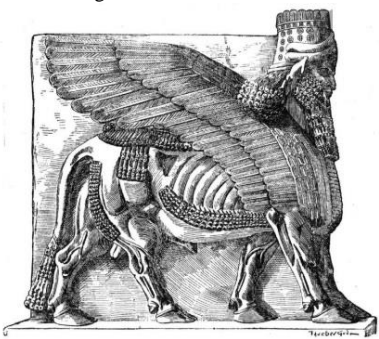


Biblical Backgrounds



© Phil Smith, PhD

No part of this book is to be copied, reproduced or rewritten in any way without the express permission of the author. All graphics were downloaded from royalty free sites.

Understand how the historical events of the Old Testament helped shape what is actually in the Bible.

Biblical Backgrounds

Contents

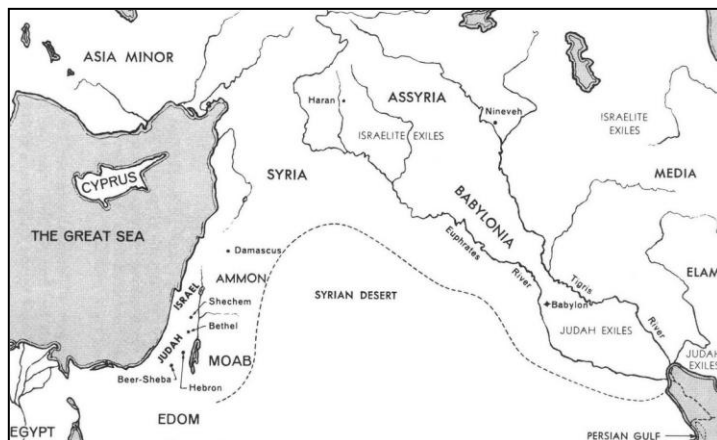
1. The Assyrians
 - A. Their Kings
 - B. Their Cities
 - C. Israel and Assyria

2. Israel and Judah
 - A. Israel's Kings
 - B. The Kings of Judah

3. The Persians
4. The Inner-Testamental Period
5. The Roman and Greek World of the New Testament
6. Jewish Literature
7. The Herod's
8. Judea and the First Century Jew
9. The Temple
10. Jesus' Ministry
11. The Early Church

(All the graphics in this book are from royalty free downloads)

Biblical Backgrounds cover various periods of ancient history that affected not only the Jewish nation but the lead up of the coming of Christ. This information represents an expanded look at time and life as mentioned in the Bible. Additional information includes that of the time before the Romans and the time of Christ itself. This article also discusses the economy and politics of the different cities during the time of Christ.



I start out with an in-depth coverage of the Assyrian Period lasting over 1500 years from 2200 BC to its final destruction in 612 BC. But within this time line, there are other time lines,

those that have to do with the nations of Judah and Israel and their kings during the two kingdom's Period of Israel and Judah. Following this is the Persian Period covering history from 612 BC to 333 BC, over 300 years. After that, we look at what happened between the two testaments period. This time line starts at 336 BC and finishes up around 148 BC. Finally we end up with the Roman and Greek world of the New Testament Period. This period begins around 98 BC and goes through to about 150 AD. More specific details are given on the everyday life of the nation and the forces that were at place at the time of the birth of Jesus and His later ministry. We will also have a close look at the dynasty of the Herod's, along with the history of Jerusalem, the Temple and all those who had anything to do with it. An in-depth look at the life of the Jew, their lives, travels, restrictions, political aspirations and living conditions is new information.

Firstly, Assyria was a very wicked nation and this was revealed in the warfare they exhibited. It was founded around 2400 BC by people from Babylon and continued to either be subject to the Babylonians or at

war with them. Initially, their primitive capital, Nineveh, was built on the western bank of the Tigris between the Upper and Lower Zab. The area was known as Subartu to the early Babylonians. It consisted of a limestone plateau which is cold and wet in winter and warm during the summer months. Figs, olives, pomegranates, almonds, mulberries and vines were cultivated and also grains. Cotton was even grown. The high mountain chains of Armenia and Kurdistan are in the north and east. There were lions in the forests and wild bulls, asses, goats and gazelles on the plains. It was what you would imagine Africa is today. The area was originally



claimed by the Amorites and the Mitannians. Genesis 10:11, 12 tell us that the country was occupied by Babylonian Semites in 2500 BC who brought religion, law, customs,

script and Semitic language of Babylonia. Nineveh, Rehobath, Calah and Resen made up a large triangle which was under their control. In the Old Testament, Assyria is differentiated from Babylonia. For some reason the two cities and empires acted very differently though they were basically the same people.

As already mentioned, the Assyrians were intense and intolerant, cruel and ferocious in war. They were powerfully built, modern height, dark complexion, high forehead and black and bushy hair with full lips. The government was a military state with the king being leader and high priest. Amazingly, they understood the use of the lever, the pulley and the roller and had invented engines of war so in one sense they weren't primitive in their war efforts. Trade was carried on with Cappadocia, Kara Eyuk near Kaisariyeh. Later in the Second Empire trade was diverted into Assyrian hands by capturing Carchemish, a Hittite stronghold by Sargon in 717 BC. Carchemish was up near the Med Sea in what is called today, Turkey. Their language was Semitic and dialectically differed from Semitic

Babylonia. Over time their spoken language changed somewhat. They used clay to write with a stylus impressed into the moist clay. They wrote in cuneiform which was created in Sumeria and Akkad and handed down through Babylon. The writing was used instantly throughout the region at that time but some of it eventually changed to a Hebrew type of script.

Individuals had certain rights by law, but the social unit was first the tribe and then the family. Cities usually were self governing with an assembly and presiding officer. There was respect for the wealthy and elderly and education was for the priests, scribes and upper classes. There were also merchants, craftsmen, scribes and some temple positions. Citizens generally spent most of their time managing their farms. Marriages were monogamous. The status of woman was less that of a man. They were expected to submit to their husband, father and their brothers. Even though the estate was taken care of by the sons for the purpose of keeping peace, the first son was entitled to a double share. Most male members wore a short skirt that went down to the knees and more important people wore a longer skirt. Women wore their skirts up over their shoulder fastened under the right arm. The two main social organizations were the temple and the king's palace. Everyone was expected to contribute to the well being of the temple in one way or another. Other social institutions included brothels which were called 'places of pleasure'. There were brothels with harlots and also street harlots. At the bottom of the social ladder were the slaves. Slaves usually did the manual work associated with the maintenance of the Temple and they were either debtors or prisoners of war. There were also beer houses to go to for drinking. Not much different than today in many of our countries with the exception of having more women rights.

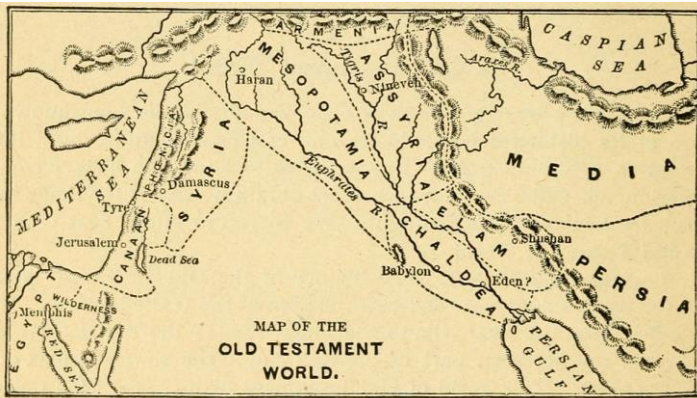
Its religion was a gross and complex polytheism made up of thirteen principal gods and a number of minor divinities lead by the chief god, Asshur. It was different than Babylonia only in two points: the king was the high priest with the national god being Asshur where Babylon was identified with the sun-god. The king became a warrior god and the army were the troops of Ashur. The enemies were the enemies of Ashur. The people had many superstitions. One such superstition prevented anyone

from doing any thing important on Friday or on the 13th day of the month. There were various superstitions that applied for different days of the week and the people believed in the influence of various demons and evil spirits. In many aspects our present world is returning to these superstitions and demonic beliefs classed today as tolerable religions.

Assyria was either subject to Babylon or in war with Babylon or independent of Babylon. Around 1300 BC, Babylonia had weakened and formed an alliance with Mitanni and Egypt. Around the same time a group of people called the sea people came down from Tuckey and destroyed the city-state of Ugarit and other city-states of the area. Mitanni was absorbed by the Hittites in Anatolia. But, it was then that Shalmaneser I crippled the Hittite power by destroying its more eastern city of Malatiyeh, and threatening Carehemish. Later it was at Carehemish that the Egyptian forces lost their battle against Babylon, thus forced to return home but warring against Jerusalem taking all the treasures of the temple and the

Ark with them.

Babylon and the entire Euphrates Valley was taken and then again in 1120 BC through Tiglath-pileasar I, Assyria rose to power again and again in the 9th



century BC, Assyria became a world power. They extended their empire to Cappadocia. This lasted for another 300 years. Around 840 BC, the time Isaiah was ministering, Tiglath-Pileasar II took the 10 tribes into captivity in 734 BC never to be heard from again.

As mentioned, the Assyrians were the worst in plundering other nations and in general, they were diabolically cruel. They were famous for their atrocities; they skinned their victims alive, cut their hands, feet, noses,

ears off and put their eyes out. They pulled out their tongues and made mounds of heads to inspire terror to their enemies. Assyria came into contact with ten different Hebrew Kings: Omri, Ahab, Jehu, Menahem, Hoshea, Pekah, Uzziah, Ahaz, Hezekiah, and Manasseh. During the reign of Hoshea, king of Israel, Shalmaneser twice invaded Israel as written in 2 Kings 17:3, 5 and Sargon II took Samaria in 722 BC and carried 27,290 Hebrews away. Esarhaddon completed the task later to bring to an end the Northern Kingdom.

Look at some of the more important Assyrian Kings:

1. *Assur-nasipal II* (885-860 B.C.) - A cruel warrior king, he made Assyria into the most fierce fighting machine of ancient world.
2. *Shalmaneser II* (860-825 B.C.) - He was the first Assyrian king to come into conflict with Israel. King Ahab fought against him, and king Jehu paid him tribute.
3. *Shalmaneser III* (783-771 B.C.) reigned during a time of decline in Assyria. A six and half foot tall black obelisk of him was found in Calah commemorating the victorious campaigns during the years 859 and 824 BC. There is also panelling revealing Israelites led by King Jehu bowing to the dust before Shalmaneser III paying tributes of gold, silver, lead and spear shafts. Bronze band from the gates of his palace at Calah reveal horrifying cruelty of the Assyrians toward the prisoner. It also shows warriors attacking the city of Parga in Hamath. Both Isaiah 25:12 and Isaiah 37:11-13 confirm this.
4. *Tiglath-pileser III* (Pul) (747-727 BC) became a terror to the ancient world and especially to the northern kingdom of Israel (2 Kings 15:19). When Tiglath Pileser III came to power, he was ready for war only after five months. He organized the Assyrian army and began an intense war that went on for 150 years. The Assyrian army were even better trained than the Romans. From Calah, the king moved northward and then westward

along the Fertile Crescent, when he reached Samaria and the large walls that King Omri had built a century earlier, Israel surrendered and had to pay fifty shekels of silver for each man. The countries he conquered became subject provinces governed by Assyrian satraps. After annexing Hamath in 738, the Syrian state, all the other rulers bowed to Tiglath Pilsar III's demands. King Menahem of Israel paid the Assyrian king off with one thousand talents of silver (2 Kings 15:19-20) which he took from his wealthiest citizens. At that time 50 shekels each was enough to buy a small home with some land. Then The Syrian League was organized under the Syrian king Rezin which was made up of all the countries around them except for Judah. But later in 1 Chronicles 5:26 and 2 Chronicles 28:20 Tiglath Pileser attacked Samaria in the reign of Pekah, 756 - 736 BC who withheld tribute. He carried the Northern Kingdom of Israel off into captivity (2 Kings 15:29). Ezek 21:22 describes Tiglath-Pileser III's attack; to set up battering rams, to call for a slaughter, to lift the voice with shouting, to set battering rams against the gates, to heap up a siege mound. As already mentioned, Assyria to Damascus and to Israel, he carried them both off. The Israelites were placed in the cities of Halah, Habor and Gozan and in the cities of the Medes. This was done under Sargon II. Later, Essarhaddon conquered Egypt and also defeated Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia (II Kings 19:9).

5. *Shalmaneser IV* (727-722 B.C.) - 2 Kings 17:3, Hoshea paid tribute to Assyria but after concluding an alliance with the king of Egypt, he revolted against Assyria. Shalmaneser IV invaded Palestine and sieged Samaria for four months in 721 BC. He died during the siege.

6. *Sargon II* (722-705 B.C.) - This king was one of the greatest Assyrian kings but is only mentioned once in Isaiah 20:1. His annals provide information of his expeditions against Babylonia, Susiana, Media, Armenia, Cappadocia, Syria, Palestine, Arabia and Egypt. In regards to ancient history, they talk of Sargon II as if he was a hero, but remember these



people were ruthless in their wars in what they did to people. Taking Ashdod caused his mention in Scripture. He completed the destruction of Samaria and the captivity of Israel. Isaiah 20:1 comments, 'In the year that Tartan came to Ashdod, when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him, he fought against Ashdod and took it.' Sargon had his palace at Khorsabad; in it he had a 3 foot limestone relief made of himself. It shows him wearing a Neo-Assyrian crown with ribbons carefully weaved into the hair and beard and earrings. There was a winged bull at his palace at Khorsabad at the entrance of his throne room standing 14 feet tall. Four lamassu statues lined each side facing each other to frighten off demons. In an attempt to take Jerusalem, an Angel of the Lord destroyed his entire army at their very gates. An Inscription on a clay prism written in cuneiform validates the biblical account regarding the capture and deportation of the northern kingdom of Israel in 722 BC and also his boasting, 'I besieged and captured Samaria, and carried off 27,290 inhabitants as booty.' This prism was addressed to the god Asshur.

7. *Sennacherib* (705-681 B.C.) - He was the most famous (or infamous) of the Assyrian kings who fixed the seat of government at Nineveh which he partially rebuilt. His palace was located in the southeast corner of a high platform and was surrounded by halls and rooms. There were reliefs on the walls depicting the siege of Lachish. Hezekiah had revolted and claimed the protection of Egypt. That was a mistake but God blessed Hezekiah and held back the Babylonians until after his death. He also conquered Babylon and totally razed it to the ground. An Inscription of Sennacherib points out that he conquered Beth-Dagon, Joppa, Benebarqua, Azuru and the cities of Tsidqa. With the help of Ashur, my lord, I fought against Egypt who called forth the archers, chariots, and horses of the king of Meluhkhi. I took King Meluhkhi alive and also I besieged Eltekeh and Temnath and carried away their spoil. In the city of Ekron, I killed all those who had committed sin and evil and hung them on poles around the city. I besieged 46 of Hezekiah's strong cities, fortresses and small cities which I gave to Mitnti, King of Ashdod. I took away treasurers, daughters, young men and women to Nineveh. He took

all the fenced cities of Judah as mentioned in 2 Kings 18:13. His army of 185,000 men was defeated at the gates of Jerusalem by the Angel of the Lord. Some think an angel came upon them and confused them while other traditions say a great plague came upon them. Just after this, he was killed by his sons in 681 BC as a rebuke and consequence of the Assyrian god Marduk for the destruction of Babylon. In 2nd Kings 19:35-37, the Bible says that it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the temple of Nisroch his god, that his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer struck him down with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Ararat and then his son Esarhaddon reigned in his place.

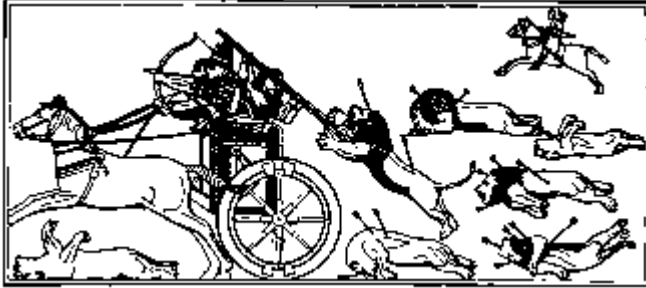
8. *Esar-baddon* (681-668 B.C.) was another great king of Assyria. Again, the idea of great may include ruthlessly evil! He was the only one to have reigned at Babylon. He rebuilt Babylon and conquered Egypt. He was one of Assyria's greatest and most powerful kings. 2 Chronicles 33:11 shows that Manasseh, king of Judah was brought before him at Babylon for rebelling against Assyria. Throughout his reign he was also known for building works at Babylon and three other places in the kingdom. He also rebuilt some thirty odd temples dedicated to their gods.

9. *Assur-bani-pal* (668-626 B.C.) He destroyed Thebes in Egypt and collected a great library, innumerable clay tablets were found. His palace revealed bas-reliefs illustrating the Assyrian campaigns against Babylonia, certain Arab tribes and Elam. There were other sculptures showing Assurbaniapli hunting goats and wild asses.

B. The four most famous cities of the Assyrian Empire were Nineveh, Khorsabad, Calah and Asshur. Each of those cities tells their own story within the history of the empire.

1. *Nineveh* (Genesis 10:11 / Nahum 2:8-10) was one of the mightiest cities of the ancient world. Along with Calah, Nineveh is said to have been first established by Nimrod which could have some truth to it. But this was the reason by Assyria was also known to the Jews as the land of Nimrod. It

was mentioned in Numbers 24:22, 24 and in Psalms 83:8. Jonah described it as a great city. In earlier times it was some 3 miles long and 1.5 miles wide but later that seemed to grow to 18 to 20 miles long by 12 to 14



miles wide and some 55 miles in circumference. The walls were extended by Sennacherib to nearly 15 metres thick and about 30 metres tall. There

were 15 gates, some which were named: Hadad, Uru, and Nannar. Then there was the Assur gate, Sennacherib's Halzi gate, the gate of Samas of Gagal, the gate of the god Enlil of Kar-Ninlil, Sibaniba gate and the gate of Halah in Mesopotamia. Other gates are listed as the gate of Ea, the quay gate, the gate of the land of Bari, the gate of the tribute palace and the gate of the god Sar-ur. These are mentioned in cuneiform records of 2100 and 1700 BC by Hammurapi. The palaces were built on artificial platforms some 10 to 15 metres high. One approached these palaces by way of stairs or ramps. The walls of the palaces contained high windows which admitted light. The partition walls varied between 2 to 5 metres in thickness. Everything was made of sun dried brick and panelled in stone. Nineveh held the royal palace of Sargon II and capital of the empire between 722-702 BC. Sennacherib between 704 and 681 BC made it into a spectacular city (2 Kings 19:36). He built the world's oldest aqueduct and a 17 metre massive wall around the city. As mentioned, the people spoke a Semitic dialect connected with the Hebrew and Chaldee of the books of Daniel and Ezra. This is why Jonah was able to go and preach repentance to them. All of the languages in the area were Semitic in nature. Prophecies relating to Nineveh are exclusively contained in Nahum and Zephaniah. Nahum prophesizes their destruction and of course Jonah warned them to repent or face God's wrath. The period of Nineveh's greatness and rule seemed to be from the beginning of Sennacherib to the

end of Assur-bani-apli or nearly 98 years. Its fall was attributed to a flood which took out part of its wall letting their conquerors to take the city.

2. *Khorsabad*, also known as Dur-Sharrukin or mound of Sargon.

Khorsabad is a great enclosure of about 2,000 metres square with towers and gateways. The palace consisted of a number of halls, rooms and passages, many faced with slabs of coarse alabaster, sculptured with military operations, hunting scenes and mythological figures. The principal entrances were flanked with amazing winged human headed bulls.

3. *Calah* (Genesis 10:8-12) was built by Nimrod when civilization first began and at one time called Nimroud. The site is located where the Tigris and Upper Zab rivers come together and covered an area of 16 square miles. The city was about 25 kilometres southeast of Nineveh. It was later the capital city for three different times, first under Shalmaneser I in 1274-1245 and again it become Ashurnasirpal II's capital in 883-859 BC who built temples and a great Ziggurat there. There was a great Temple step pyramid constructed of brick faced with stone rising to 126 feet. The platform of this tower measures 700 x 400 metres. On the eastside of the platform Assurnacirapli, placed his palace. The chambers and halls were panelled with sculptured and inscribed slabs. In the Southeast corner Esarhaddon built his own palace. There were an additional 108 towers placed along the city walls which had a large moat around it. It was from Calah that Assyria campaigned against Israel but Calah Utsekf fell after Nineveh in 612 BC.

4. *Asshur* or *Assur* was the first capital of ancient Assyria. It derived its name from Asshur, the son of Shem in Genesis 10:22. Asshur is also used for a city, a god and a territory. The modern name is Qala'at Sherqat and it's located south of Tell Hassuna on a hill over looking the Tigris.

The Empire came to an end in August, 612 BC as predicted by the prophet Nahum of the 'bloody city'. Read the Book of Nahum for an account of this.

C. The following Biblical passages refer to Israel and Assyria:

1. *1 Kings 15:34 - Assyria did evil in the sight of the Lord.*
2. *Isaiah 37:33-35 - Assyria will not come into this city....*
3. *Nabum 3:1-19 - Woe unto Nineveh*
4. *Isaiah 10:5-34 - God will call Assyria to destroy Israel.*
5. *Isaiah 7:17-25 - God will call the Assyrians to conquer Judah.*
6. *Isaiah 8:3-4 - Assyria will plunder Damascus and Samaria.*
7. *Isaiah 8:1-10 - The riches and spoils will be taken away by Assyria.*
8. *Hosea 8-9 - Israel will be taken captive to Assyria.*
9. *Isaiah 20:3-4 - Assyria will take Egypt and Ethiopia as Prisoners.*
10. *Isaiah 10:12-13 - God will punish Assyria's Arrogance.*
11. *Isaiah 14:24-25 - God will Break Assyria in Judah.*
12. *Isaiah 30:27-33 - God will destroy Assyria with His voice.*
13. *Isaiah 31:8-9 - God's Sword will devour Assyria.*
14. *Isaiah 37:21-36 - god will defend Jerusalem from Assyria.*
15. *Jonah 3:4 - 40 days and Nineveh will be overthrown.*
16. *Nabum 1:11-13 - Nineveh will be ultimately cut down.*
17. *Nabum 3:5-7 - Nineveh will be made naked.*
18. *Zephaniah 2:13 - God will make Assyria a desolation.*
19. *Isaiah 10:5-6 - Assyria is God's plunderers.*
20. *Jeremiah 1:15 - Assyria would come to attack all the cities of Judah.*

Much of what we know today about Assyria comes from the discoveries of Austen Henry Layard. He unearthed the palaces of Ashurbanipal, Shalmaneser II, Tiglath Pileser II, Adadnirari, and Esarhaddon. Layard gives an almost step by step account of everything he did. He dug into various mounds. Eventually he also found a massive library which opened the door to Assyrian logy. A colossal figure was found in a chamber of one of the palaces of a female with four wings, carrying a garland. On two slabs there were inscriptions showing the name of the king who built the Khorsabad palace. Of the discovered bas-reliefs the most interested was that of a king seated on his throne, receiving his vizier and surrounded by attendants. There was a warrior wearing a crested helmet on a rearing horse. There was a procession of warriors carrying

idols away of a conquered nation and the list goes on. Among the discoveries carried back to England is the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III, the Siloam Inscription, the Esarhaddon Inscription, a bas relief from Ashurbanipal's palace showing the king riding in a ceremonial chariot. Layard remained in the neighbourhood of Mosul, carrying on excavations at Kuyunik and Nimrud, and investigating the condition of various peoples, until 1847, and returning to England in 1848, he published *Nineveh and its Remains*.

