

# THE ARRIVAL OF THE GREEKS

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By the middle of the fourth century BC Philip II of Macedonia solidified his position as ruler of Macedonia. During his life he worked toward two great goals: to unify the Greek city-states under his rule and to overthrow the Persians. In doing so he built his Macedonian army into a small but formidable fighting force. Unfortunately, Philip was assassinated in 336 BC, after completing plans to invade Asia Minor.





Philip's son Alexander ("the Great") was well positioned to carry out his father's dreams. Although only twenty years old, Alexander had been educated by Aristotle and had already led campaigns on behalf of his father. He began his invasion of Asia Minor by crossing the Dardanelles in 334 BC. He and his general Parmenio crushed all resistance throughout Asia Minor.

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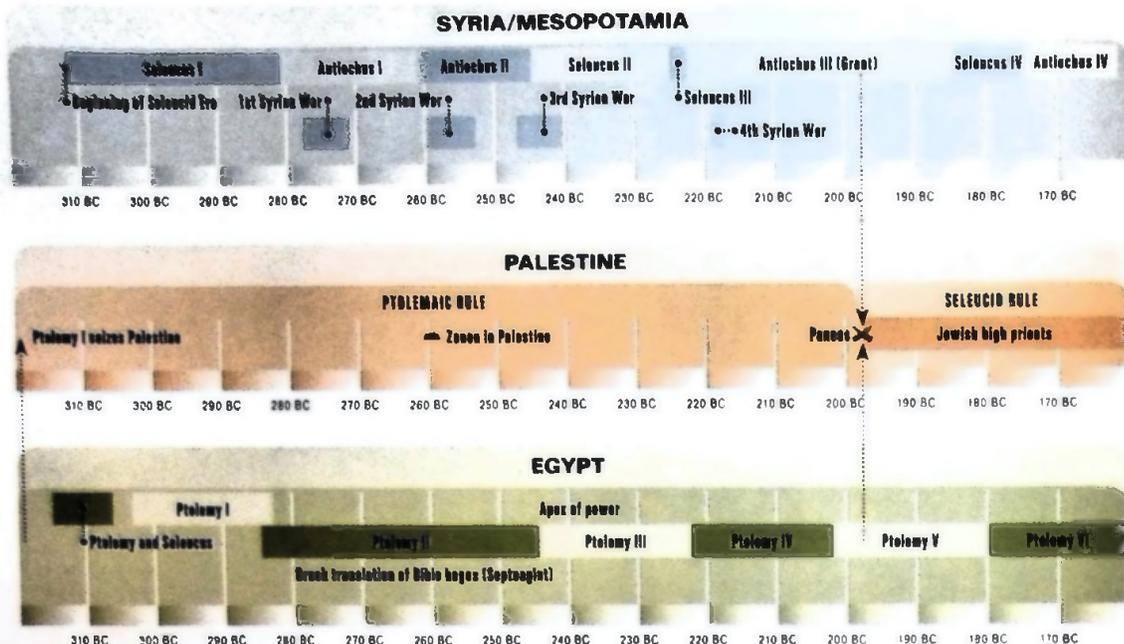


London: British Museum

▲ Coin with a representation of Alexander the Great

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Alexander then marched south along the coast of the Levant, securing or seizing Aradus, Byblos, Sidon, Tyre, Gaza, and other cities. After he crossed northern Sinai, Egypt submitted to his rule, and in the winter of 332–331 BC, he



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founded the city of Alexandria. This city became the capital of Egypt and a leading commercial and intellectual center of the world.

Alexander left Ptolemy in charge of Egypt and went north through the Levant. His treatment of the Judeans is not known, but most likely the Jews did not interfere with his advance along the coast. The Samaritans, however, murdered their

governor Andromachus. In retaliation, Alexander destroyed Samaria and resettled it with Macedonian veterans.

Heading north and then east, Alexander passed through northern Mesopotamia. To the east of the Tigris, the Persians were soundly defeated. Darius fled further east but was murdered by Bessus, the satrap of Bactria. This ended nearly 200 years of Persian rule.

## THE EMPIRE OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT



Alexander continued eastward to the area of modern Afghanistan and Kashmir, and then headed south into the Indus Valley (in modern Pakistan). From there he embarked on a difficult march west, through the deserts and mountains of southern Persia (modern Iran) toward Babylon. In 323 BC, at age thirty-two, Alexander suddenly died. But the Near East was radically changed with the arrival of Greek language and culture.

After Alexander's death a number of his officers quarreled over the conquered lands. Eventually, Antipater and Cassander were established in Macedonia and Greece; Lysimachus in Thrace and Asia Minor; Seleucus I in Syria, Mesopotamia, and Persia (all the way to the Indus River); and Ptolemy I in Egypt and Palestine.

During the reign of Ptolemy I (304 – 282 BC), the famous library and "museum" of Alexandria were established. His



political and military fortunes were varied. At one time he was able to extend his rule into southern Turkey and even toward the Greek mainland. These territories would pass in and out of Ptolemaic hands during the third century.

To the north of Palestine, Seleucus I (312 – 280 BC) established his capital at Antioch on the Orontes River. The influence of the Seleucid state was so pervasive that the calendrical system used in the Near East for hundreds of years was reckoned from the beginning of his reign (now known as 312 BC).

The Ptolemies and Seleucids fought wars during the third century BC, with Palestine caught in the middle. In the main

the Ptolemies were successful in defending and controlling their territory. Palestine was divided into a number of administrative units called hyparchies. It also served to provide Egypt with quality olive oil, wines, wood products, and, at times, slaves.

Not much is known about the hyparchy of Judea during the third century BC. It would appear that few changes occurred in its size or internal administration, whose chief Jewish official was the high priest.

The hyparchy of Samaria, north of Judea, was populated with Macedonian veterans. The Samaritans maintained





their religious and political institutions on and near Mount Gerizim. To the north of Samaria were royal estates in the Jezreel Valley, and to the north of these was the hyparchy of Galilee.

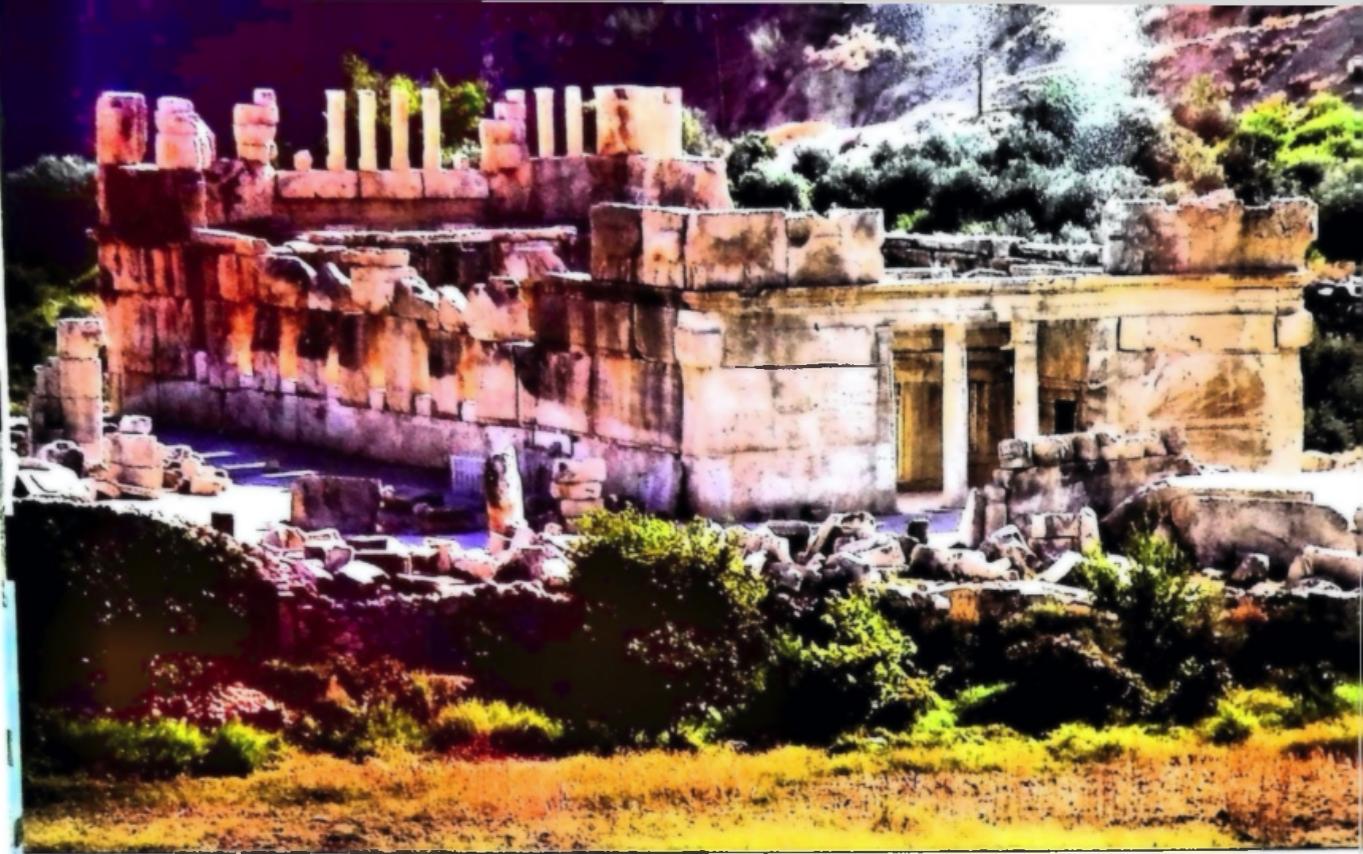
Coastal cities such as Tyre and Sidon had a high degree of independence. They supplied ships and sailors for the Ptolemaic navy and merchant fleet. Farther south, Acco, the port of Galilee, was one of the few cities to receive a dynastic name — Ptolemais. To the south was the Philistine Plain, and to the east of that was the hyparchy of Idumea.

When Ptolemy IV ascended the Egyptian throne and Antiochus III (223 – 187 BC) the Seleucid throne, the balance of power in the Levant began to shift in favor of the Seleu-



cids. In the Fourth Syrian War (221 – 217 BC) Antiochus pushed south into Galilee, the Jezreel Valley, and Transjordan, and advanced south to Gaza and Raphia, where he was defeated. But in 198 BC Antiochus III defeated the Ptolemaic general Scopas in the decisive battle at Paneas. Thus began a half century of Seleucid control of Judea (198 – 142 BC).

Initially, the Judeans prospered under the leadership of the Jewish high priest Onias III (198 – 174 BC). Because the Jewish population of Jerusalem had so readily received Antiochus III, they were granted special privileges, including the restoration of Jerusalem, limited tax exemptions, subsidies for the temple, and permission to live according to their ancestral laws (Josephus, *Ant.* 12.3.3, 4 [138 – 46]).



Mark Connolly

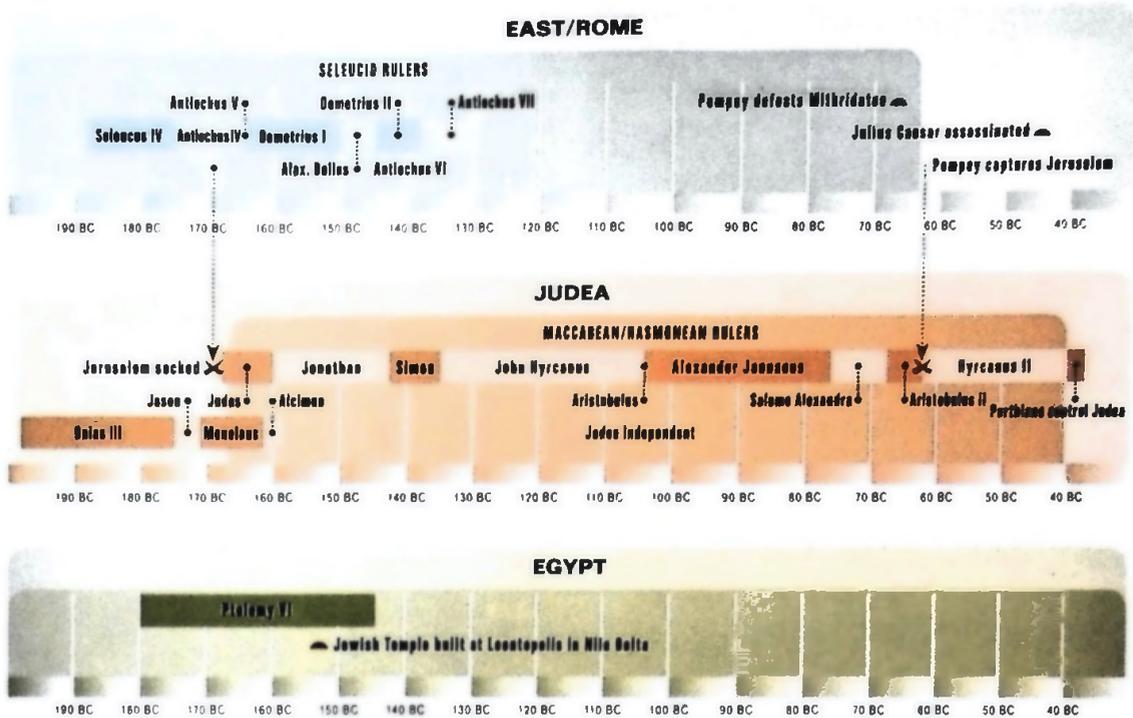
▲ *Pleasure palace at Iraq el-Amir in Jordan from the Hellenistic Period*

In general the Seleucids encouraged the adoption of Greek language, culture, and customs, and they established new cities on the model of the Greek polis — where the adult male citizens met together to govern the affairs of the city. The Seleucids changed the Semitic names of cities to Greek ones. For example, Jerusalem became Antiochia. But these names lasted for only a brief period of time.

The Seleucids combined several Ptolemaic hyparchies to form a larger unit called an “eparchy.” One of the largest of these was the eparchy of Samaria, whose governor resided

in Samaria. During the latter part of his rule, Antiochus III experienced a series of defeats at the hands of the Romans, after which he relinquished control of much of Asia Minor and pledged to pay a heavy tribute to Rome.

