

A HISTORY OF ISRAEL FROM JERUSALEM'S DESTRUCTION IN 586 BC TO THE MINISTRY, CRUCIFIXION, AND RESURRECTION OF JESUS

CHAPTER 5 EMERGENCE OF DANIEL'S THIRD EMPIRE, GREECE—THE FOUR HEADED LEOPARD

I. BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS

A. What Happened to Israel?

- For most Christians, Israel's history abruptly stopped with the prophet Malachi, to be resumed briefly 400 years later in the New Testament period
- The Old Testament period ended under the imperial rule of Persia—in the New Testament, Rome was Israel's new master
- In the interim, a series of Hellenistic rulers vied for ascendancy beginning with Alexander the Great wresting control from the declining Persian Empire
- With Alexander's death, one of his generals, Ptolomy Lagus, assumed the throne of Egypt and Palestine
- After a century of rivalry, the Ptolemies gave way to the Seleucids, descendants of another of Alexander's generals
- The policy of radical Hellenization imposed on Israel by Seleucid Antiochus Epiphanes IV eventually led to the Maccabean revolt, in which a family of native Israelites took the throne
- Their dynasty, the Hasmonean, was brought to an end by the Roman general Pompey, who took the Near East and Israel for the Roman Senate

B. The End of the Old Testament

- Malachi's promise of the return of Elijah marked the end of Old Testament prophetic activity
- Jesus' identification of John the Baptist as the promised Elijah marked the end of the divine silence—God began to speak once more, mainly through His Son
- The Old Testament writers take us just past the work of Nehemiah—and there the story ends
- Both biblical and secular history are all but silent about the affairs of the people of God during the two centuries that follow
- While Old Testament canonical [Bible] history concluded with Malachi, the history of Israel continued its vigorous course well beyond the prophet's time

II. THE EMERGENCE OF THE GREEK EMPIRE [DANIEL 11:3]

A. Israel as a Vassal State

- When the Book of Malachi was written, the minor province of Judah was part of the Persian

Empire, and mired in a historically mute period

- The Book of Nehemiah records Nehemiah as one of the governors in Judah
- The ascendance of the Greeks did not change Israel's or Judah's status—they were still dominated by new masters

B. Alexander the Great

- The appearance of Alexander the Great initiated one of the most turbulent epochs in Israel's history

- Raised in a militaristic state and in command of the finest fighting force in the world,

Alexander assumed the throne in Greece in 336 B.C. at the age of 20 upon the death of his father Philip II

- At the battle of Issus [(333 B.C.)] in Asia Minor, he defeated the forces of King Darius III of Persia

- By 331 B.C., Alexander conquered all of Persia and his empire was the greatest in the world to that time, pushing as far east as India before he died

- In 332 B.C., Alexander moved against Egypt, capturing all of the coastal regions; Tyre refused to surrender and Alexander besieged the city for seven months

- After sacking the city, most of the population was sold into slavery

- Jerusalem submitted without conflict, but Samaria offered resistance and suffered destruction

- Alexander secured Egypt in late 332 B.C. and assumed the title of "Pharaoh"

- He promised that throughout his empire Jews would continue to be governed by their own Law; he was not interested in bothering the Jews

- However, in 323 B.C., Alexander died at the age of 33 of a fever and his empire splintered

C. Impact of the Greek Conquest Upon the Jews

- Greek became the official language of the empire; many Jews learned to speak Greek

- Hebrew Bible eventually translated into Greek [Septuagint] for the Jews who spoke Greek as their primary language

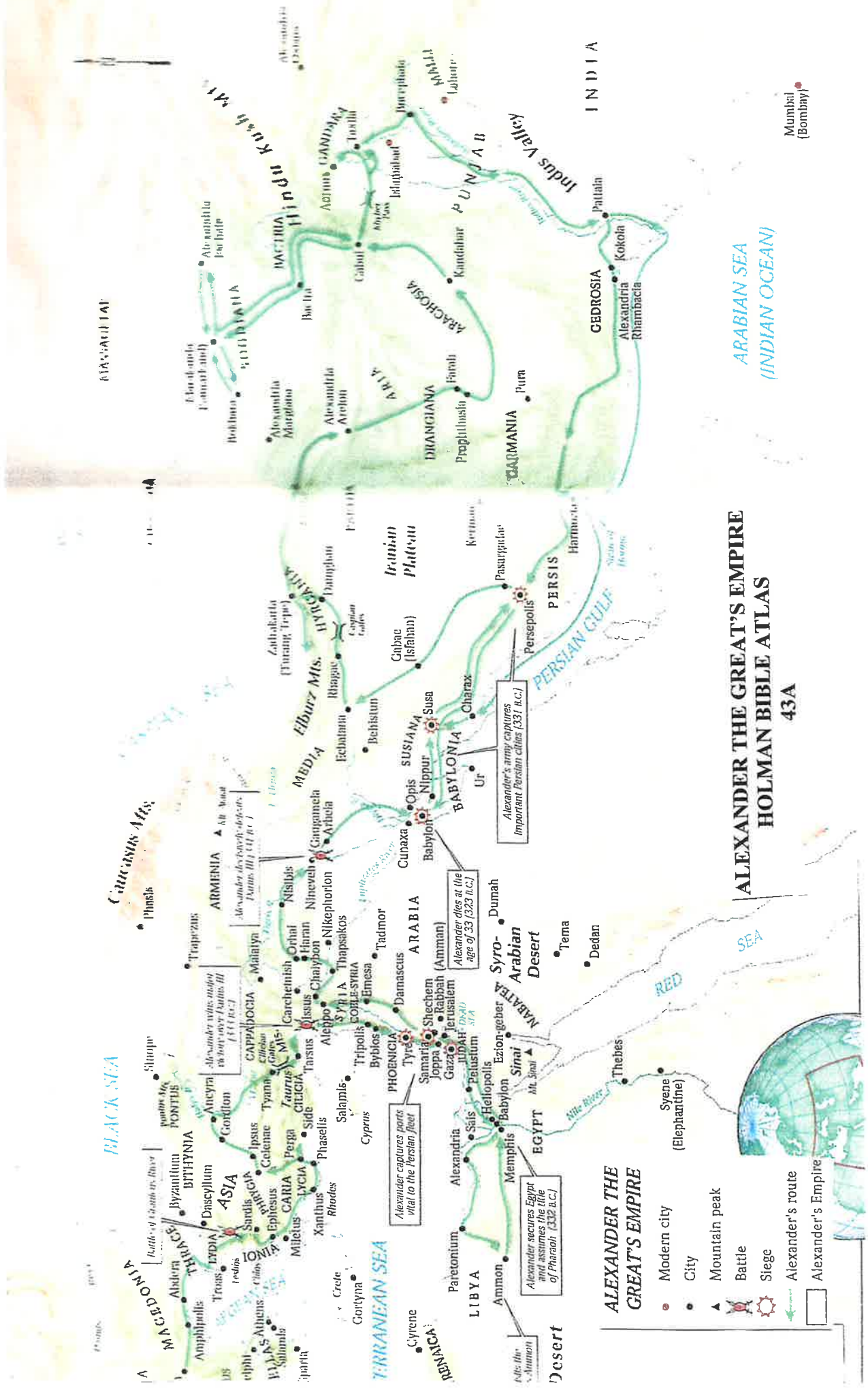
- Greek culture and philosophy influenced the Jews

