rebuilding the temple.—Special Study; The Temple of Herod. 11. Herod's other buildings in Jerusalem. 12. Family troubles of Herod. Execution of his two sons Aristobulus and Alexander. 13. Herod's golden eagle thrown down. 14. Conspiracy of Herod's son Antipater. 15. Herod's last sickness. Visit of wise-men. Massacre of Bethlehem babes. 16. Execution of Herod's son Antipater. Herod's death. 17. Character of Herod. 18. Herod's relation to sacred history. 19. Jewish history in two streams after the time of Herod. 20. The Herodian party. 21. Roman Emperors of N.T. times.

WATCH FOR ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS:

1. What sort of kingdom did the Herods aspire to establish?

NEW TESTAMENT BACKGROUNDS

2. Was Herod's friendship with Rome a matter of necessity or choice?
3. What office among the Jews did Herod recklessly appoint men to and depose them from?
4. What god did Herod make offerings to when he came to the throne?
5. What did Herod do to the Sanhedrin?
6. How did Herod kill Aristobulus the priest?
7. What foreign queen did Herod successfully resist?
8. How did Herod avoid being involved in the battle of Actium?
9. What were the four main divisions of Palestine during the time of Herod?
10. What was Decapolis?
11. How did Mariamne die?
12. What "entertainments" did Herod provide for the people of Jerusalem to view?
13. What did Herod name the strong tower north of the temple?
14. What did Herod rename Samaria?
15. What new seaport did Herod build?
16. From whom did Caesarea-Philippi get its name?
17. How did the name *Agrippa* get into the Herodian family?
18. How did the Jews feel about Herod's starting out to rebuild the temple?
19. Where else did Herod build a temple besides at Jerusalem?
20. Name the four courts of Herod's temple.
21. Name two of the porches (porticos) of Herod's temple.
22. When was the temple completed? How long was this before its destruction?
23. How many towers did Herod build in N.W. Jerusalem?
24. What happened to Mariamne's sons Aristobulus and Alexander?

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25. What happened to the rabbis who tore down Herod's golden eagle?
26. Which of Herod's sons plotted against his father?
27. What was Herod's physical condition in his last years?
28. About how many babes died in Herod's massacre at Bethlehem?
29. Why was it better to be Herod's hog than his son?
30. In what ways was Herod great?
31. What were the two streams of Jewish history after the time of Herod?
32. What was the name of the political party which favored the program of Herod?
33. With what group did this party ally itself against Christ?

1. *The Herodian family seeks to establish a great, independent worldly kingdom.*

The history of the Herodian family presents one side of the last development of the Jewish nation. The evils already seen in the priesthood which grew up after the Return, found an unexpected embodiment in the tyranny of a foreign usurper. Religion was adopted as a policy; and the hellenizing designs of Antiochus Epiphanes were carried out, at least in their spirit, by men who professed to observe the Law. Side by side with the spiritual "kingdom of God," proclaimed by John the Baptist, and founded by the Lord, a kingdom of the world was established, which in its external splendor recalled the traditional magnificence of Solomon. The simultaneous realization of the two principles, national and spiritual, which had long variously influenced the Jews in the establishment of a dynasty and a church, is a fact pregnant with instruction. In the fullness of time a descendant of Esau, Herod the Great, established a false counterpart of the promised glories of Messiah.

Various accounts are given of the ancestry of the Herods; but it seems certain that they were of Idumæan descent, a fact which is indicated by the forms of some of the names which were retained in the family. But though aliens by race, the Herods were Jews in faith. The Idumæans had been conquered and brought over to Judaism by John Hyrcanus (130 B.C.); and from the time of their conversion they remained constant to their new religion, looking upon Jerusalem as their mother city, and claiming for themselves the name of Jews.¹

The general policy of the whole Herodian family, though modified by the personal characteristics of the successive rulers, was the same. It centred in the endeavor to found a great and independent kingdom in which the power of Judaism should subserve the consolidation of a state. The protection of Rome was in the first instance a necessity, but the designs of Herod I. and Agrippa I. point to an independent Eastern Empire as their end, and not to a mere subject monarchy. Such a consummation of the Jewish hopes seems to have found some measure of acceptance at first, and hence arose the party of the *Herodians*; and by a natural reaction the temporal dominion of the Herods opened the way to the destruction of the Jewish nationality. The religion which was degraded into the instrument of unscrupulous ambition lost its power to quicken a united people. The high-priests were appointed and deposed by Herod I. and his successors with such a reckless disregard for the character of their office that the office itself was deprived of its sacred dignity. The nation was divided; and amid the conflicts of sects a universal faith arose which more than fulfilled the nobler hopes that found no satisfaction in the treacherous grandeur of a court.