2. The Two Kingdom's Period of Israel and Judah:

Israel of the Old Testament: There were seven nations that inhabited Canaan between the time of Abraham and Joshua. They were the Canaanites, Amorites, Hittites, Jebusites, Hivites, Perizzites and the Girgashites. Their religions all involved idolatry. The Jebusites lived in the area around Jerusalem whereas the Hivites lived in the far north. Some of their cities include Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth and Kirjath-jearim. These cities were near the border of the tribe of Benjamin. The Perizzites occupied the southern area of Canaan near Gaza within the area given to the tribe of Judah. The nation of the Girgashites settled near the Sea of Galilee. The Amorites were just north of Bethel and the Hittites were just south of Beersheba and Hormah.

In Genesis 14:18, Jerusalem is mentioned under the name of



Salem. It was also mentioned again in Joshua 10:1 under the name of Jerusalem under the kingship of Adonizedek. It was also mentioned in Judges 19:10 and 1 Chronicles 11:4. After the death of Joshua, the city was set on fire by men of Judah

as mentioned in Judges 1:1-8 but some Jebusites were still left there. It was David who eventually drove the Jebusites out. He captured the city of Jerusalem in 1046 BC and made it the capital. He called the city, the City of David. David fortified it and Solomon built mighty looking buildings

including the Temple on Mount Moriah in 1010 BC. The city was taken by the philistines and Arabians during Jehoram's time in 886 BC and by the Israelites during Amaziah's time in 826 BC. It was taken by Nebuchadnezzar in 607, 597 and 586 BC and destroyed. Its rebuilding started with Cyrus in 538 BC as prophesized by Isaiah in 650 BC and then it was completed under Artaxerxes I in 457 BC and Nehemiah in 445 BC. The streets and walls were again built as mentioned in Daniel 9:16, 19, and 25. It was taken again in 332 BC by Alexander the Great. Antiochus Epiphanes sacked it in 170 BC. In 40 BC, Herod restored the Temple and other buildings. The city was again completely destroyed by the Romans under Titus in 70 AD. It held out for five months against the Romans who razed it and the Temple to the ground.

Centuries later, long past the days of the Judges, Saul became the first king of Israel, then David, then Solomon. David became God's second appointed king. He ruled for seven years over Judah and afterwards the rest of the tribes joined his empire. The kingdom included all the original land of the 12 tribes except for Philistia and Ammon. The vassal states of Moab, Edom, Damascus and Hamath's territory gave allegiance to him. His authority eventually stretched to the Euphrates River in the north and to the River of Egypt. David first ruled from Hebron but later moved to Jerusalem. In battle, David and Joab commanded the army of Israel and even though they won many battles, it was not a military government as it was with Saul. Even though David was the strongest ruler of the day, he came no where close to matching the armies of the great empires. Much earlier, in Number 20:17-21, Israel had asked Edom permission to pass through their country on their way to the Promise Land but they were refused. This highway was an ancient trade route that began in Egypt, and stretched across the Sinai to Aqaba and north to Damascus and then on to the Euphrates River. The Edomites would not allow them to do this so Israel had to go around at that time. During the 1st millennium BC, the highway linked Edom, Moab and Ammon and centuries later the Nabateans used the same road for trading frankincense and spices that came from southern Arabia. The trouble that Moab caused them was never forgotten, because later in 2 Kings 14:7 in

the valley of Salt or Arabah valley, Joab slew every male of Edom and put garrisons throughout that kingdom. David also defeated Hadadezer, the son of Rehob, king of Zobah at the River Euphrates. Most of the other nations depended on chariots whereas David's army did not. David also placed garrisons throughout the Damascus territory. David was at first kind to Hanun of Ammon but Hanun hired mercenaries from Aram and when Joab met them, he defeated them; then Hadadezer, king of Zobah came against Joab with fresh troops and Israel crossed the Jordan at Helam to confront them. Zobah's army had 1,000 chariots, 700 horsemen and 20,000 foot soldiers but David defeated them. David loved God with all his heart but his big weakness was the taking of foreign wives. In his old age, David sang what has come to be a well known song today in 2 Sam 22:4, 'I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised; so shall I be saved from my enemies.' The last words of David from 2 Sam 23:1-2 say, "The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, and His word was on my tongue..." Each of the first 3 kings reigned for 40 years and finally King Solomon died. After Solomon the fame and fortunes of Israel diminished. The nation rebelled against God and his laws. God might have destroyed Israel had He not promised to Abraham a redeemer so He still planned to use the house of David for this.

After Solomon died the kingdom split into again, Rehoboam reigning over Judah and Benjamin with its capital still in Jerusalem and Jeroboam reigning in Samaria over the ten northern tribes. The Northern tribes voted again Rehoboam because they wanted an easier life than they had under Solomon. There was an immediate war between the two brothers over the setting of the boundary line between the two kingdoms. After both brothers died, again their sons warred against each other over the boundary line. At one time the line was only 5.5 miles north of Jerusalem. Then later King Asa sided with Damascus of Syria and both



attacked Israel and the line moved further north. King Ahab the son of Omri introduced Baal worship to the kingdom. Ahab and Jezebel daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians built a temple to Baal in Samaria and set up an altar to Baal there. The iniquity they entered into were as bad as the heathen nations around them. The Israelites built high places in their cities, setup sacred pillars and wooden images on high hills and green trees and they served idols and Baal. They practiced witchcraft, soothsaying and sold them selves into doing evil. King Hoshea, was the last king of Israel before it was conquered by the Assyrians under Sargon II and hauled them away into captivity in 722 BC. It took Sargon three years to take Samaria. The northern kingdom had a total of 19 kings in all and their reign was an average of 11 years each with 8 of them killed by violence. In 1 Kings 15:34 they did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin by which he had made Israel to sin.

A. A list of Israel's kings follows:

1. Jeroboam I (933-911) twenty-two years
2. Nadab (911-910) two years
3. Baasha (910-887) twenty-four years
4. Elah (887-886) two years
5. Zimri (886) seven days
6. Omri (886-875) twelve years
7. Ahab (875-854) twenty-two years
8. Ahaziah (855-854) two years
9. Jehoram (Joram) (854-843) twelve years
10. Jehu (843-816) twenty-eight years
11. Jehoahaz (820-804) seventeen years
12. Jehoash (Joash) (806-790) sixteen years
13. Jeroboam II (790-749) forty-one years
14. Zechariah' (748) six months - a. In the 38th year of Azariah, king of Judah, Zechariah reigned for six months in Samaria, b. He did evil in the sight of God, c. Shallum, the son of Jabesh murdered him and reigned in

his place, d. The acts of Zechariah are written in the Book of Chronicles of the kings of Israel.

15. Shallum (748) one month - a. Shallum, the son of Jabesh became king in the 39th year of Uzziah, king of Judah and reigned for one month, b.

Menahem, son of Gadi murdered Shallum and reigned in his place,

16. Menahem (748-738) ten years - c. Menahem attacked Tiphshah and its territory and Menahem ripped open all the stomachs of the pregnant women, d. Menahem became King over Israel and reigned for ten years. e. He did evil in the sight of the Lord, f. Pekahiah, Menahem's son, reigned in his place.

17. Pekahiah (738-736) two years

18. Pekah (748-730) twenty years

19. Hoshea (730-721) nine years –

(2 Kings 17) a. Hoshea, son of Elah became king in the 12th year of Ahaz and reigned nine years. b. He did evil in the sight of the Lord. c. Hoshea became the vassal of Shalmaneser and paid him tribute money. d. Assyria put Hoshea in prison for not paying his tribute. e. Assyria besieged Samaria for three years and carried them off to Halah, Gozan and in the cities of the Medes. f. Assyria brought people from Babylon, cuthah, Ava, hamath and from Sepharvaim and put them throughout Samaria.

The Lord became so angry against what they did and so rejected them. He tore Israel from the house of David and removed them by bringing the Assyrians against them. The northern kingdom lasted for 200 years while the southern kingdom lasted 300 years. Israel was conquered by Assyria and deported north around 722 BC never to appear again. While Judah was conquered by Babylon and deported to Babylon in 586 BC.

The tribe of Judah and Benjamin made up the southern kingdom. The kingdom covered an area between Bethel in the north to the Negev in the south. Besides the wars with their brothers to the north, they were invaded from Egypt and all the Temple treasures were taken away. Not only did they never recover from that, they never again enjoyed the same degree of prosperity they once had. Rehoboam wanted to reunite the

kingdom by force but God spoke to Shemaiah the prophet saying, "Thus says that Lord: 'You shall not go up nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel' (1 Kings 12:24). In the 300 years Judah had 20 kings with an average reign of 16 years. Here, follows a list of them:

B. the Kings of Judah (8 were good)

1. Rehoboam (933-916) seventeen years
2. Abijam (915-913) three years
3. Asa (Good) (912-872) forty-one years
4. Jehoshaphat (Good) (874-850) twenty-five years
5. Jehoram (850-843) eight years
6. Ahaziah (843) one year
7. Athaliah (843-837) six years
8. Joash (Good) (843-803) forty years
9. Amaziah (Good) (803-775) 29 years - (2Kings 15; 2 Chron 26:3-23) a. He became king in the 27th year of Jeroboam, b. He was 16 years old and reigned 52 years in Jerusalem, c. His mother was Jecholiah of Jerusalem, d. He did right in the sight of God, except the high places were not removed and they still burned incense on the high places, e. The Lord gave the king leprosy until his death, f. They buried Azariah in the City of David, g. Jotham reigned in his place.
10. Azariah (Uzziah) (Good) (787-735) fifty-two years
11. Jotham (Good) (749-734) sixteen years - a. In the 2nd year of Pekah, Jotham, the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, began to reign, b. He was 25 years old when he became king and reigned for 16 years in Jerusalem. c. His mother's name was Jerusha, the daughter of Zadok. d. He followed his father and did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, e. The high places were not removed and the people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places, f. He built the Upper gate of the house of the Lord, g. the Lord sent Rezin, king of Syria and Pekah, son of Remaliah against Judah, h. He died and Ahaz, his son reigned in his place.
12. Ahaz (741-726) sixteen years - a. In the 17th year of Pekah, the son of Remaliah, Ahaz began to reign. b. Ahaz was 20 years old when he became

king and reigned for 16 years in Jerusalem. c. He did not do what was right in the sight of God but walked in the way of the Kings of Israel. d. He sacrificed and burned incense on the high places. e. Rezin of Syria and Pekah came against Jerusalem to make war but failed. f. Rezin of Syria took Elath and drove the men of Judah out. g. Ahaz appealed to Assyria for help against Rezin and Pekah. h. Assyria took Damascus and killed Rezin. i. Ahaz met Tiglath Pileser at damascus, j. Urijah, the priest builds an altar according to Ahaz instructions, k. Ahaz burned offerings on the altar, l. Ahaz removed certain things from the temple as ordered by the king of Assyria, m. He died and Hezekiah reigned in his place.

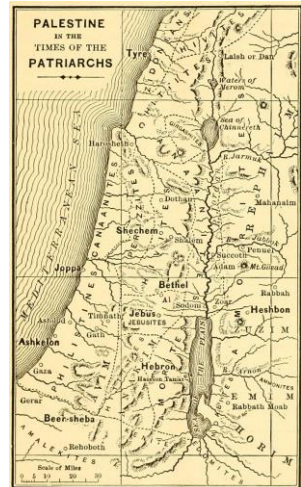
13. Hezekiah (Good) (726-697) 29 years

14. Manasseh (697-642) fifty-five years, a very bad king

15. Amon (641-640) two years

16. Josiah (Good) (639-608) thirty-one years - Josiah brought about religious reforms between 640 and 609 BC.

17. Jehoahaz (608) three months - Jehoahaz, after a reign of but 3 months, was carried captive (2 Kings 23:34) by Necho to Egypt, where he died--and apparently was buried among strangers (Jeremiah 22:10-12). His brother Eliakim, renamed Jehoiakim, succeeded. In the 4th year of his reign, Egypt was defeated at Carchemish by the Babylonians, and as a consequence Jehoiakim had to change from subjection to Egypt to that of Babylon.



18. Jehoiakim (608-597) eleven years - Because of the sins of Manasseh; he had filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, the Lord sent raiding bands of

Chaldeans, bands of Syrians, bands of Moabites, and bands of the people of Ammon. This happens during the days of Jehoiakim who was the vassal of Nebuchadnezzar for three years.

19. Jehoiachin (597) three months - Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king and reigned three months. His mother's name was Nehushta the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. He was an evil person, just like his father. Nebuchadnezzar besieged the city and Jehoiachin, his mother, his servants, his princes and his officers surrendered and they were taken away to Babylon, in the 8th year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. Jehoiachen was eventually released from prison after many years and given food and a regular ration by the king of Babylon until he died.

20. Zedekiah (597-586) eleven years

Baal worship was also established in the southern Kingdom because Jehoshaphat's son Jehoram between 848 and 841 BC married the daughter of King Ahab and the wicked Queen Jezebel. Athaliah, Jehoram's wife, seized the throne after one year just before Jehoram was killed. She killed all of Ahaziah's sons but one, Joash who was rescued by his aunt Jehoshabeath and her husband Jehoiada, the godly high priest (2 Chr 22:10-12). Athaliah was executed after six years and Joash was proclaimed king. Ahaz sided with the Assyrians against Israel and Syria in 722 BC. Hezekiah succeeded Ahaz and signed a treaty with Babylonia and Egypt against Assyria. Sennacherib moved against Jerusalem in 701 BC. Sennacherib lost his army to a plague or something. Isaiah 37:33-38 says Assyria will not come into the city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor build a siege mound against it.' An angel of the Lord went out and destroyed one hundred and eighty five thousand Assyrians. Sennacherib returned home to Nineveh and was murdered by his two sons while he was worshipping his god, Nisroch. That was when Esarhaddon brought an army against Nineveh and established himself as King. Afterwards, under Hezekiah, the kingdom came back to God but then Manasseh, the wicked and longest ruling king accented the throne.

Later, Josiah from 640 to 609 BC restored the Temple and the covenant but the population was so turned toward evil that they still lived evil lives. The Assyrian Empire fell and Babylon march against Egypt where Josiah decided to intervene and was killed at Megiddo. The last three kings of Judah were also evil. After two battles, one in 597 BC and the second in 586 BC against Jerusalem, they were taken to Babylonia. Timeline of Events:3. The Persian Period

Babylon was one of the most infamous cities of the ancient world. It was located on the plain of Shinar on the Euphrates River about 50 miles south of Baghdad. During the time of Nebuchadnezzar II 605-562 BC, it was at the height of its glory and was the most important city of the whole Mesopotamia region. Nebuchadnezzar built palaces, temples, mighty walls and beautiful gateways. The hanging gardens of Babylon were considered one of the wonders of the ancient world. There was also the Ishtar gate, the main entrance into Babylon, one of the eight gates of the inner city which was built by Nebuchadnezzar II. It was decorated with glazed brick reliefs of dragons and young bulls. This was a double gate and on the south side it had a vast antechamber. The Processional Way, a brick paved avenue, lead the way through the gate.

Biblical Backgrounds

- 612 - *Nabum is a prophet in Judah*
612 - *Babylonians and Medes conquer Assyria*
609 - *Assyrian Empire comes to an end*
605 - *Babylonians battle Egyptians at Carchemish*
605 - *Nebuchadnezzar becomes king of Babylon*
605 - *Habakkuk is a prophet in Judah*
605 - *The Babylonians invade Judah*
605 - *First wave of deportation of Jews to Babylon*
605 - *Daniel is taken captive and begins to prophesy*
601 - *Babylonians battle Egypt, both sides suffer losses*
601 - *Judah decides to realign itself with Egypt, Jeremiah warns*
597 - *Jeboachin becomes king of Judah*
597 - *Babylonians capture Jerusalem*
597 - *Second wave of deportation to Babylon from Judah.*
597 - *Ezekiel is taken captive to Babylon*
597 - *Zedekiah becomes king of Judah*
593 - *Ezekiel begins to prophesy*
586 - *The Babylonians destroy Jerusalem and the Temple (9th of Av)*
586 - *Jerusalem's walls and gates are burned with fire*
586 - *Third wave of Jews deported to Babylon*
586 - *Babylonian Exile (Galut Bavel) begins*
586 - *End of Biblical (First Temple) Period*
586 - *The end of the monarchy in Judah*
539 - *The Fall of Babylon*
539 - *Beginning of the Persian Period to 332*
539 - *The Decree of Cyrus II allowing Jews to return*
516 - *The Jews rebuild their Temple (70 years)*
500 - *Joel is a prophet in Judah*
500 - *Malachi is a prophet in Judah*
500 - *Pericles of Athens is born*
495 - *Alexander I rules over Macedonia*
490 - *Persian Wars*
485 - *Birth of Herodotus*
486 - *Xerxes demands tribute from Greece but is refused*
480 - *Xerxes invades Greece with 180,000 men, wins at Thermopylae*
480 - *Persians suffer defeats by the Greeks*
479 - *More Persian defeats by the Greeks at Salamis, Plataea and Mycale*
471 - *Naxos tries to leave the Delian League but is stopped by Athens*
469 - *Birth of Socrates (famous philosopher)*
465 - *Xerxes is murdered and artaxerxes comes to power*
450 - *Rome begins to found colonies in Italy*
447 - *The construction of the Parthenon begins*
443 - *Pericles leads Athens and the 10 generals*
429 - *Birth of Plato (philosopher, student of Socrates)*
424 - *Thucydides is exiled from Athens*
424 - *Xerxes II is assassinated*
424 - *Darius II rules Persia*
405 - *Egypt overthrows Persian rule*
401 - *Sparta goes to war with Persia*
401 - *Cyrus the Younger rebels in Persia, but is defeated by Artaxerxes II at Cunoxa*
350 - *Revolt of the Jews against Artaxerxes III in Persia*
343 - *Artaxerxes III of Persia recaptures Egypt and founds the 31st dynasty*
336 - *Artaxerxes III is assassinated; succeeded by Darius III on Persian throne*
334 - *Alexander the Great begins campaign against Persia*
334 - *Alexander defeats Darius III in Anatolia.*
333 - *Alexander the Great defeats Darius III again at battle of Issus.*
333 - *Persia is conquered*

After the fall of Assyria, Nebuchadnezzar put his final stamp on world domination by defeating the Egyptians at Carchemish. In Jehoiakim's reign, Nebuchadnezzar marched on Judah and carried thousands of Hebrews back to Babylon. This included Daniel, one of greatest Old Testament prophets. In two more different attacks, he carried away more captives including Ezekiel the prophet. Zedekiah was left as his puppet King (2 Chr 36:10-12). Afterwards, He made Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's uncle king changing his name to Zedekiah. After the faithless Zedekiah rebelled, Nebuchadnezzar came back in 586 and put an end to Judah. So the city was besieged until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah. It was on the ninth day of the 4th month; the city had no food and it was then that the walls were broken into. People started fleeing from the city including Zedekiah. The Chaldeans pursued the king and captured him on the plains of Jericho. They brought him to Riblah where Nebuchadnezzar had his headquarters and sentenced him. Nebuchadnezzar called him

many names, including covenant breaker. Zedekiah watched as his sons were murdered and then, his own eyes were put out and he too was carried off to Babylon. None remained in the land except for the poorest. He took everything that was in the Temple, this time he took 10,000 captives including all the mighty men of valour and all the craftsmen and smiths. All military, civil and religious leaders were either executed or carried away to Babylon. The Jewish survivors were taken across the Syrian Desert to Babylon where many died along the way. This marked the end of the First Temple Period. He made Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, governor over the people who remained in the land. Gedaliah assured Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah, Johanan the son of Careah, Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah the son of a Maachathite came to him and Gedaliah assured them that all would be well. But then in the seventh month all of these people returned and killed Gedaliah and then escaped to Egypt.

God raised up righteous and committed people to remind

the captives that they would return home after 70 years. It is from the three great prophets, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, that we learn most of those in captivity. The prophet Jeremiah prophesied that the captivity would last for seventy years: In Jer 29:10-24, 'After seventy years in Babylon, I will cause you to be returned to your land. The thoughts I have for you is peace and not evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon my name and pray to Me. I will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you and bring you to the place from which I caused you to be carried away captive.' Jeremiah encouraged the Jews to live their life while in Babylon which was a place believed to be Nippur, about 50 miles southeast of Babylon. They were allowed to live together in communities and to farm and do other sorts of work to earn income. Many became wealthy. Jehoiachin was still referred to as the 'king of Judah' and received food supplies from the royal storehouse. The prophet Ezekiel was among the first taken captive and lived along the River Chebar (believed to be a

canal). The Lord revealed himself to Ezekial in a vision in Ezek 8:1 where it says, 'And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth month, on the fifth day of the month, as I sat in my house with the elders of Judah sitting before me, that the hand of the Lord God fell upon me there. Then in Psalm 137, we read: By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept when we remembered Zion. We hung our harps upon the willows in the midst of it. For there those who carried us away captive asked of us a song, and those who plundered us requested mirth, saying, 'sing us one of the songs of Zion!' How shall we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land? If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its skill! If I do not remember you, let my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth, if I do not exalt Jerusalem above my chief joy. Remember, O Lord, against the sons of Edom the day of Jerusalem, who said, 'raze it, and raze it to its very foundations!' O daughter of Babylon, who are to be destroyed, happy the one who repays you as you have served us! Happy the one who takes and dashes your little ones against the rock!

The Jews were cured of Idolatry in their captivity. They never returned to idolatry again. A new order by the name of 'Scribes' came about. They taught, guarded and preserved the Scriptures. They also produced the rabbinical literature known as the Mishna which was laws allegedly passed down orally and the Gemara which was a commentary on the Mishna and a compilation of accepted traditions. These combine to form the Babylonian Talmud. The Synagogues was instituted in order to conduct formal Jewish worship and to provide schooling and kept the national spirit of the Jewish people. The Jewish people studied the scriptures intensely. The captivity also truly united the Jews.