- The challenge of Hellenism to Israel's religion was as dangerous as the cult of Baal had been

- It probably was more so because the Greek way of life was attractive, sophisticated, and appealing

- The Hellenistic era would prepare the way for the Christian movement and lead to changes in Judaism

- Under Hellenistic rule, Judah came to be called Judea from its Greek spelling



BLACK SEA

TRIRANEAN SEA

INDIAN OCEAN

ARABIAN SEA

ALEXANDER THE GREAT'S EMPIRE
HOLMAN BIBLE ATLAS

ALEXANDER THE GREAT'S EMPIRE

- Modern city
- City
- ▲ Mountain peak
- ✝ Battle
- ★ Siege
- Alexander's route
- ▭ Alexander's Empire

Mumbai (Bombay)

Note: the Nile River

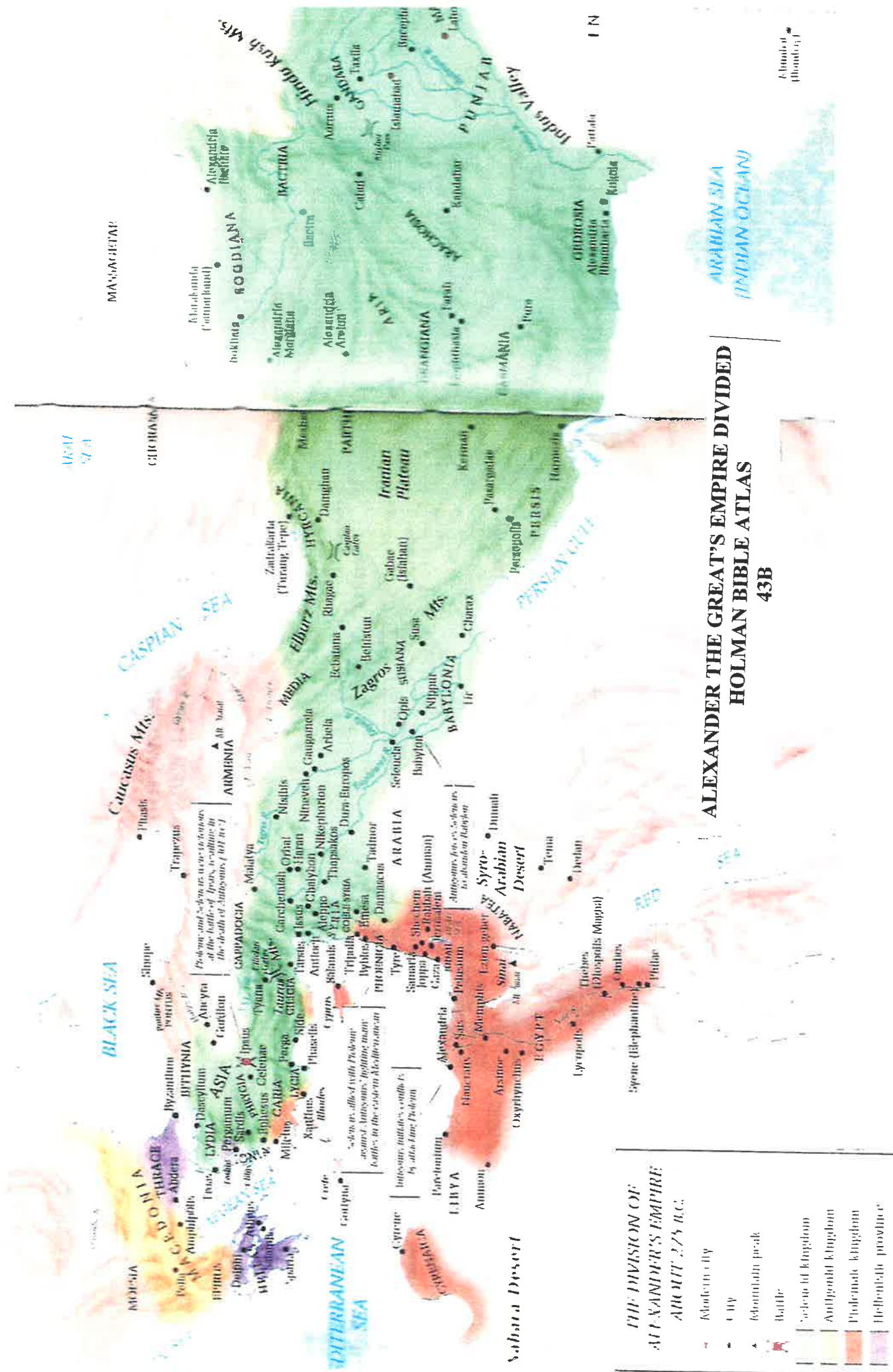
Alexander's army captures important Persian cities (331 B.C.)

