



The New Testament Times

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Introduction



- Jesus of Nazareth lived in a violent world. The Galilean Rabbi grew up in a country occupied by a foreign army.
- The southern part of the country was governed directly by the military and the northern by a local elite willing to collaborate with the foreign army in order to maintain the privileges granted by their high social status.



We Must Study the Historical Context



- To understand the New Testament (NT) it is necessary to study the historical and cultural context where the NT books were produced.
- How important is this context of political and military oppression? Suffice to remember that Jesus of Nazareth, Stephen, James, Peter and Paul were killed by Roman soldiers or their collaborators!



The Hellenistic Age



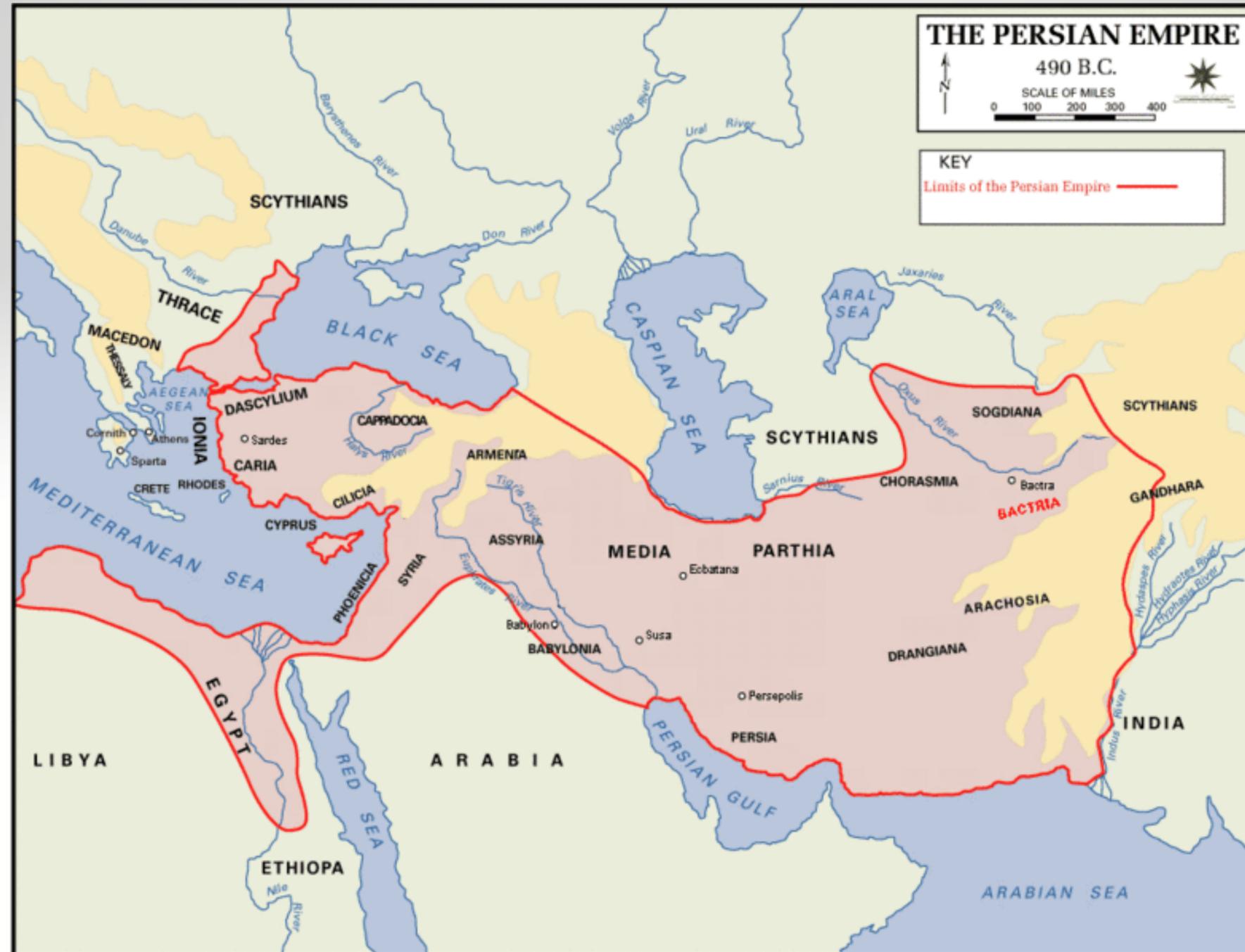
The Persian Empire



- After the Exile, under the rule of the Persian Empire, the Jewish people achieved some autonomy.
- Although they could not restore the monarchy, since the only recognized "king" was the Persian emperor, the Jewish people were able to establish a "theocracy", that is, a government led by the priestly groups, in general, and by the High Priest, in particular.



The Persian Empire



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Alexander Magnus or “the Great”



- This period of relative autonomy lasted until the Greek city-states united under the Macedonian crown. King Philip began to organize the coalition.
- However, it was his son Alexander, better known as Alexander Magnus or “the Great”, who unified the Greeks and marched east to conquer the Persian Empire.



- Alexander sought to establish Greek military rule over the peoples he managed to conquer.
- What was entirely new was his desire to achieve cultural “hegemony” as well.