1. Josephus, *Ant.* XX., 7, 7; *Wars*, I, 10, 4.

2. *Herod the Great: His cruelty and total domination of the land. Slaughter of the Sanhedrin.*

HEROD THE GREAT² (37-4 B.C.) was now established on the throne of Judæa and founded a dynasty of princes who ruled in different parts of Palestine under various titles; but among whom he himself was the last, as he was the first, independent sovereign of the whole country. For he may be termed independent in reference to the exercise of his power, though its origin and tenure rested on the will of his Roman masters. By birth an Idumæan, by policy and predilection an adherent and imitator of Rome, he seemed to many of his subjects little better than a heathen conqueror; and his cruelties to the Asmonæan house, which was still held in reverence, roused a deep sense of indignation. He signaled his elevation to the throne by offerings to the Capitoline Jupiter, and surrounded his person with foreign mercenaries, some of whom had been formerly in the service of Cleopatra. His coins, and those of his successors, bore only Greek legends, and he introduced heathen games within the walls of Jerusalem. He resolved at once to show the malcontents that they had a master. Massacre and confiscation were dealt out to the Asmonæan party. Forty-five of the chief adherents of Antigonus were put to death with the whole Sanhedrin, except the rabbis Sameas and Pollio who had counseled the surrender of Jerusalem during the siege. Their spoils enabled Herod to satisfy the rapacity of his patron Antony.

3. *Resistance to Herod. Herod and the high priesthood. Murder of Aristobulus.*

The whole period of Herod's reign was in many respects a repetition of that of the Maccabees and Antiochus

2. Ewald observes that Herod is not called the *Great* in any contemporary document. There are inscriptions which style him "the Great King," but this is a title of royalty, not the appellation of the man.

Epiphanes. True, Herod was more politic and more prudent, and also probably had more sympathy with the Jewish character than Antiochus. But the spirit of stern resistance to innovation and of devotion to the law of Jehovah burned no less fiercely in the breasts of the people than it had done before; and it is curious to remark how every attempt on Herod's part to introduce foreign customs was met by outbreaks, and how futile were all the benefits which he conferred both on the temporal and ecclesiastical welfare of the people when these obnoxious intrusions were in question. Whatever his ultimate designs might be, he was not yet prepared to annul the great institutions of religion; nor, as a stranger of the hated race of Esau, did he venture to assume the robes of Aaron. He brought an obscure priest from Babylon named Ananel to fill the office of high-priest which had been vacant since the mutilation of Hyrcanus. But this insult to the surviving members of the Asmonæan house found an able and unscrupulous opponent. This was Alexandra, the daughter of Hyrcanus, widow of Alexander the elder son of Aristobulus, and mother of Herod's wife Mariamne, and of young Aristobulus, whose claims we have seen Herod himself affecting to support at Rome. Her adroit appeals to Cleopatra, and her unscrupulous intrigues to win over Antony, alarmed Herod, who, always ready to trim his policy by necessity, conferred the high-priesthood on Aristobulus. But the people's applause, when they saw the graceful youth of sixteen, the last scion of the Maccabees, perform his office with a dignity becoming his descent, sealed the doom which had doubtless already been resolved on. At a feast given by Alexandra to Herod near Jericho, Aristobulus was drowned while bathing in a tank, as if accidentally, by the rough play of his comrades, who were instigated by Herod. Ananel was then reappointed to the priesthood. (Josephus, *Wars*, I. XXII, 2)

4. *Herod resists Cleopatra.*

It was in vain that the king honored his victim with a splendid funeral. The people were not deceived by his pretended grief; and Alexandra again appealed to Cleopatra. Herod was summoned to Antony at Laodicea. He resolved to face the danger; but with the desire for a sweet revenge on Alexandra in the death of her remaining child, he left orders with his brother Joseph to dispatch Mariamne on the first news of his own death. Herod's gifts and personal influence with Antony triumphed even over the enmity of Cleopatra; but the visit had fatal consequences. Herod returned with Cœlesyria added to his dominions, to have his mind poisoned against his wife by the jealousy of his sister Salome. His fondness for Mariamne, however, prevailed over suspicion, till her own remonstrance with him for the cruel sentence which Joseph had betrayed to her seemed to prove the familiarity alleged by Salome. But her charms had not yet lost their power, and his rage was satiated by the execution of Joseph and the imprisonment of Alexandra. A new danger followed in the shape of a visit of Cleopatra to Jerusalem on her return with Antony from his Parthian expedition; but Herod, after saving his kingdom from her cupidity, had the rarer skill to preserve himself from her fascinations. He is even said to have contemplated her murder, as the best service he could do at once to Antony and himself, and to have afterward taken credit with Augustus for such a proof of friendship to his patron.

