

Between the Testaments

~420 BC – 6 AD

Week 2: October 12, 2020

Between the Testaments – Outline and Timeframes

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198 – 166 BC	Seleucids of Syria rule Palestine.
166 – 142 BC	Jewish revolt against Seleucid rule.
142 – 63 BC	Hasmoneans rule.
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Jews are NOT a Homogeneous Group...

- Devout group seeking religious freedom (Hasideans).**
- Devout group seeking religious and political freedom.**
- Devout group who accept Antiochus IV as God's punishment.**
- Hellenists who support Greek rule.**
- Pragmatists who reject what they consider evil governance.**

Allegorism

Greeks loved their history of gods... but didn't believe they're real.

Alexandrian Stoics to the rescue!

- Gods are not real, but the stories convey a deeper meaning.

Hellenized Alexandrian Jews adopted allegorism to explain their history in a way that aligned with the Greeks.

Traditionalists viewed allegorized scripture as blasphemy.

Politics = Religion = Politics = Religion...

Civil government and religious obligations were not separate entities.

No concept of religion separate from government.

As a minimum, religion must not be subversive to government.

Revolution: Early Issues

Seleucids: Destroy copies of the Torah.

Jews: Defend the Torah.

Seleucids: Attack on the Sabbath when Jews won't fight.

Jews: The Sabbath is reserved for worship of God.

Hasideans: Politics means little; Judaism means everything!

- **Four Decisions by Mattathias...**
- **Fight on the Sabbath!**
- **Guerilla tactics!**
- **Only Judeans!**
- **Kill Collaborators!**

Mattathias Dies ~166 BC.

- Tells sons to yield to the one with the most expertise in every situation.**
- Simon (oldest) will be counselor.**
- Judas (Maccabeus) will lead the fighters.**

Judas is a proven fierce and charismatic leader; partisans start referring to themselves as Maccabeans.

Meanwhile, in Syria... (165 BC)

Parthians (Neo-Babylonians) to the east are rebelling.

Jews to the south are rebelling.

Antiochus IV splits the Seleucid army –

- Antiochus IV takes half his army east.

- Seleucid General Lysias takes half the army to Judea.

Orders to General Lysias: Eradicate the Jews!

Lysias Invades Judea

165 BC

Poor Tactics by Seleucids = Maccabean victory

- Seleucids retreat back to Syria.

Book of Daniel appears in 165 BC; inspiration to the Jews.

Seleucid army returns in 164 BC and is again soundly defeated.

- Seleucids retreat back to Syria.

Maccabees control all Judea except Jerusalem.

Jerusalem, in December 164 BC...

Maccabees capture Jerusalem (except the Acra fortress).

Temple is cleansed, then rededicated on Dec. 25, 164 BC.

Feast of Tabernacles (normally Sept / Oct) was extended to encompass rededication of the temple.

- Hanukkah celebrates this rededication of the temple.

Judea and Syria 164 - 163 BC

Antiochus IV dies in Persia.

Heir to Seleucid empire is his 8 year-old son Antiochus V.

Maccabees foray into Gilead, Galilee, Idumea, and Philistine territory.

Besiege Acra fortress in Jerusalem...

-Poor decision!

Seleucids return in strength to defend the Acra.

Seleucids Offer Peace Terms to the Maccabees...

Seleucid army under Lysias defeats the Maccabees.

But... Unrest in Syria forces Lysias to return to Syria rather than follow up on his victory in Judea.

**Lysias and Syria will grant religious freedom
IF**

Judea remains a vassal state to Syria.

Maccabees agree; Seleucids return to Syria.

Maccabees proceed to “cleanse” Judea.

Civil war in Syria keeps the Seleucids tied up in internal affairs.

Crisis Amongst the Maccabeans...

Jews now have religious freedom.

Hasideans withdraw; seek peace with the new High Priest Halcimus and the Seleucids.

Inexplicably, Halcimus and Seleucids execute 60 Hasideans.

Hasideans re-commit to the revolution.

Maccabees resume raids against Seleucids and Hellenizers.

Renewed Maccabean Raids = Renewed Seleucid Determination

161 BC a large Seleucid army enters Judea.

Maccabees decisively defeat the Seleucids.

But...

Also in 161 BC Judas Maccabeus is captured and later killed.

Maccabees retreat to the hills; appoint Jonathan their leader.

Hellenizers again seize Jerusalem; Seleucids gain upper hand.

~18 month lull in fighting. Maccabees retrain and regroup.

159 BC Maccabees resume the fight.

Seleucid Army Returns to Judea – 158 BC

Maccabees are attacking Hellenizers.

Hellenizers appeal to Syria for help.

General Bacchides leads army into Judea.

Maccabees resume guerilla tactics; punish Bacchides' army.

Bacchides and Jonathan conclude a truce!

157 – 153 BC: Five-year blank space in history...