The Hellenistic Age



- That is, Alexander not only wanted to rule over foreign peoples but also wanted to spread the Greek language and culture throughout the known world.
- This cultural movement is known as "Hellenism", since the demonym for "Greek" is "Hellenos" in that language. Alexander had unprecedented military success and his conquests ushered what universal history knows as "the Hellenistic Age."



Alexander's Conquests



- Alexander, who had ascended the throne in 336 BC, began his military campaign for the year 334. Commonly, the year 333 BC marks the beginning of the Hellenistic Age, a new stage in the history of humanity.
- In little more than ten years, Alexander conquered all regions between Greece, Egypt (to the south) and India (to the east). His armies reached the border of what we now know as Tibet. However, the King of Macedonia died at the age of 33, in the year 323 BC, when he was returning triumphantly from his trips to the Asian continent.



“Koiné” Greek

- Although Alexander largely kept the administrative and religious structures of the conquered peoples, he also built “gymnasiums”, taught the Greek language, and built cities like Alexandria.
- As a consequence of the transculturation imposed by the new political regime, the Greek language replaced Aramaic, becoming the “lingua franca” of the Empire. In particular, it was the “common” or “Koiné” dialect -- a simplified form of the Attic dialect, with Ionic elements -- that spread after Alexander's conquests.



Hellenists & Nationalists



- Alexander conquered Palestine between 333 and 332 BC, on his way to Egypt. From that moment, two elements upended life in the region.
- First, the Jewish people split between “Hellenists” and “Nationalists.” Hellenistic Jews accepted Greek culture and thus foreign rule. For their part, the Nationalist Jews wanted to preserve their culture and even to free themselves from foreign domination.



Strategic Value



- Second, the Greek armies understood the strategic value of the region of Judah. Foreign armies saw the region of what we now call “Palestine” as an area where they could place battalions to defend the conquered territory and from which continue their conquests.
- These two elements determine Jewish life until the Second century AD.



The Division of the Empire



- The Hellenistic Empire established by Alexander divided as soon as he died. At first, the Empire was divided into five parts. However, by the year 281 only three kingdoms remained.
- The first was Macedonia, which ruled all of Greece. This kingdom lasted until 146 BC, when it was conquered by the Romans.



Seleucids & Lagids



- The second was the Seleucid Empire, which dominated the regions of Syria, Lebanon, and Asia Minor. This empire lasted until 64 BC, when it was also conquered by the Romans.
- The third was the Lagid or Ptolemaic Empire, which included Egypt and the regions that this country dominated in northern eastern Africa. The Lagid Empire lasted until Cleopatra's death in 31 BC.



Greek Roots



- We should note that both the Seleucid and Lagid dynasties were originally Greek. They were founded by descendants of the main generals of Alexander's army.
- However, over time each of them adapted to the cultures of the countries that they ruled.
- In particular, the Lagids adopted some bizarre Egyptian practices, such as incestuous pharaonic marriages.



Between Lagids and Seleucids

- This map shows how Judea fell between the Lagid Empire, which ruled Egypt, and the Seleucid Empire, which ruled Syria.
- Therefore, Judea was the scene of several battles between those empires.





The Maccabean Crisis



Here Come the Syrians



- For nearly a century, the Seleucids and the Lagids fought for control of "Syro-Phoenicia"; that is, from the region that includes Lebanon, Galilee, Samaria, Judea and Philistia.
- These empires engaged in five wars during the years 274 to 200, when the Seleucids won the Battle of Paneas and finally gained control of Judea.



