



# Time Between The Testaments

# Why Study The Intertestamental Period?





# Well...

- There is hardly any end to the various factors of intertestamental history which left their mark on the political and religious culture of first century AD Israel/Judaism.
- We will consider the great political/social issue which arose during the 400 years in between the Testaments, and try to see how that issue dominated and shaped the world into which our Savior was born, and in which He lived out His mortal life.





# The Intertestamental Period

- The Intertestamental Period is often called “The Silent Years,” because no new revelation was given during this time.
- The length of this period: c. 400 years
- This period is nowhere narrated in the Bible, but it is there in the prophecies of Daniel.





# Where We Learn About It

- A prophetic overview is provided in Daniel 2 & 7.
  - It is essential to understand the course of history prophetically outlined in these two chapters.
- Selective information is recorded in the works of the Jewish/Roman historian, Flavius Josephus.
- Some help can be found in 1 Maccabees, an apocryphal work which narrates the Hasmonean revolt against the Greek/Syrian oppressors of Israel in the 2nd century BC.





Daniel 2,  
c. 602 B.C.



# Daniel 7:1-3 (c. 553 B.C.)

**1** In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel saw a dream and visions in his mind as he lay on his bed; then he wrote the dream down and related the following summary of it. **2** Daniel said, “I was looking in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea. **3** And four great beasts were coming up from the sea, different from one another.





# Four Great Beasts

- This stirred-up sea produced four startling creatures, one after the other, each more frightening than the preceding one.
- In 7:17, Daniel is told that “These great beasts, which are four in number, are four kings who will arise from the earth.”





# Daniel 7:4 – **1<sup>st</sup> Beast**

“The first was like a lion and had the wings of an eagle. I kept looking until its wings were plucked, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man; a human mind also was given to it.”







Exiles taken from Judah to  
Babylon (597 & 586 BC)