5. *Herod avoids the battle of Actium, and wins the favor of Octavian.*

In the spring of 31, the year of the battle of Actium, Judæa was visited by an earthquake, the effects of which

appear to have been indeed tremendous: 10,000³ or, according to another account,⁴ 20,000 persons were killed by the fall of buildings, and an immense quantity of cattle. The panic at Jerusalem was very severe; but it was calmed by the arguments of Herod, then departing to a campaign on the east of Jordan for the interests of Cleopatra against Malchus king of Arabia. This campaign, in which Herod won a dear-bought victory, kept him, whether by good fortune or design, from following Antony to Actium, where Antony was defeated by Octavian (Augustus Cæsar).

Herod went to meet the conqueror at Rhodes, having first put an end to all rivalry from the Asmonæan house by the execution of the aged Hyrcanus on a charge of treason (30 B.C.). He intrusted the government to his brother Pheroras and provided for the safety of his family in the fortress of Masada. Mariamne and her mother were placed in Alexandrion under the care of his steward Joseph and an Ituræan named Soemus with the same secret instruction as before. Herod had not miscalculated his personal influence over the young Octavian. Instead of apologizing for his faithful adherence to Antony, he urged it as a proof of the constancy which the conqueror might expect. He returned to Judæa, invested anew with the diadem, and honored with marks of personal favor. He shortly after met Octavian on his way to Egypt as Ptolemais, and secured his favor by a magnificent entertainment, by providing for all the wants of the Roman army and by a present of 800 talents.

6. *Extent and divisions of Herod's kingdom.*

When the tragedy of Antony and Cleopatra was consummated and Egypt reduced to a Roman province, Octavian restored to Herod those parts of Palestine which

3. Josephus, *Ant.* XV, 5, 2.

4. Josephus, *Wars*, I, 19, 3.

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Antony had presented to Cleopatra, as well as the fortresses and maritime towns which had long been the objects of dispute, as Gadara, Samaria, Joppa, Gaza, and the Tower of Straton, soon to become the princely city of Cæsarea. Herod was now master of a kingdom which included all the land originally divided among the twelve tribes, together with Idumæa. Exclusive of the latter country, the whole was divided into four districts, a clear conception of which is needful for understanding the topography of our Lord's ministry:—i. JUDAEA; extending from the confines of Egypt and the southern desert to a line drawn from Joppa, not far different from the 32d parallel of latitude. ii. SAMARIA; whose N. boundary ran along the hills S. of the plain of Esdraelon, meeting the sea S. of Dora. iii. GALILEE, Lower and Upper; extending northward as far as the parallel of Mount Hermon; but shut out from the sea by the narrow strip of Phœnice, which reached S. of Carmel and even of Dora. iv. PERAEA,⁵ the name of the whole region E. of Jordan and the Dead Sea as far S. as the Arnon, which was again subdivided into—(1) *Peraea*, in the narrower sense, between the Arnon and the Jabbok: (2) *Galaaditis*, the old land of Gilead, partly overlapping the former: (3) *Batanaea*, (4) *Gaulonitis*, and (5) *Ituraea* or *Auranitis*, embracing together the ancient country of *Basban*: (6) *Trachonitis*, in the wild rocky desert of the *Hauran*. (7) *Abilene*, among the eastern foot-hills of the Antilibanus, lay beyond the proper limits of the country. Lastly, (8) *Decapolis*, a name at first given to Ten Cities in the north, which were rebuilt and endowed with certain privileges at the time of the first Roman occupation (65 B.C.), became the designation of a large district on both sides the lake of Galilee.

5. *Peraea*, a Greek term meaning *the opposite country*, is a general term in Greek geography for any land on the opposite side of a river, strait, etc., as we say "over the water."