By 538 BC, Babylon passed into history and the Persian Empire took its place. Cyrus allowed the Jews to return to their home land. The Jews were now settled into Babylon so only a portion returned with only 74 Levites (Neh 7). Zerubbabel of the house of David led the people back to Palestine and found it a place of rubble and a mixed breed of corrupt Jews, the Samaritans. They worked together to restore the walls and gates and

once done, they gathered together and read the words of the Law. They re-established a covenant to observe the Law of Moses and not intermarry with the heathen nor travel on the Sabbath. (Ezra 1; 2) There were over 40,000 under Sheshbazzar, prince of Judah, governor of a province, returned, bringing with the sacred vessels of the Temple. Among them about 30,000 are specified (Ezra 2 and Neh 7) as belonging to the tribe of Judah, Benjamin and Levi. But many more remained in Babylon and integrated themselves into the life of the people living there. This was around 537 BC. The daily sacrifices were renewed and the feasts and fast were restored, but there was opposition from the people around the land and from the Samaritans. In 536 BC work on the New Temple was began and in 516 BC, they finished it. In 458 BC, Ezra set out for Jerusalem taking 1,800 Jews along with him.

4. Between the Two Testaments Period.

BC336 - He is succeeded by his son, Alexander the Great"

333 - Phrygia falls under Macedonian rule

333 - Israel comes under the rule of Alexander the Great

332 - Alexander takes the city of Tyre after siege

332- End of Phoenician empire

332 – Parts of Persian Empire fall to Alexander the Great

332 - Tyre falls to Alexander the Great

332 - Alexander the Great is welcomed in Egypt

332 - New city of Alexandria established.

331 - Alexander defeats Darius III at Arbela

331 - Persepolis burned by Alexander the Great

331 - Persians defeated at Gangamela

330 - Darius III is assassinated

330 - Alexander in control of Persia

327 - Second Samnite War, Roman troops are defeated

327 - Alexander begins invasion of India

324 - Alexander the Great dies (age 33)

323 - Lydia absorbed into the Seleucid kingdom

323 - Ptolemy Soter becomes pharaoh of Egypt

321 - Alexander's generals fight the "War of the Diadochi" over the conquered lands

321 - Hellenistic period begins

307 - Two of Alexander's generals rule Greece, (Antigonus I and Demetrius I)

305 - Seleucus I becomes king, founding Seleucid dynasty

301 - Phrygia becomes a part of the Seleucid empire

301 - Ptolemy I rules Palestine and Egypt

300 - Seleucus controls Iran, Mesopotamia, n. Syria and most of Asia Minor

297 - Lighthouse at Alexandria built

285 - Reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (Egypt)

278 -Three Hellenistic kingdoms developed

278 - Ptolemies in Egypt, Seleucids in Babylonia & Syria, and Antigonids in Macedonia

250 - Judea is part of Ptolemaic empire based in Egypt

250 - Hebrew Scriptures are translated into Greek (Septuagint)

246 - Ptolemy III rules in Egypt

239 - Egyptians introduce the concept of the leap year

229 - Dardanians invade Macedonia

223 - Antiochus III restores power to Seleucid Empire

221 - Philip V rules Macedonia

221 - Ptolemy IV Philopater rules in Egypt

205 - Rome and Macedonia sign a non-aggression pact

205 - Reign of Ptolemy V Epiphanes in Egypt

200 - Philip is forced to surrender Greece

198 - Judea under Antiochus III and IV

197 - Rome defeats Macedonian army under Philip V at Cynoscephalae

190 - Defeat of Syrian king Antiochus III by Romans

180 - Ptolemy VI Philometor rules in Egypt

175 - Antiochus IV Epiphanes becomes king of the Seleucid Empire

170 - Antiochus IV invades Egypt

168 - Macedonian Wars end, Rome begins to expand east

167 - Antiochus IV persecutes the Jews

164 - Judas Maccabaeus defeats the Syrians and frees Jerusalem

160 - Judas Maccabaeus is killed in battle against Syrians. His brother Jonathan leads the Jews

157 - Judaea becomes independent

150 - Macedonian revolt led by Andriscus defeats a Roman legion

149 - Fourth Macedonian war, Macedon is conquered and becomes a Roman province

148 - Rome puts down a Macedonian revolt

147 - Greece falls under Roman control

148 - *Macedonia and Greece are annexed* by Rome

The decree of Cyrus to let the Jews return home was confirmed by Darius I (521 - 486 BC). Artaxerxes or the biblical Ahasuerus (464 to 412 BC) in his seven year of reign sent Ezra to Jerusalem to deal with a problem in the organization of the Jews' religion. Then in the king's 20th year, he sent Nehemiah as Governor of Judaea. There was another mention of 'Darius the Persian' in Neh 12:22 but no other historical evidence is given until Luke 2:1, 400 years after the administration of Nehemiah. In addition, there were no prophets raised up until John the Baptist. The Persian Empire lasted for 100 years after the time of Nehemiah. There also became a distinct separation of the Jews and Samaritans with the establishment of the Temple in Jerusalem. The Samaritans' temple was on Mount Gerizim overlooking the ancient city of Shechem or modern Nablus, where even today a tiny remnant of the Samaritans still survives and carries on their distinctive worship. Around 358 to 338 under Artaxerxes III there was an incident in Palestine that seemed to involve the Jews which resulted in yet another number of Jews being deported, this time to Hyrcania near the Caspian Sea where they formed a settlement.

As already mentioned the position of high priest became more and more important while in captivity. After Nehemiah, the high priest tended more and more to be regarded as the leader of the people and continued through the Greek and Hasmonean rulers' period. Traces of the Persian influence can also be seen in the Apocryphal Book of Tobit and in the eschatological imagery of the Book of Enoch. During the Roman period, this continued as the High Priest retained the title of leader and as president of the Sanhedrin, that person had great power until 70 AD. Then, A Jewish Temple on Elephantine Island near Aswan was destroyed in 411 BC. The outpost had long been established to protect the southern frontier of Egypt. They had been stationed there since 590 BC. This was a Jewish outpost/colony. There were letters sent back and forth requesting permission to help rebuild their Temple. Other letters gave instructions on how to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Shortly after this, the Persian Empire was conquered by Alexander the Great. In 333 BC, Alexander began his move into Asia. His first major battle was at Granicus in Asia Minor which opened Syria up to him. In 331 his army marched south to Egypt. Tyre took seven months to conquer. The Persian Army met the Greek forces at Arbela, east of the Tigris. This marked the end of the Persian Empire. Five years later, Alexander marched east and invaded parts of India but afterward he had to return to Macedonia where he died. His empire was split up into Egypt with its capital at Alexandria and Syria with its capital at Antioch. The Ptolemies ruled in Egypt with Syria using the name, Seleucus, and the dynasty of the Seleucids. The Ptolemies secured control of Palestine at Gaza in 312 BC. The Ptolemies gave the Jews freedom of life and worship of God. Other happenings in Egypt: after the city of Alexandria was founded, many Jews moved there. A Greek translation was eventually made for those Jews living there called the Septuagint which means 70. As a result of this, gentiles were also able to read the Old Testament scriptures. The very early missionaries use this version when they went about the Greek world preaching Jesus. Other Greek influences focused around wisdom literature of that time. This related well to the literature of Israel since the early days of the Bible through to Solomon. But around 198 BC Antiochus III at Panion, near the head waters of the Jordan gained control of Palestine. Nothing immediately changed for the Jews until Antiochus IV between 175 and 164 BC decided to do away with the Jewish ways of life and religion and completely change Palestine to the Greek way of life. In 168 BC, he stopped the Temple worship at Jerusalem and replaced it with a pagan deity. The writer of the Maccabees described this as, 'an abomination of desolation'. This only increased patriotic spirit in the Jews. Persecution under Antiochus Epiphanes gave the Jews a resurrection hope because they had never before been persecuted for their faith. So the doctrine of the resurrection was firmly established in the Jewish faith, except for the Sadducees. This doctrine was evident from as far back as the book of Exodus. As mentioned the Sadducees were the conservative group and associated themselves with the priestly family. As mentioned in Acts 23:8, they also denied the spirit world. They were the

majority party in the Sanhedrin and supported the Roman occupation. After 70 AD, the Sadducee party disappeared. The Pharisees had the favour of the will of the people. The time between the Testaments reveals a gathering impetus toward the coming of Christ.

So the Maccabeans under Maccabaeus rose up against Greek control. In 162 the Seleucids under Lysias granted the Jews full restoration of religious autonomy. But the Maccabeans now wanted total freedom, so years later under the name of the Hasmoneans, a priestly family, Judaea became politically independent for 80 years. They took control of as much land as they could. John Hyrcanus (135-105 BC) conquered Galilee and Samaria. He destroyed the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim. He also took Idumaea in the south and forced all the people to become Jews. Jannaeus took over in 104 to 78 BC who ruled as an Oriental despot. He also added several Greek cities to his kingdom. But in 133 BC, the Roman Republic had gained control of Asia Minor and by 63 BC the Roman general Pompey took control of Palestine. He declared Hyrcanus to be the lawful ruler of the Jews. Aristobulus refused and after a three months siege, Judaea became part of the Roman Empire. Then in 47 BC, Antipater was appointed lieutenant governor of Judaea by Julius Caesar. After that Herod, his son, received the title 'King of Judaea' and ruled Judaea as a friend and ally to the Roman people from 37 to 4 BC. He was of the family, Idumaeans, originally Edomite. Octavian and Antony fought the final of a series of Roman civil wars in 31 BC and then Antony divorced his wife and married Queen Cleopatra who was the last ruler of the Ptolemaic dynasty. They both eventually committed suicide which ended the last dynastic period of Egypt. Octavian then ruled the Roman world until AD 14 as the first Roman emperor under the name Augustus. Much more detail on the Hasmonean Dynasty and the events surrounded them follows but first this is a list of the Jewish High Priests from 200 B.C to the Reign of Herod the Great

1. *Simon II the Just, 220-190 B.C.*
2. *Onias III, 190-174 B.C.*
3. *Jason/Jeshua, 175-172 B.C.*
4. *Menelaus, 172-162 B.C.*

5. *Alcimus, 162-156 B.C.*
6. *Jonathan, 153-142 B.C.*
7. *Simon, 142-135 B.C.*
8. *John Hyrcanus I, 134-104 B.C.*
9. *Aristobulus I, 104-103 B.C.*
10. *Alexander Jannaeus, 103-76 B.C.*
11. *Hyrcanus II, 76-67 B.C.*
12. *Aristobulus II, 67-63 B.C.*
13. *Hyrcanus II, 63-40 B.C.*
14. *Antigonus, 40-37 B.C.*

Before the days of Herod the Great, the high priest was the head of the priesthood. They were usually chosen from one of the leading aristocratic families in Jerusalem. They were organized into twenty four units or groups, each serving one week in the Temple. Each unit was further divided into houses which were under the prominent families in Jerusalem. Their main task involves providing sacrifices in the Temple and was helped by the Levites. On such group was the Sopherim. This was another name for scribe. The Scribes will be dealt with in other sections of the article.

But now, Palestine had passed from Egyptian to Syrian domination during the reign of Seluucus IV. Afterward Antiochus IV, Epiphanes was determined to do away with Judaism for Hellenism. This ultimately led to the Maccabean rising. Antiochus IV was seen as a madman or despot intoxicated to the lack of reason. He seemed adhere to cruelty and recklessness. With the institution of Menelaus as high priest, a terrible period of internal misrule and external troubles followed. The Temple was even plundered of some of its vessels. Any rebellion from the Jews was met with vengeance and slaughter of the Jews. Next, an expedition against Judaea by Antiochus was started in order to do away with Judaism. Thus all sacrifices, the service of the Temple, and the observance of the Sabbath and of feast day were prohibited. The Holy Scriptures was destroyed and people were forced to take part in heathen rites as the Temple then was dedicated to Jupiter Olympius.

This gave rise to the Asmonaeans under the leadership of a Person known as Mattathias. But it was his son, Judas Maccabee that won victory

after victory for three years. In the last days before the final battle late 164 BC Antiochus Epiphanes had died. His successor, Lysias wasn't happy with surrendering Palestine without a last stand. With 100,000 footmen, 20,000 horsemen and 32 war elephants ended in a treaty acknowledging Syrian as overlord but securing freedom of conscience and worship. The Chasidim wasn't happy with the agreement. It should be noted that the early Chasidim were more associated with the Rabbinical piety; however the later Chasidim developed more extreme views which later came to be the Pharisees and Sadducees during the time of Jonathan. But when Demetrius came to the throne in Syria, he appointed Alcimus High Priest which brought Syria and Judea closer to a permanent separation. However, Judas Maccabee entered into a defensive and offensive alliance with Rome to secure a temporary advantage however he died in battle against the Syrians before this was confirmed. The following war lasted seven years.

The Grecian party continued to get help from Syria. Jonathan and his army held position in Jordan. Another treaty was signed and with it the Asmonaeon party gained. Alexander Balas was a rival king in Syria and Jonathan took his side which in turn after Alexander coming to power gave him a crown of gold and purple mantle and appointed him High Priest. The Pharisees disliked this much but the support of Jonathan by the Syria soon changed again. The government of Judaea then designated Simon's as high priest. Simon tried to turn the disputes in Syria to some good. He consolidated the rule he acquired. Simon then worked toward dismissing the Greican party in Judaea and providing peace and security to the Jews. Simon also established formal relations with Rome and the setting up of an embassy in Jerusalem and Rome. Life looked better and ever before so the Jews made Simon the spiritual and secular chief declaring it hereditary. Simon's son, John Hyranus I who subjected Samaria and conquered Idumaea and made them proselytes through circumcision. He renewed a treaty with Rome and further destroyed Samaria. At the point in time the chasidim or national party had completely divided into the Pharisee and Sadduces. Hyranus became a member of the Sadducee party. It was also evident as the time of the growing hatred of the Maccabees. Hyranus appointed his wife to succeed

him in the secular government on his death but Aristobulus his son put his mother who soon starved to death in prison. His reign only lasted a year. On the death of Aristobulus I, his widow, Alexandra Solome released his brothers from prison and married the eldest, Alexander Jannaeus who became the High Priest. Salome managed the internal affairs of the nation while her husband managed the priest hood and extended Judea along the seacoast. But Jannaeus accidentally poured water out of a sacred vessel on the ground instead of upon the altar. The worshippers went into frenzy over this and pelted him with citrons. This created rebellion whereby 6,000 people died. One insurrection followed another with another 5,000 people dying. Jannai asked the Pharisaic party what would be their conditions of peace and they replied, 'his death'. In this, Jannai also replied by nailing 800 of them to crosses and then butchered their wives and children in front of them where they hung. Afterwards the Pharisees fled and the Sanhedrin ceased as a ruling power and became an ecclesiastical authority. Before Simeon death, he made regular school attendance for all children compulsory. The nine years of Queen Salome reign were the Golden Age of the Pharisees.

During that time the tyranny of the Pharisees reigned. Salome appointed her eldest son, Hyrcanus II to head the secular government but the Pharisees still ruled the country. They governed with harshness, insolence and recklessness of a fanatical religious group with unlimited power. This led many of the upper classes to join the party of the Sadducees. Aristobulus II was the younger son of Salome.. Hyrcanus II rule was disputed by his brother Aristobulus II. Then Antipas or Antipater was appointed. At this time Pompey was on a victorious march through Asia when both parties appealed to him for help. Aristobulus failed in his effort to side with Pompey and siege to Jerusalem. Those that supported Hyrcanus surrendered the City but those of Aristobulus held out in the Temple where 12,000 met their death. The Temple was plundered as a result of this. At this point, Antipater was made a Roman citizen and appointed his son Phasael Governor of Jerusalem, and Herod governor of Galilee. Herod stopped a nationalist rising in Galilee and killed Ezekias, its leader. This put him in the favour of Sextus Caesar, the Governor of Syria,

a relative to the Emperor. The Pharisaic condemned him and the Sanhedrin accused him of this. Herod appeared before the Sanhedrin and Hyrcanus headed the meeting and persuaded Herod to withdraw from Jerusalem. Sextus Caesar then named him Governor of Coele Syria and some ten years later Hyrcanus and members of the Sanhedrin was victims to this revenge. Rome declared Antigonus their enemy and appointed Herod King of Judaea in 40 BC. In this the Asmonaean family was finished. Their dynasty had lasted 130 years.

5. The Roman and Greek World of the New Testament Period

The New Testament is a product of Hellenism brought about by Alexander and his vision of a one world city, a Greek Cosmopolis. He encouraged his people to integrate with the people of conquered lands. He also built some thirty or so Greek cities throughout his new empire. The upper classes spoke Greek, wore Greek dress and absorbed Greek learning and did everything that was Greek.

At the same time, Roman history had already begun. First there was the early monarchy of 753 BC, then the Roman Republic established in 509 BC and then the Roman Empire that came much later. With the Roman Empire, came corruption, social dislocation and moral decline. Family life gave way to childless marriages, divorce, adultery, prostitution and pederasty. The ending result of this was an empire controlled by Augustus who made many reforms throughout the Empire. Other emperors were less capable. Tiberius was unpopular and led a life of debauchery on the island of Capri. He appointed Pontius Pilate as prefect of Judea. Next, Gaius Caligula wanted to be addressed as a god and recklessly spent the treasury money. Claudius took over but was also eventually assassinated by his wife Agrippina. Then Nero became emperor and again things started to deteriorate. He was tossed out in 69 AD. However, Vespasian, an experienced commander who had been ordered to Palestine to stop the Jewish uprising, was declared emperor. There was ten years of peace. His son, Titus concluded the war with the Jews and then reigned as emperor for two years. Vespasian had a second son who was an evil tyrant. He had his enemies murdered, taxed the empire heavily,

called himself divine and persecuted the Christians. His reign was the background of the Book of Revelations. Some of Rome best emperors followed: Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Antonius Plus and the Stoic philosopher Marcus Aurelius.

In Rome, the saying was, 'you were what you wore.' You were what you wore was the rule of law in Rome. Senators were the highest class and considered equal to the emperor in dress. They wore a broad purple stripe on their tunic, particular sandals and a gold ring. Their relatives and family were allowed the same. The dress indicated who the person was. This also applied to women. The dress of the first century married woman was a non-transparent fabric, falling in folds from the shoulder. There was a marriage veil was draped over her head called a mantle. For the young unmarried girl, she wrapped the mantle around her body, drawing it across both her breasts. Her left hand hung as her side. High class prostitutes wore see through provocative clothing. But then there was a move of the so called 'new woman' which consisted of married women wearing see through clothing. Along with the clothing came jewellery and hairstyles. The look of the prostitute and the married woman became indistinguishable. For this, Augustus made adultery a criminal offense. Convicted adulteresses had to wear the dress of the prostitute from then on. There were other dictates for married women such as appropriate hair style and in Greece and other parts of the East, there were dress wardens that decided what was appropriate or not. In many special functions, the wearing of transparent clothing was unacceptable.

This was also discussed in 1st Timothy 2:9-15, where Timothy stated that the Christian women must adorn themselves modestly and sensibly with seemly apparel. Christian wives were not to adorn



[dreamstime.com](https://www.dreamstime.com)

© 141007866 - 3 - Shutterstock

themselves with the braided hair that represented loose living woman or gold or pearls that made them look like prostitutes. The Christian wife would be saved through child bearing if she continues in faith and love and holiness. This was said because of the problem of abortions in those days. These as pointed out in Timothy were said to counteract the so called move of the 'new woman' in those days.

For education, from the time of Alexander the Greek, the Greek ruling class set up training institutions throughout Asia Minor, Persia and Babylonia, Egypt. Greek education started from seven years of age and continued to twenty years of age. This also included civic and military education. It seems that very few women continued on past this level however women seemed to have much more freedom in the Greek and Roman world than there was in Mesopotamian world. Afterwards, a person could continue with future studies in rhetoric, philosophy or medicine. Later when Rome came to power, they took Greek culture and education, romanised it and thus used it through out the Empire. The stages consisted of Primary Education which consisted basically of reading and writing and perhaps very basic maths. Classes were teacher centred with Children expected to memorize what they learned. Students were around the age of eleven or twelve when they finished primary school. Fewer students continued into the secondary stage of studies thus fewer schools existed. A wider education was given in the secondary school such as music, astronomy, philosophy, gymnastics, geometry and arithmetic and even literature and sometimes other topics were taught such as drawing, optics, history, medicine and law. Greek writers included Homer and others plus Latin authors such as Virgil, Horace and Terence with contemporary poets. So the education for the most part consisted of repetition, both mechanical and imitative. Rhetorical, the third stage of school started after the age of 15 years. Often these would be taught by an accomplished Orator, a person skilled in speaking. Thus learning to speak properly and writing were high on the list in their education. This involved mechanical speaking, research and organization of information. During the second stage of education, students concentrated on reading poetry, in particular the Homeric epics, The Iliad and the Odyssey. They

read, interpreted, and memorized them. The tertiary stage as already mentioned began around fifteen years of age. Usually by this time boys were the only ones who continue studying. The writing of different genres was emphasized. These genres included learning certain skills and styles which were broken up into the progymnasmata. Fables were one such progymnasmata and the narrative, another, which taught who, what, when, where, now and why with qualities such as clarity, brevity and plausibility. By the third progymnasma, the student was already writing complex compositions. There were as many as 14 progymnasma which students had to go through. Some progymnasma taught conformity and authority while others taught characterization. Eventually, the students turned to writing speeches called declamations. The eventual results were to have writers who could produce a variety of genres.

The fourth level could lead to a person spending time at a particular centre of culture. Athens still held schools of philosophy which came from famous philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, Antisthenes and Epicurus. Alexandria also had famous schools in the subjects of zoological and botany and a library of a million volumes and research facilities. The next school education level was in technical education. These involved specialized education. This would include legal experts, architects, engineers, surveyors, doctors, etc. Eventually, this education became available even to the masses.

And like the Greeks, the Jews were scattered throughout the Empire providing education of their culture and studying the Scriptures. Along with the synagogues, Jewish schools were the centre of the community. Compared to the Greeks and Romans, Jewish children received a lot of training at home toward their culture and Scriptures. At the age of six or seven a Jewish child would enter 'Beth ha-sepher or 'house of the book'. There the child would learn to read and learn the Scriptures. Before AD70 there were 480 synagogues in Jerusalem with each having a school. Like the Greek education, much of the Jewish children learned by rote, especially the books of the Bible. On the Sabbath in every synagogue the Law was read and expounded with the scribes giving sermonic instructions. This, in itself was a form of adult education.