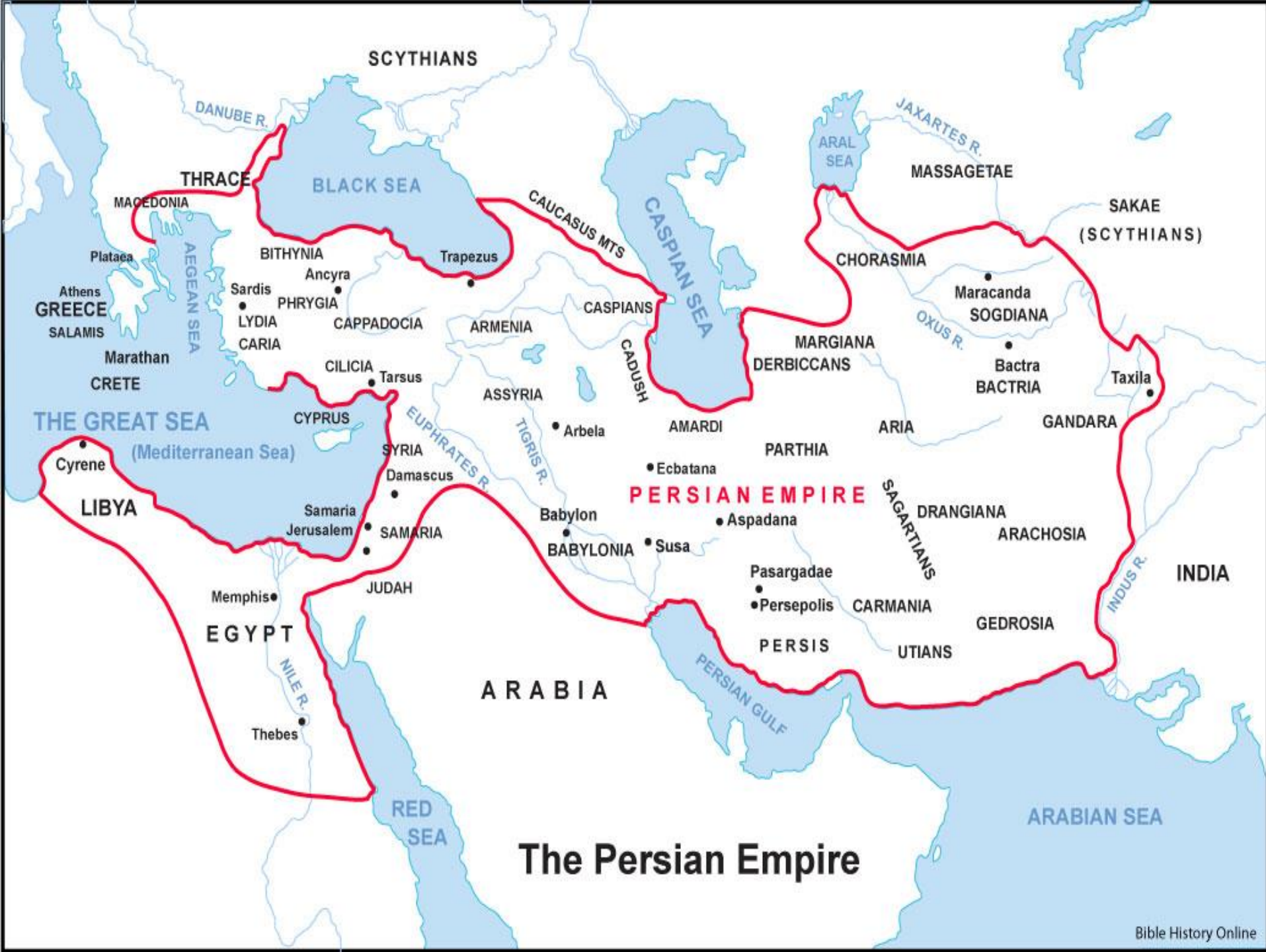




Daniel 7:5 –  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Beast**

“And behold,  
another beast, a  
second one,  
resembling a bear.  
And it was raised  
up on one side,  
and three ribs  
were in its mouth  
between its teeth;  
and thus they said  
to it, ‘Arise, devour  
much meat!’”







# Daniel 7:6 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Beast

“After this I kept looking, and behold, another one, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird; the beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it.”