Alexander dies at the age of 33 (323 B.C.)

Alexander captures ports vital to the Persian fleet

Alexander secures Egypt and assumes the title of Pharaoh (332 B.C.)

Note: the Nile River



THE DIVISION OF ALEXANDER'S EMPIRE ABOUT 325 B.C.

- Modern city
- City
- ▲ Administrative peak
- Battle
- ▭ Province in kingdom
- ▭ Antigonid kingdom
- ▭ Ptolemaic kingdom
- ▭ Seleucid province

ALEXANDER THE GREAT'S EMPIRE DIVIDED
HOLMAN BIBLE ATLAS
43B

1000 Miles

- By the Hellenistic period more Jews lived abroad than in Judea
- Jewish centers began to flourish in Alexandria, Egypt and other Greek cities

III. ALEXANDER'S EMPIRE IS SPLINTERED [DANIEL 11:4-5]

A. Fighting Over the Empire

- As impressive as Alexander's military conquests were, they were merely a prelude to events that would shake the world of Judaism

- Following Alexander's death, his generals began to fight among themselves; Ptolemy I and Seleucus I were the most prominent
- Ptolemy I took and held Egypt [Dan 11:5]
- He also took Jerusalem and incorporated it into the Egyptian Empire
- Farther to the north, Seleucus I took Mesopotamia, Syria, and Asia Minor [Dan 11:5]

- Conflict over Judea [Judah] would continue for over 100 years [301-198 B.C.] between the Ptolemies and Seleucids; five wars fought for Palestine before the Seleucids won the territory

B. The Seleucids [Syrians]

- Antiochus III [the Great] came to the Seleucid throne in 223 B.C. and it took him 25 years [198 B.C.] to take Samaria and all of Judea from the Ptolemies of Egypt

- The land was divided in five provinces familiar to readers of the Gospels—Galilee, Samaria, Judea [the three often collectively called Judea], Trachonitis, and Perea

- The Jews were at first allowed to regulate their own lives by their Laws under a high priest and council

IV. ANTIOCHUS IV EPIPHANES AND THE MACCABEAN REVOLT

A. Antiochus IV Epiphanes—God Manifest {175-164 B.C.} [Dan 11:21]

- He came to the Seleucid throne in 175 B.C. after the murder of his brother Seleucus IV and sought to expand south against Egypt, but he was stopped by a rising threat in the region—Rome

- Antiochus IV began a campaign of Hellenization in his kingdom and Jerusalem was a key target

- Greek festivals and sporting events were introduced in Jerusalem and the city took on the trappings of a Greek city that deeply distressed the traditional elements of Jewish society

- In 168 B.C. he was thought to have died in a military campaign in Egypt against the Romans, and the Jews revolted and took Jerusalem

- Antiochus was not dead; he sent the full force of his military to Jerusalem to punish the rebels

- Entering the city on the Sabbath, scores of unresisting citizens were slaughtered, the city plundered and burned, and the defensive walls were torn down

- He also settled a foreign colony on the citadel of the city; they brought their foreign gods and

worshipped in view of the Temple

- Pagan alters were established throughout Judea
- Jews were forced to change their dietary habits by eating pork and offering swine flesh sacrifices
- Jews who refused to offer sacrifice on those alters and eat the flesh of pigs were sentenced to death
- To further strike against the Jews, in 167 B.C., he forbid the practice of Jewish religion or circumcision or to observe the Sabbath
- In that same year, Antiochus committed the ultimate blasphemy
- He took over the Temple and made it a Greek sanctuary and erected a statue of Olympian Zeus in the Temple [Abomination of Desolation in Dan 11:31; 12:11]
- Antiochus offering a sacrifice of a swine on the Temple alter of burnt offerings [Dan 11:31]
- The Jews responded with passive resistance
- Rather than defile themselves with unclean food, pagan worship, and profaning God, they fled to the wilderness or chose death [This commitment is recorded in 1st and 2nd Maccabees]

B. The Maccabean Revolt

- Mattathias, a priest of the family of the Hasmonaim [Hasmoneans], and an old man by this time, enters Jewish history
- As priest and leader of his village outside Jerusalem, he was ordered by a Syrian official to offer sacrifice on a pagan alter—he refused
- When a Jewish apostate stepped forward to do the sacrifice, Mattathias killed him and the Syrian official, striking a blow that would change Jewish response to the Seleucids from passive to militant action
- His actions also changed Jewish history
- Mattathias and his five sons fled to the countryside to fight a guerilla war
- Early stages of the revolt, Jews were attacked on the Sabbath and refused to defend themselves
- If the Jews followed this approach, no Jews would be left, and so they fought back on the Sabbath
- With the passing of Mattathias, his son Judas, who was called Maccabeus [the Hammer] assumed command [166 B.C.] and fought a guerrilla war against the Seleucid armies
- Fighting a series of successful military campaigns against Antiochus IV armies, Judas led a successful rebellion and in 164 B.C. his forces took control of Jerusalem
- Judas sent a small force to clear the Temple citadel of the Hellenizers and a Syrian garrison

while select priests purified the Temple, dismantled the desecrated altar, and built a new one