Most Jewish boys received an education up to the age of thirteen. After the age of thirteen, a boy would go to the beth ha-midrash, the 'house of instruction'. They would study the halakhah, regulative legal guidance and the haggadah, interpretative homiletically narration. Memory and Manuscript were codified in written form as the Mishnah. The Pharisees were primarily the sect who attached such great importance to the traditions of the elders. The Sadducees held only that the scriptural text to be binding. The Essenes had one monastic college, that of Qumran with its own methods of interpretation and its body of esoteric doctrine. Most of the schools were Pharisaic. Paul studied in the school of Hillel and under the Gamaliel. Jews as part of their schooling insisted on manual skills. Without such, a person was considered to have an imbalance in their education. Before AD 70, the Jewish nation was the most advanced educationally.

Greco-Roman Entertainment consisted of games like marbles, draughts, board games similar to backgammon and chess. There were also ball games. Augustus had great displays of chariots; athletics, wild animal hunting, gladiators and pitched battles. Animals were used for various reasons, such as racing and blood sport. This was provided to keep the populous happy as they weren't permitted to be involved in politics. Criminals were often thrown in with wild animals as punishment for their crimes. Under Nero, many of these games became very sadistic using Christians for sport. The gymnasium was made available with traditional Greek education. Athletic games involving foot racing were common not only with the Greeks but also with the Romans. In addition, there was boxing and wrestling. Theatres were another form of entertainment with themes of lover affairs and adultery with actions being indecent and grotesque. There were comedies and tragedies also. Musical accompaniment was used as a background in events. Two most common instruments were the cithara and the flute. Good teachers of music and dancing were also in high demand as this type of entertainment was sought after.

Looking at the chronology of the times of the Greek and Roman world, we see that it gives us a condensed picture of what was what. In

Rome 98 BC, Lucretius was the most famous of the Roman Epicureans. He was the author of 'On the Nature of Things'. Epicureanism was one of the most notable influences the Greek world bestows on Roman civilization. Lucretius' poetry explains the Epicurean beliefs of obtaining the "good life" through peace of mind and disbelief in the fear of the supernatural and any afterlife.

82 BC: Rome - Following the death of Marius, the ruthless aristocrat Sulla is appointed dictator and retires after three years. Because Sulla granted full control of the Roman Empire to the aristocracy, his efforts are challenged by two leaders in defence of the Roman people, Julius Caesar and Pompey. These two leaders join their efforts to seize the Roman government but soon become rivals.

70 BC: Rome - A close friend of Horace, the poet VIRGIL (or VERGIL) authors The Eclogues and The Aeneid. He is later considered a prophet of CHRISTIANITY in the Middle Ages. He dies in 19 BC.

65 BC: Rome - Horace authors the Odes, which glorify Roman imperialism. Horace's literature exemplifies the fusion of Epicureanism and STOICISM. He dies in 8 BC.

52 BC: Rome - Pompey is elected as sole consul by the Senate, and Caesar is declared an enemy of the Roman Republic. Caesar, who at first was stationed in Gaul, marches into Rome in 49 BC, and in 48 BC, the two men warred against each other at Pharsalus in Greece. With the defeat of Pompey, Caesar campaigns in Egypt and Asia Minor before returning to Rome.

46 BC: Rome - Julius Caesar was serving in Spain as proconsul in 61 BC. He wanted to be Consul of the Republic but the Senators were opposed to him. He came up with the idea of the First Triumvirate which were made up of Pompey, commander in chief of the army and Marcus Licinius Crassus who was the wealthiest man in Rome and himself and tri- leaders of the Republic. He had a law passed that gave lands to 20,000 of the cities' poor. Because of support from the wealthy, he established a leading power amongst the three. He married Calpurnia in 59 BC and for five years, he was given rule over Cisalpine, Transalpine Gaul and Illyricum with four legions for five years from 58 to 54 BC. In 55 BC, he entered

Britain and defeated the Britons in 54 BC. By the end of 52 BC, all of Gaul was under Roman control. Pompey and Crassus were given over to Consuls in 55 BC and Spain and Syria were their charge. After Crassus death in Parthia, the Triumvirate ended. Julius Caesar, last leader of the Roman Republic had become dictator for life by 49 BC. Many of the Senate felt as if they were being treated as servants by him so they began to think of him as the enemy of the Republic. But many people outside the government liked him because he brought about many reforms and improved living standards. He reorganized the government and lowered taxes. He gave people paid work by ordering building projects. He made citizens of many from the colonials. So he entered the senate that day in 44 BC. He was warned by a fortune-teller that he would experience danger in his future. Some 60 senators had already planned to assassinate him. So a group gathered around him and drew their daggers and stabbed him. His own friend was amongst the murders and afterwards they were forced to flee because of the uprising it caused. A power struggle follows and eventually Antony, Lepidus and Octavius ruled under a Triumvirate but by 31 BC, Octavius ruled Rome alone.

42 BC: Rome - Having learned of Caesar's death while stationed in Gaul, Octavian returns to Rome to collect his inheritance as sole heir to his granduncle's empire. Here, the Roman Empire is well established through the leadership of Augustus Caesar, the adopted son of Julius Caesar. The Second Triumvirate was made up of Octavian, Lepidus and Mark Antony. The Roman Republic had slowly gained momentum over the years but its influence only affected The Italian Peninsula at first and then various other lands such as Gaul and Spain. Octavian took Rome from a republic to an empire. Later, Antony divorced Octavian's sister to marry Cleopatra and then Octavian declared war and won a victory at Actium in 31 BC, but Antony escaped to Egypt where both he and Cleopatra committed suicide. After this Octavian decided to keep Herod on as King of the regent. As the Emperor grew in power, the Senate declined in power. It was he who ordered the census that caused Joseph and Mary to go to Bethlehem. He ruled for 41 years and during that time he divided the Empire into 40 provinces each with their own governor

whose job it was to maintain order and collect taxes. The people liked him because he brought order out of chaos which had followed the immediate years of Julius Caesar. His personality was magnified and publicized through the so-called imperial cult, a complex group of ceremonies that instilled loyalty to the ruler. He reduced the armies with half made up of Roman citizens and half provincials. Augustus also had an effect on literature of the time. By the time he died, the Empire stretched from the Atlantic to the Euphrates and from Germany to North Africa. The Roman Empire experienced 200 years of peace for the most part. From 27 BC to 180 AD became known as 'Pax Romana' or the 'Peace of Rome.' Octavian died at Nola in Campania when he was 76 years of age in AD 14.

31 BC: Rome - Antony and Cleopatra are defeated by Octavian, ensuring the prosperity of Greek ideals without threat from the eastern principles of despotism. His victory begins a new Roman era, called the Principate or Early Empire. The Senate and army bestowed the name of Augustus and emperor ("victorious general") upon Octavian, and he is commonly referred to as Augustus. Having gained more land for Rome than any other ruler before him, Augustus dies in 14 CE with his rule having lasted 44 years.

1 AD: Rome - The first four books of the New Testament (written later) are the only surviving account of Jesus' career which consisted of preaching love of God and one's neighbour, healing the sick, teaching humility by example and professing the end of the world and the establishment of heaven and salvation through the forgiveness of sin.

There was peace in Rome and this peace came about through Augustus who headed up the new world Empire. The empire wanted to draw people together through various ways: imperial citizenship, customs, dress and language. There was no racial or colour bar. With Roman citizenship went Roman customs. The blessings of imperial rule were shown in other ways: peace, valour, fortune, abundance, and providence. So by the time Christianity came about, it was a prepared Empire that received it. It was an empire that lasted for four hundred years.

Augustus adopted emperor-worship also as a tool to link people together. Such deification of a person was not unnatural. These enable

provincials to present their petitions to the emperor. Jews were exempt from this and Christians would not conform to it, as this would be denial of their faith. Roads also brought people together. Road building was a regular task for the soldier when they weren't busy fighting. Roads were built to last and one can see even today the remains of Roman roads. The Mediterranean had been cleared of pirates by Pompey. For two centuries travellers could sail the seas without fear of trouble. However, storms made sailing dangerous. From September 14th to November 11th, navigation stopped for fear of storms. The Etesian winds from the North West made swift voyages between Rome and Alexandria and return. Christian travellers for the sake of spreading the word travelled the roads and sea.

Cities of the Empire were given different degrees of freedom. The Roman colonies, like Philippi and Corinth with large communities of Roman citizens had the most. Paul preached the good news of Christ in these cities. Along with the Jews, there were God fearing gentiles who listened to Paul and another plus in the east, Greek was spoken in all of the cities. In the first century the Greek were people of a great empire. They were far superior to the Roman in intellect and education. Their culture and customs even overshadowed those of the Romans. Rome captured Greece but Greece captured its conqueror through its culture.

The Roman world was also a world of recognized slavery. Slavery made up a large part of the population in Rome. Often they were abused and over worked. However, slavery wasn't the lowest, there were the poor people. But slavery was an accepted 'thing' as there were no movements to help abolish it. Some slaves were allowed to make money and even to buy themselves free while others such as the emperor's slaves were influential. Many of the early Christians were slaves. If a slave caused trouble and especially if a slave murdered someone in the household, all the slaves in the household were killed. Other groups consisted of the various guilds that were similar to our lobby groups today. They flourished in all the cities. These were voluntary associations of people who had common interests and perhaps a desire for a commercial protection and security. There were burial clubs, late diners, late sleepers, silversmiths, etc. The

city inhabitants were as materialistic as people are today. They enjoyed comforts and luxuries. It was a time when money could be made easily and quickly. The inhabitants of Athens were described by Pauls to be 'uncommonly scrupulous' in things of religion. There were so many gods of so many religions, which were essentially immoral. Demonology was rampant. Demons were believed to be an intermediary between a god and the individual person. Astrology was another force in the eastern cities. Coming from Babylonia astrologers were a sought after commodity. The Emperor Tiberius had his own private astrologer. The Emperor and other people of the day had astrologers as advisors. And along with astrology came witch craft. When Paul was at Ephesus, those who become believers came and openly confessed that they had been using magic spells. They burnt their books openly. There were also the philosophers. Philosophy and philosophers of the time were more interested in the conduct of an individual. During Paul's time, there were philosophers of the Epicureans and of the Stoics. The Epicurus taught that happiness consisted in freedom from disturbance and physical pain must be endured and violent passions, love, hatred, and ambitions are to be avoided and that the soul ceases to exist after death. However, for the stoic, the universe itself was God. The spirit of the universe was alive and rational and showed itself as reason and order in the world so man had in himself a part of the divine breath of god. A number of philosophies gained popularity from Hellenistic thinking such as Platonic 'dualism' were one view. This stated that the transient material world we perceived is only a shadow of the true reality of the eternal world of abstract ideas known through reason. This is reflected in the New Testament when the earthly realm is described as a shadow of the heavenly realm in the Book of Hebrews. As a result of this, another widespread religious movement surfaced in the Roman Empire, Gnosticism. This wasn't a single religion but a phenomenon independent of, but yet interacting with Judaism and early Christianity. The perception in Gnostic view is that the world is an evil place not created by a good God but by an inferior deity. Evil powers try to keep everyone in a state of 'sleep' or 'drunkenness' in order to hold the evil world together.

How did this affect the Jewish world of Jesus? One can look first at the struggle which the Roman Empire had experienced, to come to the position of where they were in the 1st century. There's the economic view which considers the international trade, the taxation and body of slave labour contained within the empire. Then there's the sociological view that looks at the pluralistic assortment of ethnic peoples, government officials, merchants, business people, slaves and other minorities. Finally, there's the view of its religious life. Each one of these points had their affect on Judaism. For Judah, it was now a different world. But Christianity was also very different than the cults, religions and philosophies of the time but not as restricted like Judaism. It was not a myth, Jesus was real. Christianity refused to compromise with Rome's polytheism. Christianity required repentance for past sins and gave assurance for forgiveness through Jesus Christ. All of this was a new message for the people in vast ocean of the Roman world. It brought about a supernatural change in a person's life. It was a change in love, goodness, hope and salvation.

6. Jewish Literature between 200 BC to 100 AD

There are six different works classed as literature of the Second Jewish Commonwealth. Some of these come from the Qumran library. The second set of works comes from a period after the destruction of Jerusalem. The third set is the works of Josephus. The time of the first set stretches from 200 BC to 100 AD. The first book is a work known as the 'First Enoch', an Ethiopic version based on the Greek version. The original language was Semitic and it was discovered in Cave 4 at Qumran. It consists of five parts: journeying to other worlds, similitude, courses of the heavenly bodies, world history seen in dream visions and a history of the world divided into ten weeks. In the Similitude of Enoch, it talks about an Elect One of righteousness and faith, who have a dwelling place under the wings of the Lord of Spirits. He was named before the sun and the signs were created, before the stars of heaven were made and were a support of the righteous and a light to the nations and the executor of divine judgement upon the ungodly.

Another book, the Book of Jubilees presents the Pentateuch history from the creation of the world to the Israelites entry into Canaan in fifty jubilee periods of forty nine years each. This places the Exodus at the date of 2410 and the entry into Canaan in 2450. The work is written in Ethiopic. Fragments of the Hebrew original have been found in Caves 1, 2 and 4 at Qumran. The main purpose is to show the exclusive use of a solar calendar of 364 days. This kind of calendar was used by the Qumran community. More will be said of the Jewish calendar and its influence on the Jews of the first century. The next book mentioned is the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs. These works have come down through Greek, Armenian and Slavonic copies. The original language was Hebrew and/or Aramaic, in which the work was first composed in the second or first century BC. Besides having a special emphasis on the duty of brotherly love, there's also an ethical point that pervades the Testaments. The Testaments denounce hatred and provide hope and goodwill towards the Gentiles. The Fourth book is the Psalms of Solomon. This is a collection of eighteen hymns. They are regarded as Pharisaic writings more than anything else. Some ascribe them to the Qumran sect. The poems point to the time after the Roman conquest in 63 BC. Like the Habakkuk commentary they apply to the devotion and aspiration of certain pious people. The Assumption of Moses is the fifth book. The work is only in one Latin manuscript and was translated from a Greek version which was based on a Semitic original. In it, Moses charges Joshua to anoint the books of the law and place them in jars which God made. The final book is the Ascension of Isaiah. This consists of two Christian parts and one Jewish part. This was put together by a Christian editor in the second century AD. The Jewish part records Isaiah's martyrdom and tells how Isaiah avoids the wickedness of Manasseh's reign. He left the capital for Bethlehem and then withdrew to the hill country.

The destruction of the city and temple encouraged a new perspective in Jewish apocalyptic. The Apocalypse of Ezra and the Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch tell of certain revelations given to Ezra and Baruch before the earlier Temple destruction. There is a prologue in which Ezra prophesizes the rejection of the Jews in favour of the Church. Also,

there's an epilogue containing denunciations of all people in general and certain nations because of their wickedness. The prologue and epilogue are later Christian additions. There are seven visions given to Ezra in Babylon. The first vision is dated the 30th year after the destruction of our city and Ezra is told that righteousness will be vindicated in the age to come. The 2nd vision gives assurances that the righteous who die before the new age dawns will suffer no disadvantages. The 3rd starts with a recapitulation of the six days of creation. The distresses of the world must be accepted if the bliss of the new world is to be enjoyed. The sixth vision describes the Messiah in the form of a man who rises from the sea and stands on Mount Zion. He destroys all his enemies with the fiery breath of his mouth and gathers the exiled tribes of Northern Israel and Judah.

The Apocalypse of Baruch is from a Syriac version. This book says that it had been revealed to Baruch in the 25th year of Jeconiah, king of Judah. But the period actually covers the second Jewish commonwealth downfall, not the first. Baruch sees a series of visions indicating that life will become more and more difficult for the righteous and iniquity will be increasingly rife. One passage about a fruitful vine represents a widespread theme of Jewish and early Christian expectation. It states that the heavenly Jerusalem, laid up with God before the earthly paradise was formed, will be revealed on earth and the holy vessels and other installations will be restored to their proper place.

Next we have the Works of Josephus. Accordingly, he was opposed to the Jewish revolt against Rome in AD 66. His longest works are the Jewish Antiquities, in twenty books, relating the history of his people from the earliest times to his own day. The works of Josephus are of incomparable value. He had access to the works of Nicolas of Damascus, historiographer to Herod the Great and official Roman records were given to him.

There has been a much more respectful study of the varieties of Jewish biblical and legal interpretations and customs in antiquity in Jewish literature. The author criticises Christians by saying that Jewish communities, literary works, ways of life and intellectual worlds are often facilely reduced to a simplistic synthesis convenient for Christian argument,

but irrelevant to Judaism. An adequate historical and comparative method requires that both early Jewish and Christian writings be analysed within a very broad framework which takes into account similarities and differences among documents, their traditions and their historical contexts. Neither the Gospel of Matthew nor any New Testament document uses the terms casuistry, legalism, ritualism or over development. For example, Paul doesn't attack the law; Matthew's Jesus disputes numerous positions and practices of Jewish leadership groups but he does not deny the validity of the law. Matthew agrees with Jewish literature and the Mišna that observance of the Sabbath rest was a common and important Jewish practice. The Bible forbids work on the Sabbath, but does not specify in detail the nature of work. Second Temple Jewish literature and society disputed over the norms of Sabbath observance. The Book of Jubilees and the Damascus Document promote their own peculiar norms for observance. Jubilees prohibit normal domestic chores which would naturally be done by people to whom He gave the Sabbath. The Damascus Covenant says you must not engage in idle talk, nor mingle with others, he should not walk abroad to do business, nor cause Gentiles to do business for him, nor discuss business. He should not go a thousand cubits from town and many more restrictions. Matthew's defends the action of the disciples picking corn on the Sabbath. And he argues that the principle of mercy justifies suspending the Sabbath law. The Biblical and Second Temple emphasis on refraining from work on the Sabbath continues in the Mišna. It was obvious that the restrictions of the Sabbath were different in different places. This was what Matthew was saying.

7. The Herod's

67 - 47 BC - Antipater of Idumaea. He was appointed governor of Idumea in 67 BC. The Herod's succeeded the Maccabees to power. Josephus spoke of his son was being a very wealthy person and of the Idumean race. This son was also named Antipater and was the father of Herod the Great. During the period of Aristobulus, Hyrcanus and Pompey the Great, Antipater had a lot of influence in Palestine and Judea. He was also the advisor to the Maccabean Queen Alexandra Salome. She died in 67 BC and left the Kingdom to her oldest son Hyrcanus. Hyrcanus

was a peaceful and mild person, completely opposite from his younger brother Aristobulus, who was a very strong willed and self seeking person. Aristobulus became king and high priest because Hyracnus didn't really want to rule. When a fight came about between Hyracnus and Aristobulus, Antipater encouraged Hyracnus to flee to Petra and seek help from the Arabian king (King Aretas III). In 65 BC, the Arabian army marched on Jerusalem to capture Aristobulus. Hyracnus won out with the help of Rome and Pompey's lieutenant, M. Scourus. Hyrcanus was made 'ethnarch' and remained high priest while Antipater was made chief minister of state. Scourus become legate for the province of Syria. The governor of Syria, Aulus Gabinius, broke Judea apart and Idumaea was given to Antipater. He married a woman named Cypros. He had four sons and a daughter: Phasael, Herod, Joseph, Pheroras and Salome. During the Roman civil war, Hyrcanus supported Pompey while Julius Caesar rescued Aristobulus. He was sent two Roman legions to begin a revolt in Judea. Shortly after, Aristobulus was poisoned. Pompey was defeated by Julius Caesar in 48 BC in Egypt. Antipater then supported Caesar in Alexandria and later became chief minister of Judea and gave him Roman citizenship and the right to collect taxes for Rome. He took the country away from Hyrcanus and gave it to his son Phasael as governor of Jerusalem and his second son Herod as governor of Galilee. Julius Caesar was murdered in 44 BC and Cassius went to war against Marc Antony getting help from Antipater and Hyrcanus. Antipater was poisoned in 43 BC by a man named Malichus leading an anti Roman group.

47-37 BC - Herod, Governor of Galilee: At 25 years of age, Herod became governor of Galilee. He was greatly admired. He captured the outlaw Ezekias and his followers. The Jews decided that he should be tried for killing Ezekias. He was acquitted on orders from Sextus Caesar, the governor of Syria. Herod was appointed governor of Coele-Syria. Herod then marched on Jerusalem being angry with Hyrcanus however no bloodshed happened. Sextus Caesar was murdered by Caecilius, an enemy of Julius Caesar and friend of Pompey, but he was then assassinated by Cassius, Brutus and their followers in March of 44 BC. By 42 BC, Marc Antony had defeated Cassius at Phillippi and in 41 BC; he went to

Antioch and confirmed Herod and Phasael and appointed them as tetrarchs of Judea. Phasael and Hyrcanus were captured by the Parthians and put in chains. Herod fled to Masada with his troops, relatives, and Mariamne and then moved to Petra, the capital of the Nabatean kingdom. The Parthians made Antigonus king. Hyrcanus and Phasael both died then, either murdered or mutilated.

37-25 BC - Herod I was son of Antipater and made king by the Romans in 40 BC. From Rome, he returned to Antioch with two legions and crushed the opposition in Galilee. Herod hated the Maccabean dynasty even though he was related by marriage to the dynasty. This was shown later by having his brother in law and several of his wives and sons executed. There was no question that Herod was a cruel person. Herod's slaughter of the infant boys in the New Testament shows the pathologic nature of Herod. He then moved on Antigonus who was in control of Jerusalem. Antigonus was taken to Rome in chains. The final death of Antigonus ended the Hasmonean rule of 129 years. Now, the kingdom of Herod I comprised Judea, Samaria, Galilee, Idumea, Batanea, and Peraea. All of this was about the size of David's kingdom. The Jews and especially the Pharisees hated him for his support of Rome. He forced heavy taxes on them, repressed their rebellions and encourage the Hellenistic way of life and culture in the land. He also supported the emperor cult. Even though he restored the Temple, the people also hated him for building pagan temples in other cities. Beside the Pharisees, the aristocratic followers of Antigonus gave him trouble. One time he had to execute forty five of the richest and took all their wealth. Then there was the family of the Hasmoneans with his mother in law, Alexandra, the chief trouble maker among them. Because of her political pressure, Herod placed Aristobulus, her sixteen year old son, as high priest. Eventually Herod had Aristobulus killed and Alexandra put in prison. His next opponent was Cleopatra of Egypt. Cleopatra had Antony to order him to fight against the Arabians hoping he might be killed but Herod defeated them. After Marc Antony lost a battle against Octavious, Herod eventually became friends with Octavious. Octavious then re-affirmed Herod as King. Because of enmity with his wife, he eventually had her killed.