Divisions in Society

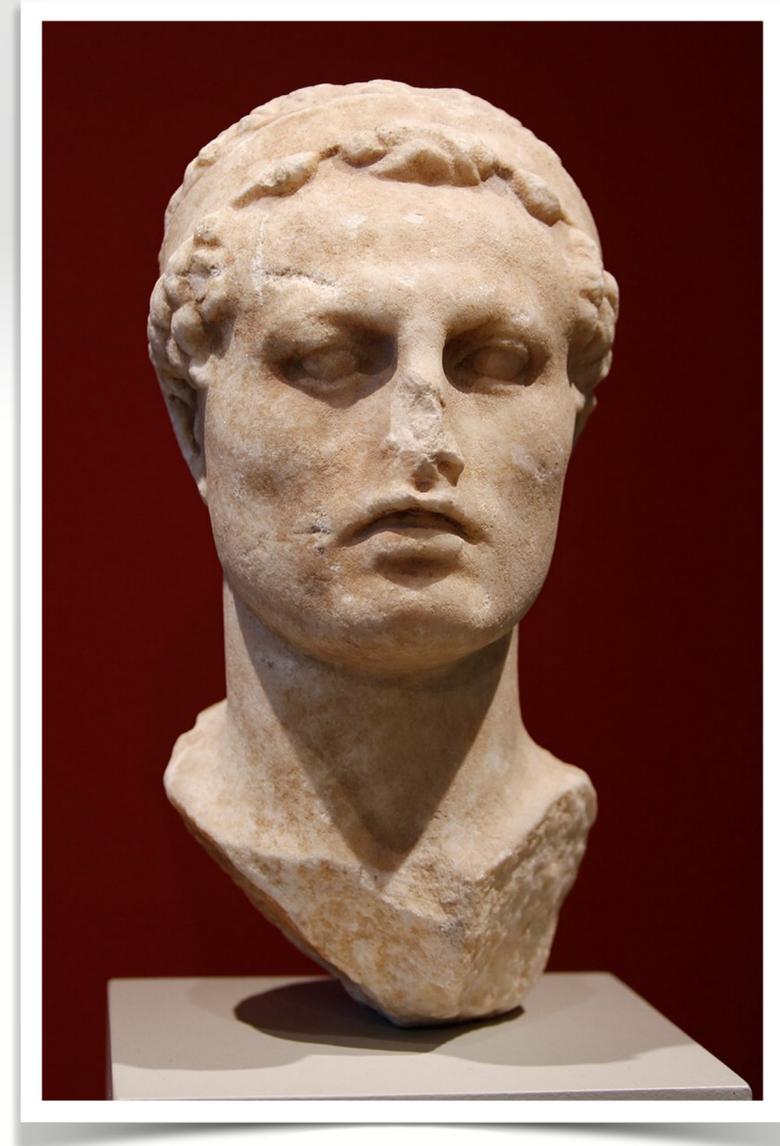


- The Seleucids were more aggressive than the Lagids in the Hellenization process.
- For this reason, their rule caused a crisis, polarizing the Jewish leadership between the *Hasidim* (literally "the saints", forerunners of the *Pharisees* and *Essenes*) and the Hellenists, forerunners of the *Sadducees*.



Antiochus Epiphanes IV

- Continuing with the tradition implanted in the post-exilic era, Judea was “governed” by the High Priest.
- The Seleucids appointed High Priests loyal to them, who were bribed to promote Syrian cultural influence.



The Acropolis or Citadel



- Antiochus also founded the Acropolis of Jerusalem (I Maccabees 1.33-35). This was a military citadel that would serve as a stronghold for the invading forces.
- The Acropolis was located next to Mount Moriah, where the Temple of Jerusalem was located. The military garrisons based on the Acropolis controlled Jerusalem, the largest center of activity of the Jewish people.



Corrupt High Priests



- Antiochus Epiphanes IV, around 175 BC, appointed a certain Jason as High Priest and changed the name of Jerusalem to "Antioch of Jerusalem", thus declaring the Jews "resident aliens" in his own capital.
- By the year 172 BC, another corrupt High Priest, named Menelaus, replaced Jason.
- This Priest, who distinguished himself by fraud, was one of the main culprits for the repression of 167-164 BC



The "Abomination of Desolation"



- The repression consisted of the abolition of the Jewish religion, including the desecration of the temple for the Jews and its transformation into a temple to Zeus (see I M. 1.20-28 and 36-64; II M. 5.5- 6.10).
- This is the so-called "abomination of desolation" mentioned in Daniel 11.31-39. The Essene community of Qumram is believed to have been organized around this time.



Mattathias & the Maccabees



- In 167 BC, a Jew named Mattathias took the initiative of starting the rebellion (I M. 2.15-28). Together with his son Judas Maccabee -- who succeeded him at his death in 166 BC -- organized the movement that rescued and cleansed the Temple in 164 BC, exactly three years after the desecration (I M. 4.36- 61 and II M. 10.1-8). Judas was succeeded by his brothers Jonathan (160-143 BC) and Simon (143-134 BC). The latter achieved full independence, recapturing the citadel of Jerusalem in 142 BC.





The Hasmonean Dynasty



Simon the Hasmonean



- This same Simon, from 142 BC, became known as Simon the Hasmonean. Despite being only a High Priest, he behaved as “Head of State” and military strategist.
- Simon was succeeded by his son John Hyrcanus, (134-104 BC), who outshined his father. Under the reign of John Hyrcanus Judea achieved total independence. However, he behaved like a secular prince, which cost him the loss of "pious" support. So, John Hyrcanus sought the support of the Sadducees, a politically conservative priestly group.



Hasmonean Kings



- The sons of John Hyrcanus began to call themselves "kings", although they were not descendants of David.
- His direct successor was the brutal Aristobulus I (104-103 BC) who died after a year's reign and was succeeded by his brother Alexander Jannaeus (103-76 BC).



Fights between Brothers



- Upon Jannaeus' death, his widow Salome Alexandra was left in charge of the Government. Although her reign was peaceful, preference for his son Hyrcanus II set the stage for a succession struggle.
- Upon her death in 67 BC, Hyrcanus II, then High Priest, was defeated by his brother Aristobulus II.



Antipater of Idumea

- After the defeat, Hyrcanus II requested the military aid of the Romans, who took advantage of the situation to take control of the region. Aristobulus II ruled until 64, when Pompey, the Roman General, dismissed him and appointed Hyrcanus II High Priest. This marks the end of the Hasmonean kingdom and the beginning of Roman rule.
- However, Judea was governed "de facto" by Antipater the Idumaeen, the "advisor" of Hyrcanus II.



Aristobulus II revolts

- Aristobulus II, who had the upper hand in the war against his brother John Hyrcanus II, was ultimately deposed by the Romans.
- Aristobulus II spent several years in prison, until Caesar freed him in 49 BC. At that time, Antipater supported Pompey in the Civil War between Caesar and the Senate. Caesar wanted Aristobulus II to regain power and support his cause. However, Aristobulus died before arriving to Jerusalem, poisoned by Pompey's party.





Roman Rule I



Colonial Rule



- Romans exerted colonial rule in two different ways. In most cases, they networked with members of local dynasties, appointing them as “Client Kings” with some measure of autonomy. They were subservient to Rome, for their fortunes depended on the favor of the Senate and, eventually, of the Emperor.
- Provinces prone to revolt were ruled by Roman military governors. These men belong to the upper classes (Decurions), particularly to the Equestrian Order (knights).