Empire of Alexander the Great



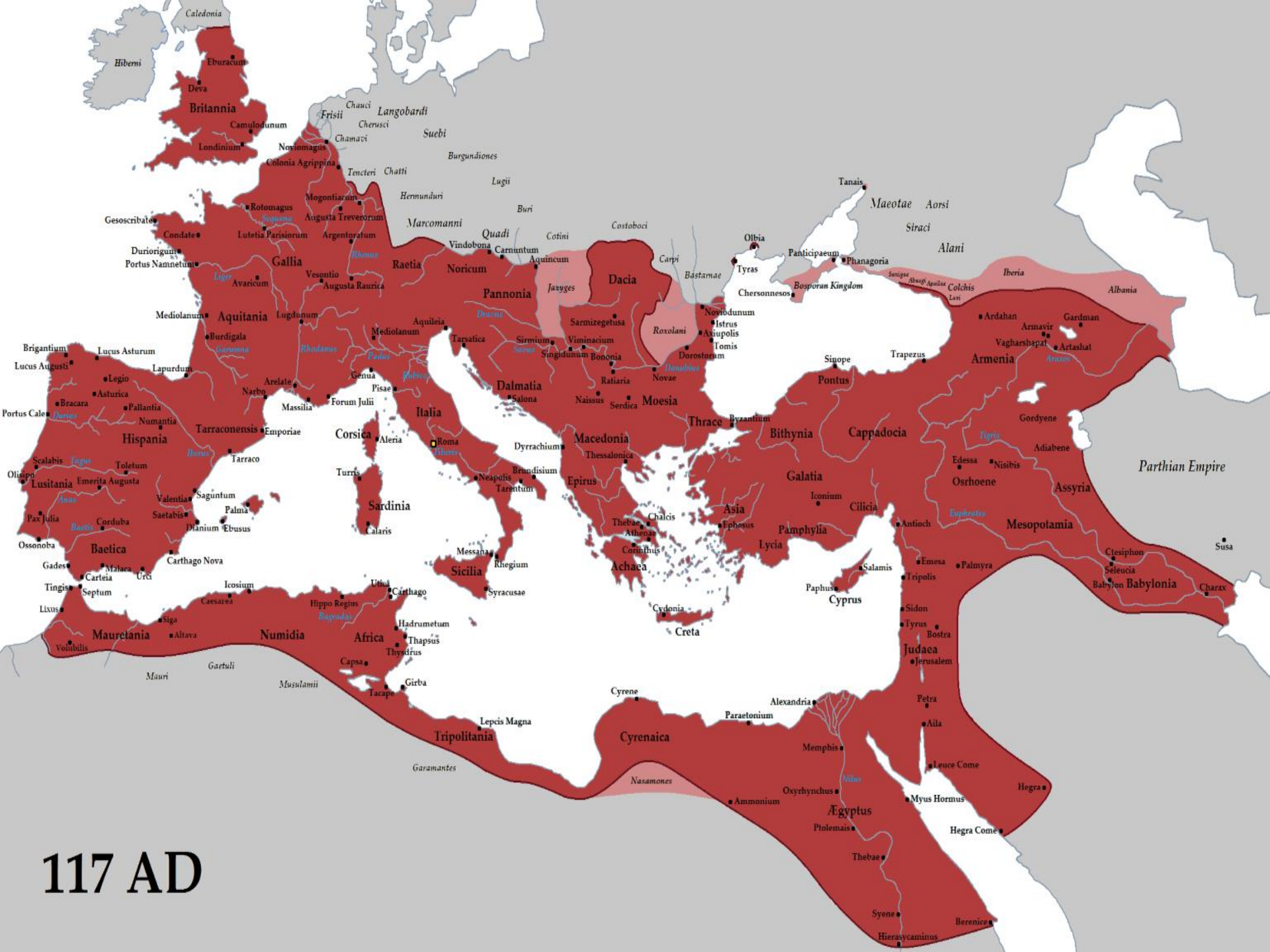
# Daniel 7:7 – 4<sup>th</sup> Beast

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“After this I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong; and it had large iron teeth. It devoured and crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet; and it was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.”







117 AD



# The 4 Beasts of Daniel 7

1. “like a lion and had the wings of an eagle”

**Babylon**

2. “a bear...raised up on one side, and three ribs were in its mouth”

**Medo-Persia**

3. “like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird”

**Greece**

4. “dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong; and it had large iron teeth”

**Rome**



## Under Greece (332-63 B.C.)

- Alexander the Great conquered Persia in 332 BC, and thus gained control of the land of Israel.
- Alexander's great crusade was Hellenism: the forced spread of Greek culture, in all of its aspects.