Antiochus III (the Great) was succeeded by his son Seleucus IV Philopater, who maintained good relations with the Judeans — even presenting gifts to the temple in Jerusalem (2 Macc 3:3). At his death in 175 BC, Antiochus IV seized the throne. With the rise of Antiochus IV, Judea entered a critical phase in its history.



# THE MACCABEAN REVOLT AND THE HASMONEAN DYNASTY

▼ *Temple of Zeus at Gerasa (Jordan)—one of the Greco-Roman cities of the Decapolis. Originally built in the Hellenistic/Early Roman period.*

With the rise of Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175–163 BC), a chain of events began that culminated in the establishment of an independent Jewish state in 142 BC, which lasted until the Romans captured Jerusalem in 63 BC. These events had a direct influence on Jewish life and practice for the next two centuries.

Antiochus IV attempted to solidify his kingdom under the banner of Hellenism. Many Jews quickly adopted the new Hellenistic lifestyle (2 Macc 4), which meant breaking with their religious, cultural, and linguistic heritage. In Judea they gained





Antiochus IV tried to gain control of Egypt, but he was rebuffed by the Romans. He then decided to strengthen his kingdom by solidifying his position in Palestine. In 167 BC he dispatched troops to Jerusalem. In an attempt to Hellenize the population further, Jews were commanded to worship Zeus and other pagan deities, to burn their copies of the Torah, and to forsake the laws of their God (1 Macc 1:41 – 64). They were forbidden to observe the Sabbath, to celebrate their feasts, to sacrifice to God, and to circumcise their children. Portions of the walls of Jerusalem were torn down and a pagan citadel, called the Acra was constructed. The temple in Jerusalem was turned into a temple of Olympian Zeus, and on December 16, 167 BC, an unclean sacrifice was offered to Zeus (2 Macc 6:1 – 11).

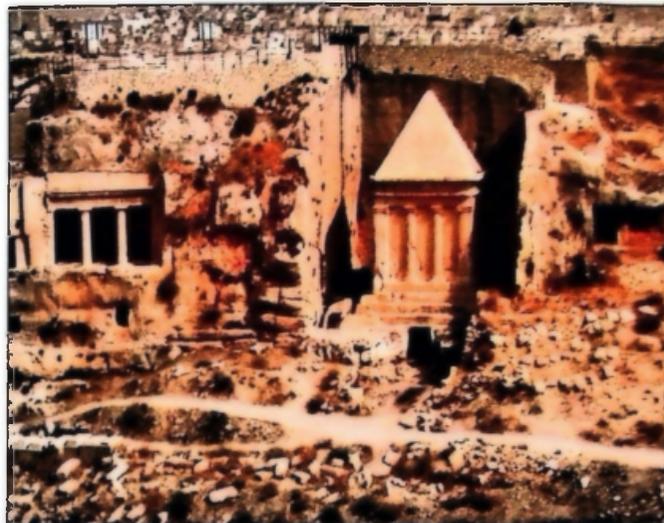
Also in 167 BC, a delegate of Antiochus IV attempted to force Mattathias, a priest who lived in Modiin, to sacrifice to a pagan deity. Mattathias refused, but another Jew volunteered to perform the rite. Outraged, Mattathias killed both the Seleucid delegate and the errant Jew, and thus the Maccabean revolution began (1 Macc 2:1 – 48). The aged Mattathias soon died a natural death, leaving his five sons to carry the revolutionary torch (2:49 – 70).

The leader of the revolution was Judas, Mattathias's middle son, who was also called Maccabeus ("the hammerer"). Judas gained the support of the Hasidim, the "pious ones," who were true to ancient Jewish beliefs and practices. Judas and his followers went throughout the countryside, tearing down pagan altars and circumcising Jewish children.

In 165 BC the Seleucids, led by Lysias, assembled a large army at Emmaus. Judas mustered his warriors at the old tribal center of Mizpah in the Hill Country of Benjamin. Through a surprise attack, the Seleucids were defeated and retreated to the coast (1 Macc 3:27 – 4:25).

Lysias and Judas next clashed at Beth Zur, where Lysias was routed (1 Macc 4:26 – 35). Flushed with victory Judas marched to Jerusalem and recaptured the city, except for the Acra — which remained in the hands of the Hellenizers. The temple was cleansed, and on Chislev 25 (December 14), 164 BC, the temple was rededicated and proper Jewish sacrifices were resumed. Jews have commemorated this event as the Feast of Hanukkah — the Feast of Dedication (vv. 36 – 61).

After the death of Antiochus IV in 164 BC Judas and his brothers expanded their influence north into Galilee and south and southwest of Judah. But a large portion of the popu-



▲ Tombs of the "sons of Hezir" (left) and of "Zechariah" (center) in the Kidron Valley, Jerusalem. Note the Doric and Ionic columns and the pyramid-shaped roof, indicating Greek and Egyptian influence on the country.

▼ Mt. Gerizim: monumental staircase from the second century BC that led up to the Samaritan temple on the top of Mt. Gerizim. The temple was destroyed by John Hyrcanus in 110 BC (compare John 4:20).



lace desired closer ties with the Seleucids, and they appealed to Antiochus V for help. Lysias again marched to Beth Zur. He defeated Judas at Beth Zechariah and lay siege to Jerusalem.

PALESTINE OF THE MACCABEES AND THE HASMONEAN DYNASTY

-  Judea at the beginning of the revolt
-  Additions of Jonathan, 160-142 BC
-  Additions of Simon, 142-134 BC
-  Additions of Hyrcanus I, 134-104 BC
-  Additions of Aristobulus I, 104-103 BC
-  Additions of Alexander Jannaeus, 103-76 BC
-  Kingdom of Alexander Jannaeus



But because of internal problems he had to return to Antioch and so made peace with Judas, guaranteeing the Jews religious freedom (1 Macc 6:55–63), though he demanded that the walls of Jerusalem be torn down. Thus at least the religious gains of the revolt were preserved.

The next eighteen years (160–142 BC) were unstable, with battles, intrigue, and changing loyalties among the Hellenists, the Hasidim, the Maccabees (led now by Jonathan), and the Seleucid rulers. Eventually, after Jonathan was killed, his brother Simon allied himself the Seleucid Demetrius II, who sent him a letter confirming Judea's complete independence. Thus 142 BC marked the official independence of the Judean state—the first time that it had been officially free from foreign domination since 586 BC, when Jerusalem had fallen to the Babylonians. The Jews conferred on Simon the position of governor and high priest “for ever, until a trustworthy prophet should arise” (1 Macc 14:25–43). Thus with Simon, the Hasmonean dynasty (142–63 BC) began.

When Antiochus VII was killed in battle, strong Seleucid rule effectively ceased, and the Judeans engaged in expansionist activities. In 128 BC John Hyrcanus, a son of Simon, seized parts of Transjordan. In the same year he attacked the Samaritans, who had been harassing the Jews, and in 110 BC he destroyed their temple on Mount Gerizim. John Hyrcanus also established an alliance with Rome, and Rome confirmed his independence. In 125 BC he was able to move against Idumea, forcing them to convert to Judaism.

After his long and successful reign (135–104 BC), John Hyrcanus was replaced by his son Aristobulus I, who ruled for only one year (104–103 BC). Upon his death, Aristobulus's wife, Salome Alexandra, released his three brothers from prison and appointed one of them, Alexander Jannaeus, as king and high priest. She in turn married him, in spite of the fact that the high priest was supposed to marry only a virgin. Alexander Jannaeus's long reign (103–76 BC) was the high point of Hasmonean power, though it was marred by internal discord.

During this time conflict between the Sadducees and Pharisees came to a head. Jannaeus sided with the Sadducees and on occasion went out of his way to offend the Pharisees. For example, during a celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles, instead of pouring the sacred water on the altar, he poured it on his feet. The worshipers at the temple responded by pelting him with lemons; Alexander, in turn, responded by massa-

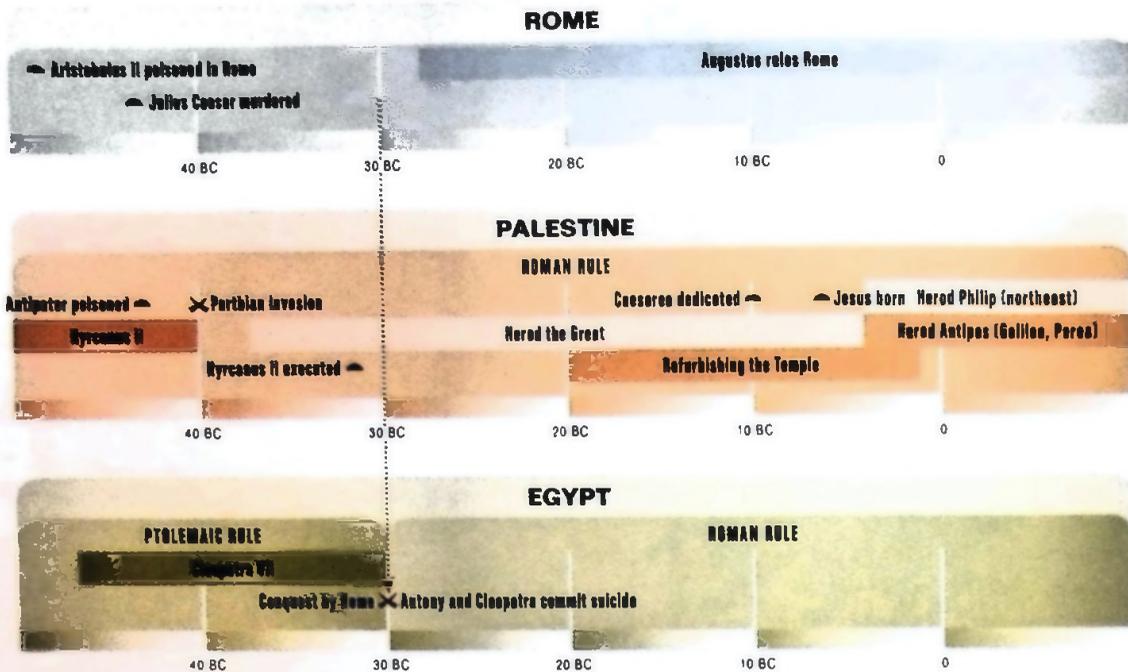


▲ *Qumran Cave IV: numerous Dead Sea Scroll fragments were found in this cave.*

cring some 6,000 Jews. Using foreign mercenaries, Alexander Jannaeus fought with his own countrymen over a six-year period, with the result that almost 50,000 Jews were eventually killed in the conflict. At one point he crucified 800 Pharisees. This tragic incident illustrates the fact that the conflict between the Pharisees and Sadducees, evident on the pages of the New Testament, was more than a theological dispute; its history was punctuated with literal life-and-death matters.

Alexander Jannaeus realized that the Pharisees enjoyed popular support, and on his deathbed he instructed his wife, Salome Alexandra, to make peace with them. After his death, Salome Alexandra assumed civil rule (76–67 BC). She appointed Alexander Jannaeus's son Hyrcanus II to be high priest. She made peace with the Pharisees, and her rule was characterized by peace. However, friction developed when Aristobulus II, the youngest son of Alexander Jannaeus, wanted to be appointed high priest.

After Salome Alexandra's death, the two Hasmonean brothers continued their conflict. It was only resolved by Pompey, who decided to put an end to the intrigue. In 63 BC, after a three-month siege of the temple area, Roman soldiers entered the temple area and killed 12,000 Jews. Pompey reinstated Hyrcanus II as high priest (63–40 BC), though with much more limited powers; Judea and Jerusalem were now firmly under Roman control. Thus in 63 BC the Hasmonean state, independent since 142 BC, officially ceased to exist.



## EARLY ROMAN RULE IN PALESTINE

When Pompey withdrew from the Near East, he left behind a proconsul to govern the province of Syria, of which Judea was a part. Thus, the sphere of Jewish control was greatly reduced. Along the Mediterranean coast, cities were granted autonomous status directly under the proconsul. Even the Jewish port of Joppa was detached from Judea.

Greco-Roman cities to the east of the Jordan River, along with Scythopolis to the west, were also freed from Jewish control, and their Gentile populations (people exiled by the Maccabees and Hasmoneans) were encouraged to return. Some of these cities banded together into a league called the Decapolis

("ten cities"). Jewish territory was limited to Judea proper, eastern Idumea, Perea, and a portion of Galilee.

The Romans appointed Hyrcanus II (63–40 BC) as high priest and left him in charge of Jewish affairs. During this time the Roman Empire was racked by civil strife, which began when Julius Caesar crossed the Rubicon in 49 BC. By 48 BC Caesar was gaining the upper hand against Pompey, pursuing him to Egypt. Hyrcanus II supported Caesar and instructed the Jews of Egypt to do the same. In addition, Antipater the Idumean, the power behind Hyrcanus, also supported Caesar. As a result, Caesar confirmed Hyrcanus II as high priest and ethnarch and appointed Antipater as procurator. Antipater appointed his sons Phasael and Herod as governors in Jerusalem and Galilee.

In 44 BC Julius Caesar was murdered, and civil war resumed in Rome. In 42 BC, Antony became master of Roman holdings in Asia. But in 40 BC the Parthians invaded Palestine and installed Antigonus II, a Hasmonean, as king and high priest in Jerusalem; Hyrcanus II was taken to Parthia as a prisoner. Herod fled to the fortress of Masada but eventually made

# TERRITORIAL CHANGES AFTER POMPEY'S CONQUEST





his way to Rome, where he was warmly received by Octavian and Antony, who persuaded the senate to appoint him king of Judea and to add Samaria and western Idumea to his realm.

From 40 BC until 37 BC Herod fought to gain control of the territory that the Romans had granted him. He began by capturing the port city of Joppa. Then he marched against Antigonus II in Jerusalem, though his first attempt to capture the city failed. During the winter of 39/38 BC he subdued Galilee. After strengthening his forces, he laid siege to Jerusalem in the winter of 38/37 BC and took the city the following summer.

From 37 BC to 25 BC, Herod consolidated his kingdom. Internally, he faced opposition from the Pharisees, from remnants of the Hasmonean family, and from portions of the populace and aristocracy. Herod, of Idumean descent, was never accepted by the Jewish population at large as a true Jew. In an attempt to legitimize his claim to the kingship, Herod married the Hasmonean Mariamne. Her mother, Alexandra, was able to secure a Hasmonean foothold in the religious-political structure of the government by having her seventeen-year-old son Aristobulus appointed as high priest.