- In 164 B.C., the Temple was rededicated, and sacrifice renewed
- The date was marked by the beginning of the eight day celebration of *Hanukkah*, the feast of dedication [now called the Feast of Lights]
- Accounts of the dedication can be found in the Apocrypha [1 Macc 4:52-59; 2 Macc 10:1-8]—it does not contain the legend of the lights
- According to legend, the Seleucids defiled all the oil for the Temple Menorah
- When the Maccabees attempted to rekindle the Menorah, they were able to find only a small flask with enough oil for one day
- Nevertheless, this small supply burned for eight days, hence the eight day duration of the festival
- Judas fought against the Seleucids until his death in battle in 160 B.C.
- Leadership resistance passed to Judas' brother Jonathan, and later to Simon in 143 B.C. when Jonathan was murdered by Seleucids
- Under Simon, Israel won its freedom and independence as a nation again in 140 B.C. and the beginning of the Hasmonean kingdom

V. THE HASMONEAN DYNASTY [140 B.C. - 63 B.C.]

A. The Final Jewish State Before the 20th Century

- Under Simon, the last of Judas Maccabee's brothers, Judea was established as an independent kingdom called the Hasmonean dynasty
- 142 B.C. becomes the first year of Simon the great high priest, the governor and leader of the Jews—the Great Synagogue in Jerusalem had to agree to accept Simon and his descendants as high priest and governor since they were normally filled by two men
 - Simon was also not of the Zadokite line, the only lineage accepted for the hereditary office of high priest
- The Hasmonean Dynasty established the first independent Jewish state since Nebuchadnezzar destroyed and captured Jerusalem 440 years before in 586 B.C.

B. The Hasmonean Era

- The Hasmoneans would rule over an independent Israel that for a time equaled the boundaries of David and Solomon, but the country didn't have the heart or the desire to follow God
- Unfortunately, the Maccabees successfully threw off the foreign yoke, only to replace it with a less offensive dominance of their descendants

- Simon and his descendants governed an independent Jewish state [not very well] nearly 80 years until Roman intervention in 63 B.C.

- Kingdom lasted until 37 B.C. when it came under the control of King Herod

- Jews will not have another independent nation until Israel is established in 1948

C. Fall of the Hasmonean Dynasty

- Internal fighting between the priestly establishment [Pharisees] and the common people as well as two brothers, Hyrcanus and Aristobulus who were vying for leadership and the kingship helped bring the dynasty down in a civil war in 64 B.C.

- In 64 B.C., the Roman army had earlier marched into Syria under the leadership of Pompey, one of Rome's most gifted generals

- Both sides appealed to Pompey for help

- Eager to claim the eastern Mediterranean for Rome, he took control of Judea and Jerusalem in 63 B.C., thus ending the dynasty

- Pompey laid siege to Jerusalem for three months and slaughtered over 12,000

- He installed Hyrcanus as high priest but without the title of king; Judea was now a Roman client state

- Hyrcanus had a chief minister, Antipater who was more than willing to come to terms with the Romans; he was half-Jew, half-Hellenizer

- Antipater and his two sons, Phasael and Herod became quite influential with the Romans

- The Hasmonean's rebelled against Rome in 40 B.C., but were put down in 37 B.C.

- With the help of Roman forces, Herod seized Jerusalem in 37 B.C. and was given the throne and made King of Judea by the Roman Senate

- Herod would reign until 4 B.C. and the beginning of the Christian era

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CHAPTER 6 ROMAN DOMINANCE [37 B.C.—35 A.D.] DANIEL'S FOURTH BEAST [DANIEL 7:7]

I. ROMAN CIVIL WAR AND THE RISE OF AUGUSTUS

A. The First Triumvirate of Rome [60 B.C.] and Shared Power

- Pompey suppressed revolt in Spain, cleared Mediterranean of pirates, conquered Syria, annexed Palestine
- Crassus led Roman legions against Spartacus in 71 B.C.
- Julius Caesar won his reputation in command of the Gallic Wars [58-51 B.C.]
- Crassus killed fighting the Parthians in 53 B.C.

- Caesar defeated Pompey in 48 B.C. in Egypt and fell under the spell of Cleopatra VII
- Caesar returned to Rome in 46 B.C. and declared dictator by the Senate which he took for life

- In 44 B.C., Caesar assassinated by Brutus and Cassius

B. The Final Struggle for Power—Antony and Octavian

- Caesar named his young grandnephew Octavian as his heir to the detriment of Mark Antony
- The two formed an uneasy alliance against Caesar's assassins, defeating them on the Plains of Philippi in 42 B.C.

- After the battle Octavian received Italy and the western provinces while Antony took command of the east, which led to him allying with Cleopatra in Alexandria

- In 31 B.C., Octavian defeated Antony in the battle of Actium in Greece; Antony and Cleopatra returned to Alexandria and committed suicide

- In 27 B.C., the Roman Senate gave Octavian the title "Augustus" which led to Augustus gaining great power as "Caesar" or Emperor
- Under Augustus, Rome established "*Pax Romana*" [Roman Peace] ending the civil wars and establishing security and economic prosperity in the Roman Empire

C. The Successor to Augustus—Tiberius

- Augustus was a benevolent ruler and tried to assure his successor within the family but without success since his two sons and son-in-law died before him
- Augustus adopted Tiberius, his stepson by his wife Livia as his successor

- The Senate conferred upon Tiberius the same power given to Augustus
- When Augustus died on August 19, 14 A.D., Tiberius became emperor of Rome

D. Significant New Testament Events

- Under Augustus, Jesus was born, Herod the Great died and his kingdom divided, the first procuratorship established in 6 A.D.
- Under Tiberius, the public ministry of Jesus, day of Pentecost, Paul's conversion