The Sanhedrin, the colonial legislature



- Although The Hasmoneans claimed to be kings, the source of their political power was the High Priesthood. They also had a council of elders and sages who advised them on political matters, called the Sanhedrin.
- After the invasion of Jerusalem, the Roman Senate appointed the local Judean rulers, particularly the Kings and the High Priests. In 57 BC, the Sanhedrin became a colonial legislature subservient to Rome and the local dynasties that mediated their rule.



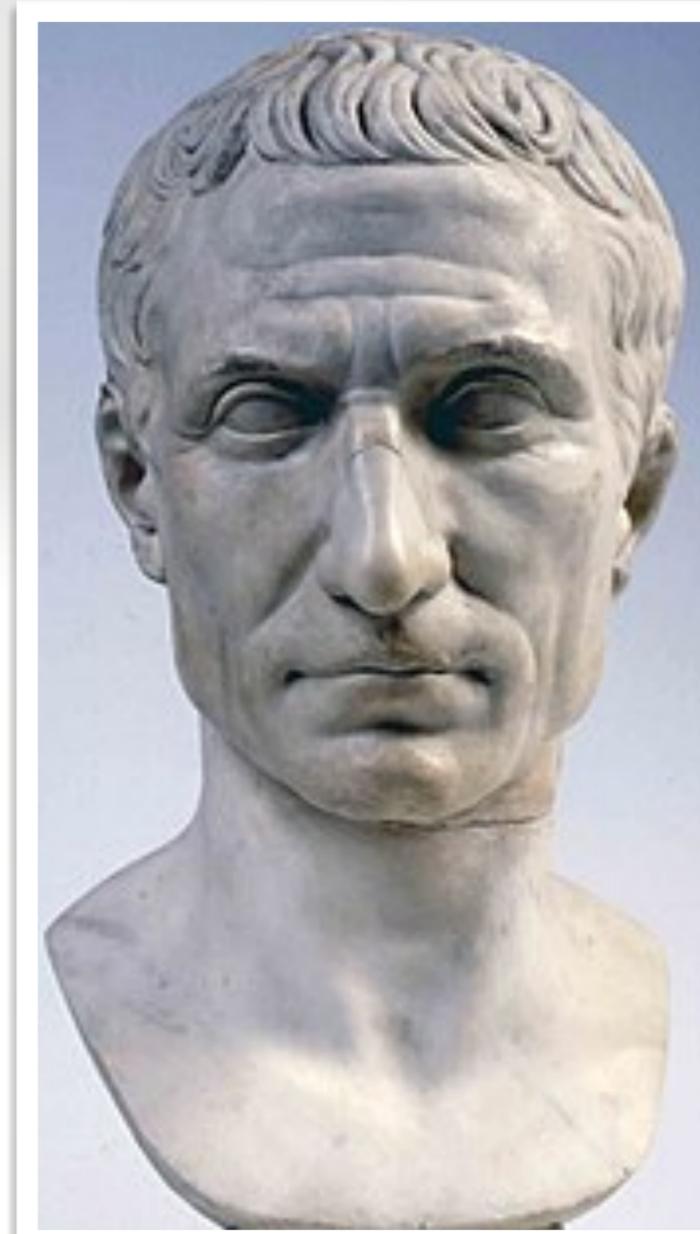
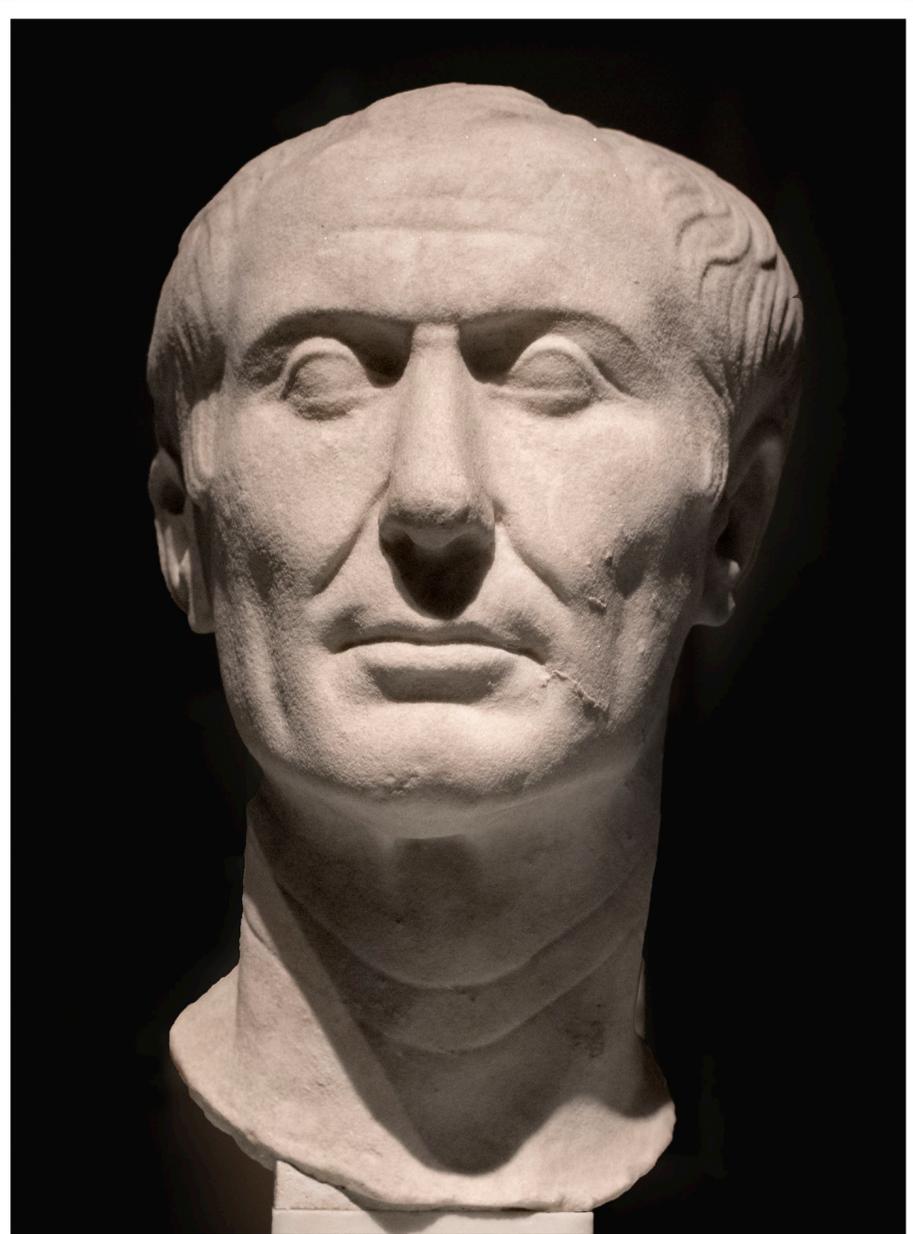
Julius Caesar and Juda