The people saw him as a legitimate Jewish replacement for Herod. Enraged by this, Herod arranged for some of his friends to hold the young Aristobulus under water too long while they were swimming in one of the pools in Jericho. In spite of Herod's feigned grief over the "accidental" death of Aristobulus, it was well known that he, in fact, was the instigator of the deed. Herod also eventually eliminated Mariamne, her mother, and the aged Hyrcanus. By 25 BC, most of the internal threats to his kingship had been removed.

Externally, Herod faced a formidable threat from Cleopatra in Egypt, who wanted to revive the Ptolemaic Empire into Palestine and Arabia. Antony, her lover and the master of the east, agreed, and in 35 BC granted her large portions of Herod's territory and of Arabia. But Antony was defeated by Octavian in 31 BC at Actium, and he and Cleopatra committed suicide rather than face the wrath of Rome.

While Antony and Cleopatra were losing power, Herod skillfully changed his allegiance from Antony to Octavian so that when the latter emerged victorious, Herod received back the territories and cities that he had lost to Cleopatra. Thus he emerged from the crisis stronger than ever. From 25 to 14 BC, Herod added further territory to his kingdom.



▲ *Model of the temple in Jerusalem that Herod the Great refurbished and which was standing in the days of Jesus — up until its destruction by the Romans in AD 70.*

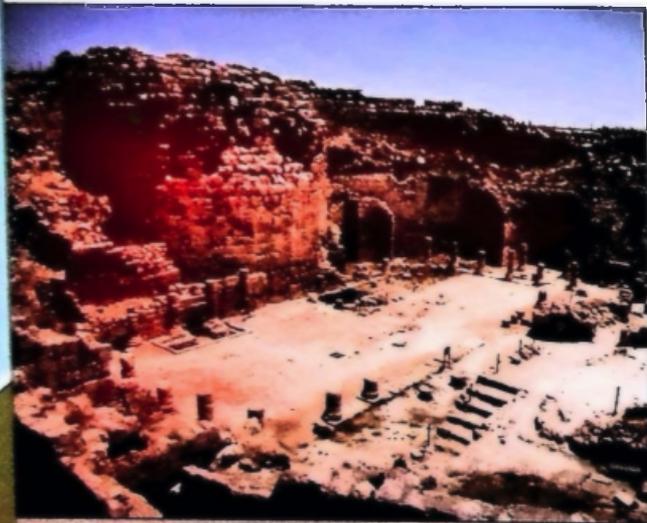
Herod then took a number of measures to secure his kingdom. He established at least two military colonies: one at Gaba and one at Esbus (= OT Heshbon). He also built or rebuilt a string of fortresses throughout his kingdom, which he used to control nearby territory and which served as places of security if Herod had to flee (e.g., Masada) or as prisons.

Herod also sought to neutralize the potential threat from the Jewish population by building and rebuilding cities along Greco-Roman lines and settling Gentiles in them (e.g., Samaria, which he renamed Sebaste, the Greek name for Augustus, the emperor). Since Herod now ruled most of the Mediterranean coastline, he moved to create a secure port for himself from which he could maintain constant contact with Rome and export grain crops to Rome. He chose a small landing called Strato's Tower, just south of Mount Carmel.

Strato's Tower was well situated, for an easy pass through the Mount Carmel range connected it with the Jezreel Valley and the rich agricultural areas northeast of the Sea of Galilee. There Herod built Caesarea Maritima, naming it after the emperor. He brought in fresh water, via tunnels and aqueducts, from springs located at the foot of Mount Carmel, and he built a huge port and other magnificent public buildings. Caesarea



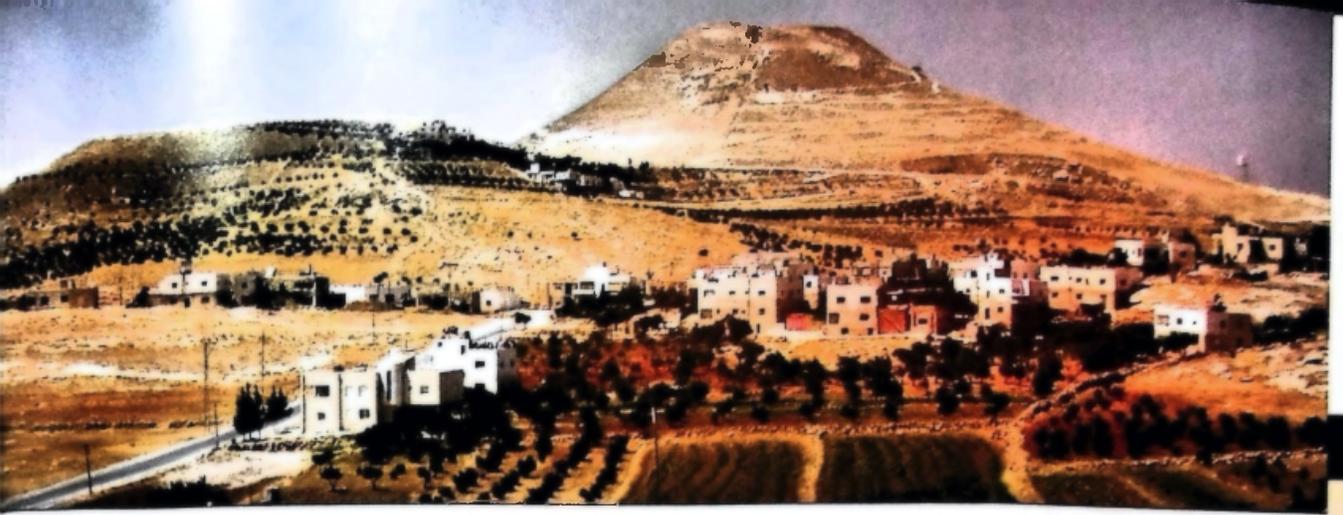
▼ *Herodium*: interior courtyard of Herod the Great's pleasure palace. Note large circular eastern tower. Apartments once ringed the area.



continued to expand in importance and soon became the capital of the country, a position it held for almost 600 years.

Herod lavished much attention and energy on Jerusalem. In 20 BC, he began refurbishing the temple area (see p. 146). Always thinking security, Herod strengthened the Antonia fortress, which overlooked all of the temple precincts. For himself he built a magnificent palace on the western hill and fortified the approach to it from the north by constructing three huge towers, named Hippius (after a friend), Phasael (after his brother), and Mariamne (after his beloved wife, whom he had executed). The massive base of one of these towers still remains in the present-day citadel complex just southeast of the Jaffa Gate.

During the final period of Herod's rule (15 BC – 4 BC), the major concern was that of succession. During this time of intrigue, plots, slander, and duplicity, Herod drew up at least six wills, naming first one and then another of his sons as his successor. When Magi from the east appeared in Jerusalem asking, "Where is the one who has been born king of the



▲ *Herodium: seven miles south of Jerusalem. A combination pleasure palace, fort, and mausoleum built by Herod the Great.*

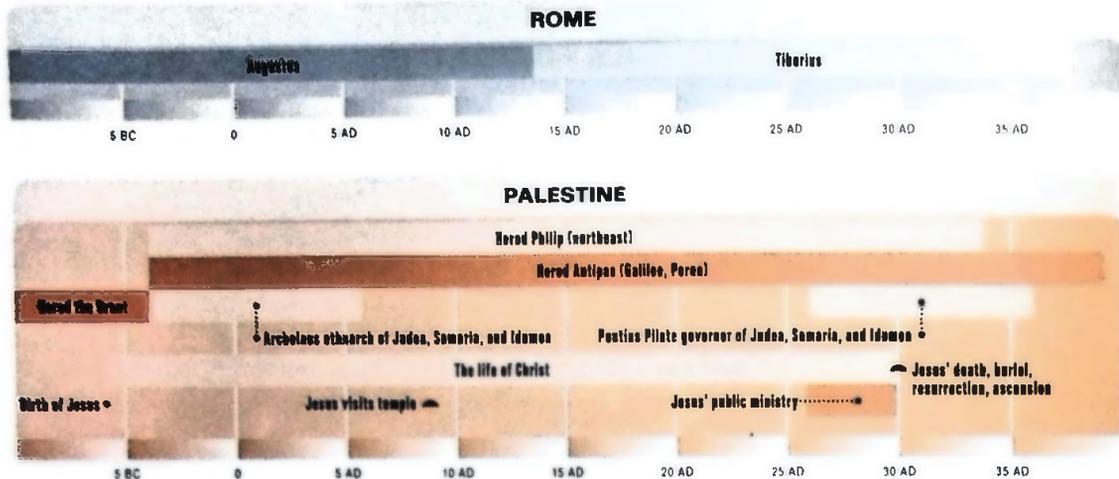
Jews?" (Matt 2:2) it is no wonder that "when King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him" (2:3). His slaughter of the baby boys of Bethlehem to remove a possible threat to his throne (vv. 16–18) was certainly in keeping with his character.

Herod's health began to deteriorate rapidly, and he died in Jericho in the spring of 4 BC. Even though the Jewish popu-

lation rejoiced at his death, his family and soldiers gave him a lavish funeral, carrying his body with great pomp in a jewel-studded gold coffin from Jericho to his mausoleum at the Herodium. He left behind a kingdom that was economically and materially prosperous. But he had also ruled using fear and terror and thus left behind much dissatisfaction. To some he was Herod the Great, to others, Herod the Despicable.

▼ *Herodium: Recently discovered foundation monument of the tomb of Herod the Great*





## THE LIFE OF CHRIST

In his sixth and final will Herod designated Archelaus as king of Idumea, Judea, and Samaria; Antipas as ruler in Galilee and Perea; and Philip as governor of the lands northeast of the Sea of Galilee. However, the Romans did not give Archelaus the title of king but rather “ethnarch” (meaning “ruler of the nation”). Archelaus’s ten-year rule (4 BC – AD 6) was brutal. It is little wonder that when Mary, Joseph, and the baby Jesus returned from Egypt, they avoided returning to Judea, for they heard that Archelaus was ruling in place of his father (Matt 2:19 – 23). Instead, they proceeded to Galilee and settled in the village of Nazareth.

Herod Antipas (4 BC – AD 39) ruled over both Galilee and Perea. Each of these territories had a large number of Jews. The area northwest of the Sea of Galilee was higher in elevation and was called Upper Galilee. To the south, Lower Galilee was much more open to outside influence, and its broad, spacious valleys provided good land for growing grain crops.

As Jesus was growing up, Antipas was constructing his new capital at Sepphoris (3 BC – AD 10), which may have had a population of 5,000. This city overlooked valuable farmland



- ▲ Nazareth. Church of the Annunciation surrounded by the hills rising above Nazareth
- ▼ A full-scale model of the excavated Galilee boat. This multi-purpose boat could carry about 15 persons total.



and was close to an important east – west route that connected the cities of the area with the port of Ptolemais.

Jesus was raised in the small village of Nazareth, only 3.5 miles southeast of Sepphoris. Although Nazareth itself was small, its residents probably came into contact with caravans and Greek-speaking Gentile traders who passed through Sepphoris on the north or the Esdraelon Valley (= OT Jezreel Valley) on the south.

When Jesus began to minister at about age 30, he spent much more time in Lower than in Upper Galilee (map p. 116). He ministered at Cana of Galilee: turning water into wine and healing the son of a Roman official (John 2:1 – 11; 4:43 – 54). Two sites have been suggested for Cana: Khirbet Qana (8 miles north of Nazareth) and Kafr Kana (4 mi. northeast of Nazareth).

It is about 12 miles from Cana to the Sea of Galilee, about a six-hour walk. There, along the northern shore, Jesus spent much of his public ministry. The largest city on the lake was the newly built city of Tiberias, which Herod Antipas made his capital (AD 18 – 22; Josephus, *Ant.* 18.2.3 [36 – 38]). In John 6:1 and 21:1, the Sea of Galilee is called (lit.) “the Sea of Tiberias,” and on one occasion, boats from Tiberias arrived with passengers wanting to see Jesus (6:23).

Four miles to the north of Tiberias, on the western shore of the sea, is the probable site of Magadan (Matt 15:39; Mark 8:10 calls it Dalmanutha). Jesus visited it after feeding the 4,000 on the other side of the lake. Proceeding from Magadan 6 miles

in a clockwise direction around the north shore of the Sea of Galilee is Capernaum. Apart from Jerusalem, this is the most important town mentioned in the Gospels, for here Jesus established his headquarters for the major portion of his public ministry. Several of his disciples were from Capernaum (Mark 1:21, 29). Fishing was probably its major occupation.

Capernaum sat astride a branch of the international route that ran from the Mediterranean Sea to Transjordan



and Damascus, and a custom station was located there, likely staffed by Matthew (Matt 9:9). The town was important enough for a Roman centurion and his troops to be stationed there (8:5–9). In Capernaum, Jesus healed many people, including the servant of the centurion (Matt 8:5–13), the paralytic who was let down through the roof of a dwelling (Mark 2:1–12), Peter’s mother-in-law (1:29–31), and a royal official’s son (John 4:46).

The Franciscans, who now own much of the site of Capernaum, have excavated a beautiful white limestone synagogue that dates from the sixth century AD; underneath it they have

discovered the massive foundation walls of a black basalt synagogue that preceded it. This earlier synagogue probably dates back to the days of Jesus and was the one in which he preached while at Capernaum. Early Christian presence at the site is evidenced by the remains of several churches that were built over a house, thought to have been the house of Peter.

Although it is difficult to pinpoint the exact location of many of Jesus’ activities in the neighboring countryside, by the fourth century Christian tradition had localized the site of the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5–7), the feeding of the 5,000 (14:13–21), and the appearance of the resurrected Lord





- ▲ Black basalt foundation wall of an earlier synagogue upon which the rebuilt limestone walls of the sixth-century synagogue at Capernaum are visible.
- ▼ View of the Plain of Gemmesaret and the Arbel Cliffs from the Mount of Beatitudes



to his disciples (John 21) near the place of seven springs — Heptapegon (Tabgha). This area may indeed have been the site of these events, although the feeding of the 5,000 probably occurred northeast of the Sea of Galilee. Between Capernaum and Tabgha is a small bay (called Sower's Cove) on the seashore in the shape of a natural theater that may have been the



- ▲ "Sowers Cove" (Matt 13:1 – 2) on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee

spot where Jesus spoke "many things in parables" from a boat (Matt 13:2 – 3).