II. HEROD THE GREAT [37—4 B.C.]

A. The Man

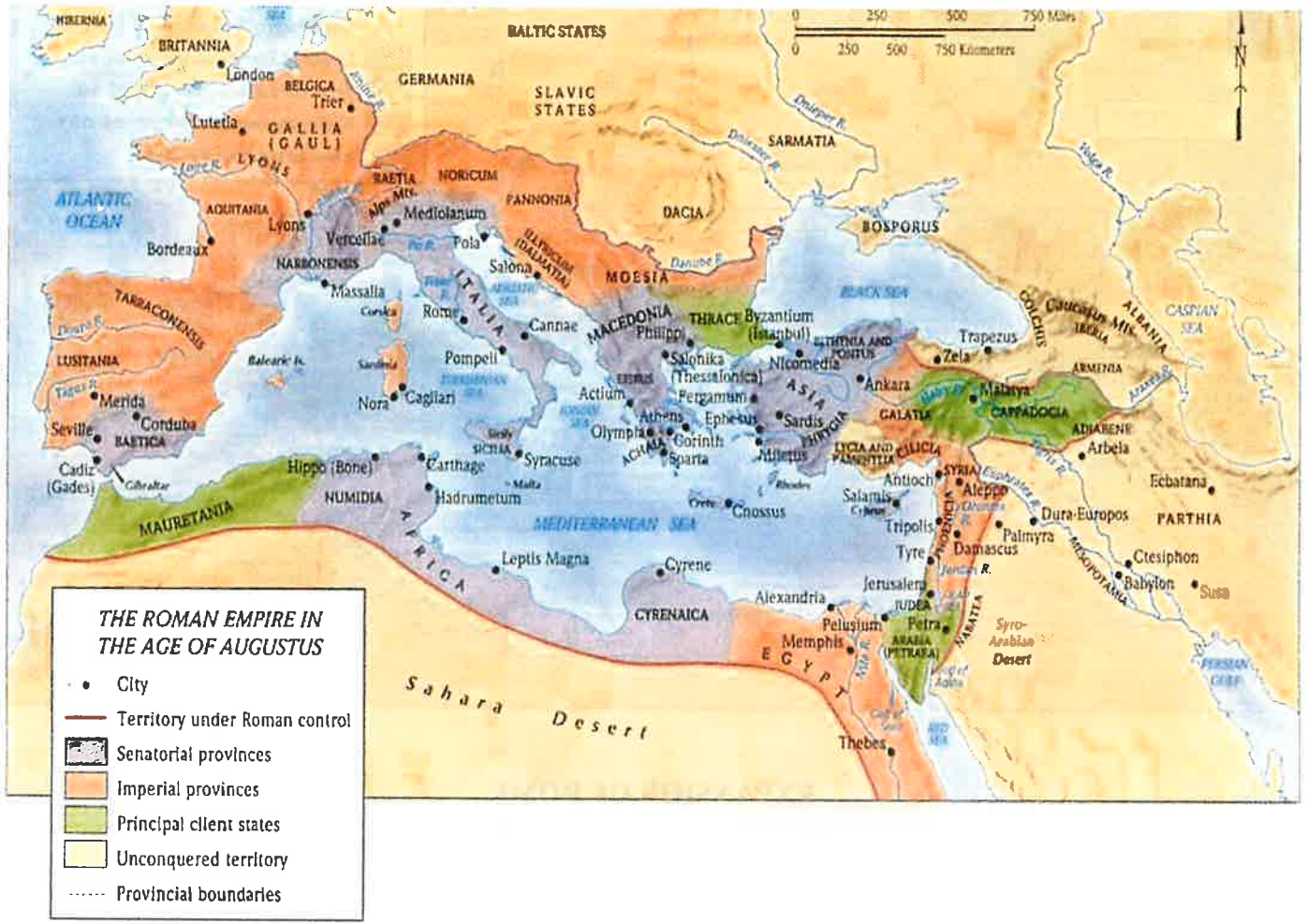
- He was both a Jew and an anti-Jew; upholder of Roman life and culture, and a barbarian capable of unspeakable cruelty
- The Romanization of Israel intensified during the reign of Herod the Great—he won the favor of Roman rulers for his unflinching loyalty to the interests of Rome
- The Roman Senate confirmed Herod as king of the Jews, and after Rome put down an insurrection of Hasmonean supporters [Antigonus, son of Aristobulus II] in 37 B.C., Herod possessed a kingdom that included Judea, Samaria, Idumea, Galilee, and Perea