Later between 25 to 4 BC Herod build a great theatre, amphitheatre and race course in honour of Caesar. Then in 24 BC, he built himself a palace and then rebuilt the Temple in Jerusalem in 20 BC. This replaced the second temple that was built after the return from captivity but it was not finished until long after Herod's death. He also became interested in Greek literature and art. Mariamme was actually a princess from the Hasmonaean dynasty of Kings that ruled Judah years before. Her two sons were Aristobulus and Alexander. They were nominated by Herod at a young age as his heirs. All three were later executed. Antipater, Herod's older son by his first wife Doris was later suspected of plotting against Herod life. So Herod now favours his other son, Herod, son of the second Mariamme, daughter of the high priest Simon Boethus, whom Herod married in 23 BC in place of the first Mariamme. But in 5 BC, this son fell from grace. Herod divorced the second Mariamme. Herod's youngest son, Andipias was now named heir to the throne. He was Herod's son by a secondary wife, a Samaritan woman name Malthake. Herod also had an older son by Malthake, Archelaus by name. So Herod divided his kingdom among his three sons: Antipas would rule Galilee and Peraea as tetrarch; Archelaus would rule Judaea including Samaria and Idumaea along with the title King. Philip, Herod's son by another wife, Cleopatra of Jerusalem, would be tetrarch of the area, east of the Lake of Galilee. Before his death, Christ was born and then taken down into Egypt. Herod was now seventy years old. Right before his death the people tried to take the Roman eagle down from the Temple gate but Herod took them captive and had them burned alive. Then he ordered all the notable Jews to the hippodrome and locked them up and ordered on his death, they were to be executed so that people would morn his death. Herod was buried in the Herodium, one of several fortress-palaces built by Herod the Great. It was artificially shaped, with everything placed inside its protected craterlike top.

4 BC - 39 AD - Archelaus in Matthew 2 was given Judea and Samaria. Augustus threw him out in 6 AD for being a tyrant and irritating the Jews and Samaritans. Herod Antipas became tetrarch of Galilee and Peraea in 4 BC to 39 AD. He built the Hellenistic city of Tiberias. He

married the former wife of his half brother Herod Philip, who brought her daughter Salome with her to Antipas' court. Herod Antipas had John the Baptist beheaded after a dance by Herodias daughter, Salome. John had accused Antipas of adultery. Pilate sent Jesus to see Herod who was in Jerusalem at the time of the Passover. Herod ordered the soldiers to mock Jesus. He died in exile in 39 AD. Herod's third son, Philip, was put in charge of the provinces between the Jordan and Damascus. The capital was Caesarea Philippi. He married Salome in the year 30 and died in 34 AD. Agrippa I, Herodias' brother, succeeded him. He acquired Antipas' tetrarchy in the year 40 and in 41 Judea and Samaria came under his rule. He finally reigned over the entire kingdom like his grandfather. Unlike his family, he tried to win the support of the more orthodox Jews. He put James to death and imprisoned Peter in Acts 12. He died in 44 AD. Agrippa wanted to return to Italy but did not have the money. He sailed for Alexandria after taking another large loan out from Protos. Agrippa owed money to the imperial treasury as well. At Alexandria Agrippa's wife, Cypros, obtained a loan from Alexander the alabarch. He eventually borrowed the money from Antonia and paid that debt off. He received another loan, a large one, to pay of Antonia from Samaritan freedmen of Tiberius. Wishing openly that Tiberius would die, he was overheard and put in chains and imprisoned for treason. After the death of Tiberius he was reinstated by Caligula and given the tetrarchy of Philip Lysanius. His son, Agrippa II 27-100 AD acquired a large kingdom north of Palestine. He was responsible for the Temple and appointed the high priests. In Acts 25, Paul spoke before him. His sister, Bernice was Titus' mistress and his sister Drusilla, married the procurator Felix. He heard Paul speak in Acts 24. The Herodian dynasty disappeared when he died.

4 BC – 39 AD - Antipas was the ablest of Herod's sons. He was also known in the New Testament, he became Tetrarch over Galilee and Perea, where both John the Baptist and Jesus had their ministry. He was a patron of the Hellenistic culture and also a builder. He built Tiberias on the Lake of Galilee. The city became a seat of rabbinical learning. He rebuilt Sepphoris which had been destroyed in the revolt of 4 BC. He also rebuilt Beth-haram of the Old Testament. He married the daughter of the

Nabataean king Aretas IV (9 BC - AD 40). Later he married Herodias who wanted him to divorce the Nabataean princess but she was able to return home before the divorce. So Herodias came to live with Antipas as his wife. The marriage was offensive in the eyes of the Jews because marriage between a man and his deceased brother's widow was forbidden, except in the special case of the levirate marriage where the deceased brother had left no child. Herodias and her first husband had a child called Salome. In Jewish law, a woman could not divorce her husband but Roman law was different, you could. Antipas was also responsible for the imprisonment and execution of John. He gave a banquet and his wife's daughter came and danced a sinuous and exotic dance that seemed to have excited Antipas very much. He said to her, whatever you ask I will give to you, up to half my kingdom. Encouraged by her mother, she ask for the head of John the Baptist. It was later that Antipas was wanted to kill Jesus but Jesus evaded him on several occasions. But Jesus was sent to Antipas when he was arrested by the Jews. Antipas territory was attacked by Arabia in 36 AD but it was Tiberius who responded with a punitive attack on Aretas but this was called because Tiberius had died. Gaius succeeded to the throne. With the death of Tiberius, Agrippa re-surfaced. On Philip's death his tetrarch was given to Agrippa and eventually the title of King. Antipas also wanted to become King with the persuasion of his wife and went to Rome to request it. However Agrippa sent a letter telling Gaius that Antipas has built up an arsenal enough to equip 70,000 soldiers. He was sentenced to Lyons and exiled there in Gaul. Everything of his was handed over to Agrippa in 39 AD. Herodias decided to go into exile with her husband and they were never heard of again.

27 – 100 AD - His son, Agrippa II (27-100 A.D.), never ruled in Jerusalem; however he acquired a kingdom to the North of Palestine as an inheritance from the Romans. As already mentioned the Jews only came in contact with him because he had supervision of the temple and appointed the high priests. His sister Drusilla, married to the procurator Felix, heard Paul speak (Acts 24). With Agrippa II's death, the Herodian dynasty disappeared from the stage of history.

8. Judea and First Century Jew:

This section provides a close look at the life of the first century Jew and how history had shaped their lives. The Land of Israel was the land promised to the Abraham. The geography becomes important only in reference to the history of Israelites and the coming of Christ. This section acknowledges the many different aspects by which the society interacted with. There was Jerusalem itself along with the many small towns that dotted the countryside along with larger cities such as Damascus. The topography of the land had a special historical content about that reminded the Jews of the happening in their history. Then there were the different and intriguing political and religious parties such as the Scribes, Pharisees, and Priests which the everyday Jewish person engaged with. There were historical reminders even associated with city water supply and aqueducts. Even the tax collectors had their hated interaction with the Jewish society.

Starting off we take a brief look at the topography of Palestine and the surrounding nations. There were twelve provinces and Tetrarch in Palestine: Judea, Samaria, Galilee, Iturea, Abilene, East and West Syria, Trachonitis, Batanea, Decapolis, Perea, Idumea and Nabatea. There were a total of seven Fortresses: Alexandrium, Cyprus, Herodium, Hrcania, Jerusalem, Machaerus and Masada. The New Testament Cities were Bethany, Bethlehem, Bethphage, Caesarea, Caesarea Philippi, Emmaus, Jericho, Joppa, Salim, and Samaria and another ten cities in Decapolis: Scythopolis, Hypos, Gadara, Pella, Philadelphia, Gerasa, Dion, Canatha, Damascus and Raphana. Bethany, Bethlehem, Bethphage, and the Dead Sea were all within six miles of Jerusalem. Emmaus, Jericho, Joppa, Jordan River, Samaria, and the Mediterranean Sea were within thirty seven miles of Jerusalem. Capernaum and the Sea of Galilee were around 80 miles from Jerusalem. But from Capernaum, Bethsaida was only 6 miles and Gennesaret was only 3 miles. Most other places: Caesarea Philippi, Cana, Nain, Nazareth, Tyre were around twenty or so miles from Capernaum. The valleys and plains numbered six altogether: Arabah, Gennesaret, Hinnom, Megiddo, Sharon and Sorek. Also, there were a number of mountains mentioned in the Bible: Mt. Abarim, Mt. Ararat, Mt. Bashan,

Mt. Carmel, Mt. Ebal, Mt. Gerizim, Mt. Gilboa, Mt. Gilead, Mt. Hermon, Mt. Hor, Mt. Horeb, Mt. Lebanon, Mt. Moriah, Mt. Nebo, Mt. Olivet, Mt. Pisgah, Mt. Seir, Mt. Sinai, Mt. Tabor and Mt. Zion. All of the cities, places and mountains had a special relationship with the Jews. They were where important things happened in their lives. At the mention of a river, a mountain or valley would bring up memories that affected related to some incident in their history.

The Jewish culture of ancient Israel was a male dominant culture. Rabbinic literature was filled with contempt for women. They were not to be acknowledged on the street or spoken to. They were not to be taught the law and if a woman uncovered her hair in public she was to be considered a harlot. They had only limited rights in the home. The man had to right to do what he wanted to do with his wife and daughters. They were passed from father to husband like slaves. They were sold for a dowry settlement and the Mishnah taught that a woman was like a gentile slave who could be obtained by intercourse, money or writ. Neither could women play any kind of significant role in the synagogue because they were levitically unclean for several days every month due to their period. In fact they weren't even counted as members of the synagogue. In court their testimony was questionable and did not have the right to divorce. However, many women followed Jesus, including prostitutes. Jesus was obviously concerned with the way women were treated. He allowed women during his teaching sessions and healed Peter's mother, the woman with the haemorrhage, raised the widow of Nain's son from the dead, healed the Syro Phenician woman's daughter and raised Lazarus from the dead after Mary and Martha pleaded with Him. In his teachings, He focused on women often and used them as illustrations of spiritual truths. He ministered to a Samaritan woman at Jacob's well and wouldn't judge the woman caught in adultery. Women prepared his body for the grave and were the first to go to the tomb. Women were in the Upper Room when Jesus breathed the Holy Spirit into them.

Jerusalem was a city full of Jews. It was Mount Zion, the City of David where God's house was located. The city already had an ancient history going back to before 1500 BC. The first certain reference to the

city is about 1450 BC contained in the Tell el-Amarna Correspondence. During Joshua's Conquest, Adoni-Zedek is mentioned as king of Jerusalem. In 2 Sam 5:6-9 David takes the city of the Jebusites. Of course David expanded the city greatly in his time where Solomon increased the beauty of the city, its court, and the walls along with the Temple. Shishak in 928 came up against Jerusalem and took 'the fenced cities of Judah'. The city was also plundered by the Arabs in 2 Chron 21:16-17. Uzziah refortified it in 779 to 740 BC. Hezekiah sealed the waters of Gihon and brought them within the city to prevent the kings of Assyria from getting access to them. Manasseh repaired the walls and fortifications of Jerusalem. Nehemiah rebuilds what Nebuchadnezzar destroyed in 586 BC. As mentioned, from the Tell el-Amarna letters of 1450 BC the name in Cuneiform was written Uru-sa-lim. The most ancient Biblical form is yerushalem from Gen 14:18. To the early Egyptians Jerusalem was called Urusalimum, to the Assyrians it was called Ursalimmu; supposedly founded by the god Shalem. The Romans and Greeks called it Hierosolyma and the Arabs called it El Kuds meaning 'holy town'. In Ezek 16:3, 45, it's said to have been founded by the Amorites and Hittites. Part of the name means 'peace' thus the name came to mean 'city of peace'. Jerusalem is situated on four hills; two of which is called Mount Zion and mount Moriah. The hill on the north was called Bezetha. The city is 2,550 feet above sea level and 3,800 feet above the level to the Dead Sea. The Kidron, Tyropoeon and Hinnom valleys were part of the geographical nature of the city. Hinnom is a deep valley on the west and southwest. Kidron was on the east side of the city. There were mountains also around the city, one called the Mount of Olives which stood 300 feet higher the Temple Mount and a 100 feet higher than the city. David, in his day, had enlarged and beautified the city. There is a stratum of considerable thickness of chalky limestone. There are caves of various sizes that have been dug over the many years under the city. Jerusalem's climate consists of seasonal rain and coldish winters. During the rainless summer months temperatures reach 73.6 degrees F with some days being as much as 100 degrees F. There are malarial, sandflies and other fevers. In the late summer, heavy dews can be experienced with uncommonly

tropical downpours. The maximum rainfall was recorded in 1877 at 42.95 inches with the lowest occurring in 1910 with 9 inches of rainfall. There is only one shadow natural spring called the 'spring of the Lady Mary.' Depending on the rainfall, the water sometimes gushes out into a cave at the bottom of the Kidron valley. The waters find their way through the Siloam tunnel out into the Pool of Siloam. Another water source is Job's well situated near to where the Kidron and Hinnom valley meet. After heavy rains, water bursts out from the underground and flows like a river down the valley. Getting water into the city will be given more attention later.

Josephus talks about five distinct areas in Jerusalem. The Upper city or Upper Market Place which was called the citadel of King David located on the south-western hill. Then Akra or the Lower City was also known as a fortress. This south-eastern hill was described as a semicircular shape which was also called the City of David. It contained the tombs of David and the Judean kings. The next hill is the Temple Hill which is lower than Akra and is the central eastern hill. The fourth hill is known as 'Bezetha.' Its location is against the tower Antonia. This was clearly the north-eastern hill. The Northern Quarter of the city starts with the 'first wall' which runs along the northern edge of the south-western hill. The second wall contained the populated part of the north-western hill.

Nebuchadnezzar levelled Jerusalem to the ground and took its citizens into exile. Herod the Great transformed the city with palaces, citadels, a theatre and an amphitheatre, viaducts, monuments and the Temple which stood at the centre of a gigantic white stone platform. The lower part of the city was south of the temple and to the west was the upper city. Unpaved narrow streets and houses sloped downward toward the Tyropean Valley. There were open air shops of crafts such as bakers, tailors, carpenters plus a market that sold vegetables, fish, clothes, perfumes and jewellery. This description can apply to many places in the Middle East today. During the feasts, pilgrims would inflate the city to 100,000 people or even more. Commerce was everywhere, from the shops, markets, government, hotels and the Temple.

The city's walls and gates comprise 4,326 metres or nearly 2.15 miles with a height of 35 feet having 35 towers and 8 gates. Bab el Khulil or the Gate of Hebron is the only gate on the west side. On the North there are three gates: Bab Abd'ul Kamid, now commonly known as the Damascus gate. There's also Bab es Sahirah or the Gate of the Plain or 'Herod's Gate'. The only open gate on the east side is Bab el'Asbat or Gate of the Tribes; Christians commonly call this the 'Gate of the Lady Mary' but others call it, 'St. Stephen's gate.' Near the north-eastern corn of the Charam is the great walled up Byzantine Gate or Bab el Dahariyeh or the Gate of the Conqueror but the Europeans call it the 'Golden Gate.' In the southern wall are two city gates: Bab el Mugharibeh or the Gate of the Moors but to the Europeans, 'Dung Gate'. The next gate is Bab Nebi Daoud or the Gate of the Prophet David, or the Zion Gate. Josephus describes three existing walls of the day. The first wall began on the North at the Hippicus tower and extended as far as the Xistus and then joined the Council House. It ended at the western cloister of the temple. It crossed the main Tyropoeon near the Tarik bab es Silsiel and joined the western cloisters close to where the Mechkemeh, the present 'Council House' is situated. The second wall took its beginning from a gate called 'Gennath' which belonged to the first wall. No one knows where the Gate Gennath was. Some say that the second wall only goes back to the Hasmoneans while others think it goes back to the monarch. The third wall started by Herod Agrippa I but not finished out of fear of Claudius Caesar. It had a breadth of over 18feet and a height of 40 feet and 90 massive towers. One such tower was 135 feet high was at the north quarter of the city.



For Nehemiah's account, he went out by night by the valley gate or Gate of the Gai which opens into the Gai Hinnom and viewed the

walls of the city near to the Dung Gate. Next, there was the Fountain Gate, near the King's Pool which is most likely buried in an area known as Birket el Kamra. Then Nehemiah went up by the Kidron, viewed the walls from there and then retraced his steps to the Valley gate. There is also mention of a Water gate. Proceeding north is the Horse Gate. This was close to the entry to the King's house as mentioned in Kings 11:16. The Sheep gate which was repaired by the goldsmiths and merchants was the last gate by which the circuit of the repairs was traced. The Fish Gate stood across the Tyropoeon in much the same way as the modern Damascus Gate does now. The next gate westward was the Old Gate or the Gate of the old stood near the north western corner of the city, or the present Jaffa Gate. In Neh. 12:39, the Gate of Ephraim is mentioned being 600 feet from the Corner gate somewhere on the western wall. In the Old Testament some of the gates appear to have received different names at various times. So the Sheep Gate appear to be identical with the gate of Benjamin or Upper gate of Benjamin

The city had an incredible underground water supply system. There's an older tunnel that begins in a cave near one water source. It dates back to 1500 to 2000 BC and is known as the aqueduct of the Canaanites. This runs westward for 67 foot and then a shaft ascends toward the surface for 40 feet into a rock cut passage which runs to the north to the surface into a natural cavern. There's also the Warren's Shaft, which is a watercourse mentioned in 2 Sam 5:8 where Joab and his men made their way into the heart of the city. This was constructed around one thousand BC. Hezekiah 'Siloam' Aqueduct came next. This runs for about 1,682 feet and empties itself into the Pool of Siloam. The whole canal is rock cut and 2 to 3 feet wide. This work is referred to in 2 King 20:20. There are two other aqueducts, both runs along the western sides of the Kidron valley. Bir Eyyub consists of a collecting chamber more than a 110 feet deep. There are also a variety of cisterns and tanks either cut in rock or partially built. Within the city walls the largest reservoir is the Birket Israel which extends from the North-eastern angle of the Charam westward for 360 feet. It was 125 feet wide and 80 deep. Some think this to be the Sheep Pool while others think it to be the Pool of Bethesda. The

Twin pools are to the west of the Birket Israel. Others are the Birket Hammam el Batrak, Birket Mamilla, Birket es Sultan, and Solomon's pools which is a low level aqueduct as referred to in Eccl 2:6 are storage reservoirs constructed across the breadth of the valley. The length of the aqueduct is nearly 12 miles and was later extended another 28 miles to Wady Arrub on the road to Hebron. A high level aqueduct that formed part of 50 wells was about 4 miles long from Wady Biar or the Valley of Wells. The low level aqueduct which supplied the Temple with water came from the hills about Hebron, from Etham and from the three pools of Solomon. The aqueduct was over 40 miles long. Water was stored in a number of places before arriving at the Temple grounds: the lower pool of Gihon plus the many rock hewn cisterns under the city. When one cistern was full, it ran into the next one and so forth. One such cistern contained nearly two million gallons of water; overall the total storage reached nearly ten million gallons. The water supply to the Sanctuary was well organized supplying water to the entire Temple. One such place was the laver where the twelve priests could wash at the same time.

The cities of Jerusalem along with Damascus were main centres of commerce and destination for people travelling. From Jerusalem people used the major roads to travel in Palestine. There were Roman military roads and many other minor roads. There were six main avenues of travel going to Caesarea and Jerusalem. There was a southern road from Jerusalem via Bethlehem and Hebron and westward to Gaza and then eastwards into Arabia. A direct road existed to Damascus. An old highway ran along the sea from Tyre to Egypt which branched off at Lydda toward Jerusalem. The distance from Jerusalem to Caesarea comprised some seventy eight Roman miles. There was a third road from Jerusalem via Beth-horon and Lydda to Joppa. A fourth road went to Jerusalem from Galilee straight through Samaria. Then another main road went from Jerusalem via Bethany and Jericho over the Jordan to Gilead and then either south or north. There was a sixth road that passed through Galilee and then on to Rome. This connected to Capernaum, Tiberias and Nain, to Nazareth and then to Ptolemais. The military roads were paved and milestones were added to it. They were usually about 24 feet wide with

lesser roads being about six feet wide. Roads were annually repaired in the spring for coming feast days. Travelling the roads were the individuals who walked or road animals from one city to another and then the round carriage was used for transport of goods. People usually travelled in company with one another. And of course the Roman soldiers on horseback or marching. There was a great emphasis on hospitality of the traveller usually for free but places also existed where food and drink could be purchased.

Another controlling aspect in the life of the Jew was their calendar. It controlled many of the yearly activities in the life of the Jewish person. Each month commemorated different historical aspects which the Jews considered important. It was also a guide for the farmers telling them when to prepare the ground; when to sow; when to harvest; etc. The names of the months were: Nisan, Iyyar, Sivan, Tammuz, Av, Elul, Tishri, Heshvan, Chisler, Tebeth, Shebat and Adar. The calendar's history is divided up into three periods: the biblical, the Talmudic and the post Talmudic. The Lord commanded them to keep the month of Aviv. Originally, they used numbers and then names were employed. The calendar starts off with the month of Nisan with the new moon. The Passover, one of the most celebrated feasts in the year occurs during the month. On the 10th day, a lamb is selected for the Passover and killed on the 14th. The 15th was the first day of unleavened bread plus the day of first fruits. The 16th was the second day of the Passover when the Hebrews offered a sheaf of barley at the first fruits. The 17th and 18th of the month are called the middle days and on the 21st and 22nd the Passover and unleavened bread closes. The second month is Iyyar. This is also known as the month of flowers. It was the greenest and prettiest of all months. Harvest began in the Jordan valley and on the coastal plain. The first of the month commemorates the census of the people that began under Moses. The 2nd of the month is remembered because King Solomon began the building of the Temple. The 7th day of the month commemorates the dedication of the walls of Jerusalem. The priest Eli died on the 10th. On the 15th, the Israelites arrived in the desert of Sin and on the 16th, manna began to fall. On the 29th, the prophet Samuel

died. Sivan is the 3rd month of the year where the harvest of the wheat usually took place. The 6th of Sivan was associated with the Feast of Pentecost which came 50 days after first fruits and on the 7th was the Feast of Weeks. Traditional remembrances commemorate the 3 to 5th day of Tammuz, the fourth month, for preparation of the giving the law on Mount Sinai. This was also called first grapes with harvesting continuing in the highlands. The 14th was a time during the Second Temple period when the Pharisees gained victory over the Sadducees in a dispute over the interpretation of the Law. There are other days, 17 and 27 that remembers various battles in regards to Jerusalem. Av is the 5th month when the grapes, figs and olives are ripe. The 1st commemorates the death of Aaron and the 9th remembers the destruction of the Temple by the Babylonians in 586 BC and the Romans in 70 AD. The 15th was a popular festival day in the time of the 2nd Temple where women dressed in white and went out to dance in the vineyards with the young men, asking them to choose one of them for marriage. Elul is the 6th month and precedes the Days of Ave; it is a month of repentance. The 7th month of the Jewish calendar is Tishri, time of the early rains and ploughing. The 1st and 2nd is the Feast of Trumpets, the 10th day is the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur where everyone fasts. The 15-21 is the Feast of Tabernacles, Succoth. In this month the farmers would dry their figs for the winter and make their grapes into raisins, syrup and wine. The month of Heshvan was the time of sowing barley. The 17th commemorates the beginning of the great Flood. Chislev is the 9th month. The 25th day is the Feast of Lights, Hanukkah. According to II Maccabees the festival of Hanukkah was celebrated in the same manner as the Feast of Tabernacles by carrying palm branches and singing songs of praise. Tebeth is the 10th month where the 7th and 8th day of Hanukkah are remembered. The 8th day commemorates the completion of the Septuagint translation. The 28th commemorates the event when the majority of the Sanhedrin passed over to the Pharisees. The 11th month is Shebat, the coldest month of the year. The days are dark and gloomy with heavy rainfalls. The 15th is observed as a semi holy day and designated as the New Year for Trees. Adar is the last month. During this month the almond trees begin to blossom and the

late barley seeds are sown. The 7th commemorates the death of Moses. The 13th commemorated Queen Esther's fast.