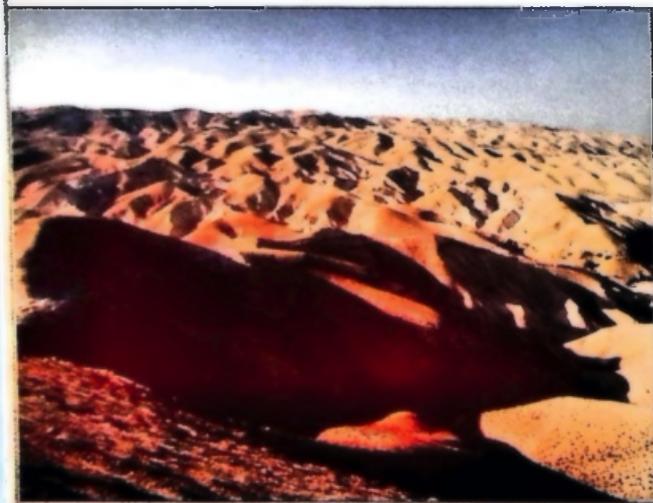
Another important village Jesus visited is Bethsaida. A possible location is the mound called et-Tell, located east of the Jordan River about 1.5 miles before it enters the Sea of Galilee. This city was built by Philip, the son of Herod the Great, who named it Julias, after Julia, the daughter of Augustus. However, there was another Bethsaida "in Galilee" (John 12:21). The latter has been tentatively identified with Araj, located close to the shore of the Sea of Galilee. Bethsaida was the early home of Peter, Andrew, and Philip (1:44; 12:21). There a blind man was healed (Mark 8:22 – 26), and in a nearby deserted place Jesus fed 4,000 people.

To the northeast of Bethsaida lay Philip's territory. In the first century, most of this territory was settled by Gentiles, and Jesus does not appear to have spent much time there. However, on at least one occasion he traveled with his disciples to the vicinity of Caesarea Philippi, about 25 miles north of Bethsaida. There, at the headwaters of the Jordan, Herod the Great had built a white marble temple in honor of the emperor; and there his successor, Philip, built a large city that he named after the emperor — adding his own name to the title.

Philip made Caesarea Philippi the capital of his territory, and it must have been a thriving city, for it was situated



- ▲ *Rock-cut sanctuary of Pan at Caesarea Philippi — near where Peter affirmed that Jesus was the Messiah (Matt. 16)*
- ▼ *Wilderness of Judah east of Jerusalem. Jesus fasted for forty days in this area and passed through it on his way from Jericho to Jerusalem.*



along the road that led from Damascus to Tyre and Sidon. In this vicinity Peter made his “great confession,” stating that he believed that Jesus was “the Messiah, the Son of the living God” (Matt 16:13–20). Soon afterward Jesus was transfigured in the presence of Peter, James, and John (Matt 17:1–8; Mark 9:2–8; Luke 9:28–36). It is possible that the transfiguration also occurred in this region, perhaps on Mount Hermon.

To the south of Philip’s territory was a region that came to be known as the Decapolis — a group of ten Greco-Roman cities (hence the name Decapolis, meaning “ten cities”), though in later years it often included more than ten cities. On one occasion Jesus healed two demon-possessed men (Matt 8:28), one of whom went into the Decapolis to tell of all that Jesus had done for him (Mark 5:20). The placement of this miracle near Gadara (modern Umm Qeis; see Matt 8:28) is the most plausible location (though also see Mark 5:1, which refers to Gerasa, much further south), since it is only 6 miles southeast of the sea.

To the south and west of the Decapolis was the region called Perea. This is a shortened form of a Greek phrase that can be translated as “other side of the Jordan” or “regions across the Jordan.” Herod Antipas received this territory and controlled both it and Galilee. Perea, Galilee, and Judea are called “the three Jewish provinces” in the Mishnah (written around AD 200).

Jesus ministered in Perea, since Luke 9:51–18:34 places a number of events there. In addition, John was baptizing “at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan” (John 1:28). This Bethany is difficult to locate precisely, but it may have been in the vicinity of Bethennabris or a spot closer to the Jordan. Later, the gospel writer notes that John was “baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water” (3:23). This Aenon (“springs”) is also difficult to identify, but the best location is in/near the Jordan Valley near Salim. This places John’s activities in the Decapolis, just outside the reach of Herod Antipas (who had been angered by his preaching) and of Pilate (who might have considered him a revolutionary).

Jews living in Perea probably had close contact with Jerusalem, for they could cross the fords of the Jordan opposite Jericho and climb their way up to the Holy City. In Jesus’ day the Romans controlled Jericho, and its aqueducts, plantations, fortresses, palaces, and pools were spread out over a large area. Jesus mentioned Jericho in the parable of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:25–37), and he passed through it on his way to Bethany to raise Lazarus from the dead (John 10:40–11:54). At Jericho two blind men (Matt 20:29–34), including Bartimaeus (Mark 10:46), were healed, and Jesus also dined there with Zacchaeus, the tax collector (Luke 19:1–10).

From Jericho a well-traveled road ran up to Jerusalem through the dry, chalky wilderness. After an uphill walk of





▲ Church and olive grove at the traditional site of the Garden of Gethsemane on the western foot of the Mount of Olives

eight to ten hours one approached the eastern slopes of the Mount of Olives. Here was the village of Bethany, the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. Jesus often stayed there, and events such as the teaching of Mary, the raising of Lazarus, and the anointing with precious oil took place there. From Bethany/Bethphage Jesus mounted a colt and rode it into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. During the final week of his life, he spent several days teaching in Jerusalem, but he seems to have returned to Bethany every night.

The territory of Judea stretched thirty-five miles north of Jerusalem. Early in Jesus' ministry, this was probably the area where he and his disciples "went out into the Judean countryside" (John 3:22). Late in his ministry, after raising Lazarus and learning of a plot on his life, he withdrew with his disciples to this same area, to a "village called Ephraim" (11:54).

North of Judea was the district of Samaria (map p. 119), which stretched to the village of Ginae. This district too was

governed by the Roman official, Pontius Pilate. The district was named after the Old Testament city of Samaria (then called Sebaste), and the Samaritans dominated large portions of the area. An important route that ran through Samaria was used by some Jewish inhabitants of Galilee on their pilgrimages to and from Jerusalem (Josephus, *Ant.* 20.6.1 [118]). This portion probably took three days. Galileans heading south crossed the Valley of Esdraelon and entered Samaria at Ginae. Here, "along the border between Samaria and Galilee" (Luke 17:11), Jesus probably met and healed ten lepers, one of whom was a Samaritan (vv. 12–19).

Jewish pilgrims would then continue south from Ginae toward Shechem, and they may have spent the night in the area of Geba. It is doubtful they stayed in Samaritan or Gentile homes, so they presumably camped out in the open. From Geba, the pilgrims continued south, passing Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim. They likely entered Jewish Judea before set-

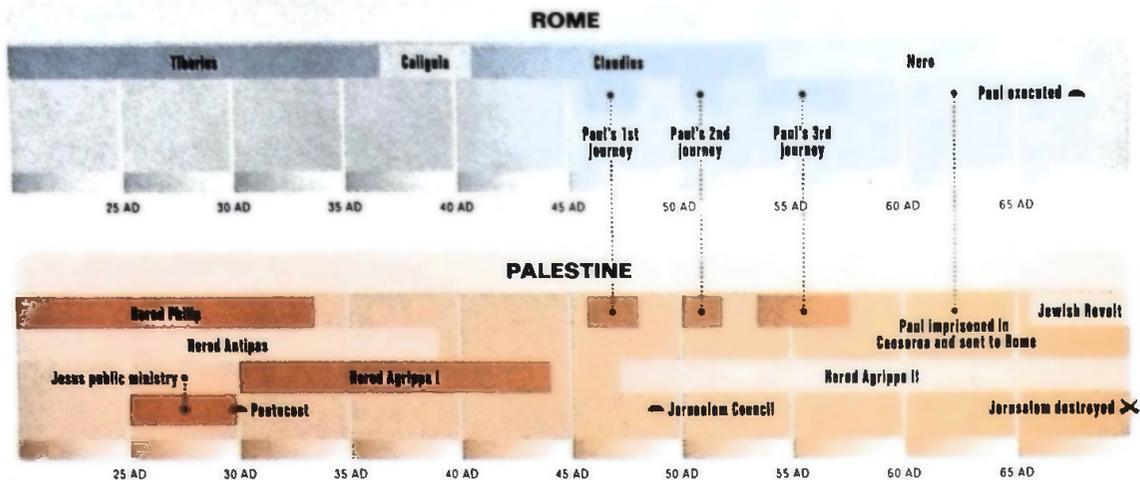
tling in for the night, possibly in the el-Lubban (= OT Lebonah) region. The last day of their journey took them into Jerusalem.

On one occasion Jesus, heading north, stopped at "Jacob's well" near the town of Sychar (modern Askar) at midday (John 4:4–6); it is about a half-day's journey north from the el-Lubban overnight stop to Sychar. There, near the foot of the Samaritan holy mountain, Mount Gerizim, he pointed the Samaritan woman to the real source of living water so that she, and others like her, could worship God in spirit and truth (vv. 4–42).

Only one event in the Gospels is placed west of Jerusalem. This was his appearance to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13–35). According to the best Greek manuscripts, Emmaus was 60 stadia (ca. 7 mi.) from Jerusalem. One possible site is near modern Qaloniya/Motza — a site 3.5 miles west of Jerusalem on the Roman road leading to Joppa (map p. 119). If so, the distance in Luke 24:13 is the distance from Jerusalem to Emmaus and back, i.e., the distance of a round trip.

Another possible site for biblical Emmaus is the city of Emmaus/Nicopolis. The name of the ancient city was preserved in the now-destroyed Arab village of Imwas, which overlooked the Aijalon Valley. But this site is about 19 miles from Jerusalem (but note that one important Greek manuscript reads "160 stadia" [= ca. 20 mi.]).

It was back in the Jerusalem area, on the Mount of Olives, that Jesus ascended into heaven (for Jesus' final days in Jerusalem, see p. 148). It is amazing to reflect on the worldwide significance of the message and work of this first-century itinerant Jewish prophet, especially when one considers that he only ministered for three or four years, that he left behind only a small band of loyal followers, and that his ministry was primarily confined to a rather small province of the Roman Empire. But the New Testament writers were anxious to establish that it was not through the might of Herod the Great or through the power of the Roman emperors, but through Jesus, that all of the nations of the earth will be blessed (Gen 12:3; Gal 3:6–15).



## THE EXPANSION OF THE CHURCH IN PALESTINE

Acts describes the growth of Christianity from its beginning in Jerusalem, its expansion into Judea and Samaria, and its spread throughout the Roman world (Acts 1:8). After Jesus' ascension the disciples gathered in Jerusalem. Acts 2 records the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the disciples at the Feast of Weeks/Pentecost. At the time, Jerusalem was filled with Jewish pilgrims from all over the Roman world — a number of whom were converted to the new faith.

Opposition to the early church grew in Jerusalem as more and more Greek-speaking Jews (Hellenists) joined the ranks of Jesus' followers. As the Jerusalem church scattered throughout Judea and Samaria (8:1), the believers shared their faith with others. For example Philip traveled to a city in Samaria (8:5), where people were converted. Indeed, even Peter and John, who had come to pray for the new converts, willingly preached the gospel in Samaritan villages on their return trip to Jerusalem (8:25).

Philip also traveled south and west of Jerusalem, on the road from Bethlehem to Betogabris. There he met an Ethiopian official riding in a chariot and reading from Isaiah 53. After Philip explained the meaning of the passage, the Ethiopian believed, was baptized, and “went on his way rejoicing”

▼ *Jerusalem: paved street with shops on the west side of the Temple Mount (vertical wall on right). The tumble of boulders is from the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 by the Romans.*



(vv. 26–39), going to Gaza and then west into Africa. Philip then moved into the Philistine Plain (Azotus; 8:40) and eventually settled in Caesarea (21:8).

Peter was also active in the coastal plain area, healing Aeneas at Lydda (Acts 9:32–35) and raising Tabitha from the dead (9:36–42) at Joppa. From there he accepted an invitation to go to the house of Cornelius, a centurion living in Caesarea. Cornelius and others believed. Thus it was from Caesarea that the gospel began to make inroads into the Gentile world.

Meanwhile, the persecution of the church continued in Jerusalem and Judea. Saul, a zealous Pharisee armed with official sanction, traveled to Damascus in order to persecute the believers, but the risen Lord appeared to him and he became a believer (see next chapter).

When Jesus died, Pilate was the Roman governor of Idumea, Judea, and Samaria, while Herod the Great's sons Antipas and Philip still held their positions in the north. Philip died in AD 34, and his territory was transferred to the province of Syria. But in AD 37 the districts were detached from Syria when the Roman emperor Caligula appointed Herod Agrippa I (AD 37–44) as the ruler over Philip's old domain. When in AD 39 Antipas foolishly requested an improvement of his position, he was banished to Gaul, and Galilee and Perea were added to the realm of Herod Agrippa I.

In AD 41 the emperor Claudius, grateful for Agrippa's assistance in helping him secure the throne, added Samaria, Judea, and Idumea to his holdings. With these additions, Agrippa's kingdom was as extensive as that of his grandfather,



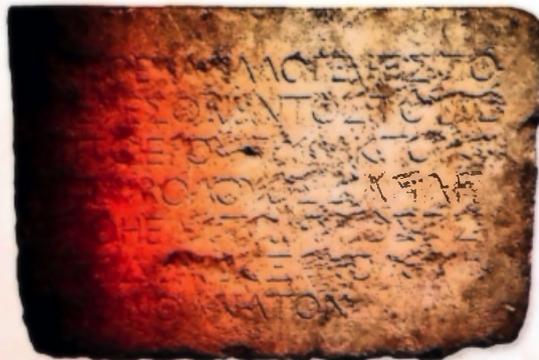
▼ Gamala: view to west-southwest of the city, where 9,000 Jews died attempting to defend the city against the Romans—AD 67.





Herod the Great. However, at the peak of his power Agrippa was struck down with a terminal illness, and he died in Caesarea in AD 44 (Acts 12:19–23; Josephus, *Ant.* 19.8.2 [343–52]).