- Caesar was besieged in Alexandria when Antipater the Idumean (who used to oppose him) and Mithridates of Pergamon lead 13,000 men to rescue him. From this point on, Caesar and his heirs, the Julian Dynasty, had a close relationship with Antipater and his descendents, the Herodian Dynasty.
- Caesar revoked harsh decrees against the Jews, granting them favors such as exemption from the military service, permission to keep the Sabbath, and to pay the Temple tax.



Julius Caesar



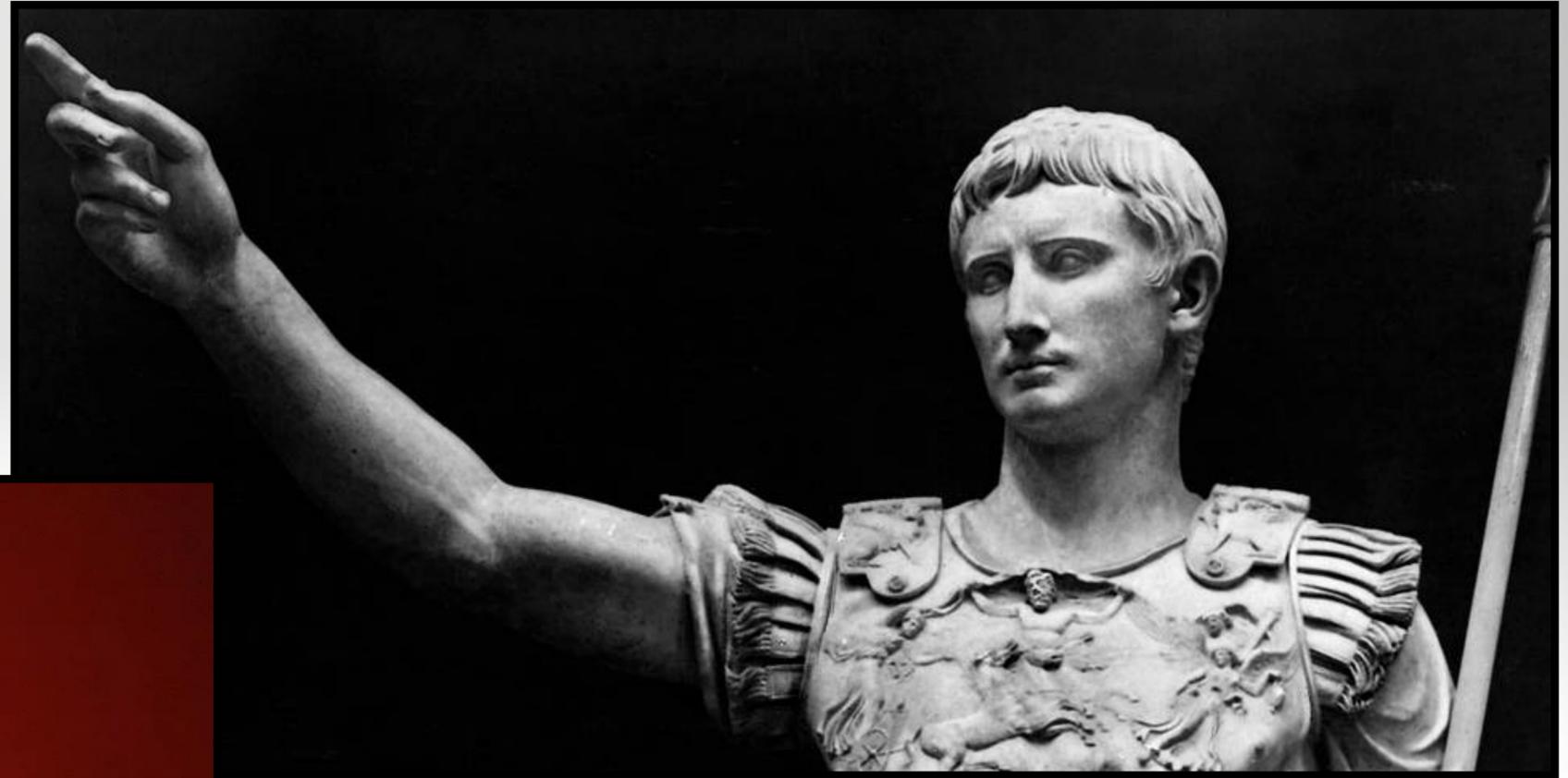
Aftermath of Caesar's Assassination



- Caesar adopted posthumously his nephew Octavian as his son. Although Octavian was still an adolescent with minimum military talent, he soon became a political force, spinning a crisis.
- With Mark Anthony and Lepidus, Octavian formed the Second Triumvirate. Judea fell under the authority of Mark Anthony, who lived in Alexandria, Egypt with Cleopatra, the Seventh.
- As usual, Antipater and his descendents changed allegiances, ultimately siding with Octavian.



Octavian - Caesar Augustus



The Parthian Menace



- The main enemies of the Romans, where the Parthians. Rome was never able to conquer the Parthia.
- The Parthian Empire stretched from the northern reaches of the Euphrates, in what is now central-eastern Turkey, to present-day Afghanistan and western Pakistan. The empire, located on the Silk Road trade route between the Roman Empire in the Mediterranean Basin and the Han dynasty of China, became a center of trade and commerce.



Parthian Empire



Power Struggles

In 43 BC Antipater died poisoned. However, the former Hasmonean kingdom had been divided between his two of his sons:

- Phasael: Originally named Phasaelus, he was called Phasael in Hebrew. Julius Caesar appointed him as governor of Judea.
- Herod: Julius Caesar appointed him as governor of Galilee.
- The Sanhedrin opposed them, calling Mark Anthony to remove them from power.