The ancient Hebrews used a calendar based on 12 lunar months, with an intercalary month which was added to the calendar whenever it was needed to match it with the solar year. In first century Israel there was a sacred year and also a civil year. The Sacred year began in late March with Nisan being the first month. The Civil year started in October. The day was divided up into watches: First Watch 6 to 9 pm, Second Watch 9 to 12 pm, third Watch 12 to 3 am, and Fourth Watch 3 to 6 am. In the old calendar, the first month of the year was Abib, the time of the passover; then Ziv. Ethanim was the 7th, Bul the 8th. There was also Tishri and Marchesvan. The Passover, a great feast started the year off for the Hebrews as it does today. The 7th month, the 7th day and every seventh year God decreed a Sabbatical year that was considered a jubilee year. The feast of Tabernacles lasts for seven days. The seventh month is known as Tishri and contains the most holy days within the Hebrew calendar. In New Testament times they had seven feasts: Passover, Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, New Year and Yom Kippur, Tabernacles, Lights or Dedication and Purim.

The Sect of the Pharisees of the first century influenced the attitude of Jews and everybody else both religiously and politically. In the time of Jesus the Pharisees were one of the three chief Jewish sects along with the Sadducees and the Essenes. The sect is thought to have originated in the 3rd century BC before the Maccabean wars. Pharisee is from a Greek word 'pharisaios' meaning, 'separated one'. From their history, it was not sure what exactly they separated themselves from; whether from the house of Hasmoneans or Gentiles and their abominations or from the Hellenistic way of life or from others around them. The Maccabeans came to a point of no longer being interested in carrying out the law. They were only interested in political power. During the reigns of Aristobulus I and Alexander Jannaeus, the breach between them and the Hasidim got wider. When Jannaeus was defeated by the Nabataean Arabs, there was a six year revolt encouraged by the Pharisees; Jannaeus defeated them and crucified eight hundreds Jews as victims of

his vengeance. Their aim was to preserve their national integrity and strict conformity to Mosaic Law. The people then highly respected them as they ruled the public life of the nation which continued for generations. At that time, the Sadducee high priests were at the head of the Sanhedrin but it was the Pharisees who had the most influence. The early beginning of the Pharisees came out of a group known as the 'Hasidim' of the 2nd century BC. They were devout and pious men being strict legalist they resisted Hellenization. So the Hasidim gave birth to sects such as the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essences. The powerful Pharisees continued to maintain an influence among the people throughout the conflicts and often even the Sadducees had to submit to them. They were feared, courted, shunned, flattered, laughed at and also looked upon by the ordinary person. There were about 6,000 of them at the time of Christ. They belonged to the most influential, zealous and closely connected religious group of the time. They were really more of a fraternity than a sect. Their patriotism and religious stand equally combined made them to look favourably in the eyes of the locals. They were in every town and city where Jews lived. They acted their position, often stopping anywhere to recite certain prayers and benedictions making sure in what ever they did, no 't' was left uncrossed and no 'i' was left un-dotted. The workman would stop his work and drop his tools; those carrying loads would drop them and rider would dismount. The Pharisee would even stand in the middle of the road and pray. The more prayers the better they would say. This was the Pharisee and their extravagant religious displays. Everything was unclean to the Pharisee. Their dress was even different making them easily noticed. This was also true for the Sadducees, the Herodians and the polished Grecians. As the Romans would say, 'you are what you wear.' There were eighteen garments for the well dressed. The fashionable wore the finest white, embroidered and purple garments with the curiously wrought silk girdles. The inner garment went down to the heels. The head dress consisted of a pointed cap, or kind of turban. The ladies used three kinds of veils; one covering everything but the eyes, one covering everything but the face. Sandals were merely soles strapped to the feet for the men but the ladies also wore slippers, sometimes embroidered and adorned with gems. Some ladies

used cosmetics, painting their cheeks and blackening their eyebrows with a mixture of antimony, zinc, and oil. Young women wore their hair long and the men would often have trimmed beards while the fashionable Jewish women curled and plaited theirs, adorning the tresses with gold ornaments and pearls often prepared by a hairdresser. The poor used the upper garment for a covering at night. The slaves were not allowed to wear beards. Peasant girls tied their hair in a simple knot. Men would often wear a seal on their fingers or around the neck. The fashionable lady would wear bracelets, finger rings, ankle rings, nose rings, ear rings, beautiful head dresses, necklaces, chains and charms. There were capsules, called tephillin, containing parchment of written passages of Scripture worn on the left arm.

Unlike the Scribes, the teachings of the Pharisees were more centred on morality than anything else. They held the belief that the immortal strength belongs to souls and that the soul was imperishable, but those who were righteous would pass into another body but those who were wicked would suffer eternal torment. They got this from the Jewish doctrine of retribution and resurrection in Dan 12:2. They also believed that the eschatological expectations of a Messiah would restore the fortunes of Israel. They looked for the day when the glorious kingdom of righteousness would come. They believed that their own righteousness would instigate this coming. The Pharisee also accepted the oral law along with the Torah. The oral law was referred to by Jesus as the tradition of the elders. During the captivity, commentaries on the law appeared with certain restriction that was written to protect the Jews from violations of the Torah. This could be seen in the Mishnah, an encyclopaedia of Pharisaic legalistic details in areas of conduct. These teaching were rejected by the Sadducees because it wasn't in the Torah. The Sadducees argued that free will was ultimately determined by the course of history whereas the Essenes argued that everything was determined in advance and human will was of no consequence. But, according to the Pharisees everything that happens takes place through God's providence. God is in control of it which is actually taught throughout the Old Testament. They believed everything was brought about by fate but did not deprive the free

will of pursuit of what a person could achieve. They also taught that angels and spirits were real whereas the Sadducees denied them. The Pharisees were proponents of human equality and thus representatives of a democratic outlook. They opposed aristocratic political leaders. According to Gamaliel, the Pharisees possessed a great reverence for humanity and high regard for tolerance and a great love of peace. The average Pharisee had no formal education and the majority were laymen who represented the middle class whereas the Sadducees were from the aristocracy.

The Samaritans represented a difficult issue for the Pharisees and Jews of the first century AD. They were an ethnic group of people who had their roots in Hebrew Scriptures. Their history places them in central Palestine as early as 722 BC. Like the Jews, they recognized the Pentateuch as the written Word of God; they practiced circumcision and observed the Sabbath and festivals but they rejected the other books of the Old Testament. They came out of the intermarriages of the Israelites that were left after the others were carried off by the Assyrians with colonists that had been placed there by Sargon II and Esarhaddon around 722 BC. Sargon II took 27,290 captives away from the city of Samaria and its vicinity. Colonists were brought into the region three different times: in 721 by Sargon and in 715, by Esarhaddon in 680 and then in 669 BC by Osnapper who added people from Elam. After the Jews returned from captivity, the Samaritans wanted to help the Jews in rebuilding the Temple. Not only were they refused, they were also forbidden to offer sacrifices in the Temple or to intermarry with Jews. They were considered pagans by the Jews and ordinary Jews despised them. This really upset the Samaritans causing them to write a letter to Artaxerxes to halt the building of the wall and Temple. This action resulted in the Samaritans building their own Temple on mount Gerazim near Shechem. The letters eventuated in the King sending initially Erza and then later Nehemiah as governor to see what the problem was. The Jews continued their building project but the Samaritans did everything they could to discourage them, causing them endless trouble and frustration. So the Samaria of Josephus included what was formerly Ephraim, however they only possessed a few towns and villages there. Even though they worshipped Yahweh, they were not

mainstream Judaism. For example, in 332 BC the Samaritans ask Alexander for an exemption from paying taxes. Like the Jews, they had a sabbatical year and didn't cultivate their land. Alexander refused on the ground that they weren't Jews. They decided not pay anyway which in turn led to Alexander laying siege to Samaria. Another incident happened when John Hyrcanus of the Hasmonean dynasty destroyed their Temple on Mount Gerazim in 128 BC.

An example of their literature reads:

In the depths of an abundant spring is the life of the world.

Let us rise with understanding to drink from its waters!

We thirst for the waters of life.

There are great rivers here before us.

Blessed be God who brought into being (all) kinds of creatures

For the sake of Adam

Worthy is the form which is in the Image of God!

Later Gnosticism played a large part in Samaritan theology. There were also strong relationships between the Samaritans and the Essenes in interpreting prophecy. The Samaritans were also mixed up with the priests of the high places. They would have been accepted into the Jewish community if they had denied Mount Gerazim and confessed Jerusalem and the resurrection of the dead but they didn't. The Samaritans of the New Testament are remembered for their encounter and stories from Jesus and the Good Samaritan, the Samaritan Leper and the Woman at the well. Jesus plainly told the woman at the well, a Samaritan, that she worshipped what she didn't know but that was besides the point; Jesus wanted to stress, 'the hour is coming, and now is that true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth.' In this Jesus was showing his disciples that the attitude toward the Samaritans had to change. This later led Peter and John to go to Samaria to preach the gospel. We also see in Acts that Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them and many accepted the Gospel. This was exciting news for the Christian brethren in Jerusalem.

Today, at Nablus (Samaria) there is still a community of Samaritans with a synagogue and a very old manuscript of the Pentateuch

with a high priest officiating. The scroll is a parchment, written in columns, 13 inches deep and 7.5 inches wide. Each column contains between 70 and 72 lines. Two thirds of it is still readable. The Script is older than the Hebrew square characters. A further analysis of the script showed that the end of the lines was done differently than the typical square character of Hebrew. Also when a scribe wanted to inform the reader who he was, he would made use of the Tarikh. This was a space in the middle of the line where a single letter is used to bridge the gap. Thus the name of the person could be read downward on a page. For the Nablus Scroll, the scribe put it in Deuteronomy and it occupied three columns. The tarikh is usually written in Hebrew. Also in the Nablus scroll, none of gutturals are used in the script. The first five verses of Genesis are subjoined according to the Samaritan pronunciation. In further examination, the age of the Nablus Roll puts it somewhere around the 12th century AD. The tarikh seemed to be added afterwards making it a copy of an original and not an original.

Next, we look at the Scribes and who they were and what was their history? How did they fit into Jewish life of the first century? At first the Priests were the teachers of the law but as time passed they became of interested in Hellenism of the age so the Priests became tainted and thus over time, the scribes and not the priests became the defenders of the Law. These scribes became the teachers of the law even before the Pharisees existed. Their history is divided into five different time periods. From 458 to 300 BC they were known as the Sopherim or "scribes". This was because they wrote out the law, or they classified and arranged its precepts or because they examined every elapse and letter the law included. In the New Testament times, they were called Tanaim or the 'teachers' of the law. They were also called the Amoraim (AD 220 - AD 500) or doctors of the law who made up of the authorized recorders and expositors of the Halachah. Then they were called the Saboraim or teachers of the law after the conclusion of the Talmud who determined the law from a careful examination of all the pros and cons (AD 500-657). They devoted themselves to the careful study of the text, and laid down rules for transcribing it with the utmost precision. Their motive behind their

commitment was the belief in divine retribution or the prophetic idea of a covenant which God had made with His select people so in a sense, they thought, services and rewards stood in equal standing to each other. They came to be honoured above the law. Then they were considered the last doctors of the law in the rabbinic succession during the period of the Gaonim between 657 AD and 1034 AD). After the return from captivity, Ezra organized the scribes into a distinct body. They became interpreters and copyists of God's law. Eventually, they were also called rabbis, 'my lord' and demanded respect from their students. They taught in schools, in chambers, in the outer courts of the temple, in the synagogues, and even in the streets. Over the years the process of systematizing the law was carried on through questioning and discussion with one another. Gradually their theories and teachings were taken as truth and in themselves become law. As lawyers, they were not permitted to charge for their services and thus had to get their income from other places.

The last group of people that were prominent amongst the life of the Jewish person was the tax collectors. Like all tax collectors, they were hated because everybody dislikes paying taxes. Throughout history various tax systems were used in Israel. The earliest mention of tribute in the Bible was against the conquered Canaanites to provide forced labour. During the theocratic government of the judges, life was too unorganized and chaotic for any kind of systematic tax collection. The only taxes were those of Tithes, First fruits, the Redemption money of the first born and other offerings as belong to special occasions. There was a half shekel atonement money payment for the service of the tabernacle. With the Kingdom that changed to a tithe of the produce both of the soil and of live stock with military service for one month every year. In general, the King took what he could get and the individual gave what he couldn't hold on to. But in the time of war, the winning side collected all kinds of tribute and taxes. The more battles won, the more money, the government would have. Solomon put the country under the direction of twelve officials to add to the treasury. Also, under Solomon, there was forced labour. The people were tired of this over taxation and that's the reason the Kingdom split up. There were also gifts to the Kings, Import duties, special tribute

during time to pay tribute to foreign conquerors. Under the Persians, there was tribut, excise tax and custom tax. Often tax collection was contracted out to unscrupulous people who collected by violence and cruelty. This was employed by the Ptolemies and Seleucid Kings and also by the Romans until Augustus. Nothing changed that much when Rome came to power over the Jews.

The tax collectors collected the taxes for the Romans. They were also called publicans in the King James Version of the Bible. They came into being around 200 BC when the Roman Senate decided to contract out the collection of taxes to others, who agreed to pay a substantial sum into the treasury and thus received the name of publicani. But these were sort a like companies at that time who inturn hired others to collect for the company. Later Augustus did away with this and paid tax collectors directly. There were actually two kinds of tax collectors; the Douanier who were the customhouse officials and the Babbai who collected regular dues of ground, income and poll tax. All import and exports were taxed. Anything that was bought and sold was taxed and there was duty on bridges, roads, harbor and towns and many other kinds of taxes. The things that could be taxed was up to ones own imagination. It is believed that taxes that were collected at Capernaum, in Galilee were taken by Herod Antipas while in senatorial provinces, the roman senate took the money. The revenue collected in Judea went into the treasury of the emperor because Judea was a imperial province.

To the Jews they were extortionist and a much despised people. They had an abusive and tyrannical attitude and the taxes they collected reminded the people of bondage and servitude which they were under. They had great power over the individual anywhere in their district. They could stop anyone and exact tax from them. Because of this, the Jews put the tax collectors in the same category as gamblers, thieves, harlots, usurers, lawless, licensed robbers and dishonest herdsmen. And there were quiet a few other names they were called. They were so despised that they were not allowed to worship in the Temple or Synagogue nor could they serve as a witness in the Jewish court.

9. The Temple:

The Temple Jesus knew was the Temple renovated, enlarged and beautified by Herod the Great. The six centuries between the return from exile and the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD are known in Jewish history as the age of the second Temple. The site was Mount Moriah where Abraham built an altar and offer up his son Isaac. It's the same place where Solomon built the first Temple. The Jerusalem temple was a place of national Jewish life and worship. The Temple told the world that God was worshiped here. The synagogue was training place where as the temple was a place of sacrifice, a symbol of unity. Its courts were always crowded, and Temple worship and sacrifices happened every morning and every evening. The High Priest not conducted the ceremony every morning and evening, they were also a political leader who negotiated with neighbouring governments. Only the descendants of the sons of Aaron could be priests, although the descendants of Levi could perform a limited number of functions. Even though the High Priests were appointed and did not have the power that it had in the days after the Captivity, the High Priest was still the most powerful person in the land. The Romans controlled the wearing of the priestly garments because they understood the tremendous power of the high priest's office. The wearing of the robes symbolized its authority with the Jewish Priest and in restricting their use restricted their authority. The Jewish High Priests from Herod the Great to the destruction of Jerusalem follows:

1. *Ananel, 37-36 B.C. (Appointed by Herod the Great)*
2. *Aristobulus III, 35 B.C.*
3. *Jesus, son of Phiabi, ? -22 B.C.*
4. *Simon, son of Boethus, 22-5 B.C.*
5. *Matthias, son of Theophilus, 5-4 B.C.*
6. *Joseph, son of Elam, 5 B.C.*
7. *Joezer, son of Boethus, 4 B.C.*
8. *Eleazar, son of Boethus, 4-1 B.C. - (Appointed by Herod Archelaus)*
9. *Jesus, son of Sie, 1 - 6 A.D.*
10. *Annas, 6-15 A.D. (Appointed by Quirinius)*

11. *Ishmael, son of Phiabi I, 15-16 A.D. (Appointed by Valerius Gratus)*
12. *Eleazar, son of Annas, 16-17 A.D.*
13. *Simon, son of Kamithos, 17-18 A.D.*
14. *Joseph Caiaphas, 18-37 AD.*
15. *Jonathan, son of Annas, 37 A.D. (Appointed by Vitellius)*
16. *Theophilus, son of Annas, 37-41 A.D.*
17. *Simon Kantheras, son of Boethus, 41-43 A.D. (Appointed by Herod Agrippa I)*
18. *Matthias, son of Annas, 43-44 A.D.*
19. *Elionaius, son of Kantheras, 44-45 A.D.*
20. *Joseph, son of Kami, 45-47 A.D. (Appointed by Herod of Chalcis)*
21. *Ananias, son of Nebedaius, 47-55 A.D.*
22. *Ishmael, son of Phiabi III, 55-61 A.D. (Appointed by Herod Agrippa II)*
23. *Joseph Qabi, son of Simon, 61-62 A.D.*
24. *Ananus, son of Ananus, 62 A.D.*
25. *Jesus, son of Damnaius, 62-65 A.D.*
26. *Joshua, son of Gamal iel, 63-65 A.D.*
27. *Matthias, son of Theophilus, 65-67 A.D.*
28. *Phinnias, son of Samuel, 67-70 A.D. (Appointed by The People)*

Solomon's Temple stood on Mount Moriah for over 350 years before it was destroyed in 586 by Babylon. The army of the Chaldeans broke down all the walls of Jerusalem all around. This was also the place where God appeared to David. The temple took eleven years to build. The highest part of Mount Moriah is now the site of the building called The Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem. After the destruction in 586 BC, seventy years later another Temple was started by authority of the Persian King. It was dedicated in 515 BC. This was Zerubbabel's temple. According to Herod, the temple he built was only considered a reconstruction. It began in 19 BC and required 10,000 skilled labourers and then 1,000 Levites were specially trained as builders and masons and carried out the work inside. It began with the Holy of



Hollies and then the court of the Israelites and to the side was the court of the women and behind it was the court of the Gentiles with the royal porticos of Solomon. There were beautiful marble porticos constructed. Another wall surrounded the whole area of which one wall remains today and known as 'The Wailing Wall'. Two bridges connected the Temple with the city on the west. The work went on for 60 years and not finished until AD 63, seven years before it was torn down again in 70 AD.

There were many Gentile people in Jerusalem conducting business, travelling or working with the Roman government or military. And there was a place for them in the temple where they could come and worship. Surrounding the Court of the Gentiles was a series of porches which had a double row of Corinthian pillars. These were pillars of marble; the southern porches were called 'Solomon's Porch'. The entire Temple complex was surrounding by the Court of the Gentiles and a fence separated that from the next court. Only Jews were allowed to enter the fence and the enclosure around the temple. Jesus preached in the Court of the Gentiles, which had doubled in size under Herod and was surrounded with a elaborate Hellenistic portico. In Jesus' day, foreigners would enter the Court of the Gentiles where they first saw the moneychangers. They were not allowed to go any further. Accordingly, the moneychangers treated the foreigners with contempt. They made large profits from those who had money and from those who didn't. Every adult who came to the Temple was expected to bring their offerings or purchase a sacrificial animal. Judges decided which offerings were good and which were bad. And often the poor would have to borrow money just for a sacrifice. The Temple also acted as a bank loaning money doing other financial businesses.

Viewing the Temple from the Mount of Olives a person could see the gates in a perfect line. There were eight gates leading into the temple. There were two Huldah Gates, the Gate of Susa and the Golden gate. In the western water wall the gate of Coponius was the main gate. Then there was the Beautiful Gate and then the gate of Nicanor. This gate gave a person access to the courtyards of the Temple from the Kidron valley. The outer courts were enclosed by beautiful colonnades and along the east

side was where Jesus began teaching the multitudes. The most magnificent part was the Royal Porch of Herod on the south side where Jesus discussed theology with the Scribes. The Inner courts were on a higher level than the outer court. To enter the Inner Courts a person had to pass through the western gate and walk up 15 steps. The inner court was about 280 feet long and 202 feet wide and surrounded the whole Temple. People usually entered the Temple through the eastern gate which brought them into the Court of the Gentiles, also called the outer court or lower court. Surrounding the Temple was an additional 9 foot high terrace with stairs. The Women's Court was the place of the treasury where 13 trumpet shaped containers for offerings of money could be given. Jesus sat opposite the treasury when a woman put two mites into the containers. Jesus' comment, 'this poor widow has put in more than anyone else.' The Court of Israel was open to Jewish laymen and situated east of the Women's court. Going beyond the Court of the Gentiles and at the top of the terrace a platform and wall was seen. You could see the 60 foot wide 'Beautiful Gate' which was also referred to as 'Gate Susan'. Entering this gate brought you into the Court of the Women. In each of the four corners of this court were smaller courts with columns. It was just over 200 feet square. In front of the columns were eleven chests for the voluntary offerings of money plus an additional two at the 'Beautiful Gate'. These were narrow at the mouth and wide at the bottom, shaped like trumpets. The two at the Gate of Susan were numbered 1 and 2 and was for the half shekel tax. Trumpet III was for those women who had to bring turtledoves for a burnt and sin offering dropped their equivalent in money. Trumpet IV received the value of young pigeons. Incense went into Trumpet VI and in Trumpet VII deposited the golden vessels for the ministry. Money left over after purchasing a sin offering was put in number VIII. Trumpets IX, X, XI, XII and XIII were designated for money left over from trespass offerings, birds, the offerings of the Nazarite, of the cleansed leper and voluntary offerings. On the far west of the Women's court was the great Nicanor Gate which stood at the east side of the Court of Israel. This was made of brass and led down to a 15 step stairway to the Court of Women. In each corner of the Women's Court

were 60 by 60 foot chamber courts. One chamber court was called the Oil of Yah court a place where oil and wine were preserved in vaults. You could also wash and cook in these chambers. Another of these courts was known as the Nazarene Court where those who had fulfilled the vow of Nazarenes shaved their heads. The leper's chamber was in the northwest chamber were the healed unclean and lepers were declared so by the priests. The northeast court was where the priests sorted the wood. The women could only glance over balconies from the Court of the Women to see the ceremonies inside the Inner Court. The innermost court was the Court of the Priest. This excluded all laymen. Seen from a distance the great altar of unwrought stone of burnt offerings stood 45 feet in length and breadth and 22 feet high. At its west side stood the sanctuary proper, comprising the porch, the holy place and holy of holies. The Priest entered the holy place to do various duties, especially to offer incense. The back wall of the porch in the Holy Place was overlaid with gold and a golden lamp was hung on it. There were two tables on the porch; one was gold and the other marble where the bread was placed. On the Gold Table two frankincense cups and the Golden Lamp stand. There was a double veil that separated the hall from the Holy of Hollies. Only the High Priest could enter the Holy of Holies and only on the Day of Atonement.