After Agrippa I's death at Caesarea in AD 44, inept and offensive procurators ruled much of Palestine. Various Jewish groups attempted to revolt, but none was successful. In the meantime, Herod Agrippa II was granted more and more territory by the Romans, so that by the time of the Jewish revolt (AD 66–70), he was in control of Gaulanitis, Bata-nea, Auranitis, Trachonitis, and portions of Galilee.



▲ Greek inscription, found in Jerusalem, forbidding Gentiles to enter into the more sacred precincts of the temple — Paul was accused of violating this ban (Acts 21:27–29)

During this time Paul was traveling on his three great missionary journeys and returning to Judea after each journey. After his third journey he was imprisoned in Jerusalem, having been accused of bringing a Gentile into the temple area.

Because of a plot on his life, he was transferred by night to Caesarea via Antipatris. Paul spent over two years imprisoned at Caesarea, during which time he appeared before two different procurators, Felix and Festus, as well as before the ascending Jewish king, Agrippa II. In the end, Paul appealed to Caesar.

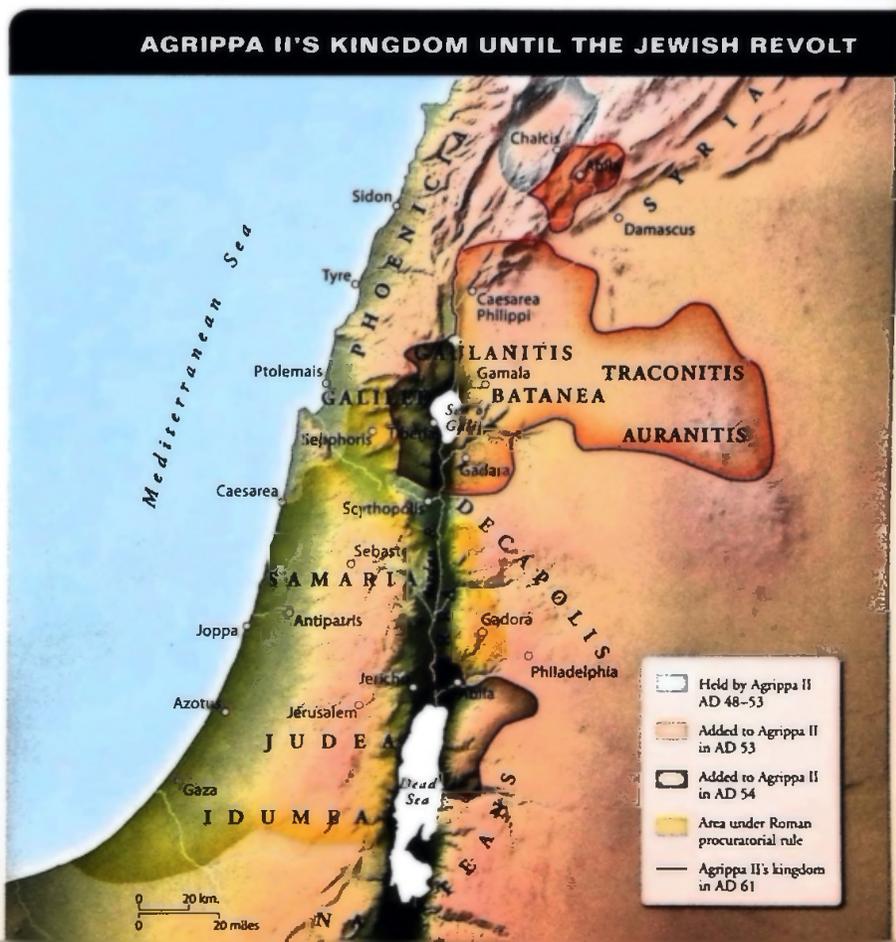
During the tenure of the Roman governor Florus (AD 64–66), Jews



▲ Rome: Arch of Titus at the entrance to the Forum, depicting the menorah being displayed in Rome after the Jerusalem temple had been destroyed in AD 70.

all over Palestine revolted. In Jerusalem they seized the Temple Mount and the Antonia Fortress, and by the end of the summer of AD 67 all of Jerusalem was under Jewish control. In response, the Roman legate of Syria marched south with the Twelfth Legion, but he failed to retake Jerusalem.

Although the Jewish rebel forces faced serious internal divisions, a Jewish government was established and military commands were set up. The emperor Nero sent his general Vespasian to crush the revolt. Vespasian established his headquarters in Ptolemais. His first objective was to secure the northern part of the country. After retaking Sepphoris, he laid siege to the fortress of Jotapata. Although most of the





London, British Museum

▲ *Head of Titus: as general, he destroyed the temple and Jerusalem and later (AD 79–81) ruled as emperor of Rome.*

defending garrison died, their commander, Josephus, saved his life by surrendering to the Romans. Vespasian then regained the area around the Sea of Galilee. By the end of AD 67 all of Galilee was under Roman control.

Roman troops marched south along the coast, capturing Joppa, Jamnia, and Azotus. To the east they secured Samaritan territory in the Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim region. In

the spring of AD 68 fighting resumed, and Vespasian's goal was first to isolate and then to capture Jerusalem. In June Emperor Nero committed suicide, but Vespasian was able to keep up the pressure in Judea. By midsummer of AD 69 only Jerusalem, the Judean Desert, Masada, and Machaerus remained in Jewish hands.

In the summer of AD 69 Vespasian's troops declared him emperor, and in the summer of AD 70 his son Titus captured Jerusalem. The Romans took the Temple Mount and set fire to the temple. The upper (western) portion of Jerusalem held out for a few weeks longer, but it too fell to the Romans. Although Jerusalem had been captured and destroyed, it was not abandoned, and the Romans stationed the Tenth Legion there to prevent further insurrection.

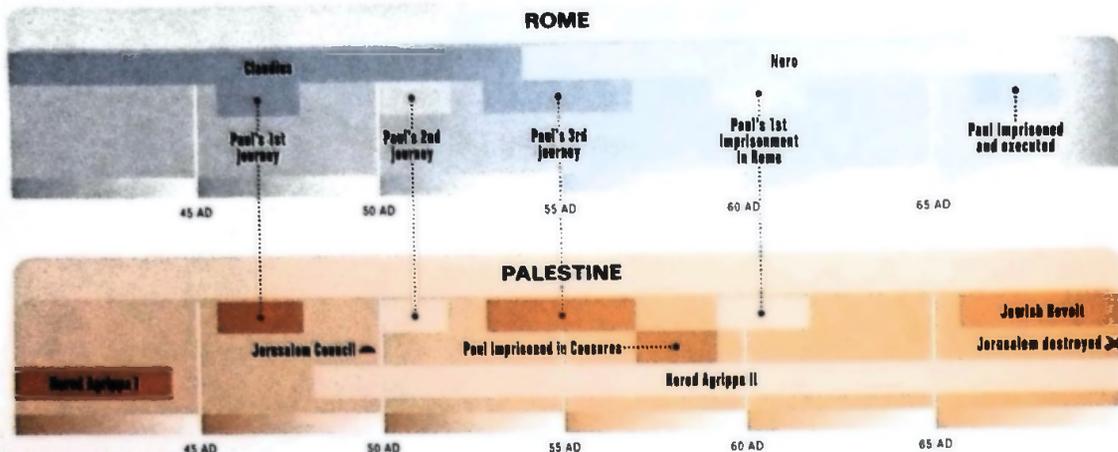
The capture of Jerusalem in AD 70 marks the end of the Jewish revolt, although the Romans still had to take Masada on the shore of the Dead Sea. There, 960 of the 967 Jewish defenders decided to commit suicide.

In the early second century (AD 132–35) the Jewish people staged a second revolt. Simeon Bar Kokhba was declared the leader of the Jewish people by the highly respected Rabbi Akiba. After some initial success by the Jews, the Romans sent several legions to suppress the revolt. Bar Kokhba abandoned Jerusalem and retreated to Bethther, 7 miles southwest of Jerusalem. The Romans laid siege to his fortress, and he and his garrison were annihilated. Emperor Hadrian ordered Jerusalem to be destroyed and rebuilt as a Roman colony named Aelia Capitolina, and Jews were forbidden to enter the city. He changed the name of the province from Judea to Palestine.

# JEWISH REVOLT AGAINST ROME (AD 66 - 70)

 First attack of Twelfth Legion to regain Jerusalem  
 Attacks by Vespasian to quell the revolt  
 Titus's capture of Jerusalem  
 Area in revolt  
 Area partially in revolt





## THE JOURNEYS OF PAUL

### The Early Life of Saul

**S**aul (later called Paul) was born in the Greco-Roman city of Tarsus and was sent to Jerusalem to study under Rabbi Gamaliel (Acts 22:3; cf. 5:34). There, he witnessed the stoning of Stephen. But sometime later, on the road to Damascus, he himself confessed Jesus as the Messiah (Acts 9). After spending a short time in Damascus, Paul retired to Arabia (Gal 1:17). After briefly returning to Damascus, he traveled to Jerusalem for a short visit and then departed for Tarsus, his home city in Cilicia (Acts 9:26 – 30).

Antioch on the Orontes River was the major city of Syria. It was a leading commercial center, located at the western end of land routes leading from Mesopotamia to the Mediterranean. It was predominantly Gentile, but a considerable number of Jews lived there. Some Christians who fled Judea because of persecution after the stoning of Stephen sought refuge in Antioch. Because of their success in sharing the new faith, the Jerusalem church sent Barnabas to investigate the situation (Acts 11:22). After spending some time in Antioch, he went to

Tarsus to seek Saul's help. From about AD 43 – 45, Barnabas and Saul ministered together at Antioch, where believers were first called "Christians" (v. 26).

▼ *Tarsus: one of the main streets from the days of Paul. Note the basalt paving stones, the white limestone curbing, and the remains of buildings that line the right side of the street.*





## Paul's First Missionary Journey (Acts 13:4 - 14:28)

The Holy Spirit then set aside Barnabas and Saul to be ministers elsewhere in the Roman world. From Seleucia, Antioch's harbor, Saul set out on the first of three missionary journeys (ca. AD 46 - 48). Barnabas and Saul — accompanied by John Mark, Barnabas's cousin — sailed to Cyprus, landing at Salamis. There they preached in the synagogue before moving overland to the administrative capital, Paphos. At Paphos, the proconsul of Cyprus, Sergius Paulus, was converted.

Next Paul and Barnabas sailed northwest to ancient Pamphylia and proceeded up the Kestros River to Perge, one of the largest cities of the province. At Perge, for unknown

reasons John Mark left them and returned to Jerusalem (Acts 13:13). Paul and Barnabas headed north, up into the rugged Taurus Mountains, entering the area called Pisidia. From there they continued north into Phrygia to the city of Antioch (called "Pisidian Antioch," Acts 13:14).

Antioch was the administrative center of southern Galatia. Paul and Barnabas preached in the synagogue for several Sabbaths. Although the Jews were not overly receptive to their message, the Gentiles were, and the gospel message spread "through the whole region" (v. 49). Opposition developed, however, and Paul and Barnabas were expelled from the city and moved on to Iconium. There, Paul and Barnabas again preached in the synagogue, and a large number of Jews and Gentiles believed. But opposition and threats on their lives

## PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY



▲ *Sergius Paulus inscription from Pisidian Antioch. Possibly Sergius Paulus, whom Paul converted at Paphos on Cyprus (Acts 13), had landholdings here.*

forced them to flee, this time to the Lycaonian cities of Lystra and Derbe.

At Lystra Paul and Barnabas healed a man crippled from birth, and the Lycaonians thought that the gods were visiting them; they identified Barnabas with Zeus and Paul with Hermes. Paul and Barnabas dissuaded the townspeople from worshipping them, but when Jews from Antioch and Iconium arrived, they incited the populace to stone Paul. This lack of order and justice suggests that Roman presence was minimal there. There was no strong Jewish presence in Lystra, since no synagogue is mentioned, although Timothy, whose mother was Jewish, was from this city (Acts 16:1).

Paul and Barnabas traveled east to Derbe. After preaching in that city, they retraced their steps and strengthened the

churches they had started. They went south through the Taurus Mountains and arrived at the port of Attalia and sailed back to Antioch.

Because of this ministry of Paul and Barnabas, many Gentiles began entering the church directly. This raised the question of the Gentile converts' relationship to the Mosaic law; the issue was decided at a conference in Jerusalem (Acts 15; ca. AD 49/50). Armed with this verdict, Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch on the Orontes.

## Paul's Second Missionary Journey (Acts 15:36 – 18:22)

After some time, Barnabas and John Mark sailed to Cyprus, while Paul and Silas headed toward Asia Minor. On this second journey (ca. AD 50 – 52), they went north from Antioch and traveled through the Amanus Mountains to Cilicia. Passing through Tarsus they headed through the Cilician Gates. They continued west, sharing the decision of the Jerusalem council with the churches at Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and Pisidian Antioch. At Lystra, Timothy joined Paul and Silas.

Instead of ministering to cities in Asia, Mysia, and Bythina, the Holy Spirit directed Paul and Barnabas to head toward Troas, a coastal city that enjoyed great prosperity as a Roman colony. There Paul evidently met Luke, a physician and the author of Luke-Acts. In response to a vision of a man from Macedonia, Paul and his party (now including Luke; see "we" in Acts 16:11) sailed to Europe.

▼ *Erastus inscription at Corinth: Erastus was a wealthy official in Corinth, and this inscription tells how he laid the street at his own expense (cf. Rom 16:23).*



▲ *Corinth: the temple of Apollo was over 500 years old by the time that Paul visited Corinth on his second journey.*

The ship landed in Macedonia at Neapolis, and Paul and company continued inland to Philippi, situated on the Via Egnatia — an important Roman road. As a Roman colony Philippi was populated predominantly by Gentiles, for there were not enough Jews to warrant a synagogue.

At a place of prayer used by Jewish women by the River Gan-gites, near the city, Paul met Lydia, the purple-cloth dealer from Thyatira. Paul ministered in Philippi while staying at her house. One day he healed a demon-possessed slave girl; as a result her owners had Paul and Silas thrown into prison. After an earthquake in the middle of the night and the subsequent conversion

## PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY



of the prison guard and his family, the leaders of Philippi begged Paul and Silas to leave the city, and the two men complied.

From Philippi Paul and Silas traveled west along the Via Egnatia to Thessalonica. This city was not only a district capital but also the chief port for all of Macedonia. Paul and Silas preached in the synagogue for three Sabbaths, and a number of Jews, God-fearing Greeks, and prominent women believed. But because of strong opposition Paul and Silas left the city.