# Important Results of Hellenism

1. Greek culture permeated the Mediterranean world, imposing a remarkable measure of oneness on that part of that world.
2. The city became a very important political unit; thus the emphasis on citizenship.
3. The Greek language became the common tongue of the Mediterranean world.
4. The acceptance or rejection of Hellenization became the most dominating issue in all of life in Israel.



# At Alexander's Death...

- His kingdom was ultimately divided among four generals.
- Two of these four were especially important to New Testament history:
  1. The family of Ptolemy was given rule in Egypt (south of Israel)
  2. The family of Seleucus was given rule in Syria (north of Israel)







Antiochus IV Epiphanes









# Abomination of Desolation

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# The Hasmonean Dynasty

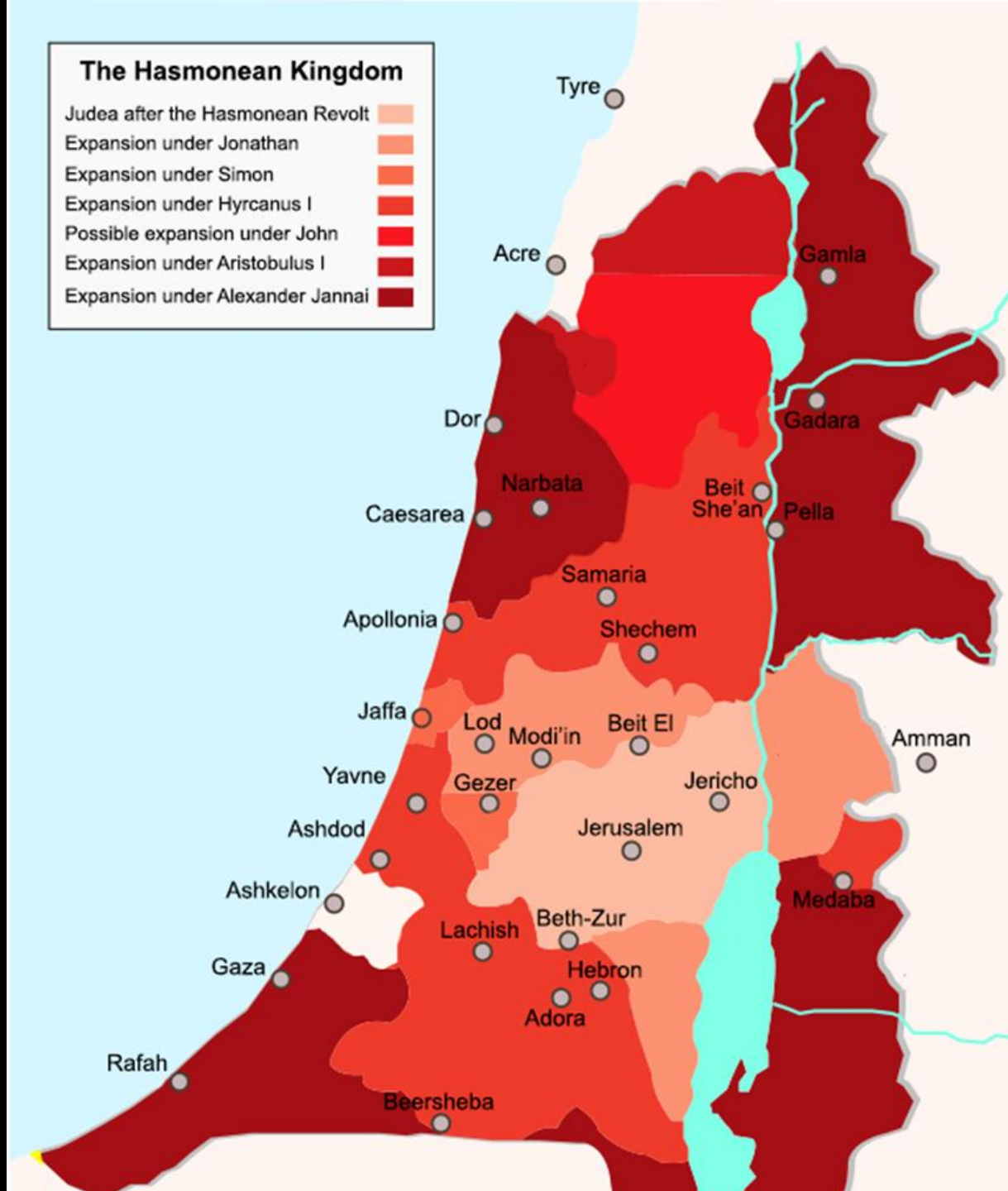
(143\*-63 B.C.)