Maccabees: Changing of the Guard

~143 BC Jonathan is lured into a trap and killed.

Simon is named leader of the Maccabees.

- Family is becoming known as the “Hasmoneans”.

142 BC: In return for military aid, Demetrius II declares Judea independent of Seleucid rule!!

142 BC: INDEPENDENCE FOR JUDEA!!

An independent Jewish state exists for the first time in ~450 years.

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Years 1, 2, and 3 of Simon... (142 - 140 BC)

New calendaring system is created...

142 BC is declared “Year 1 of Simon”.

Simon’s forces oust Seleucids from port towns.

Simon convenes Jewish elders to designate a High Priest.

- Elders designate Simon to be High Priest!

- Hasideans agree with this and support it... Then vanish from history.

- Elders also designate Simon ethnarch of the Jews.

Detour from Historical Events to Discuss...

Pharisees

Sadducees

Essenes

These are Political and Religious Sects.

Pharisees ~140 BC

Commoners; liberal-minded; well-liked by populace.

Taught in the synagogues.

Accepted the oral Torah.

Pharisaic Beliefs...

- Resurrection of the dead / angels / immortal soul.**
- Rewards and punishments after death.**
- Sacredness can be found in the home.**
 - Temple is not an absolute necessity.**
- Free will... but God knows what will happen.**

Advocated for social justice.

Pharisees in the First Century AD...

Unfortunately, Pharisees' focus shifted to concern for the letter of the Law, rather than intent.

Temple is destroyed in 70 AD.

Pharisees drop the name "Pharisee" and serve as teachers... rabbis.

Today's rabbis are heirs of the Pharisees.

Sadducees

Conservative; strict...

Aristocrats; the wealthy; the privileged.

No known Sadducean documents.

Sadducean beliefs...

- Judaism is defined by the temple.**
- Free will; but God is in charge.**
- No afterlife.**

Essenes

~165 BC

Pacifists... But await the coming battle between the Sons Of Light and Sons of Darkness.

Great emphasis on ritual and holiness.

Communal ownership.

Essene Beliefs...

- Predestination / angels / no animal sacrifices**
- Soul is entombed in a worldly body; lives forever in a bodiless eternity.**
- Two messianic figures – Davidic and Levitic.**

Essenes vanish in 68 AD courtesy of the Romans.

Some Essene churches have arisen since discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Sanhedrin

- **The Jewish “Supreme Court” to adjudicate religious and civil issues.**
- **“Great Sanhedrin” in Jerusalem had 71 members.**
- **Towns had their own (smaller) Sanhedrin, but all were required to adhere to rulings of the Great Sanhedrin.**
- **Hearings involved no lawyers; just the accused, the grievant, and any witnesses.**
 - **Members heard everyone, then debated and voted.**
- **Rabbinic tradition: Sanhedrin is traced back to Moses.**
- **First historical record of the Sanhedrin dates to Antiochus III (223 – 187 BC).**

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The Hasmoneans

Solid line = lineage
 Dashed line = Marriage
 Dates = Years that person led Maccabees or ruled Judea.

Mattathias

As an elderly priest he started the rebellion against the Seleucids.
 Died ~165 BC

Jonathan
 ~161 – 143 BC
 Third leader of the revolt.
 First Hasmonean High Priest.
 Taken captive, then killed ~143 BC.

Simon 142 – 135 BC
 Fourth leader of the revolt.
 Achieved victory over the Seleucids.
 Killed by his son-in-law in 135 BC.

Judas (Maccabeus)
 ~165 – 161 BC
 Second leader of the revolt.
 Killed in battle ~161 BC.

John
 Fighter; ambushed and killed by Nabatians (Arabs) ~159 BC.

Eleazar
 Fighter; killed in battle ~163 BC when an elephant fell on him.

Mattathias
 Killed by his brother-in-law in 135 BC.

John Hyrcanus 134 – 104 BC
 Succeeds Simon as leader of Judea and High Priest.
 Expands the territory under Judean control.
 Dies peacefully in 104 BC.

Judah
 Killed by his brother-in-law in 135 BC.

Daughter ----- **Ptolemy son of Abubus**
 Killer of Simon and Simon's sons Mattathias & Judah.

Antigonus
 His murder was arranged by his brother Aristobulus.
 Died ~102 BC.

Aristobulus -----
 Ruled 104 - 102 BC.
 Took the throne from his mother and starved her to death.

Salome Alexandra -----
 Ruler of Judea from 76 – 67 BC.

Jannaeus -----
 Ruled Judea from 102 – 76 BC.
 Soldier, brawler... and High Priest.
 Did much to sully the name of the Hasmoneans.

Aristobulus II 66 – 63 BC
 Captured by Pompey in 63 BC; sent to Rome. Escaped in 57 BC. Recaptured. Released by Julius Caesar in 49 BC. Poisoned by Pompey's agents in 49 BC.