And then there was the Antonia Fortress which was built on the north side of the Temple. It seemed almost part of the Temple ground having an entrance down into the Temple courts. This Fortress was also a palace at one time housing the High Priest and even Herod used it sometimes. It became an ideal location for Roman troop's barracks. The North side of Jerusalem was the only unprotected area of the city. The rest of the city was protected by the naturally surroundings of immense valleys on all sides except for the North. This was built in 35 BC in honour of Herod's friend and Roman Triumvir Marcus Antonius, also known as Mark Antony. The Romans placed a garrison there. The



Fortress overlooked the Temple and the city of Jerusalem and became another landmark of Herod. Herod actually rebuilt an existing fort called the Baris. The earlier tower as far back to Solomon it's thought. The Hasmonean rulers stayed at the Baris fortress when they performed priestly duties in the Temple. Pompey destroyed it in 63 BC. It appeared to be a tower from the outside. It measured about 490 feet long and 260 feet wide with walls about 60-75 feet high. Each corner had a high tower and the northwest tower was later called the Strato's Tower. The Fortress of Antonia was partly surrounded by a deep ravine 165 feet wide. It was a palace and a barracks for the Roman soldiers. The western wall was built upon the edge of the cliff overlooking the Tyropoeon Valley. The north wall was directly across the hill Bezetha and there was a deep mote between them. From the southern wall a person could view the entire Temple area and the eastern wall overlooked the Pool of Bethesda and the Kidron Valley. There were apartments, cloisters, baths and large courtyards in the fortress. There were stairs that led down from the Fortress to the porticoes of the Temple court and the extreme north side. The fortress held 600 Roman soldiers. Paul was held in the fortress in protective custody until a military escort took him to Caesarea. It may have been the place where Jesus tried but that's not for sure. Paul was arrested in the Temple Court where the angry Jewish crowd tried to kill him. It was from here that the soldiers secretly took him to Caesarea. The ceremonial robes of the high Priest were kept in one of the four guard towers of the Fortress and were worn only on Passover, Yom Kippur and other important religious feast days.



10. Jesus' Ministry

Tiberius Caesar was in his fifteenth year as Emperor of the Roman Empire. Herod was tetrarch of Galilee and his brother Philip was tetrarch of Iturea and the region of Trachonitis. Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene and Annas and Caiaphas were high priests. Pontius Pilate was governor of

Judea at the time. These were the leaders of the world when John starting preaching the Kingdom of God and baptizing in the river Jordan. And Jesus went to John to be baptized thus starting His ministry. Afterwards He spends time in the Wilderness being tempted by the devil. His first miracle was in Cana, turning the water to wine. From Cana He visits Jerusalem for the First Passover. He goes on to Samaria and minister's to the woman at the well and afterwards proceeds to Galilee and teaches all around Galilee. In Capernaum He heals Simon's Wife's Mother and others. He also meets Matthew the Tax Collector. Jesus continues His travels to Jerusalem, Nain, Capernaum, the Sea of Galilee, Nazareth, The Region of Tyre and Sidon and back to Bethsaida and then to Caesara Philippi and then to Capernaum. In all of these places, Jesus teaches, heals, and argues the Gospel. His continued travels take Him to Jerusalem, Bethany, Jerusalem, Beyond the Jordan, Ephraim, Judea, Jericho, and Jerusalem.

The Life of Jesus in chronological Order:

7 BC – October – Gabriel announces John's Birth

6 BC – July – Gabriel Announces to Mary, An angel talks to Joseph and Mary visits Elizabeth. The Birth of Christ and the Shepherds and the Magi visit

5 BC – Jesus is Circumcised and presented in the Temple

4 BC – Joseph and Mary return from Egypt to Nazareth

8 AD – The Boy Jesus at the Temple

25 AD – Jesus is Baptized in the Jordan, Temptation in the Wilderness, The testimony of John in Bethabara and the First disciples, The Turning of Water into Wine in Cana, The first Passover in Jerusalem

26 AD – April – Jesus was 30 years of age. He departed to Galilee, The Woman at the Well in Samaria and Jesus' Ministry in Galilee, He taught in the Synagogues, A certain nobleman in Nazareth, Peter, Andrew, James and John at the Sea of Galilee, Jesus taught



all about Galilee, A Man with an Unclean Spirit, Wimon's Wife's Mother, A Leper and a Paralytic in Capernaum, Jesus calls Matthew the tax Collector and the Second Passover

27 AD – April in Jerusalem – Healing at the Pool of Bethesda, Healing in the Synagogue on the Sabbath day, Jesus appoints the twelve, The Sermon on the Mount, A certain Centurion's servant, Jesus raises the dead son at Nain, Jesus is the coming one, The woman and the alabaster flash at Capernaum, Mary Magdalene, the Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit, they ask for a sign, woe to the scribes and Pharisees, parable of the fig tree, parable of the sower, Jesus rebukes the storm on the Sea of Galilee, the demon and the Swine, back to Nazareth, parable of the wineskins, Jairus' Daughter and the woman with the flow of blood, the blind and the mute, John the Baptist beheaded at Machaerus, Feeding of the five thousand near Bethsaida, waling on the water at Galilee and the third Passover

28 AD – I am the Bread of Life in Jerusalem, Jesus ask whether the disciples want to leave also, A woman of canaan, Great multitudes came to him, feeding of the four thousand, heals a blind man at Bethsaida, transfiguration at Caesarea Philippi, Jesus rebukes the Demon, Jesus speaks of His death, Miracle of the coin, The Feast of Tabernacles, return to Jerusalem, appointed seventy others, the ten lepers, Jesus teaches in the Temple at the Feast of Tabernacles, parable of the Good Samaritan, Mary and Martha in Bethany, Jesus Teaches His Disciples to pray, Jesus heals a blind person in Jerusalem, They picked up stone to stone him, Beyond the Jordan, Jesus Raises Lazarus from the dead at Bethany, The Declaration of Caiaphas at Ephraim, Prodigal Son, Hypocrisy of the Pharisees, the Rich Man and Lazarus, The Pharisee and the Tax Collector, Marriage and divorce, Little children, Rich Young Ruler, The Parable of the Vineyard, Blind Bartimaeus at Jericho, Zacchaeus the Tax Collector and the parable of the minas, Mary anoints Jesus' feet at Bethany, Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem, Jesus enters the temple and drives the Vendors Out, the Blind and Lame came to Him, Teaching daily in the Temple, the withered Fig Tree, parable of the two sons, parable of the vinedressers, parable of the Great supper, Tested by the Pharisees, Sadducees, Lawyer, A certain poor widown, the Prophecy of Isaiah, foretells the destruction of the Temple

and Jerusalem, parables of the ten virgins and the talents, sheep and the goats

29 AD – April – The Last Passover in Jerusalem, Washes the Disciples' feet, Teaches about the Holy Spirit, the Prayer in Gethsemane, Betrayed and Taken, The Trial, Pilate, Herod, Tried before Pilate, mocked by the soldiers, Crucifixion, the resurrection, Appeared to Simon, Appeared to two disciples on the Road to Emmaus, appeared to others.

The Messiah's arrival in the world was not unexpected. It was His approach that confused the Jews. Their expectation was one of a person portraying a physical conquering warrior. The Jews and their nation had been 'like a ship in a storm which was tossed by the waves on both sides. Their lives seem to have been singled out for all manners of troubles and problems. It's obvious that they brought much of it upon themselves and much of it God did in order to draw them back to Himself. This was done because of His love for them. They had been conquered over and over again and even when they became independent under the Hasmonean Dynasty, many of the priests were self seeking, despotic tyrants. So we can see why the Jewish people and their various sects misread the prophecies of the coming Messiah.

God told Abraham that the coming redeemer would be from the seed of Abraham. In Numbers 24:17-19, 'I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; a Star shall come out of Jacob; a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel ... Out of Jacob One shall have dominion, and destroy the remains of the city.' The Jews looked at verses like this and waited for their physical salvation. In Jeremiah 23:5-6, 'Behold, the days are coming,' says the Lord, 'That I will raise a Branch of righteousness out of David; a king shall reign and prosper, and execute judgement and righteousness in the earth. In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell safely; now this is His name by which He will be called: The Lord our Righteousness.' So the Jews thought that the Messiah would save their nation and it would become a place of safety. It would be a righteous Messiah not the evilness they were used to. They looked for a Prophet like Moses, a person that would lead the Jewish nation out of the physical slavery they were in. Deuteronomy 18:15-19, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you a

Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren.' The Jews were expecting a High Priest that would be like other High Priest of their time, but one of righteousness, one who would take charge, one that had power to lead them unlike any other High Priest. Heb 5:5-6, 'So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but it was He who said to Him, 'You are My son, today I have begotten You.' But the Jews obviously didn't understand verses such as Psalm 118:22-23, the stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.' They had blinded themselves and did not recognize that the Messiah would be one of peace and humbleness. They knew that He would be born of a virgin, but His entry into the world had to be obvious to everyone as He would triumph over his enemies, proclaiming His Kingdom. How could he be born in a stable with straw as a bed? The Jews could not look upon a verse such as Isaiah 53:7 as pertaining to their Saviour: 'He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; he was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers in silence, so he opened not His mouth. The Jews had been suppressed for so long by the Godless Gentiles, how could they even imagine that their saviour would also come to save the Gentiles: Isaiah 49:6, Indeed He says, 'It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, that You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.' You can see how the Jews would read the following scripture in Isaiah 61:1-2, 'The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; he has sent Me to heal the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God.' But in Matthew 11:5, this was the real Messiah, 'the blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up the poor have the gospel preached to

them.' So to sum up, the Messiah would come not only as a lion but also as a lamp. He would serve man, perform miracles and help the needy and



suffer and die for the sins of the world, the ultimate form of serving. His second mission would be to exercise vengeance upon the enemies of god and of Israel. He would rid the world of all rebellion, including all principalities and demonic powers. He would pour out his wrath on all sinful mankind and judge the

nations.

The Pharisees, Sadducees nor the Herodians accepted this type of Christ. More than once they had joined together in order to destroy Jesus for they were the main enemies of Jesus and were later among those who had condemned Jesus to death. The reason was, Jesus had gained a deeper influence among the people. There were good people among the Pharisees but that was over shadowed by their covetousness, self righteousness and hypocrisy. Jesus had plenty to say about the Pharisees. One such quote, 'do as they say, not as they do.' Another one, 'blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel,' Jesus fearlessly proclaimed: woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee; first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Interestingly, their knowledge of God's word did not bring them to faith but just the opposite happened, their hatred of God was exposed.

Jesus repeatedly gave the Scribes prophetic curses because of their arrogance, hypocrisy, self seeking ambition and scrupulous observances. As a result, they watched Him closely waiting for Jesus to make a mistake. When Jesus forgave a person of their sins, they accused Him. When he cast out demons, they accused Him. When he healed on the Sabbath, they reacted negatively and when Jesus performed all kinds of miracles, they accused Him. Jesus further said that they were making disciples of hell. Jesus had often said that the rabbis wanted first place in everything. Matthew tells us while the scribes just repeated what the traditions had said, Jesus 'spoke as one having authority' and not as the scribes. While the Scribes only taught scholars, Jesus had compassion for the multitudes. While the Scribes were only in schools or councils, Jesus went about the villages preaching. While they vaguely spoke of the Kingdom of God, Jesus said that it had already come to them. Jesus knew that there were good amongst them: Nicodemus and Gamaliel were scribes.

The attitude of Jesus to the tax collectors was different. He made himself a friend of men, even of the tax collectors and the worst of sinners. He accepted and associated and ate with the tax collectors. Matthew had been a tax collector. Jesus offered salvation to them. Jesus told the story: Two men went to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee, full of pride and prompt said, 'God, I thankyou that I am not like others: extortionist, unjust, adulterers and even this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.' But the Tax collector couldn't raise his own eyes to heaven because of his shame. He beat this breast saying, 'God, have mercy on me a sinner!' Jesus said that everyone who exalts himself will be humbled and who humbles himself will be exalted.

The sequence of times Jesus had entered the Temple is unknown. The first time occurred during the cleansing of the temple court in the court of the Gentiles. This was when Jesus told them he would raise the Temple in three days referring to His resurrection. During the following two years, Jesus walked in the temple courts on a number of occasions teaching and disputed with the Jews. He was there at the Passover and at the Feast of Tabernacles and then again during the Feast of the

Dedication in the winter. He was often in the Temple just before His end came. One such time, He spoke assertively against the Pharisees and again on His last day that He told his disciples that the Temple would be destroyed.

The very next day, they arrested Jesus and made Him stand before the Sanhedrin, Pontus Pilot and Herod for judgement. They took Jesus to the Palace of Annas who was the head of the priestly party and was still called the high priest, even though Caiaphas, his son-in-law was the actual high priest. Annas also had five of his sons on the council. It's not known what took place with Annas but it was in Caiaphas' palace that He was questioned about his disciples and his teachings. Caiaphas took a leading part in the trial and the condemnation of Jesus. It seems that Peter and John were nearby, perhaps even in the palace itself or right outside it. This is where Peter denies Christ three times. The Sanhedrin found Jesus guilty of blasphemy; for claiming to be God. Strictly speaking, according to the Sanhedrin, blasphemy involved the pronouncement of the name which Jesus did not do exactly, yet the priest said, 'You have heard his blasphemy'. Since the trial was already quiet illegal, what did it matter? The Sadducees wouldn't have any problem with whatever was said as long as Jesus was condemned. Perhaps, Jesus did say the name when He said, 'I am' and perhaps the definition of blasphemy was altogether different in Jesus' time. These arguments don't matter. They had already condemned Jesus even before He stood before the chief Priests. Jesus knew their hearts. The claim to be Messiah had obviously justified a claim of blasphemy to them or instead, they used it as a claim of using God's name in vain. This was shown by their further actions of having Jesus beaten, insulted and flogged. Once a person had been condemned to death, the law said they were not to be further punished, have a prolonged death or scourged but the law didn't stop them from doing this to Jesus. I'm also sure that Jesus chose those words for a reason; perhaps as a statement to the chief priests of who they were putting on trial and to pronounce guilt on them. And perhaps this is what the Sanhedrin wanted to hear from Him. Those on the Sanhedrin would have found a way to pronounce Jesus guilty no matter what but when Jesus uttered the claim to be God that was

enough. After the meeting with the Sanhedrims, they took Jesus to see Pontius Pilate.

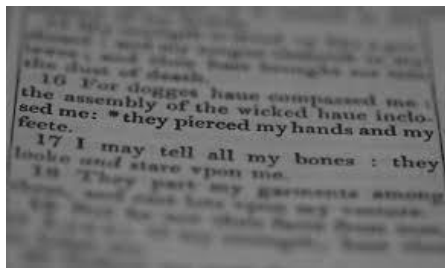
Pontius Pilate was the man of the time as was mentioned in the article. He ordered the crucifixion of Jesus. Little is known of Pilate, he is said to be the son of Tyrus, king of Mayence. Josephus thinks that he was a wealthy Italian born Roman citizen. While exiled in Pontus, he was recognized for his effort in fighting off several barbarous tribes. He was given the post of Roman procurator in Judea from 26 to 36 AD. Pontius Pilate was known for his harshness, pride, violence, greed, insults, cruelty and murders. He was also

insensitive toward the Jews. He did things like using temple funds to finance an aqueduct, had soldiers to enter Jerusalem bearing the image of the emperor and placing shields with the same images inside

Herod's palace. The Jews appealed

to Tiberius and Pilate had to withdraw the images. Pilate was a procurator who in some way was subordinate to the legate of Syria, Vitellius. There was an incident by Pilate brutally slaughtering the Samaritans. This happened after Pilate condemned Jesus to death. He was sent back to Rome by Vitellius to answer for his conduct for this. When he arrived in Rome Tiberius was dead and Caius (Caligula) was on the throne (36 AD). History shows us that Pilate did not return to Judea. There is no history of Pilate after 36 AD but rumours abound. Eusebius says he was exiled to the city of Vienne in Gaul where he committed suicide. Proof of his existence is from an inscription dug up in the theatre of Caesarea reading, 'Pontius Pilate, Prefect of Judea, to the Emperor Tiberius.'

During the Passover, Pilate was staying in his official residence in Herod's palace. This is where Pilate met Jesus. The Jews first described Jesus as a disturber of the public; when that didn't work, they said He had declared Himself King and was perverting the nation. It's interesting to note that Jesus was condemned by the chief priests for religious reasons but in front of Pilate they changed it to political reasons. Pilate sent Jesus



to Herod Antipas because Jesus was a Galilean and also because he didn't want the responsibility but Herod returned Jesus back to Pilate wearing a purple robe of mockery. Pilate's hesitancy was from the feeling of being manipulated by the Jews which they had done often enough. To make matters worst, his wife warned him not to condemn Jesus because of a dream she had. As was the custom Pilate gave the people the opportunity to choose between Barabbas and Jesus but the mob being encouraged by the Priests wanted Pilate to release Barabbas. Pilate then wash his hands as an innocent sign of what he was doing and had Jesus scourged. Afterwards the priests was still crying out for His death and yelling, 'He made Himself out to be the Son of God'. Pilate's soldiers placed a crown of thorns on his head and mocked Him more by hitting him on the head and face. After this, Pilate brought Jesus in front of the crowd and their hatred grew more intense. Pilate asks Jesus, 'Where are you from?' but Jesus didn't answer. 'Do you not know that I have the authority to crucify you?' This time, Jesus answered, 'You only have the power that has been given to you from on high.' Again, Pilate asked the crowd what they wanted. They yelled louder, 'if you let this man go, you are not a friend of Caesar's.' Pilate said to them then, 'I am innocent of this man blood.' They answered, 'His blood is on us, and on our children.' Pilate asked, 'Shall I crucify your King?' They answered, 'We have no king but Caesar.' Jesus was then led away to be crucified. They continued to mock Jesus all the way to Golgotha and while He hung on the cross. Even one of the robbers on the cross mocked Him. Afterwards we know that Jesus rose and met many people before He ascended into heaven. But before he left Jesus gave the great commission to go into the entire world and preach the Gospel.

11. The Early Church and 1st Century Christianity

Christianities' fire spread throughout the Roman world, from city to city, regent to regent and culture to culture. The men and women accepted the great commission and sacrificed so much to share the Gospel of Jesus as they travelled town to town. They travelled through Roman

cities on Roman roads and everywhere they travelled they came into contact with Rome.

The New Testament is a result of this. The New Testament consists of 27 books altogether, written by nine different authors. All of them were written in the first century somewhere between 45 and 95 AD. All except one of the writers are Jewish with five of them being apostles. A lot more will be said about these books but first it must be pointed out that these books are also about the writers. As directed by the Holy Spirit they wrote the things which they saw through their own eyes or heard with their own ears of which many of these things were personally experienced. Paul was one of the major players in the spreading of the Gospel. He was well prepared for the job, God gave him. The end results of Paul's travels ended up with established churches throughout the Roman Empire. This article will look at Paul, his travels and his letters, then Mark and the Gospel of Mark. Following Mark, Matthew is discussed along with Luke. Following this Gospel, we will look at the letter from James. The following writers and books will be dealt with one by one: Hebrews, Jude, Peter, and finally John.

In regards to Paul, he not only influenced Luke in writing the Gospel of Luke but wrote a series of letters to various churches that had been established in his previous journeys. In trying to understand from where Paul wrote some of his letters, it's not clear whether Paul was in prison one time or two times in Rome. Paul's prison life up can be summed up in this way: in 58 AD, Paul was arrested in Jerusalem. He arrives in Rome in 61 AD. He was released from prison in 63 AD and was free from 64 to 67 AD during which he supposedly wrote 1st Timothy and Titus from Macedonia. 2nd Timothy was written from Rome in 67 AD and then Paul was imprisoned again from 67 to 68 AD and put to death. We first look at Galatians, then Thessalonians, Corinthians, Romans, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Corinthians, Philemon, and Timothy. It was around 48 AD when Paul, Barnabas and Mark left Antioch preaching the Word of God, performing miracles and making disciples and raises up elders in the newly planted churches. In what now is called Paul's first missionary journey, the group went to Salamis and the

synagogues of the Jews on the island of Cyprus. They went to Paphos the worship centre of the goddess Aphrodite. Afterwards they sailed from Perga to Antioch of Pisidia in the southern region of the province of Galatia and the synagogues there. This was a place of the temple dedicated to Ascaenus, the chief deity of the city. The whole city came to hear Paul's words of truth and many believed. In Iconium of Lycaonia located in the central plateau at the foot of the Taurus Mountains, both Jews and Greeks accepted the word and believed. At every place, the word was preached and people accepted Jesus but also they experienced persecution of various types and in many instances had to flee the city. They continued to Lystra, Derbe and the cities of Lycaonia. In some places they were thought to be gods because of the miracles that were preformed. In Lystra, Paul was stoned and left for dead. About 70 miles away they group travelled on to Derbe and made many disciples, one of them Gaius later travelled with Paul through Greece. After passing back through Pisida on their return route, they went to Pamphylia and then again to Perga and then southwest to Attalia, an important harbor and commercial centre in Paul's day, where the word was preached. After this they sailed to Antioch. They had been gone for nearly two years and travelled nearly 1,250 miles. It was back in Antioch that they first experienced Christian Judaizers saying that people had to be circumcised to be saved. So Paul and Barnabas travelled down to Jerusalem to sort this problem out. In doing so they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria meeting with Christians on the way. In 51 AD, Paul and Silas set out again to re-visit the churches that he had helped to establish. They eventually went through Mysia and then on to Troas. It was here that Paul had the Macedonian vision and thus they sailed first to Samothrace and then to Neapolis and then to Philippi, a Roman colony. Here, Paul cast out a spirit from a slave girl. Because of this, men seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace and then thrown into prison. While praising God and singing hymns, an earthquake caused all the cells to open. The keeper of the prison was so afraid that he was about to kill himself but Paul stopped him. He and his family all accepted Jesus and were saved. Afterwards, they entered the house of Lydia and encouraged everyone there. Travelling to Thessalonica, they passed

through Ahipolis and Apollonia. There was a synagogue at Thessalonica where Paul preached the word. Some came to Christ but it was the Greeks both men and women joined Paul and Silas. Paul and Silas had to leave the city by night to Berea and from there; Paul and Silas went to Athens and proclaimed the unknown God to the Athenians. Some listened and believed named Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman Damaris and others. From Athens Paul travelled on to Corinth where he met a Jew named Aquila who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla. Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart Rome. They worked a while as tentmakers. He also taught Jesus to both Jews and Greeks. Paul and Silas stayed in Corinth for one and a half years. Finally Paul sailed for Syria with Priscilla and Aquila. He left them in Ephesus and sailed on to Antioch. He went over to the region of Galatia and Phrygia encouraging the church. This was when Aquila and Priscilla met Apollos who had just come from Egypt and told him about Jesus.