7. *Herod's domestic tragedies—murders of Mariamne and Alexandra.*

This fair kingdom had been won (we have seen in what way) by a man of ability, magnificence, and taste; but utterly regardless of his people's most cherished feelings, and insensible to the high destiny of the "Holy Nation," the "peculiar possession of Jehovah." This idea has been for some time so steadily fading that the sacred name has almost disappeared from our pages; but it was reserved for the Idumæan usurper at once to reunite the nation and to heathenize its government, and so to prove the need, while smoothing the way, for the advent of the Christ. Meanwhile Herod's prosperity was poisoned by unparalleled domestic tragedies. Alexandra and Mariamne had again won from Soemus the secret of Herod's fatal orders, and this time the wife's indignation and the renewed accusations of Salome were too strong for Herod's fondness. Convinced at length that guilty love was the price of his betrayed secret, Herod sentenced Mariamne to death; and her last moments were insulted by the reproaches with which her mother purchased a brief respite for herself. The proud and beautiful queen died with the courage of innocence, leaving Herod the victim of a remorse which never ceased. In its first transports he retired into solitude, and fell dangerously ill. Alexandra now thought the time was come to consummate her intrigues and revenge; but her plot for seizing the Tower of Baris (or Antonia) was betrayed to Herod, and she was led to the fate which her daughter had so lately suffered. Her death removed Herod's last fears from the Asmonæans; but his illness seems to have given the last permanent tinge of morose cruelty to his stern temper. Among many distinguished victims to the charge of an Asmonæan conspiracy was Costabaras, an Idumæan, the former husband of Salome, who had divorced him in direct violation of the law.

8. *Government of Herod. His pro-Grecian practices. Building of tower of Antonia, Sebaste and Caesarea.*

Herod's public administration was directed to the increase of his own royal state, and the gratification of his imperial master. But he probably acted also from the more subtle policy of "counterbalancing by a strong Grecian party the turbulent and exclusive spirit of the Jews." The Jews, who had so nobly resisted the attempt to persecute them into Hellenism, were now invited to adopt both Greek and Roman customs. The holy hill, to which David had carried up the ark of God, looked down upon a theatre and amphitheatre, in which Herod held games in honor of Augustus, with musical and dramatic contests, horse and chariot races, and the bloody fights of gladiators and wild beasts, while Jewish athletes took part in gymnastic contests. The sullen submission of the people was only overtaxed by the sight of the trophies hung round the theatre; but when Herod had them opened to show that they contained no idols; indignation gave way to ridicule. A few, however, viewed these proceedings with far sterner feelings. Ten zealots bound themselves by a vow to kill Herod in the theatre; but they were discovered and put to death, enduring the most cruel torments with the constancy of the Maccabæan martyrs.

At this time Herod occupied the old palace of the Asmonæans which crowned the eastern face of the upper city and stood adjoining the Xystus at the end of the bridge which formed the communication between the south part of the Temple and the upper city.⁶ This palace was not yet so magnificent as he afterward made it, but it was already most richly furnished.⁷ Herod had now also completed the improvements of the Baris—the fortress built by John Hyrcanus on the foundations of Simon Maccabæus

6. Josephus, *Ant.* XV, 8, 5. *Comp.* XX, 8, 11, and *Wars* II, 16, 3.

7. *Ant.*, XV, 9, 2.

—which he had enlarged and strengthened at great expense, and named *Antonia*—after his friend Mark Antony. This celebrated fortress formed an intimate part of the TEMPLE as reconstructed by Herod. It stood at the west end of the north wall of the Temple and was inaccessible on all sides but that. He provided a refuge, in case of need, from the hostility of Jerusalem, in the two fortresses of Gaba in Galilee and Heshbon in Peræa.

A similar feeling was displayed in his restoration of Samaria, which he called Sebaste,⁸ in honor of Augustus, and peopled with his veteran soldiers mingled with descendants of the old Samaritans. But his greatest undertaking in this sort was the erection of a new seacoast city on the site of the Tower of Straton. An exposed anchorage was converted into a safe harbor by a mole 200 feet wide, constructed of immense stones and fortified with towers. The city, magnificently built in the Græco-Roman style of architecture, rose in the form of an amphitheatre from the quays that lined the harbor. Among its public buildings were a theatre and amphitheatre; and in its centre stood a temple dedicated to Augustus, with two colossal statues, one of Rome, and the other of the Emperor, in whose honor the city was called CAESAREA. That all might be in keeping, it was peopled chiefly by Greeks. Its erection occupied twelve years. Designed probably for Herod's new capital, whenever he might feel it safe to throw off the last shred of Judaism, it became before long the seat of Roman government. Meanwhile its maritime position brought Judæa into closer contact than ever with the Roman world. The ruins of Cæsarea and its harbor on the Mediterranean have been excavated extensively in recent years. (Jack Finegan, *Archæology of the N.T.*, Princeton, 1969, p. 70ff)

8. *Sebastos* was the Greek translation of the Latin *Augustus*, and was used throughout the East as the title of the Emperor.

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Herod's leaning to the religion of Rome was shown by his erecting a temple of white marble, dedicated to Augustus, at the chief source of the Jordan, which had already acquired the heathen name of *Panium* (the *Cave of Pan*). Around this temple his son Philip afterward built the city of *Caesarea-Philippi*, in honor of Tiberius.