They next moved southwest to Berea, where they entered the synagogue and preached. The people of Berea were known for their desire to study the Scriptures, and a number of Jews, as well as Greek men and women, believed. However, Jews from Thessalonica agitated the crowds of Berea, so Paul departed for Athens by ship (Acts 17:14 – 15).

Athens was no longer the administrative capital of southern Greece (the Roman province of Achaia), but it was still a renowned cultural and intellectual center. Paul preached in the marketplace and synagogue and was invited by a group of philosophers to address the assembly called the Areopagus. Although a number of Athenians were converted, there does not seem to have been a ready acceptance of the gospel; so Paul left for Corinth.

Corinth was a bustling administrative and commercial center. It had been refounded as a Roman colony in 44 BC. It owed its prosperity to its geographical location — just south of the narrow isthmus that connected the Greek mainland with the Peloponnese. The ancients preferred to portage passengers and cargo across the isthmus rather than take the more dangerous trip around the Peloponnese. In addition, crowds and

revenue were drawn to the city because of the biannual Panhellenic, athletic, musical, and poetic contests held at nearby Isthmia. As a “tentmaker” (Acts 18:3) Paul may have serviced the sailing ships and made tents and shelters for the visitors to the games.

The crowds eagerly received the gospel. Paul probably penned both of his letters to the Thessalonians at this time. After an eighteen-month stay Paul left Corinth via the port of Cenchrea for a sea journey to Ephesus. Stopping there for only a brief time, he continued on to Caesarea, went up to Jerusalem, and reported to the church the results of his journey. Then he returned north to his home base, Syrian Antioch.

### Paul’s Third Missionary Journey (Acts 18:23 – 21:14)

In AD 53, Paul set out on his third journey (ca. AD 53–57). He retraced the route of his second journey to Pisidian Antioch, this time continuing west to Ephesus. Ephesus had become an important commercial center, since caravan routes from the east converged there, and from there shipping lanes to the west originated. Paul spent three years ministering in Ephesus; most likely he or his converts carried the gospel message to additional cities in Asia such as those addressed in Revelation 1–3.

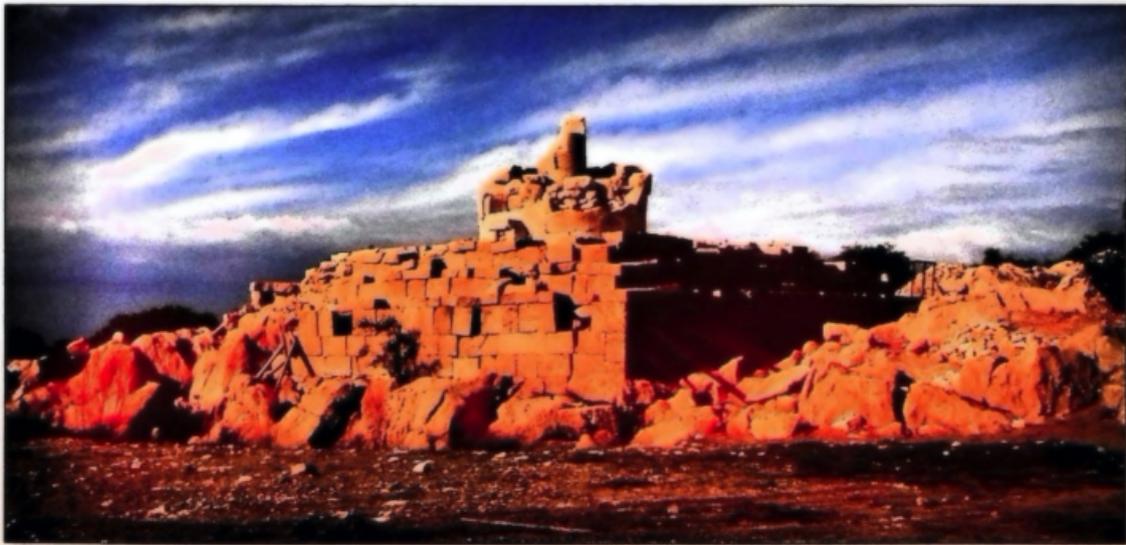
The success of the gospel in Ephesus led to a serious decline in business associated with the worship of Artemis, whose magnificent temple stood there. Thus Demetrius, a silversmith, incited the Ephesians against Paul and other Christians, but the town clerk was able to dissuade the mob from carrying out any illegal acts.

Soon afterward, Paul set out for Macedonia (Acts 20:1; 2 Cor 2:12–13), probably revisiting the churches at Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea. Eventually he continued south and spent three months wintering in Corinth. During this time he likely wrote his famous letter to the church at Rome, informing them of his intention to visit them after a visit to Jerusalem.

When spring came, Paul traveled overland to Philippi and then sailed for Troas. After spending seven days there, he walked the 20 miles overland to Assos and then sailed down the coast to Miletus. From Miletus, he summoned the elders of the Ephesian church, who traveled there to spend a few days with their beloved teacher.

After a tearful goodbye, Paul and his party headed by ship for Jerusalem. After disembarking at Tyre and against the advice of some Christians, he continued on to Jerusalem, where he greeted the elders of the church and completed the purification rites associated with a vow he had made. Jerusa-

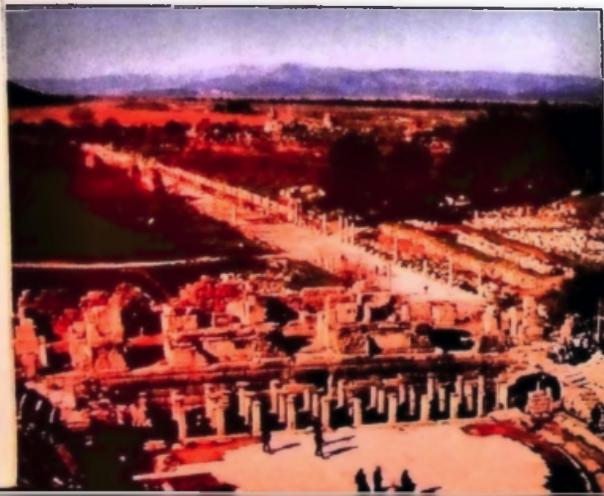
▼ *Patara: Probably the oldest preserved lighthouse in the world. Paul changed ships at Patara on his return from his third journey (Acts 21:1).*



## PAUL'S JOURNEY TO ROME



- ▼ *Ephesus: view toward the now-silted harbor from the theater at Ephesus (Acts 19:23 - 41)*



lem ended up being the terminal point of his third journey, for here he was arrested. After being transported to Caesarea, he remained imprisoned there for two years (ca. AD 57 - 59) before finally appealing to Caesar for justice.

### Paul's Journey to Rome (Acts 27:1 - 28:16)

For the trip to Rome, Paul was placed in the custody of a centurion named Julius. Along with a small party that included Aristarchus and probably Luke, Paul was placed on a ship that hugged the coast of Asia Minor until Myra, a major port of call for grain ships bound for Rome. There Paul and his



▲ *Assos: The temple of Athena. Paul visited Assos on the return leg of his third journey (Acts 20:13).*

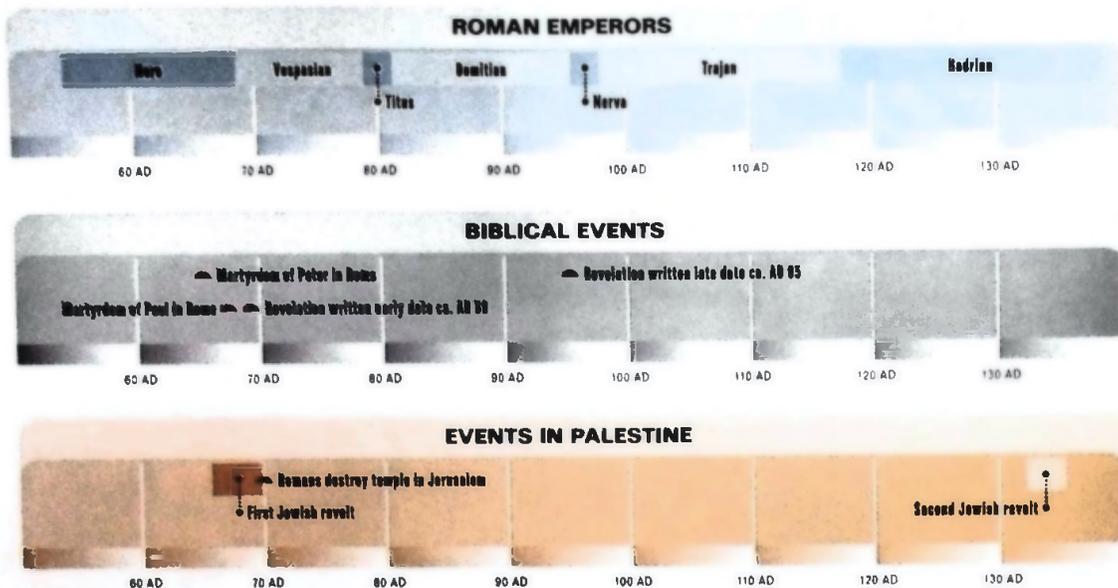
party transferred onto a cargo ship that was to sail directly to Italy. Because of adverse winds, the ship was not able to reach Cnidus on the southwestern tip of Asia Minor. Instead, it sailed south, intending to pass on the lee side of the island of Crete.

By this time it was late fall, and in their attempt to reach the desirable port of Phoenix on Crete, a “northeaster” (Acts 27:14) wind sprang up, and the ship was driven off course. As it passed on the lee side of the island of Cauda, the ship had to be lashed together. For two weeks it tossed about in the Mediterranean Sea and eventually ran aground on the island of Malta. All 276 passengers were saved, but the ship and its cargo were lost.

After wintering three months on Malta, they sailed to Italy, landing at the port of Puteoli. On the road to Rome, at the Forum of Appius and at Three Taverns, Paul was greeted by Christians from the capital. The Rome of Paul’s day was a huge city with a population of about 1,000,000. As the capital

of the Roman Empire, it boasted imperial palaces on the Palatine Hill, temples of Jupiter and Juno on the Capitoline Hill, and theaters, amphitheatres, hippodromes, and other monuments. But its beauty was tempered by the fact that over half its population were slaves, and many others lived in squalid conditions in high-rise apartment buildings of four and five stories and depended on the free distribution of food.

The book of Acts concludes with Paul residing in Rome for two years, under house arrest, without ever having had his case go to trial. According to tradition, Paul was released from prison around AD 62 and traveled to various parts of the Mediterranean world—probably to Crete (Titus 1:5) and possibly to Spain. Several years later, he was arrested and imprisoned again, during which time he penned his final letter (2 Timothy). Tradition claims that the Roman emperor Nero had Paul executed outside the walls of Rome.



# THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF REVELATION

In Revelation 1–3, John addresses seven churches located in the Roman province of Asia. Beginning with Ephesus, the churches are addressed in a clockwise fashion, ending at Laodicea. This may be the order that the carrier of the document followed.

## Ephesus (1:11; 2:1–7)

Ephesus was the closest church to the desolate island of Patmos, where John may have been exiled and where he received his “revelation” (Rev 1:9–11). It was the capital of Asia Minor. It had a population of about 250,000 people and was an important trade center. It housed numerous temples and cults. Note how Paul’s letter to the Ephesians addresses the priority of worshipping Jesus, rather than Caesar, as “Lord.”

Early Christian traditions associate the apostle John with Ephesus, and he may have written his gospel and his three letters from here. During the Byzantine period Christianity flourished at Ephesus, and the Third Ecumenical Council was held there in AD 431.

▼ *Patmos: the barren Aegean island to which John was exiled (Rev 1:9)*



## Smyrna (1:11; 2:8 - 11)

Smyrna is 36 miles north of Ephesus. This Roman city was on a sheltered bay at the western end of the Hermus River Valley. It was the first city in Asia Minor to establish a temple dedicated to Dea Roma, the goddess Roma (ca. 195 BC). In AD 26 Tiberius granted it permission to establish a temple for worshipping the emperor.

The church there is encouraged to remain faithful in light of the coming persecution. The early church father Polycarp was martyred in the stadium of Smyrna at the age of 85 (AD 156). The "victor's crown" mentioned in Revelation 2:10 may refer to the wreath given to a victorious athlete. The modern city of Izmir is built over the ancient remains of Smyrna.

## Pergamum (1:11; 2:12 - 17)

Pergamum was a magnificent city with a population of about 100,000. The upper city rises about 900 feet above the surrounding plain and held many temples and altars. In the lower city significant remains of the Asclepieion (an ancient healing center) are still visible.

In 129 BC, when Rome created the province of Asia, Pergamum became its early capital. In 29 BC it was the first city to be granted permission to establish a



▲ Pergamum: the great theater and beyond it, by the tree, the altar of Zeus (the throne of Satan? Rev 2:13)





- ▲ Sardis: gymnasium and palestra of this once very rich city
- ▼ Laodicea: calcified siphon that once brought water into the city (Rev 3:15 – 16)



temple dedicated to a Roman emperor (Augustus). In Revelation 2:13 it is said that “Satan has his throne” there.

John also writes that Antipas was martyred there (2:13), but note that it is King Jesus who wields the real “double-edged sword” (2:12), not Caesar or his representatives. On the negative side, John warns the church that some must give up eating “food sacrificed to idols” and living immorally (2:14 – 16).

## Thyatira (1:11; 2:18 – 29)

Thyatira (modern Akhisar) is located 42 miles inland from the Aegean Sea. It was a major commercial center. Near the center of Akhisar, visible archaeological remains are located in a fenced-off rectangular city block. From inscriptions it is evident that guilds of bakers, bronze smiths, wool workers, potters, linen weavers, and tanners were active in the city. Such guilds often held banquets that included immoral sexual acts (cf. Rev 2:20 – 24). Lydia, converted by Paul in Philippi, originated from Thyatira (Acts 16:11-15).

## Sardis (1:11; 3:1 – 6)

Sardis, in the Hermus Valley east of Smyrna, was for many years the chief city of the powerful kingdom of Lydia. It derived its wealth from gold mining, trade, and the manufacture of textiles. In 546 BC Cyrus the Persian conquered the city. The Persians built the “Royal Road” that connected Sardis with Susa, one of the Persian capitals (map on p. 93).