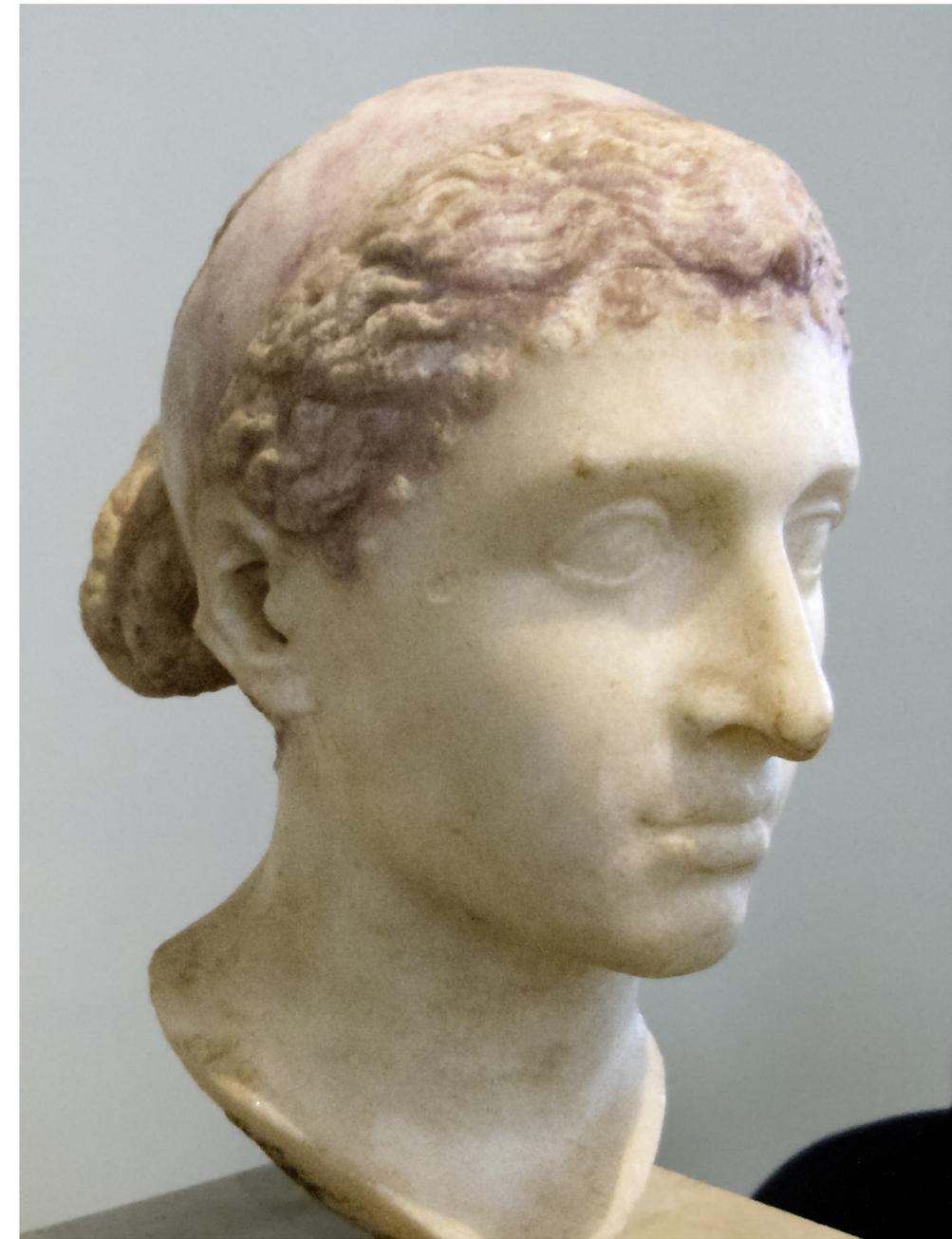
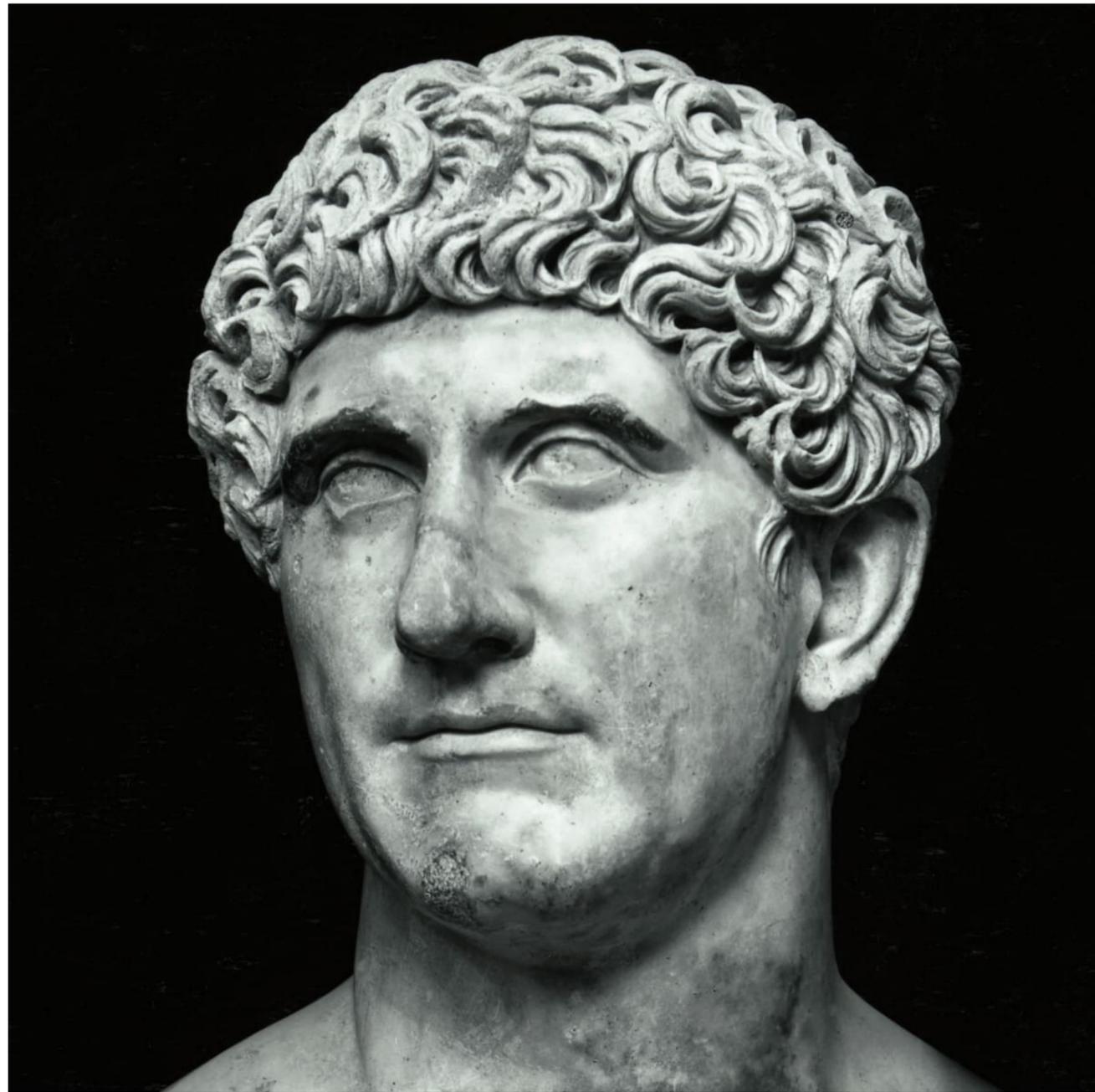
Mark Anthony Rescues Herod



- Antigonus II Mattathias, also known as Antigonus the Hasmonean, was the son of Aristobulus II. He sought the support of the Parthians, who invaded Galilee and Judea, assassinating Phasael and forcing Herod to flee. Antigonus II ruled Judea from 40 to 37 BC, becoming the last Hasmonean king.
- Ultimately, Mark Anthony—who had previously failed to conquer the Parthians—defeated the troops that had invaded Judea, executed Antigonus II and installed Herod as “king” over both Judea and Galilee.