B. Consolidation of His Power

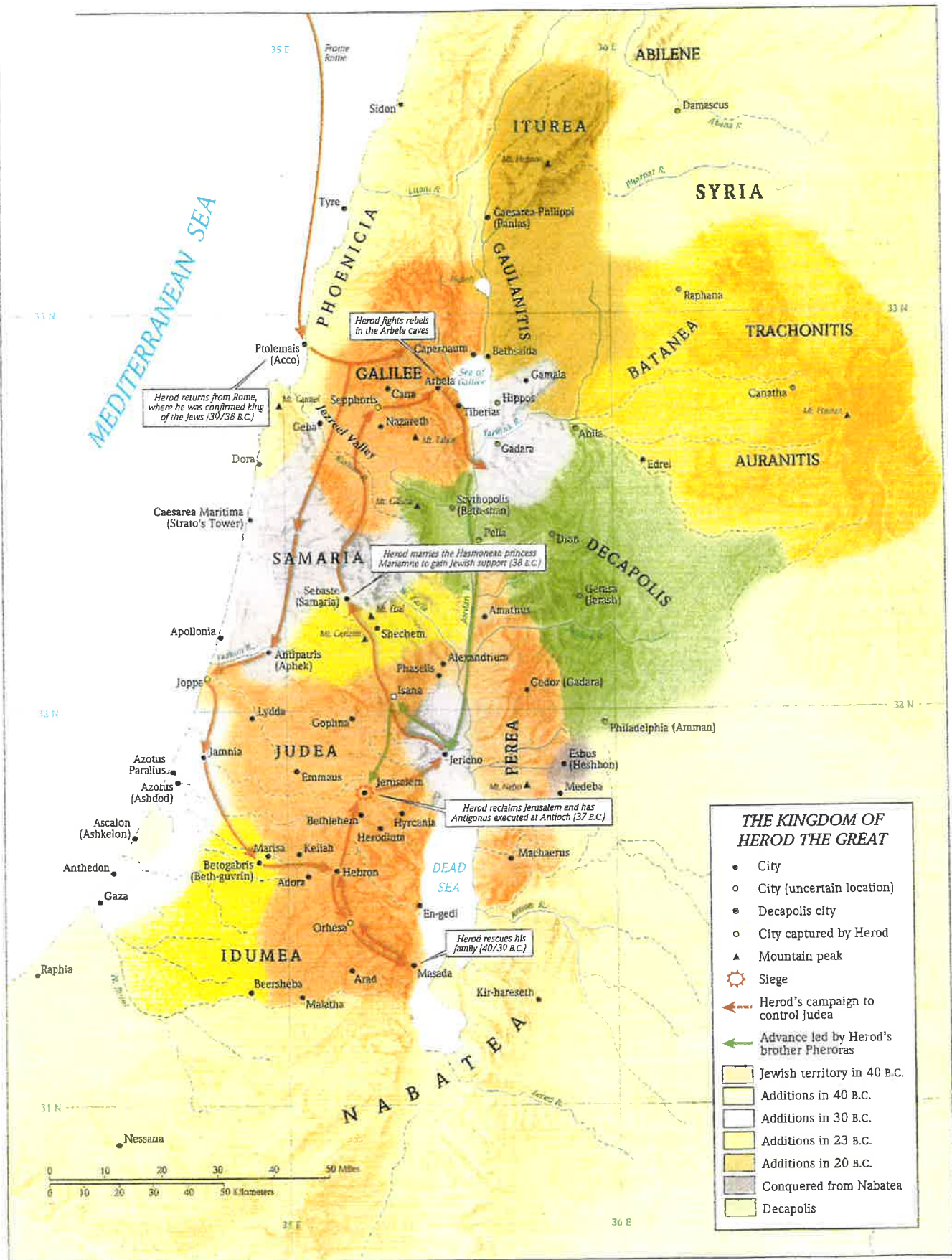
- Hated by the Jews because of his harshness and support of Roman life—he symbolized foreign domination to the Jews
- Herod was thought to be insane, and definitely was a murderer
- He ordered the murder of members of his own family and chief rivals; his brother-in-law, mother-in-law, his wife Mariamne, his two sons by Mariamne, and finally, his son Antipater by another wife
- Threat of a rival king aroused his worst fears as the case of Jesus and his order to murder all the boys in Bethlehem two years old and under [Matt 2:16]

C. The Great Builder

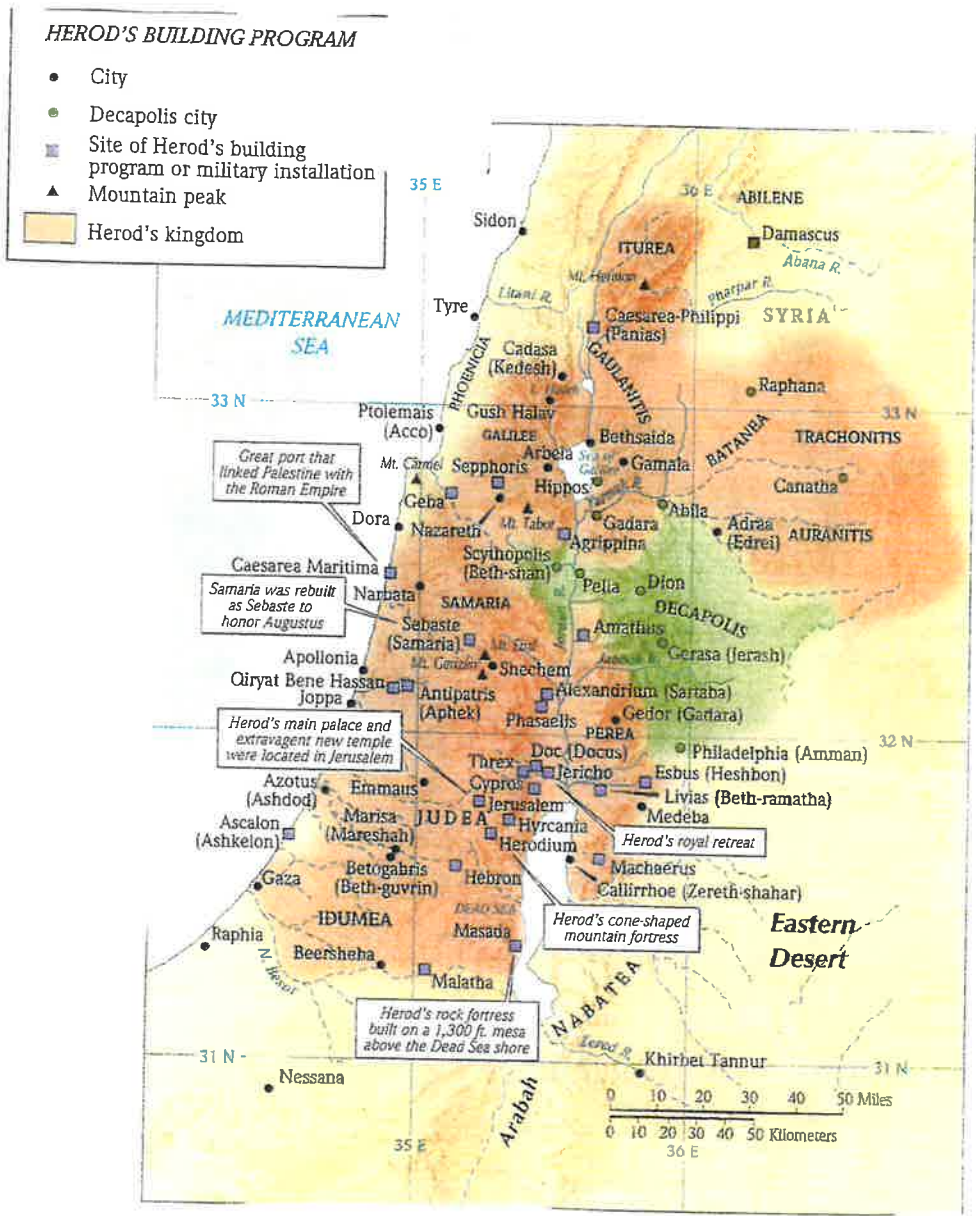
- Greatest builder in the history of Judea, surpassing even King Solomon
- Rebuilt the city of Jerusalem with a new palace on the western side of the city; build the Antonia Fortress on the north side of the Temple complex
- Founded new cities such as Caesarea along the coast in honor of the Emperor, rebuilt Samaria, built a system of forts, had numerous palace retreats such as Masada constructed throughout the country
- His greatest building accomplishment was the building of a new Temple in Jerusalem to replace the unimpressive structure dedicated by Zerubbabel in 515 B.C.