## The Hasmonean Kingdom

- Judea after the Hasmonean Revolt
- Expansion under Jonathan
- Expansion under Simon
- Expansion under Hyrcanus I
- Possible expansion under John
- Expansion under Aristobulus I
- Expansion under Alexander Jannai





# Under Rome (63 B.C-NT Era)

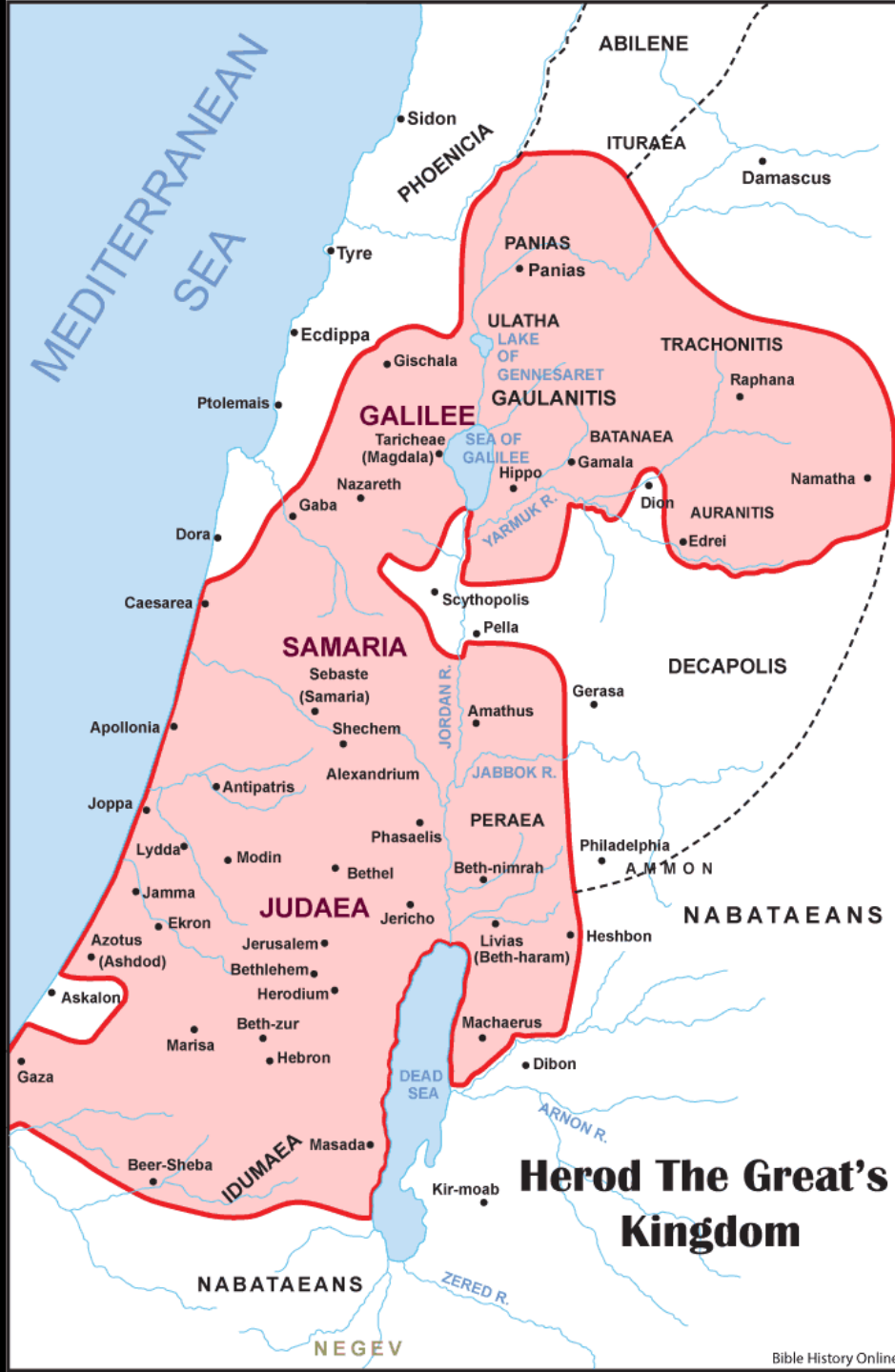
- Pompey of Rome took control of Jerusalem in 63 B.C.
- Herod the Great was appointed “King in Judea” by Rome, ruled from 37 - 1 B.C.
- Herod was an Idumaeon whose father (Antipater) had befriended Rome during the years Rome was trying to establish rule over the eastern Mediterranean world.