Hyrcanus II 67 – 66 BC & 47 – 40 BC (Ethnarch under Roman rule.)
 Executed by Herod ~31 BC.

Alexandra
 Herod's mother-in-law from hell.
 Executed by Herod ~29 BC.

63 – 48 BC:
 Infighting between Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II, with Rome in the middle.

Antigonus 40 – 37 BC
 Allied with Parthians and rebelled against Roman rule of Judea.
 Took throne in 40 BC.
 Killed by Romans in 37 BC.

Alexander -----
 Executed by Rome at Herod's request.

Aristobulus III
 Appointed High Priest in 37 BC.
 Drowned in 36 BC.

Mariamme ----- **Herod (the Great)**
 Married Herod in 37 BC.
 Executed by Herod ~29 BC.

Hasmonean Rule

140 BC Simon is political, military, and religious leader.

Seven years of relative peace (142 – 135 BC)...

-Something had to change!

134 BC Simon is assassinated in Jericho.

-Simon's son-in-law Ptolemy wants the Judean throne.

Simon's son John Hyrcanus beats Ptolemy to Jerusalem and assumes power.

John Hyrcanus Ethnarch of Judea 134 – 104 BC

134 BC Seleucids attack Judea again.

-Simon took some Seleucid ports in 141 BC. Seleucids want them back!

Seleucids put Jerusalem under siege.

- Payments and agreements end the siege.

128 BC civil war occupies Syria; Hyrcanus declares freedom from Syria and pursues military expansion.

Pharisees and Sadducees first appear in recorded history.

- John Hyrcanus has a falling out with the Pharisees.

Military campaigns and forced conversion to Judaism.

Hyrcanus dies peacefully in his sleep in 104 BC.

John Hyrcanus' children were reared in a palace! They considered themselves aristocrats; favored Hellenization...

Aristobulus I

104 – 102 BC

John Hyrcanus' will: His wife will lead the government; his eldest son Aristobulus I will be High Priest.

Aristobulus I made adjustments to this situation.

- Murders his mother (starvation) and jails 3 of his brothers.

Continued the military expansions of his father.

Openly refers to himself as “king”.

Brought Galilee under Judean rule; expanded Judaism.

Dies in 102 BC. Very little mourning of his passing.

Aristobulus' widow, Salome Alexandra, is smart, clever, and capable... She knows what to do...

(Alexander) Jannaeus

102 – 76 BC

Aristobulus' widow, Salome Alexandra, let his brother Jannaeus out of jail, married him... and worked the system to have Jannaeus declared the next ruler of Judea... and High Priest!

Jannaeus was a hard-fighting, hard-drinking soldier.

Jannaeus shows contempt for a temple ritual (94 BC).

- Riots and subsequent military slaughter result in six years of civil war (94 – 88 BC).

- Josephus tells us 50,000 Jews died and 8,000 emigrated.

Jannaeus and his supporters eventually regain the throne.

Appoints Antipas the Idumean to be general over Idumea.

On his deathbed, Jannaeus decrees his wife Salome is to rule Judea and tells her to reconcile with the Pharisees.

Salome Alexandra

76 – 67 BC

Appoints her eldest son Hyrcanus II High Priest and immediately seeks to reconcile with the Pharisees.

- Younger son Aristobulus II commanded the army.

Good ruler; she gave Judea several years of peace.

Pharisees take domination of the Sanhedrin...

- Execute Sadducees who helped Jannaeus crucify Pharisees.

- Decreed that every young man should be educated.

Salome Alexandra dies in 67 BC.

- Eldest son Hyrcanus II is designated ruler of Judea...

BUT...

- Younger son Aristobulus II wants a different arrangement.

Siblings Squabble... Is There a Mediator??

Hyrchanus II is backed by the Pharisees; Aristobulus II is backed by the Sadducees.

Aristobulus II marches on Jerusalem and takes the throne and High Priest role from a rather weak Hyrchanus II.

The Idumean leader Antipater backs Hyrchanus II.

Meanwhile, in 64 BC, Rome takes control of Syria.

- Roman General Pompey awaits an opportunity re Judea...

Both Hyrchanus II and Aristobulus II ask Pompey to intervene in their behalf.

- Pompey is glad to oblige...

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Jewish Independence Ends; Hello Romans – 63 BC

Pompey orders the competing Jewish forces to stand down; then hears each side's claim to the throne of Judea.

Aristobulus II ill-advisedly ignores Pompey, precipitating a 3-month Roman siege in Jerusalem.

Pompey names Hyrcanus II ethnarch of Judea; and names a separate ethnarch for Samaria.

Pompey declares Judea, Samaria, and Galilee to be vassal states reporting to the Roman governor in Antioch.

After the turmoil of Hasmonean rule, most Jews are satisfied that Rome has taken control.