9. *Herod courts Augustus and Agrippa.* *His munificence.*

Herod's sons by Mariamne, Aristobulus and Alexander, were sent to be educated at Rome; and he lost no opportunity of waiting upon Augustus, whether in his wars or his peaceful progresses. At the same time he maintained the closest friendship with the great minister Agrippa, so that "Cæsar was said to assign Herod the next place in his favor to Agrippa; Agrippa to esteem Herod higher than any of his friends, except Augustus." This intimacy was the cause of the introduction into the family of Herod's son Aristobulus of the name of AGRIPPA, which appears in the *Acts of the Apostles*. (Acts 25:13). He courted the people of Greece by magnificent donations to the temple at Olympia, and was made perpetual president of the Olympic games—a strange mutation for both Jews and Greeks, that a half-hearthen king of Judæa should be the recognized head of the Hellenic race.

Herod's subjects were not without some compensation for all these insults to their national traditions. True, he put down every show of opposition with relentless severity. His perpetual fears of the Pharisees and Essenes prompted him to require of them an oath of allegiance, and he knew how to revenge himself for their obstinate refusal. His espionage was always vigilant, and many murmurers disappeared forever in the prison of Hyrcania, which has been called Herod's Bastile. But he displayed a princely liberality. His great works enriched the industrious, without

adding to the burdens of the country; and the taxes were diminished by a third.

The year 25 B.C.—the next after the attempt on Herod's life in the theatre— was one of great misfortunes. A long drought, followed by unproductive seasons, involved Judæa in famine, and its usual consequence, a dreadful pestilence. Herod took a noble and at the same time a most politic course. He sent to Egypt for corn, sacrificing for the purchase the costly decorations of his palace and his silver and gold plate. He was thus able to make regular distributions of corn and clothing on an enormous scale for the present necessities of the people as well as to supply seed for the next year's crop.⁹ The result was to remove to a great degree the animosity occasioned by his proceedings in the previous year.

In this year or the next Herod took another wife, the daughter of an obscure priest of Jerusalem named Simon. Shortly before the marriage Simon was made high-priest in the place of Joshua, or Jesus, the son of Phaneus, who appears to have succeeded Ananel, and was now deposed to make way for Herod's future father-in-law.¹⁰ It was probably on the occasion of this marriage that he built a new and extensive palace immediately adjoining the old wall at the north-west corner of the upper city,¹¹ about the spot now occupied by the Latin convent, in which, as memorials of his connection with Cæsar and Agrippa, a large apartment, superior in size to the sanctuary of the Temple, was named after each. This palace was very strongly fortified; it communicated with the three great towers on the wall erected shortly after, and it became the *citadel*, "special fortress," as Josephus calls it, of the upper city. A road led to it from the northern gate in the west wall of the Temple enclosure.

9. Josephus, *Ant.*, XV, 9, 2.

10. *Ant.* XV, 9, 3.

11. *Wars*, V, 4, 4.

10. *Rebuilding of the temple.*

But his great claim to the favor of the Jews was that restoration of the *Temple*, the design of which he announced to the people assembled at the Passover (20 or 19 B.C.). If we may believe Josephus, he pulled down the whole edifice to its foundations and laid them anew on an enlarged scale. The new edifice was a stately pile of Græco-Roman architecture, built in white marble with gilded *acroteria*. It is minutely described by Josephus, and the New Testament has made us familiar with the pride of the Jews in its magnificence. A different feeling, however, marked the commencement of the work, which met with some opposition from the fear that what Herod had begun he would not be able to finish. He overcame all jealousy by engaging not to pull down any part of the existing buildings till all the materials for the new edifice were collected on its site. Two years appear to have been occupied in these preparations, among which Josephus mentions the teaching some of the priests and Levites to work as masons and carpenters—and then the work began.

The holy "house", including the Porch, Sanctuary, and Holy of Holies, was finished in a year and a half (16 B.C.). Its completion, on the anniversary of Herod's inauguration, was celebrated by lavish sacrifices and a great feast. Yet even this splendid work was not likely to mislead the Jews to the real spirit of the king. While he rebuilt the temple at Jerusalem, he rebuilt also the temple at Samaria, and made provision in his new city of Cæsarea for the celebration of heathen worship; and it has been supposed that the rebuilding of the Temple furnished him with the opportunity of destroying the authentic collection of genealogies which was of the highest importance to the priestly families. Herod, as appears from his public designs, affected the dignity of a second Solomon, but he joined the license of that monarch to his magnificence; and it was

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said that the monument which he raised over the royal tombs was due to the fear which seized him after a sacrilegious attempt to rob them of secret treasures.