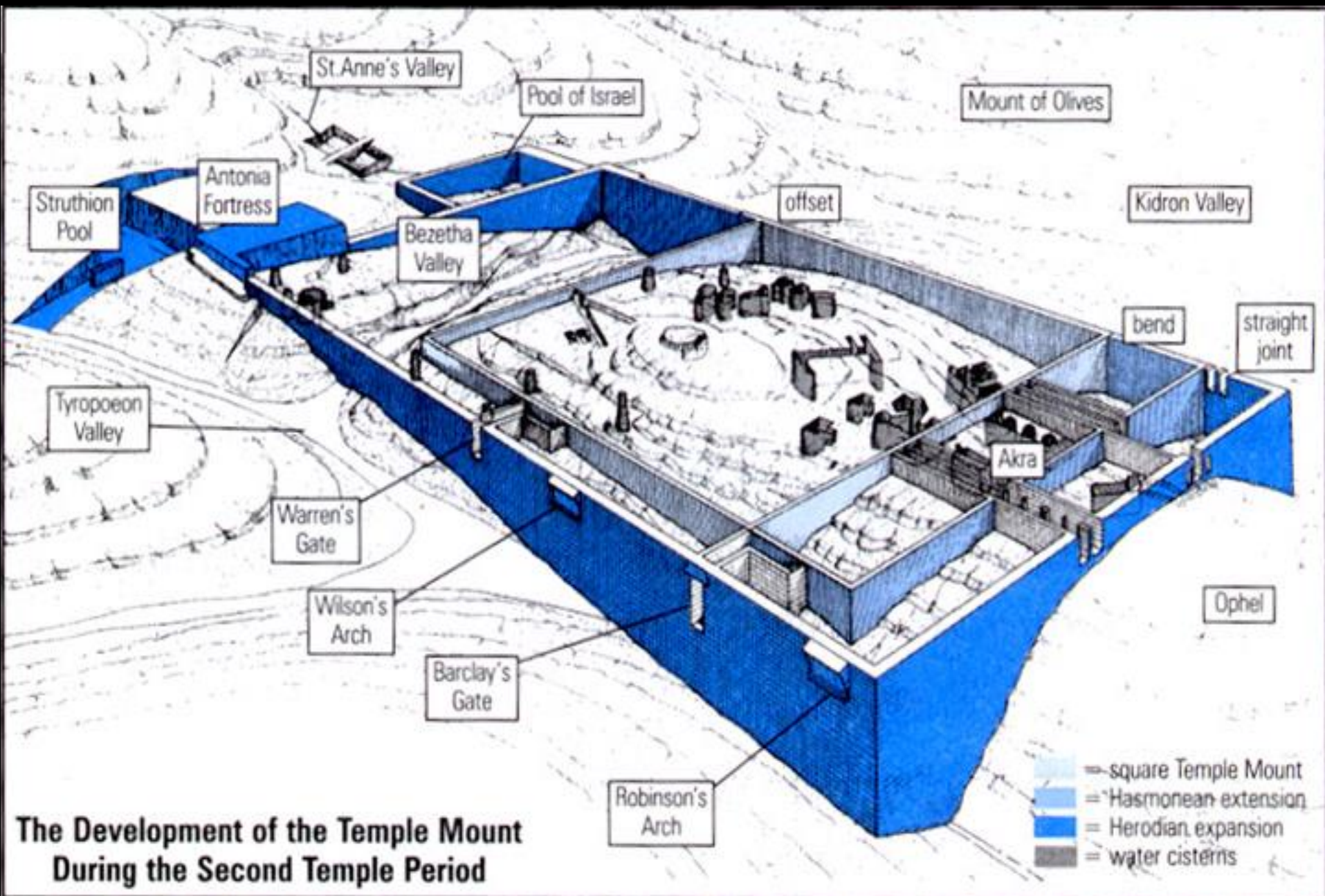






















# Herod and the Roman Empire

- However, because of the treachery of Herod and of his sons, it was not long after Herod's death that the Roman government fully realized the folly of that arrangement, and returned to the more normal arrangement of procurators ruling in Judea, directly answerable to Rome itself.
- Thus, although there is a king by the name of Herod ruling in Palestine at the time of the birth of Jesus, throughout the rest of the New Testament we read of procurators governing in Judea (e.g., Pilate, Felix, Festus), except for a brief period during the time of Paul.



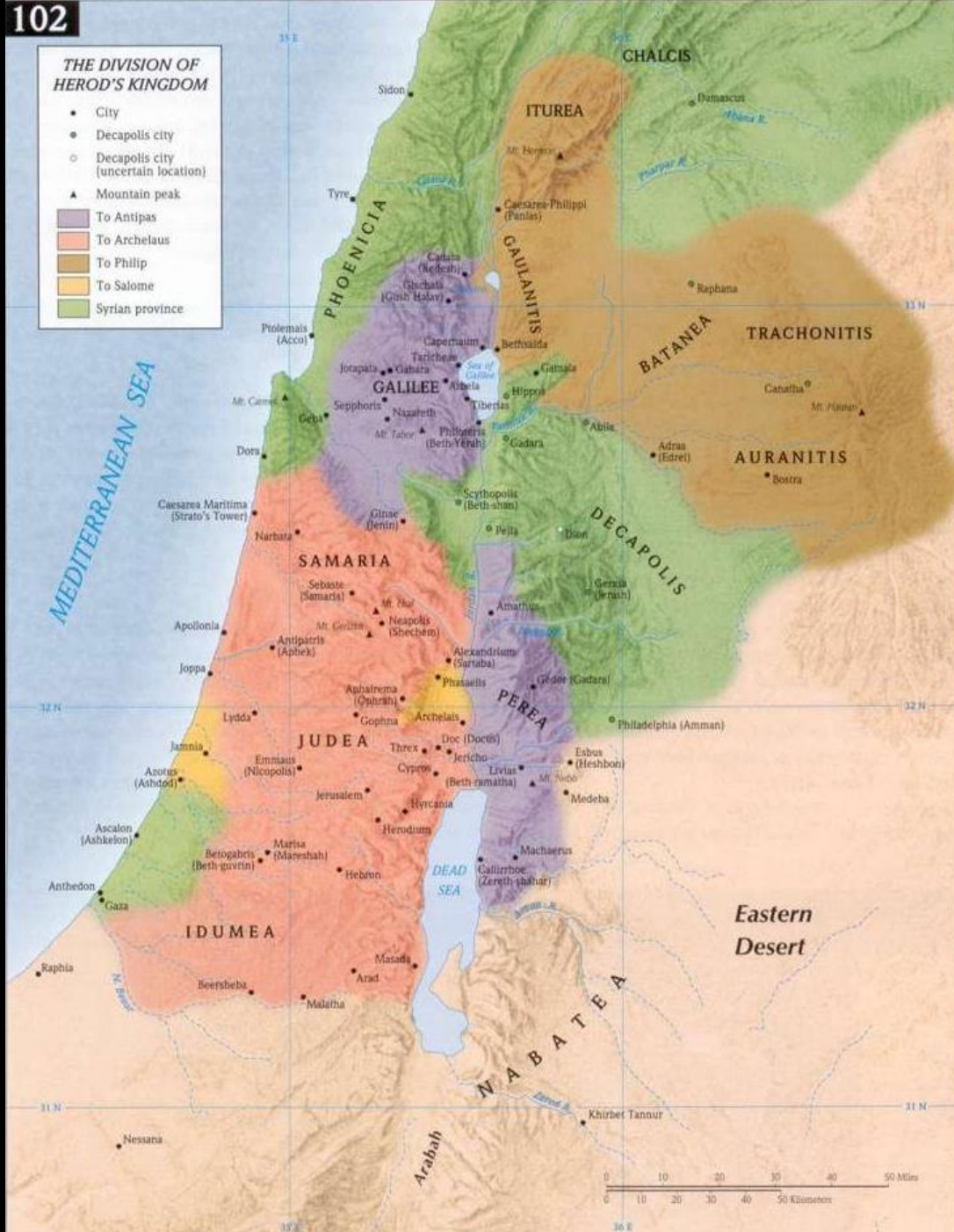
## Roman Rulers of Judea after Herod the Great