ROMAN EMPIRE IN AGE OF AUGUSTUS
HOLMAN BIBLE ATLAS
49B



**HEROD THE GREAT'S KINGDOM
HOLMAN BIBLE ATLAS**



- Around 22 B.C., Herod summoned a national assembly to announce the building of the Temple on a scale exceeding the glory of Solomon
- For two years, Herod assembled the materials and 10,000 workers; 1,000 supervisory priests trained as stonemasons to work in the forbidden areas
- Creation of the Temple as a place for sacrifice took only 18 months
- The building as a whole took 46 years to complete
- Craftsmen were still finishing the decorations just before the Romans tore the whole thing down in 70 A.D., leaving not one stone upon another
- The Temple complex covered an area of 35 acres
- Since Herod was not of a priestly family and couldn't enter the inner court, he spent little on the interior and the Holy of Holies, though lined in gold, was bare
- He spent profusely on the exterior
- The glitter of the stone and gleam of the gold could be seen many miles away and made the Temple so striking to travelers

D. The Demise of Herod's Rule

- Bitterness and increasing fears of those he believed wanted his throne plagued Herod in his final years
- He turned on the nation and his family as previously discussed: murder of sons, wife, mother in-law, rivals
- Herod suffered a chronic and painful stomach disease that plagued him until his death
- When he died in 4 B.C., his death sparked relief and joy among many Jews, who believed the agonies of his illness was a divine punishment from God
- In spite of all the building projects Herod had accomplished, especially the Temple, there was deep hatred from his Jewish subjects in his last days
- After his death in the spring of 4 B.C., his sons followed him in rule
- None of Herod's three remaining sons were worthy of rule and the Romans removed them from authority
- However, Herod's grandson, Herod Agrippa was able, and in 37 A.D. the Romans gave him Judea
- Herod Agrippa died in 44 A.D. and the Romans governed directly by Roman procurators
- The death of Herod the Great effectively ended the last phase of stable Jewish rule in Judea until the mid 20th century

III. ROMAN RULE DURING THE TIME OF JESUS

A. Emperor Tiberius

- Was a very capable general; fearless on the battlefield
- His marital and family life was a disaster; forced to marry Augustus' daughter Julia

- Came to the imperial throne at age 55
- Inherited a stable empire from Augustus
- Proved to be a capable leader

- Not liked by the Senate or the Roman populace
- Avoided Rome and established his residence on the island of Capri

- Indulged in astrology and sexual activities with young boys and girls; most were later killed
- Turned over most of his administrative duties to subordinates who abused their power

B. Pontius Pilate

- Limited information on his background
- Wife was Claudia Procula, a granddaughter of Caesar Augustus

- Fifth appointed Roman governor [Procurator] for Judea by Sejanus, Tiberius' administrator in 31 A.D.
- Had no sympathy for the Jews; preferred his residence in Caesarea to Jerusalem

- His personal and professional future depended on making the degenerate Tiberius happy
- He had to accommodate the Jews because Tiberius directed him to do so "conducive to public order"

- According to Tiberius' orders, Pilate was not to meddle in matters of Jewish law

- Pilate was forced to make an uneasy alliance with the high priest Caiaphas, the most powerful man in Jerusalem, next to his father-in-law Annas the former high priest

- The procurator was the Emperor's direct representative and oversaw financial affairs of the province, including the collection of taxes and tariffs

- The procurator also appointed the high priest for the Temple

IV. CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS RULE DURING CHRIST'S MINISTRY

A. The King of Judea

- After Herod's death in 4 B.C., his kingdom was divided among three of his surviving sons
- During Jesus' ministry, two of those sons, Herod Antipas and Philip ruled as clients of Rome
- Archelaus, the third son was removed in 6 A.D. and a Roman procurator ruled

- Herod Antipas ruled Galilee and Perea; Galilee was the scene of much of Jesus' ministry
- He is mentioned 20 times in the Gospels; he came to fear Jesus' growing popularity
- He ordered John the Baptist's execution because of John's preaching
- Pilate would send Jesus to Herod Antipas during His trial [Luke 23:6-12]
- Herod Antipas supported building projects throughout his region; named city of Tiberias after the Emperor
- Tiberias served as the capital of Galilee until Emperor Caligula deposed him in 39 A.D.