The letter to the Galatians was written in 49 AD from Antioch. This was just after Paul's first missionary journey. However, some people think it was written later in 52 AD from Ephesus where he wrote several other letters. Doctrinally, the letter is about Soteriology but the general theme is the liberation by the gospel. In the letter, Paul argues against the errors of legalism and shows that salvation is by grace. This was in part to refute Christian Judaizers who were teaching the need for Christians to live within the Law of Moses. This could have brought Christians back under Judaism and portrayed as another sect like the Pharisees, etc. But Paul said faith in Christ was sufficient. The first letter to the Thessalonians was written around 52 AD from Corinth. Its doctrinal classification is in Eschatology while its theme was on the second coming of Christ. This was written a few months after the church had been founded. The problem comes from the Jews not Judazing Christians. The condition of the church was actually very healthy as compared to some of the other churches at a later date. Paul had established this church during his second missionary journey. He ended up being expelled from the city. He had travelled on to Berea and Athens and at Athens he sent Timothy back to Thessalonica to help them amidst their persecutions. Later, Silas and

Timothy had rejoined Paul at Corinth. The second letter to the Thessalonians seems to have been written not long after the first letters. It deals with the same doctrine and theme, the second coming of Christ. Silos and Timothy were still with Paul. Here, Paul seems to be arguing for a pre-tribulation of the church. The church seemed to have been facing persecution and Paul encourages them to stand fast in Christ. The letter to the Corinthians was written to Christians in Corinth in 54 AD. This was while Paul was finishing up his extended stay in Ephesus. The subject of the letter focussed on Ecclesiology with the general theme being on Church problems. Paul had planted this church on his second missionary journal where he stayed for one and a half years. This was when Apollos, a Jew from Alexandria arrived at the church and two separate groups established themselves: the followers of Paul and the followers of Apollos. However, later Judaizing Jews arrived preaching the gospel in direct antagonism to Paul. The Corinthians were affected by the moral pollution of their city was notorious for its immorality. The second letter to the Corinthians was written from Macedonia shortly after Paul wrote the first letter. Again the focus was on Ecclesiology and vindication of his own ministry. Paul's first letter seemed to have cleared up some of the other problems but now there was a small faction that questioned Paul's Apostleship. Not only does the letter tell of Paul's devotion to his calling even in the suffering he has experienced, the letter also expresses Paul's love and concern for the church. The letter to the Romans was written in 55 AD while Paul was in Corinth for three months and written to the Christians in Rome on the subject of Soteriology. The book is a systematic examination of justification, sanctification and glorification. This letter was written during the winter and spring after staying in Ephesus for some time. Interestingly, Paul dictated the letter to Tertius to write the letter but Paul signed it, himself. I think it's interesting because I wonder how much of Luke's Gospel was Paul's dictation and Luke's writing. So the letter was written during Paul's third missionary journal. The church in Rome was a very early church some say started by Peter while others say it was started when certain Christian Jews and Romans returning from Palestine. The letter has been called the constitution of Christianity as the Book of

Galatians has been called the Magna Charta. The letter to the Colossians was written around 62 AD from Rome. Its doctrinal classification is Christology and general theme concerns itself with Christ being the Lord over the cosmos. Paul also focuses on the Deity of Jesus. Paul warns against the influence of the spirit of semi Judaistic and semi Oriental philosophy which was leading the astray plus the epistle had a strong polemic against a Judaic Gnostic heresy of ceremonialism and doctrine of emanations.

The letter to the Ephesians was written while Paul was in prison in Rome in 60 or 64 AD. The doctrinal classification was Christology and the general theme was to present Christ as Lord over the church. The book is free of any controversial elements dealing with the believer and their relationship with Christ. The letter to the Philippians was written from Rome around 62 AD. Paul went to the city of Philippi, a Roman colony, in 52 AD laying the foundation of Christianity there. Doctrinally, it was about Christology but the theme was Joy in Christ. This letter comes to them 11 years later. He had left the church to Timothy and Luke to watch over while Paul and Silas went to Thessalonica. It was at Philippi that Paul wrote a second letter to the Corinthians. The Philippians were kind to Paul and financially supported him all those years. Paul wrote telling them of his situation in Rome showing joy in suffering. The letter to Philemon was written from Rome somewhere around 62 or 63 AD from Rome. The general theme of the letter is forgiveness and brotherhood in Christ. The letter is addressed also to Apphia who could be Philemon's wife and to Archippus a minister in the Colossian church. The occasion was a slave of Philemon, Onesimus, had run away from him to Rome. In Rome, Onesimus came to Christ under Paul. Being closely connected to the Colossians Onesimus carried both letters. In this letter, Paul is expressing humbleness, tactfulness and politeness to encourage Philemon to accept Onesimus back as if it were Paul himself and charge all wrong doings to Paul. The letter to Timothy was written from Macedonia or Rome to Timothy at Ephesus in 65 AD. Paul had also written to Titus at the same time. There's some question as to Paul prison experience. Some think that Paul had been released from prison between 63 and 67 AD. But if this is

not so, then 1st Timothy was written just before his last visit to Jerusalem which makes more sense. Regardless, this letter was near the end of Paul's life and the apostolic period. Both letters, to Titus and Timothy were about the pastoral care of the church. On such characteristic in both letters is God's mercy on his life. The second letter seems to have been written in 67 AD most likely from Rome. The doctrinal view is eschatology and in the general theme, Paul's ministry is finished and he's given a final charge to Timothy and encouragement to be strong. In this letter, we have the famous saying of Paul, 'I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith.' The letter to Titus who was ministering in Crete was written around 65 AD. The composition of the letter was near to 1st Timothy than 2nd Timothy. The letter's doctrinal classification was ecclesiology and the general theme was sound doctrine and good works. The letter reviews the requirements of elders and reasons for Godly living. Paul sent the letter by way of Zenas and Apollos who were going to the island.

Mark: Next, we have the Book of Mark. Mark was a Christian Jew who was an associate of Peter, the Apostle. Mark wasn't there with Jesus but he obviously spent a lot of time with Peter. Mark wrote the Gospel around 60 AD before the destruction of Jerusalem between 50 and 60 AD in Rome. It was written to the people in Rome and its general theme was 'Jesus being the Servant of Yahweh'. It seems to have been written in Greek with a large portion of it dealing with the last week of Jesus' life. What can we learn about Mark and Peter from the account? Peter obviously shared different aspects of the life of Christ with Mark but I find it interesting that none of Peter's activities are even hinted at in the Gospel. Since the account was written in Rome; was Peter ever in Rome? Or did Mark write it much later.

The Book of Matthew was written by Mathew. Remember, he was a tax collector, hated among the Jews for representing the Roman Empire. Matthew was an apostle of Jesus, called by Jesus and stayed with Jesus for three years, up until His death. He wrote the book around 60 AD from perhaps Antioch, before the destruction of Jerusalem. He addressed it to the Jews who lived in Syria or Israel to convince them that Jesus was the

Messiah and King. The Book of Matthew was the Gospel for the Jew. It was written in Greek and also most likely in Hebrew. Matthew was personally evolved in the activities of Jesus; his travels, his ministry, his teachings and His miracles. This book represented a first hand account of the life of Jesus. And most likely, Matthew was there and distributed the bread and fish when Jesus fed the 5,000. Matthew was there when Jesus healed and even brought people back to life. Matthew was there.

Now, we have the Book of Luke which was written by a Greek Physician and Historian around the year 60 AD. The book is the largest of the gospels and was written to explain Jesus' humanity. Like Mark, Luke was not an eye witness to the things he wrote about. He was closely associated to Paul and probably got most of his information from Paul. The book was written before the Book of Acts. The book was addressed to Theophilus in Greek and the gospel was intended for the Greek speaking world. Thus far we've seen that Matthew presents Jesus as the King of the Jews, mark presents Him as a Servant and now Luke presents Jesus as the Son of Man while in the next gospel, John will present Jesus as the Son of God. The book was either written in Caesarea or Rome. Luke was known to have been in Caesarea where Paul was in prison but it could have been when Paul was in prison in Rome. Even though the Book of Luke contains 50% newer materials than Matthew and Mark, the first three books is known to be closer related than the Gospel of John. Luke also wrote the Book of Acts in 61 AD in Rome. The book was also addressed to Theophilus as the fulfilment of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The book covers a span of nearly 33 years covering the reign of four different Roman Emperors and much of the acts of the Apostles, especially Paul and his travels. Acts is actually an obvious continuation of the Gospel of Luke as both are addressed to the same person. Luke provides us with vivid details of first century life of the Greek and Roman world.

The letter from James was written around 62 AD from Jerusalem. But this date is by tradition only and could have been much earlier. Tradition also holds that James was martyred around the same time. Its doctrinal classification is Soteriology and the theme applies to the practical

outworking of salvation. The book has been called the most Jewish book in the New Testament. Because of the book, James has also become known as the moral teacher of the New Testament. The letter was addressed to the Jewish Christians of the Dispersion. Like Paul and Barnabas, James was included as one of the apostles. He occupied a prominent, if not the chief, place in the church at Jerusalem, was president of the first council, and, with the elders, received Paul upon his return from his third missionary tour. He brings attention to the uselessness of faith apart from works and speaks against quarrelsomeness, worldliness, pride, and the spirit of their business activities. James was also influenced by two of the Apocrypha books: Ecclesiasticus and the Wisdom of Solomon. A personal note; of all the eye witnesses to the events of Jesus, to me, James ranks very high on the list. He knew Jesus like no other because he grew up with Jesus as a child. Jesus was his older brother. It's hard to understand why there isn't information from James or his mother about this part of Jesus' life.

Much is unknown about the letter to the Hebrews; its author, the place it was written and exactly to whom it was written. Its thought to have been written between 60 and 65 AD to Jewish Christians either in Rome or Jerusalem. The doctrinal classification is Christology and Soteriology with theme concerning the superiority of the priesthood of Christ and His salvation. Some say that it's most likely Paul had some sort of influence in the writing the letter. It could have been Paul or Luke, Barnabas and Apollos. The letter is addressed to the Christian Jews in Jerusalem. Besides a high literary content and knowledge Judaism suggest Paul as the author. We must remember the Greek education system taught writing in various genres. Paul had a vast education which took in both Judaism and Greek. Hebrews tries to establish the supremacy of Christ and Christianity and to warn about the dangers of apostasy.

The letter was written by Jude, also a brother of Jesus Christ written to Christians in general with a doctrinal classification in eschatology and a theme of contending for the faith in view of Christ's coming. Jude encourages Christians to be steadfast in the faith. The letter is very similar to that of 2nd Peter again dealing with false teachers. He

does not include himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ like his brother, James. Jude provides several examples of defection in the Old Testament; i.e. notably the defection of the Israelites when they came up out of Egypt; defection among angelic beings, evidently in connection with the Flood; and the apostasy of Sodom and Gomorrah.

First Peter was addressed to the Christians in Asia Minor and its doctrinal classification is on eschatology with the theme to suffering and the anticipation of Christ's coming. There's seems to be a problem with assigning a place of origin. It mentions Babylon in Asia which Peter might have gone to. However, we're not sure whether Babylon means Babylon and doesn't mean Rome. Being written to the Christians in Asia Minor, Rome was make more sense as the place of writing than Babylon. Plus, additional evidence is given as referring to the suffering Christians because the Emperor Nero having blamed the Christians for the burning of Rome. The traditional date of writing puts it around 65 AD. The general purpose and message is providing hope in the midst of suffering and testing. Second Peter was written shortly after somewhere around 66 or 67 AD again from Rome. Doctrinal Classification is on Eschatology with a general theme on the certainty of the gospel and the Day of the Lord. Authenticity seems to be a little problem with some people. Peter urges growth in Christian grace and warns against false teachers especially in regards in the rise of Gnosticism. The context seems to be similar to that of the context of Jude.

In the summer of 64 AD, things began to change for the Christian. For 200 years four dynasties ruled the Roman Empire. Some were moral while others were cruel. Augustus began a moral and peaceful reign. Nero was the same when he started his reign at 17 years of age. However, he became more interested in entertaining himself than in governing the empire. In 59 AD Nero executed his mother, his wife and anyone who opposed him. He was neither respected by the senators, the army nor the people of Rome. The Emperor Nero became very unpopular by instituting a series of laws to limit public spending. In addition, he decided to blame the burning of Rome on the Christians. Many were being gathered up and arrested. Nero made them public enemy number one. The laws that Nero

created brought about slander classed the Christians as anti social, outcasts with no respect to law, thus they must be killed. They were enemies to the fundamental principles of society. By admission they were condemned. So the persecution of the church began. In confessing to be Christians they were either made objects of amusement; being torn to death by dogs, crucified, set on fire and murdered. In 68 AD his own army rebelled against him and attempted to seize the throne. This state of affairs continued for many years to different degrees.

The apostolic age had come to an end. John the Apostle was the last one. Not only did he totally end the age, his two books and three letters finished the New Testament. The Gospel of John, the fourth book of its kind was written about 25 years later after the fall of Jerusalem around 90 AD. The Gospel was written to the people of Ephesus. It presents Jesus and God incarnate or God in Flesh. It was the Gospel for a young church. This gospel differs greatly from the first three as nearly two thirds of the book covered the last six months of Jesus and one third of it covers the last week of Jesus' life. John was more than an eye witness to the activities of Jesus; he was perhaps closer to Jesus than any other apostle. The book is spiritual in content, dwelling on the deity of Christ through His miraculous signs. The letter identified as first John was written around the same times as the Gospel of John from or near Ephesus. The purpose is to declare the word of life to Christians around Ephesus. John describes true fellowship of the believer with the believer and with God. John also describes God as light and love and encourages a holy Christian walk with the Lord. Again, false teachers of Gnosticism were denying the truth of the incarnation, that Christ had come in the flesh, maintaining that matter was evil. John also debated false mysticism that denied the reality of the sin nature in the Christian. So, 1st John turns out to be a moral and practical application of the gospel. The second letter was much like the first letter with soteriology as a doctrinal classification and warning about false teachings. However, the 2nd letter is addressed to the Lady Electa or to the 'elect lady'. Against a warning was issued in regards to the false teachings associated with that of Basilides and his followers. The 3rd letter stresses personal responsibility in a day of

deterioration. This letter was written around 95 AD and was written to exhortation in view of tyrannical teacher in the church. It was addressed to Caius, possibly one of his converts and the purpose was to counteract or rebuke the person Diotrephes who was exercising a dominating authority in the church. John's fifth book, the Book of revelation places John on the Island of Patmos. The book is a prophetic book to the seven churches in Asia and the theme is victory of Christ and the church over sin and the world. In the last days of John, he has assumed spiritual governor and teacher over the churches of Asia Minor. Written in 97 AD long after the destruction of Israel, John was exiled to the island by Emperor Domitian. There's strong disagreement on what and when the meaning of the book applies. Some say the past while many say, it's yet to come. Various themes are presented in the book such as: Christ's future triumph over evil, the redemption of the earth and destruction of the ungodly and the establishment of His earthly kingdom are but a few. Another theme has to do with the Great Tribulation and Satan and demonic powers and the new heaven and the new earth. To sum up the book, it is the Revelation of Jesus Christ revealing his plan for the earth and saints for all eternity. just like he forgives me for the wrongs that I do sometimes. I feel sorrow when I hear people say things like tongues are of the devil and wrong, the Catholics are all going to hell or if you don't speak in tongues, you are not a Christian nor can you come to our church. Jesus told people to do what the Pharisees say but don't do what they do. He calls them blind Guides. I see that our churches are full of blind guides and that saddens me but then I think, who am I to even think that, I'm certainly not their judge nor do I ever want to think that I'm better than anyone else because I'm not. I realise that it wasn't necessarily the Scribes and Pharisees doctrine that Jesus was against but it was their pride that make them think that they were better than everybody else.

Profile

Dr Phil Smith has written a number of related articles and books. He has been a Christian for more than fifty years and continues to

faithfully serve God in whatever capacity he can. He is presently associated with Biblical Training.org in Washington State and also with the Missionary Training Institute in Yeosu, South Korea. He and his wife were missionaries in the Middle East for many years. They attend City Bible Church in Hamilton, New Zealand. Phil has the most experience in Linguistics, Old Testament history and Islamics, His educational profile is shown below. Phil's sole purpose is to further the kingdom of God in the world. His website and blog is *philsblog.online*.

His qualifications include a Dr of Religious Education, and a PhD in Biblical Archaeology, MA in Applied Linguistics, MA in Biblical Archaeology, Post Grad Diploma in TESOL, Graduate Diploma in Teaching, BA, Dip Writing, Dip Business Admin, Cert TESOL, Cert Applied Linguistics, His educational accomplishments grew out of his interest in tertiary teaching, biblical studies and biblical archaeology. His research and study has been an ongoing life process. (Many of the above diplomas and degrees are NZQA, with some having other educational standards).

References:

- A Brief Chronology of Mesopotamia. Gateway to Babylon. Downloaded from www.gatewaystobabylon.com 4 Aug 2013. Lishtarlight. (2000). A Brief Overview of Assyrian History: From Early Beginnings to Sargon II. Archaeological Study Bible, 2005 Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan USA
- Arnold, Bill T. 2015. Encountering the Old Testament, Published by Baker Academics, a division of Baker Publishing Group, Grand Rapids MI., USA

- Barton, G., *Archaeology and the Bible*, Published by Peter Books May 28, 2008 Price, J & House, H. 2017.
- Bodine, Walter R., 1992. *Peoples of the Old Testament*, Published by Baker Academics, a division of Baker Publishing Group, Grand Rapids MI., USA
- Craig S. Keener 2014, *Biblical Backgrounds*, IVP Academic, 2nd edition
ESV Archaeology Study Bible; published by Crossway 2018 *Rose Book of Bible Charts, Maps, and Time Lines*, 2015 Rose Publishing, Rorrance, California USA
- Frankfort, Henri – 1978 *Kingship and Gods - Ancient Near eastern religion* – University of Chicago Press Home, Charles F. – *Code of Hammurabi* – 13 Nov 2007 – Published by Forgotten Books Mesopotamia Page 24 of 25 Lishtarlight. (2000).
- Gateway to Babylon. Downloaded from www.gatewaystobabylon.com 4 Aug 2013. Lishtarlight. (2000). *Sumerian and Babylonian Science*.
- Gateway to Babylon. Downloaded from www.gatewaystobabylon.com 4 Aug 2013.
- Gwaltney, William C. Jr., 1992. *Peoples of the Old Testament*, Published by Baker Academics, a division of Baker Publishing Group, Grand Rapids MI., USA
- Hoerth, A. & Mattingly, G & Yamachi, E. *Peoples of the Old Testament World*, Published 1994 - Baker Books, Grand Rapids, Michigan.
- Hoffmeier, James K., 2008. *The Archaeology of the Bible*, Publisher: Lion Hudson; 1st edition
- Hoffner, Harry A. Jr., 2003. *Hittite Studies, In honor of*, Publisher: Eisenbrauns (June 30, 2003)
- Hoglund, Kenneth G., 1992. *Achaemenid Imperial. Administration in Syria-Palestine and the Missions of Ezra and Hehemiah*. Soceity of Biblical Literature
- Howared, David M. 2007. *An Introduction to the Old Testament historical Books*. Moody Publishers.

- Kitchen, K. A, Ancient Egypt and the Hebrew Monarchies: A review article, the Melios, Volume 26 – Issue 3. Millard, A. R, 1981, Archaeology and Ancient Israel, Page 53 from Faith & Thought Price, J & House, H. 2017.
- Layard, Austen Henry - 2001. Nineveh and Its Remains, Published by Lyons Press; 1st Edition
- Mattingly, Gerald L., and Pitard, Wayne T. 1992. Peoples of the Old Testament, Published by Baker Academics, a division of Baker Publishing Group, Grand Rapids MI., USA
- NIV 2016 Published by Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan Tenney, M. 1976.
- NIV Archaeology Study Bible, ESV 2016 by Crossway, Wheaton, Illinois USA, Good News Publishers, Printed in China Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible,
- Parpola, S. (1999) Sons of God – The Ideology of Assyrian Kingship. Bas Library – Biblical Archaeology Society – Bringing the ancient World to Life. Journal Achives Nov/Dec.
- Rose Book of Bible Charts, Maps, and Time Lines, 2015 Rose Publishing, Rorrance, California USA
- Roux, G. (1992). Ancient Iraq – The House of Sargon II. Chapter 20. Penguin Books, London. Roux, G. (1992). Ancient Iraq 3rd Edition.
- Schoville, Keith N. 1982. Biblical Archaeology in Focus, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan.
- The Arameans. Pages 273-277. Penquin Books, Publishers: Clays Ltd, St Ives Place, England. Seiglie, M. (2002). The Bible and Archaeology. The
- The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopaedia of the Bible, Regency Reference Library, Grand Rapids, Michigan
- Yamauchi, Edwin M., 1990. Persia and The Bible, Baker Book House; Publisher

Yunker, Randall W. 1999. *God's, Exploring the Genesis Story*, Pacific Press Pub. Association.

Zondervan Handbook of Biblical Archaeology: A Book by Book Guide to Archaeological Discoveries Related to the Bible.