In the first century AD the glory days of Sardis were over. When John admonishes the church to “wake up” (Rev 3:2) and asserts that Jesus will “come like a thief” in the night (3:4), he may be alluding to the two occasions when the enemies of Sardis were able to capture its citadel because of the laxness of its defenders. The reference to true believers being “dressed in white” garments (3:4 – 5) may allude to the famous textile industry of Sardis.

## Philadelphia (1:11; 3:7 – 13)

Philadelphia (modern Alashehir) was founded in the third century BC by one of the Pergamenian kings and named after Attalus II, who maintained “loyalty/love” for his brother — thus Philadelphia (lit., “brotherly love”). It housed a number of temples; in AD 17 it was destroyed by an earthquake. In Revelation 3:12 the believer who “is victorious” is compared to a pillar (stability) in the temple of God.

## Laodicea (1:11; 3:14 – 27)

Laodicea was founded in the third century BC; by the first century AD it had replaced Colossae and Hierapolis as the

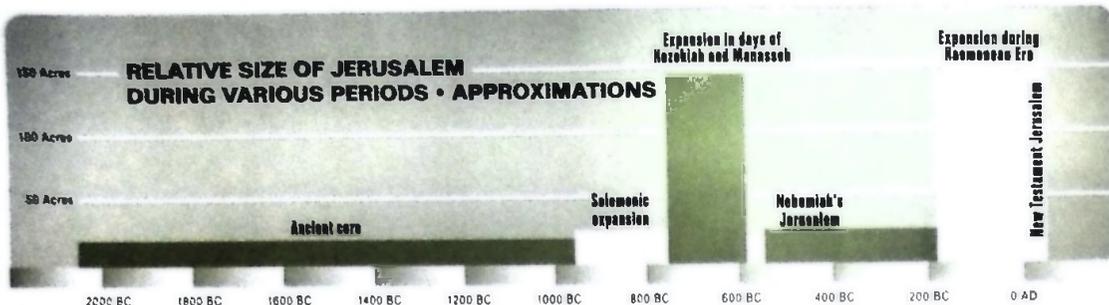


▲ *Laodicea: excavated street of this proud, self-satisfied city (Rev 3:14–22)*

chief city of the region. It was famous for its textiles, for an eye salve produced there, and for its nearby medical center. Laodicea was so wealthy that after the devastating earthquake of AD 60, it paid for its own rebuilding and declined assistance offered.

Epaphras (Col 1:7; 2:1; 4:12; Philem 23) may have brought the gospel to Laodicea, ministering also to Colossae and Hierapolis. Paul wrote a letter not only to the church at Colossae (Col 1:1–2), but also to the church at Laodicea (4:16).

The church at Laodicea is the only one of the seven churches not to receive any commendation. The church seemed self-satisfied (Rev 3:17). In 3:18 gold, textiles, and eye salve are all mentioned—the very commodities Laodicea took pride in. The reference to the church being lukewarm (3:15–16) may allude to the desirable—for medicinal purposes—hot springs at Hierapolis and to the cool stream waters running by Colossae. Laodicea had built an aqueduct to bring water to it from springs 8 miles to the southeast.



# JERUSALEM

Jerusalem holds a special place in the hearts and minds of Jews, Christians, and Muslims. It is mentioned 667 times in the Old Testament and 139 times in the New. Although today the city boasts a population of over 770,000 people, its origins were humble.

## Geography of Jerusalem

Jerusalem was located in the Hill Country of Judah, far removed from the Coastal and the Transjordanian highways. The only route that passed by it was the north-south Ridge Route, and even that ran about half a mile west of the city. A west-east road that connected Gezer on the coastal plain with Jericho in the Jordan Valley passed 5.5 miles to the north.

Jerusalem's location in the hill country, at an elevation of 2,500 feet, gave it the benefit of many natural defenses. It has a rugged and treacherous landscape that protected access to the city from the east and west. It was somewhat easier to

approach Jerusalem from the north or south, along the Ridge Route, but access to the Ridge Route was difficult.

While arid land lies to the east and south, Jerusalem itself receives ample supplies of winter rain (approximately 25 in.

▼ *Jerusalem: view toward the ancient core from the south. The golden-colored Dome of the Rock stands where the ancient temple once did. Note how the hills surround Jerusalem (Ps 121:1).*



per year), as do the hills to the west, so that a variety of crops can be grown on the hillside terraces to the north, west, and south of the city.

Biblical Jerusalem was built on two parallel north-south ridges. The western ridge, the higher and broader one, is bounded on the west and south by the Hinnom Valley (map p. 142). The narrower and lower eastern ridge is bounded on the east by the Kidron Valley, which in the Jerusalem area flows basically north to south. Both the Hinnom and the Kidron are noted in the Bible, but the valley between them, which separates the eastern and western ridges, is not. It is often called the Central or the Tyropoeon (“Cheesemakers”) Valley (Josephus *War* 5.4.1 [140]).

On the north, both ridges continue to rise as they veer to the northwest. Because of the easier approaches from the north and the northwest, invading armies generally assaulted Jerusalem from a northerly direction.

### Early History of Jerusalem

The earliest settlement in Jerusalem began on the 15-acre southern portion of the eastern ridge, “the old ancient core,” because the only good-sized spring — the Gihon Spring (see p. 69) — was located there. Tombs from the MB I period have been found in the Jerusalem area, but there is no evidence of a settlement. During the MB II period (2000–1550 BC) Jerusalem is mentioned several times in the Egyptian Execration Texts as *Urusalimum* (meaning “foundation of the god Shalim” or “city of peace”). Although excavated building remains are few, significant portions of a thick city wall have been uncovered. This wall was apparently built about 1800 BC and continued in use, with rebuilds, until the end of the Judean monarchy (586 BC). The city remained 15 acres until it began to expand northward during the days of David and Solomon.

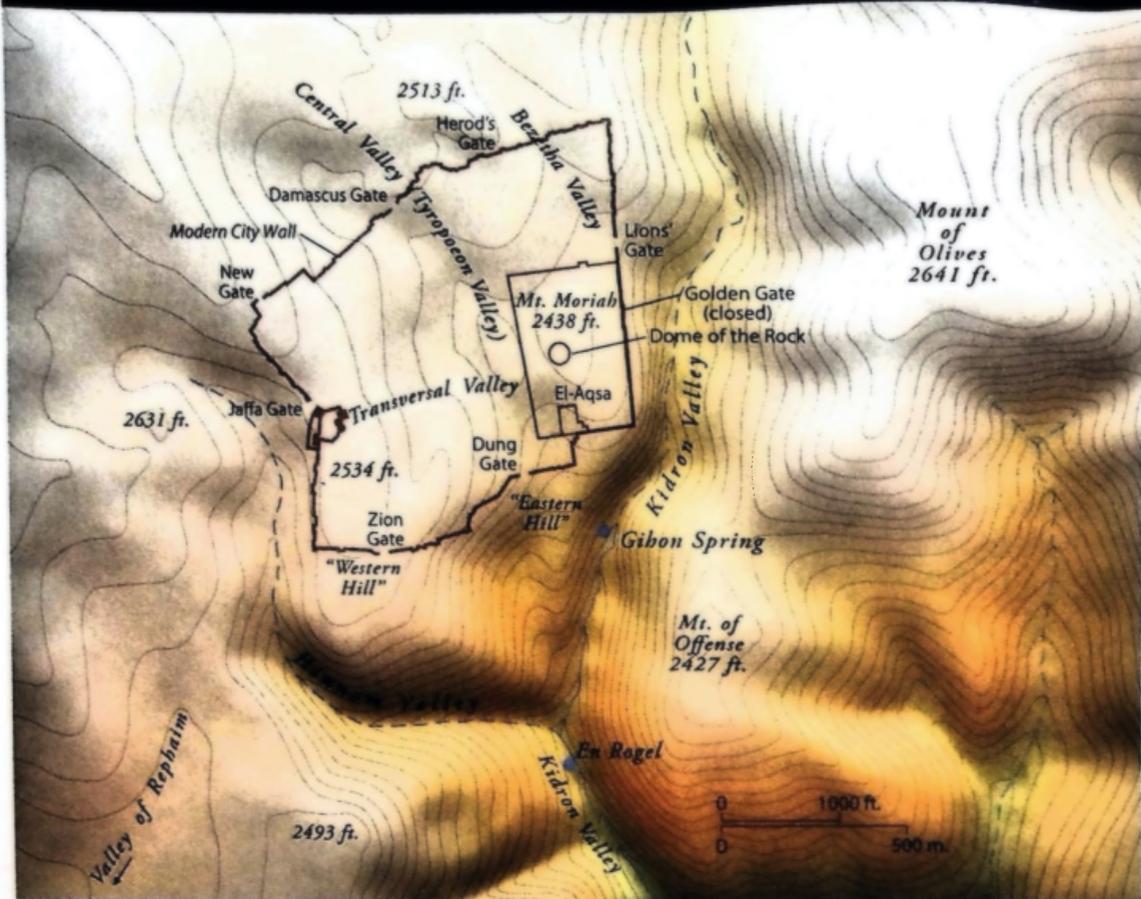
Two events in the life of Abraham place him in close proximity to Jerusalem. Melchizedek, the king of Salem (Gen 14:18; cf. Ps 76:2), met Abram after his rescue of Lot. Later Abraham took his son Isaac to one



▲ Looking north up the Kidron Valley. The slopes of the City of David are on the left (west), and a corner of the Temple Mount is visible.



## JERUSALEM TOPOGRAPHY



of the mountains in the "region of Moriah" to sacrifice him (Gen 22:2), the same place where Solomon built the temple (2 Chron 3:1).

Jerusalem next appears in the stories of the conquest under Joshua. When the king of Jerusalem, Adoni-Zedek, heard of the Gibeonites' treaty with Joshua, he realized that his major line of communication with the coast, and hence with Egypt, was in jeopardy. He assembled a coalition of four other Amorite kings and attacked Gibeon (map on p. 50) but was defeated by Joshua.

During the period of the judges Jerusalem came under the control of the Jebusites and was named Jebus (see Judg 19:11–12; cf. also Josh 15:8; 18:16). It was the Judahite David

who captured the city in his seventh year (2 Sam 5) and made it his capital. His general Joab used the *sinmor* ("water shaft," 2 Sam 5:8) to do so — an underground, rock-cut diagonal tunnel (see picture on p. 87) that led from inside the city to a large pool fed by the Gihon Spring.

### The City of David

Because of Jerusalem's neutral location, it was a capital acceptable to both David's own tribe of Judah as well as to the tribes of the north. The city became David's and his descendants' personal property (called "the City of David") and the royal seat of the Davidic dynasty. David brought the ark from Kiri-



▲ Looking south at the Dome of the Rock. Many believe this is where the ancient Israelite temple stood: the Most Holy Place under the dome, and the sacrificial altar near the smaller structure to the left (east) of the dome. There are close to 50 cisterns on the Temple Mount.

ath Jearim to Jerusalem, which he established as the major worship center for all Israel (2 Sam 6:1 – 23; 1 Chron 13:1 – 14). David built his own palace there (2 Sam 5:11) and toward the end of his reign purchased the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite, a site north of and higher than the ancient city core, where Solomon eventually built the temple (2 Sam 24:18 – 25; 1 Chron 21:18 – 26).

In the fourth year of Solomon's reign (966 BC), he began building the temple, a task that took seven years. The building itself was composed of two rooms: the Holy Place, in which the ten lampstands, the table for the bread of the Presence, and the incense altar were placed; and the most sacred place, called the Most Holy Place or the Holy of Holies, in which the ark of the covenant was kept. The whole building was surrounded by courtyards in which were located the sacrificial altar, lavers, and the like. The exact location of the temple is not known, although many researchers place it in the immediate vicinity of the existing Muslim shrine called the Dome of the Rock.

To the south of the temple, but north of the ancient core of Jerusalem, Solomon built his own palace and the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon (1 Kings 7:1 – 12). It is possible that this

royal acropolis was, in early times, called the Millo (NIV “the terraces”; 1 Kings 9:15, 24; 11:27) but later came to be known as the Ophel (the acropolis). Solomon strengthened the wall of Jerusalem and included the Millo/Ophel, as well as the temple area, within the confines of the wall. Thus the walled city expanded from 15 acres to about 37 acres (map on p. 144).

During the divided monarchy (930 – 722 BC), Jerusalem was attacked several times: once by the Egyptian pharaoh Shishak (925 BC; 1 Kings 14:22 – 28; 2 Chron 12:2 – 4) and once by Hazael of Aram Damascus (ca. 813 BC; 2 Kings 12:17 – 18; 2 Chron 24:17 – 24). In each instance, lavish gifts, taken from the temple treasury, bought off the aggressors.

In the days of Amaziah of Judah, however, Jehoash of Israel attacked the city and “broke down the wall of Jerusalem from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate” (ca. 790 BC; 2 Chron 25:23). It is difficult, however, to pinpoint the location of these gates in the city walls.

During the eighth century BC “Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at the Corner Gate, at the Valley Gate and at the angle of the wall” (2 Chron 26:9) as he strengthened the defenses of the city. Also during his reign (792 – 740 BC) and after, Jerusalem

# OLD TESTAMENT JERUSALEM

-  City walls at the time of the Canaanites, Jebusites and David
-  Additions at the time of Solomon
-  Additions to the city: 9th to 7th centuries BC
-  City wall today
-  Ophel area
-  Water systems



expanded westward so as to include the southern portion of the western ridge — probably because settlers from the northern kingdom moved south to avoid the Assyrian onslaught (see p. 84); they may have thought that Jerusalem would never be taken because the temple of Yahweh was there (Ps 132:13–18).

In the excavations in the modern Jewish Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem, a 210-foot segment of a massive wall, 23 feet thick and in places preserved to a height of 10 feet, was discovered (see photo on p. 85). This was likely built in Hezekiah's day because of the threat of Assyrian assault (see p. 86 for the history). He enclosed the whole southern portion of the western ridge so that the total area of the walled city swelled to 150 acres and boasted a population of about 25,000.

Since the Gihon Spring was at some distance from the newly enclosed western suburb, Hezekiah devised a plan to divert the water to a spot inside the city walls, closer to the western hill. He did this by digging an underground tunnel (see photo, p. 87) that followed a serpentine path to a point in the Central Valley, which was inside the newly constructed city wall. This diversion is mentioned not only in the Bible (2 Kings 20:20), but also in a Hebrew inscription discovered at the southern end of the 1,750-foot tunnel.