B. Philip

- Philip was appointed tetrarch over the areas north and east of the Sea of Galilee
- Greeks and non-Jews predominated the area; little religious issues or Jewish nationalism
- Considered a capable administrator and a just ruler whose reign was peaceful and prosperous
- Jesus occasionally went into Philip's area to get away from the crowds in Galilee

V. RELIGIOUS RULE

A. The High Priest—Annas the Old High Priest

- Appointed high priest by governor Quirinius decades before arrival of Jesus
- He grew prosperous and powerful
- Came to see the Temple in Jerusalem as the key to all power, especially economic
- It was the biggest enterprise, holiest ground, most revered site in the nation

B. Caiaphas the High Priest

- A member of the Sadducees
- Son-in-law of Annas and high priest of the Jews in the reign of Tiberius [Luke 3:2]
- Received Jesus from Annas before Jesus was sent to Pilate

VI. ESTABLISHED JEWISH STRUCTURES AT THE TIME OF CHRIST

A. The Synagogue

- It means a gathering or assembly and has its origins in the first homes in Babylon during the captivity [Ezek 8:1; 20:1-3]
- The house synagogue met in homes because there was no access to the Temple
- These formal assemblies provided instruction, public worship, and prayer
- In Jesus' time, there was at least one synagogue in nearly every village and town [Luke 4:14-30]
- There were services every Sabbath and on Jewish festival days
- The synagogue was open three times a day for prayer

- The synagogues were repositories of Hebrew scripture and the sacred rolls of the Law [Torah]
- The synagogues were among the first places the Gospel was proclaimed [Acts 13:5, 14; 14:1]

B. The Sanhedrin

- An aristocratic body possessing powers of jurisdiction, going back in principle to King Jehoshaphat's time [2 Chron 19:5-11]—it means a sitting together or assembly
- Developed into the supreme native court of the Jews by Jesus' day and functioned in both civil and religious matters until the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.
- Usually consisted of 70 men and at the time of Jesus, met in the Temple in Jerusalem
- Nicodemus was a member of the Sanhedrin [John 7:50-51] as well as Joseph of Arimathea [Luke 23:50]
- The Sanhedrin was presided over by the high priests—Jesus went before them

C. The Pharisees

- During the Maccabean period in the reign of John Hyrcanus [134-104 B.C.], the conflicting parties in Judaism came into existence as fighters against the Seleucids—it means to be separated, “Separated Ones”
- They developed a theology different from the Sadducees; they believed Moses received from God not only the written Law, but simultaneously the Oral Law
- The Torah [first five books of the Old Testament] was valued above all else; should be interpreted in every generation through the Oral Law by the rabbis of that generation
- If the spirit of the Law was in conflict with the letter of the Law, then Oral Law allowed a new interpretation
- For example, in an "eye for an eye," the Pharisees believed the law need not be taken literally like the Sadducees; some other compensation could be substituted
- Oral Law was able to adapt to change; Oral Law much like interpreting U.S. Constitution
- Pharisees differed over the oral tradition of the law with Jesus [Mark 2:23-28; 7:1-13; Luke 6:1-11]
- Pharisaic concept of God became the bedrock of Judaism; God was omnipotent, all-just, and all merciful
- Pharisees accepted new theological ideas: angels, demons, heaven and hell, resurrection [Paul was a Pharisee and accepted these new ideas]
- Pharisees believed in bodily resurrection of the dead and immortality of the soul; Sadducees did not

- Believed God could be worshipped everywhere, not just Temple and animal sacrifices
- Pharisees were especially concerned about laws of ritual purity, Sabbath observances, and tithing—they were identified as separate ones who endeavored to keep the whole Law
- Sinners were those Jews whose observance fell short of the standards set by the Pharisees
- Gamaliel, a teacher of young Saul, was one of the most important Pharisees in the first century
- Conflicts between Jesus and the Pharisees mainly centered on the oral tradition because Jesus did not consider it as binding [Mark 2:23-28; 7:1-13; Luke 6:1-11]
- Jesus criticized Pharisees because their piety in fasting, prayer, and tithing was done for improper motives [Matt 6:5-18; 23:1-39]
- The Pharisees condemned Jesus for consorting and eating with sinners [Matt 9:11; Luke 15:2]
- However, Jesus maintained positive contacts with Pharisees, eating in their homes and encouraging their search for God [Mark 12:28-34; Luke 7:36-50; John 3]
- Once the Temple was destroyed, Sadducees lacked center of worship and faded, while Pharisees became dominant force in Jewish life and shaped Judaism

D. The Sadducees

- They were chiefly aristocratic, worldly-minded priests, who obeyed the letter of the Law
- They were fundamentalists who believed only in the written Law and saw the Temple and animal sacrifice as the center of Judaism; the Temple was their stronghold
- Took their name from Zadok, the high priest at the time of King David [1 Kings 1:38-48]
- They were Temple officials and dominated the Sanhedrin
- They appear prominently in the trials of Peter and John before the Sanhedrin [Acts 4:1-4; 5:17-18]
- They were willing to cooperate with ruling parties, especially the Romans; by the time of Jesus, they developed Hellenistic tendencies
- The Sadducees had little support among the common people
- Sadducees were the wealthier elements of society
- They controlled the practice of religion through their role as Temple officials and priests
- A major point of disagreement with Pharisees was authority—they rejected the oral traditions the Pharisees valued, and argued over matters of interpretation
- They centered their beliefs on the Law of Moses; Temple sacrifices an integral part of their practices

- They rejected most of the progressive theological ideas of the Pharisees: Sadducees denied such concepts as eternal rewards and punishments and that faithfulness to God was rewarded in this life
- Bordering on fundamentalism, they were strict observers of the Law; to the Sadducee, "an eye for an eye, and tooth for a tooth" was literally enforced
- Their rejection of the idea of resurrection presented an insurmountable obstacle with the Pharisees and the new faith of Christianity
- The Sadducees collapsed in the wake of the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.; their influence dissolved when their stronghold, the Temple, was lost

E. The Scribes

- They were called copyists of Holy Scripture, intimately conversant with the Mosaic law; also called lawyers
- They were interpreters of the Law and provided the Pharisees with authoritative pronouncements upon what the Law demanded
- They were very influential in Jesus' day