1. Archelaus, son of Herod the Great, was appointed “ethnarch” of Judea, Samaria, and Idumea at the death of his father; he reigned from 1 B.C. to A.D. 6.
2. Roman procurators were established in authority over Judea after the short reign of Archelaus.
  - Note: This system was maintained throughout the earthly ministry of Jesus, and was interrupted briefly during the ministry of the Apostle Paul.





- City
- Decapolis city
- Decapolis city (uncertain location)
- ▲ Mountain peak
- To Antipas
- To Archelaus
- To Philip
- To Salome
- Syrian province





# Still the Issue: Hellenism

- Again, by definition, Hellenism was the attempt to impose Greek culture, language, religion, and ways of life upon all of the various peoples conquered by Alexander.
- The Hellenic influence pervaded everything, and even in the very strongholds of Judaism it modified the organization of the state, the laws, and public affairs, art, science, and industry, affecting even the ordinary things of life and the common associations of the people.





# Hellenism in Israel

- Jews changed their names from Hebrew to Greek
- 'Honi' became 'Menelaus'; 'Joshua' became 'Jason' or 'Jesus.'
- The inscription forbidding strangers to advance beyond a certain point in the Temple was in Greek; and was probably made necessary by the presence of numerous Jews from Greek-speaking countries at the time of the festivals.
- The coffers in the Temple which contained the shekel contributions were marked with Greek letters.