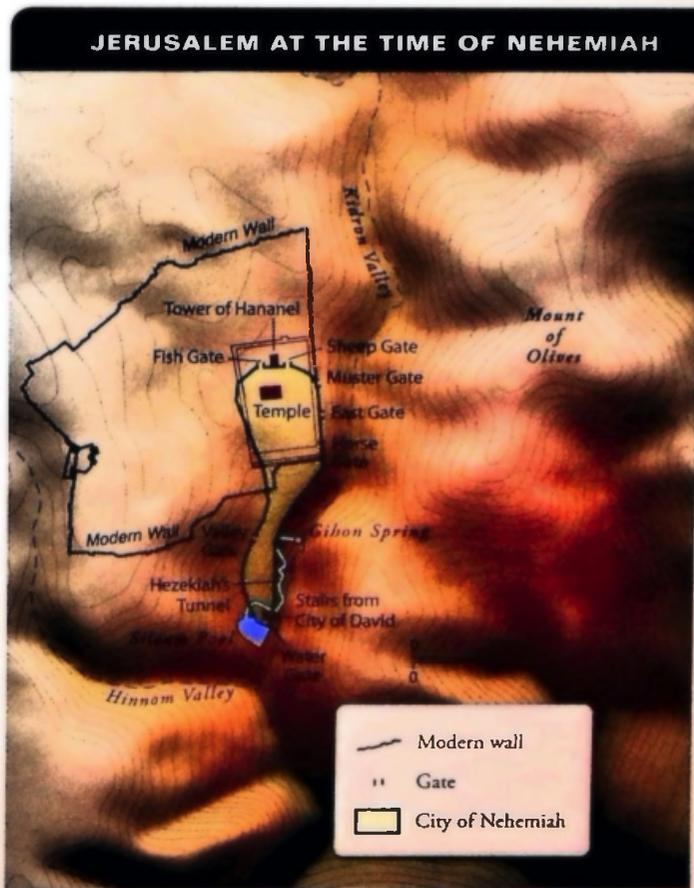
### Postexilic Jerusalem

But because of the continuing sins of the people and their leaders, God's judgment fell on Jerusalem in 605, in 597, and climactically in 586 BC — the year when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed both the city and the temple (see p. 89). Almost fifty years later, a large-scale return to Jerusalem began in response to the decree issued by Cyrus (539 BC). Led by Sheshbazzar, 49,897 people returned to Jerusalem from Babylon, rebuilt the temple altar, and reinstated sacrificial worship. Not until the days of the Persian Darius, however, were Jews, led by Zerubbabel, able to actually rebuild the temple (520–516 BC; Ezra 6).

The second return from Babylon was led by Ezra the scribe (458 BC) and was noted for its spiritual accomplishments. The actual rebuilding of the walls took place in the days of Nehemiah (445 BC; see Neh 1–4; 6; 12:27–47). From that time until the beginning of the second century BC, not much is known about Jerusalem.

Early in the second century the Seleucid king Antiochus III defeated the Ptolemies (198 BC), and the change in rule was welcomed by most of the Jewish population. With Antiochus's support, repairs were made to the temple, and a large pool — possibly the Pool of Bethesda — was constructed (Sir 50:1–3).

During the reign of Antiochus IV (175–164 BC), however, the king and his Jewish supporters pressed for a Hellenizing program among all of the Jews. The temple in Jerusalem was desecrated and a statue of Olympian Zeus was set up in its precincts (168 BC). Other Greek structures were erected in Jerusalem, including a gymnasium and a citadel. The citadel (called the "Akra" in Greek) was built on the eastern ridge just south of the temple area and was so tall that it towered over the temple area. Although Judas Maccabeus's forces were able to retake Jerusalem, purify the temple (164 BC),





▲ *Garden Tomb located about 260 yards north of the present-day wall of the Old City. This tradition dates back to the 19th century AD.*

Mount near the Sheep Gate (John 5:1 – 14). Portions of a double pool that could have been surrounded by “five covered colonnades” — one on each side and one in the middle separating the two pools — have been discovered just north of the Temple Mount. On another occasion Jesus healed a blind man whom he sent to the Pool of Siloam to wash (John 9).

Most of the information about Jesus in Jerusalem comes from the last week of his earthly ministry. Jesus evidently spent his nights with his friends in Bethany, 1.5 miles from Jerusalem on the east side of the Mount of Olives. He made his triumphal entry into Jerusalem on a donkey that he had mounted in the Bethphage area. After crossing the Mount of Olives, he descended into the Kidron Valley to shouts of “Hosanna”; after entering Jerusalem, he took a look around the temple area.

On Monday he entered the temple area again, and this time he drove out the moneychangers who were possibly operating in the Royal Colonnade along the southern perimeter of the Court of the Gentiles. On Tuesday Jesus once again entered the temple complex and later in the day spent time teaching his disciples on the Mount of Olives.

After resting in Bethany on Wednesday, Jesus sent “two of his disciples” (Mark 14:13) into the city to secure a room and prepare a meal so that he could celebrate the Passover with his

disciples. In spite of the fact that the structure on the traditional site of the Last Supper (the Cenacle) dates from the Crusader period (at least 1,100 years after the event), it is probable that the site itself, located on the southern portion of the western ridge in a well-to-do section of town, is close to where the meal took place. Then Jesus and his disciples went down to the Garden of Gethsemane, at the western foot of the Mount of Olives, near the Kidron Valley. There, after praying for a while, he was taken prisoner.

That night he appeared before Caiaphas the high priest, Pilate the procurator, and Herod Antipas, the ruler of Galilee, who was in Jerusalem for the festival. The exact site of each interrogation is not known, but most likely the residence of Caiaphas was somewhere on the southern or eastern portion of the western ridge, and Herod Antipas was probably staying in the old Hasmonean palace on the eastern slope of the western ridge, over-

looking the temple. Although Jesus may have appeared before Pilate at the Antonia Fortress, it is more probable that as ruler of the country, he was residing in Herod’s palace and Jesus was interrogated, humiliated, and condemned there.

According to the gospel accounts, Jesus was led outside the city, crucified, and buried in a nearby tomb belonging to Joseph of Arimathea. In Jerusalem today two localities lay claim to these events. The first of these is Gordon’s Calvary, to the north of the present-day Damascus Gate, with the nearby Garden Tomb. Although this site lies outside the ancient as well as the present-day city wall and is quite amenable to certain types of piety, there is no compelling reason to think that this is either Calvary and/or the tomb; in fact, the tomb may date back to the Iron Age (1000 – 586 BC) and thus would not have been a tomb “in which no one had yet been laid” (Luke 23:53).

More compelling is the suggestion that the Church of the Holy Sepulcher marks the spot of these dramatic events. This more traditional site was probably outside the walled city of Jesus’ day and was in fact a burial ground. After his resurrection Jesus appeared to his disciples for forty days and then, on the Mount of Olives, he ascended into heaven.



▲ Crusader entrance to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. This church contains both the site of Calvary and the tomb of Jesus. Tradition dating back to the 4th century AD.

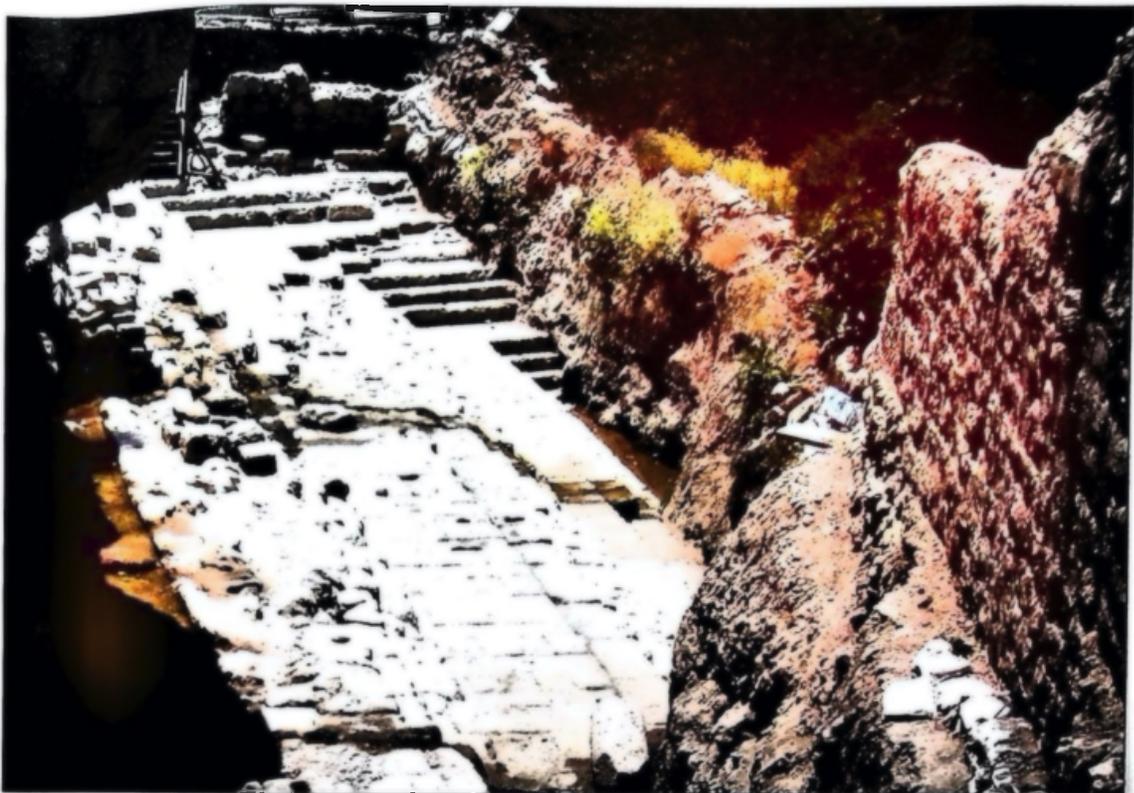
During the early apostolic period (ca. AD 30–44) the Christian church was centered in Jerusalem. Various events took place there, such as house meetings, appearances before the Sanhedrin, and imprisonments, but it is all but impossible to pinpoint their location. In the temple precincts a paralyzed man who was sitting at the “Beautiful Gate” (probably the gate that led into the Court of Women) was healed, and the early Christians often met in “Solomon’s Colonnade” (Acts 3:11; 5:12) — probably the colonnade along the inner side of the eastern enclosure wall of the temple precincts.

After Agrippa I died (AD 44), Roman procurators ruled Jerusalem directly until the outbreak of the first Jewish revolt (AD 66–70). During this revolt, the Romans, slowly but surely, subdued the rebels. In the spring of AD 70 the Fifth, Tenth,

Twelfth, and Fourteenth legions, and their slave captives — about 80,000 men in all — advanced on Jerusalem (map p. 127).

The Jews attempted to fortify the third, or northern, wall that Agrippa I had begun, but by the end of May the Romans breached it. A few days later the second wall was breached and a siege dike was set up around the remainder of the city. The suffering within the city was severe, and in late July the Antonia Fortress was attacked and captured. From there the Romans advanced into the temple precincts, and on the ninth of Ab (August 28) the temple was burned. Titus, the Roman general who later became emperor, ordered much of the city to be razed, save the three towers just north of the Herodian palace. These he left standing as mute tribute to the greatness of the city he had just captured.





▲ Looking east at the northeast corner of the recently discovered "Pool of Siloam" (John 9). Note the series of steps and platforms that lead down to the pool from left to right.

and reestablish sacrificial worship, the Seleucid garrison in the Akra remained a thorn in the side of the Jews until Judas's brother Simon (142 – 135 BC) captured and demolished it (Josephus, *Ant.* 13.6.7 [215]). Simon also completed building the walls of Jerusalem, a project his brother Jonathan had begun (1 Macc 10:10 – 11; 13:10). (On the history of Jerusalem during the Hasmonean era, see pp. 103 – 7.)

### Jerusalem in Roman Times

At the beginning of the period of Roman rule Jerusalem experienced great expansion, construction, and beautification under the leadership of the Roman client king, Herod the Great (37 – 4 BC). Pride of place must certainly go to Herod's refurbishing of the temple and the Temple Mount (see p. 112), a project that took ten years, though crews were still working

on it during Jesus' lifetime (John 2:20, ca. AD 28). Herod especially expanded the courts surrounding the temple. He doubled the size of the platform area so that it reached its present size of 36 acres. The area is now occupied by Muslim structures and is called the Haram esh-Sharif — the Noble Sanctuary. To the northwest of the temple Herod built the Antonia Fortress, which towered over the temple area and housed a garrison to monitor and control the crowds.

On the western ridge Herod built a magnificent palace for himself (see p. 112). In addition, Herod built a second wall that began near these towers — by the Gennath Gate — and ran to the Antonia Fortress, enclosing the northern "Second Quarter" of the city (Josephus, *War* 5.4.2 [146]).

The Jerusalem Jesus knew was basically the same as Herodian Jerusalem. On one of his visits to the city, Jesus healed a paralyzed invalid at the Pool of Bethesda, north of the Temple

*tell Beth Shan in northern Israel. During the OT period life was focused on the tell, but during the Greco-Roman period the city greatly expanded to the area at the foot of the tell.*



### Why Are There Tells?

The ancients did not set out to build tells. Rather, it often took centuries for tells to develop. The following are some of the more important factors that entered into the complex process of the formation of tells.

1. People preferred to settle close to a source of fresh water—a spring, a well, or, more rarely, a flowing stream.
2. By settling on a hill or a rise near a water source, people could more easily monitor the surrounding landscape and defend themselves...
3. People preferred to live in regions with good agricultural land and/or pasturage.
4. Often people wanted to live close to major and even minor “roads,” which may have led to the settlement of some sites.
5. Other sites may have developed because of their religious significance, their proximity to special natural resources, etc.
6. If stone walls, foundation walls, or even just stones from structures of previous inhabitants of a site were available, these could easily be reused in the building of a new settlement. In some areas of the country, the accumulation of mud from mud bricks also significantly contributed to the rise of a tell.

Since there was a limited number of water sources with a limited number of hills near them, and since on these sites building materials from previous settlers were often available, it was here that new settlements were built over old ones, a process that was often repeated many times over. Thus in the end, the distinctive mounds now known as tells were formed.

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