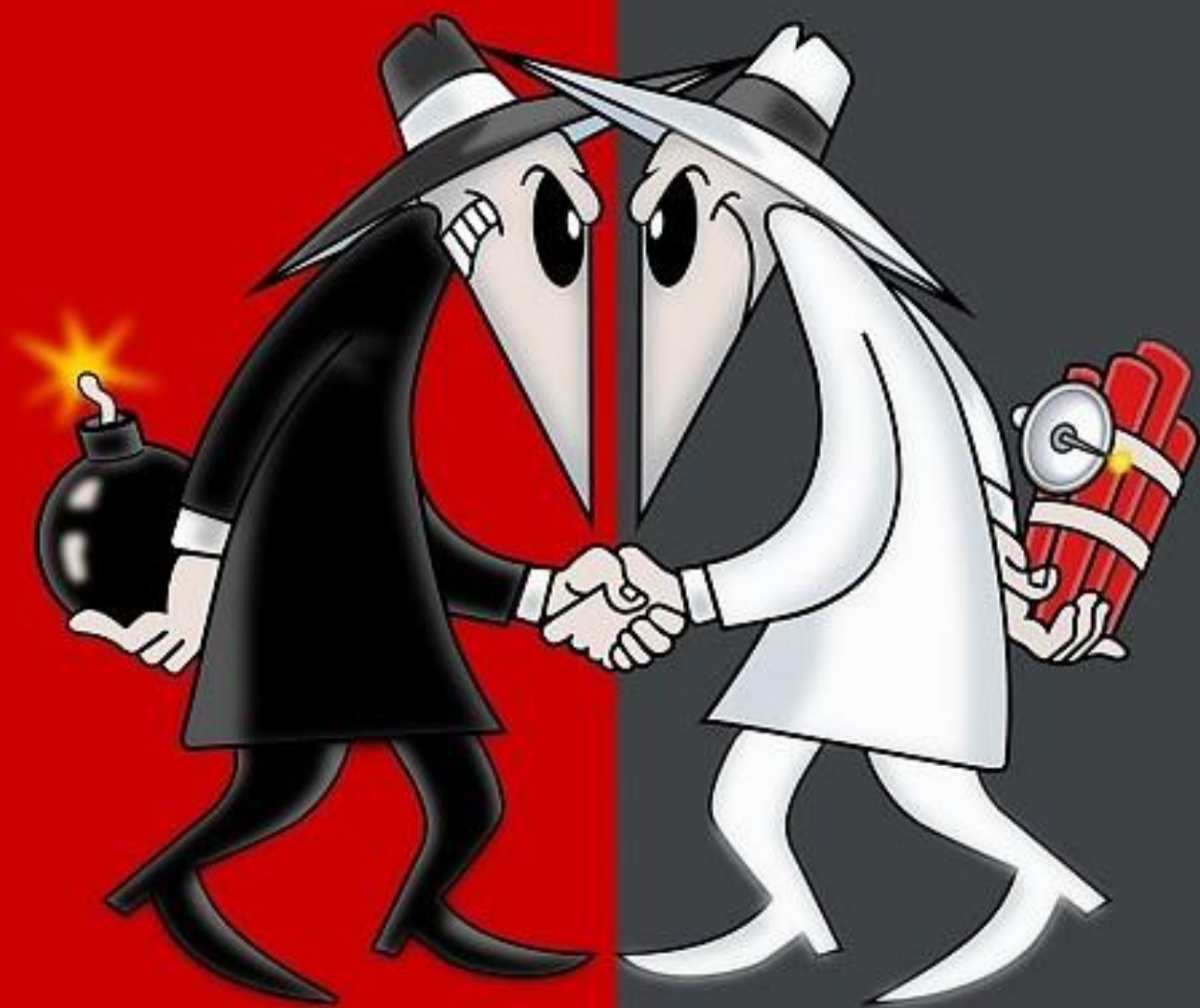


# Cultural Conflict in Israel

- On the one hand, there were those who counseled principled separatism and limited resistance.
- On the other hand, others insisted on the wisdom of measured assimilation and deliberate capitulation.
- There were many expressions of each of these reactions, but in terms of New Testament history, the two primary parties were the

**Pharisees and Sadducees.**







# Pharisees vs. Sadducees

- Identified with the common man; some were wealthy, most were more common
- Primary association – with the Synagogue
- Identified with the aristocracy of Jerusalem; aloof from the common man.
- Primary association – with the high priestly office





# Pharisees

- Only about 6,000 official Pharisees in Jesus' day, but many more who identified with spirit & philosophy of Pharisaism.
- **Theirs was primarily a practical relationship with the people:**
  - Synagogues were everywhere
  - **No synagogue w/o a copy of the Torah**
  - No Torah w/o a scribe to copy and teach it
  - Scribes (by definition) tended to be Pharisees, or at least Pharisaical in philosophy and spirit



**Therefore...**

**Pharisees functionally  
controlled the Synagogues,  
and Pharisees functionally  
(though not officially)  
controlled the mind of the  
common man.**





# Pharisees vs. Sadducees

- The party of resistance; to varying degrees, sought to frustrate, even overthrow, the ruling Gentile power (Rome).
- Therefore, Pharisees regarded as political radicals or liberals (anxious to overthrow prevailing political system).
- Wealthy and comfortable and most anxious to preserve that status, so their every impulse was in the direction of assimilation and capitulation.
- Therefore, Sadducees regarded as political conservatives (anxious to maintain status quo).



# Pharisees vs. Sadducees

- Very legalistic (to a point of pride, arrogance); they did believe in the resurrection of the dead, angels and spirits, etc.
- Officially accepted not only the entire Old Testament Scriptures, but the “oral law” (i.e., the teachings of the fathers concerning the Scriptures) as well
- Hungry for proselytes
- Therefore, regarded as theological conservatives
- Remembered primarily for what they did not believe, very non-descript system of belief; most specifically, they did not believe in the resurrection of the dead
- Officially accepted the Torah, primarily b/c Leviticus demands allegiance to the Temple, which was the source of the Sadducees’ livelihood
- Very exclusivistic, uninterested in proselytes, converts or recruits
- Therefore, regarded as religious liberals or radicals



# Pharisees vs. Sadducees

- Functionally controlled the synagogues in days of Jesus' ministry
  - This was primarily because of the fact that the synagogue demanded a scribe, the scribes tended to be Pharisees (at least in philosophy)
  - By this means, controlled the minds of the common man; the Pharisees were both respected and feared
- Controlled the temple in the days of Jesus' ministry
  - In the days of Jesus' ministry, they also controlled the high priestly office, and thus the leadership of the Sanhedrin
  - No influence whatever over the common man; indeed, much despised and resented



# God's Sovereign Plan

- Hellenism
  - Language, Culture
- Pax Romana
  - Travel, Trade, Roads
- Daniel 9 Timetable





# Perfect Timing

**1 Timothy 2:5** For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, **6** who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given **at the proper time**.

**Galatians 4:4** But **when the fullness of the time came**, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, **5** so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.