Mark Anthony and Cleopatra VII



Herod the "Great"



- Herod, now called "the Great", was confirmed as king of Judea by the Roman Senate, reigning from 37 to 4 BC.
- Although his father was Idumaeian and his mother was Nabatean (Arab), Herod feigned to observe Jewish Law, particularly the dietetically ones.
- He claimed the throne because he married Princess Mariamne, granddaughter of Hyrcanus II.



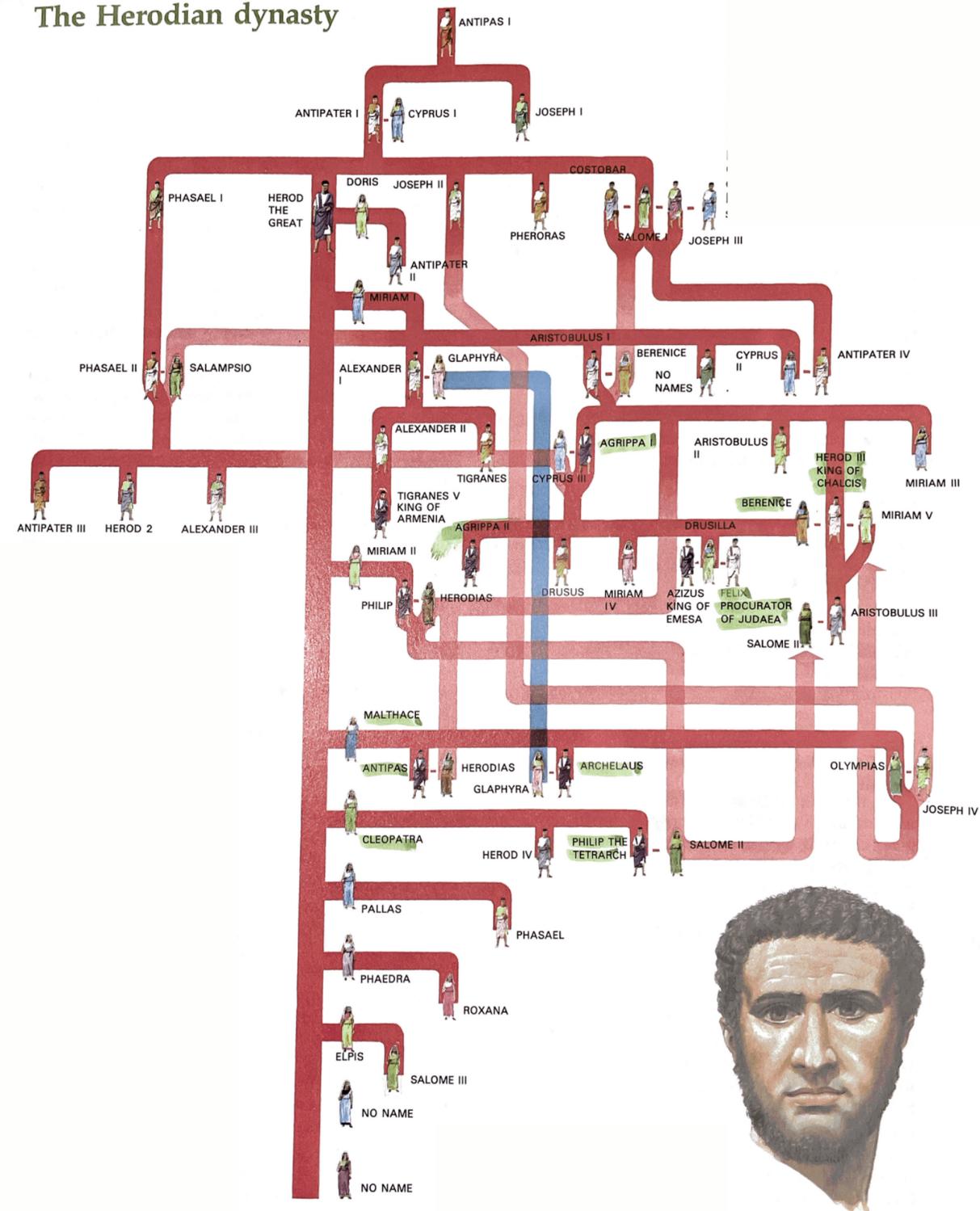
Herod's (Complicated) Family



- Herod had several wives and concubines, and had children from different mothers. However, his children with Mariamme had a special claim to the throne, given that they were the last direct descendants of the Hasmoneans.
- Herod ordered the execution of Mariamme in 29 BC. He also ordered the execution of their sons Alexander and Aristobulus IV in 7 BC.
- Herod also ordered the execution of Antipater II, his first-born, son of Doris. Antipater was executed just days after Herod's death.



The Herodian dynasty



“It is better to be Herod’s pig than son.”

Octavian (Caesar Augustus)

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Consolidation of Power



- Although Herod was considered a "Hasmonean" king, he took it upon himself to assassinate all possible claimants to Hasmonean throne and to persecute their supporters. This explains the murder of his sons with Mariamme.
- Herod military power was very influential. The extension of his rule was comparable to the Kingdoms of David and Salomon.



Herod the Builder



- Herod built impressive buildings: A palace in Jerusalem, the Antonia Fortress on the foundations of the Seleucid citadel, and began to remodel of the Temple. He also built a network of military the fortresses, such as Masada and the Herodion.
- The construction of the Temple court, which encased Mount Zion, Mount Moriah and the Citadel in a rectangular wall, began in 20 BC.



Masada



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The Herodium





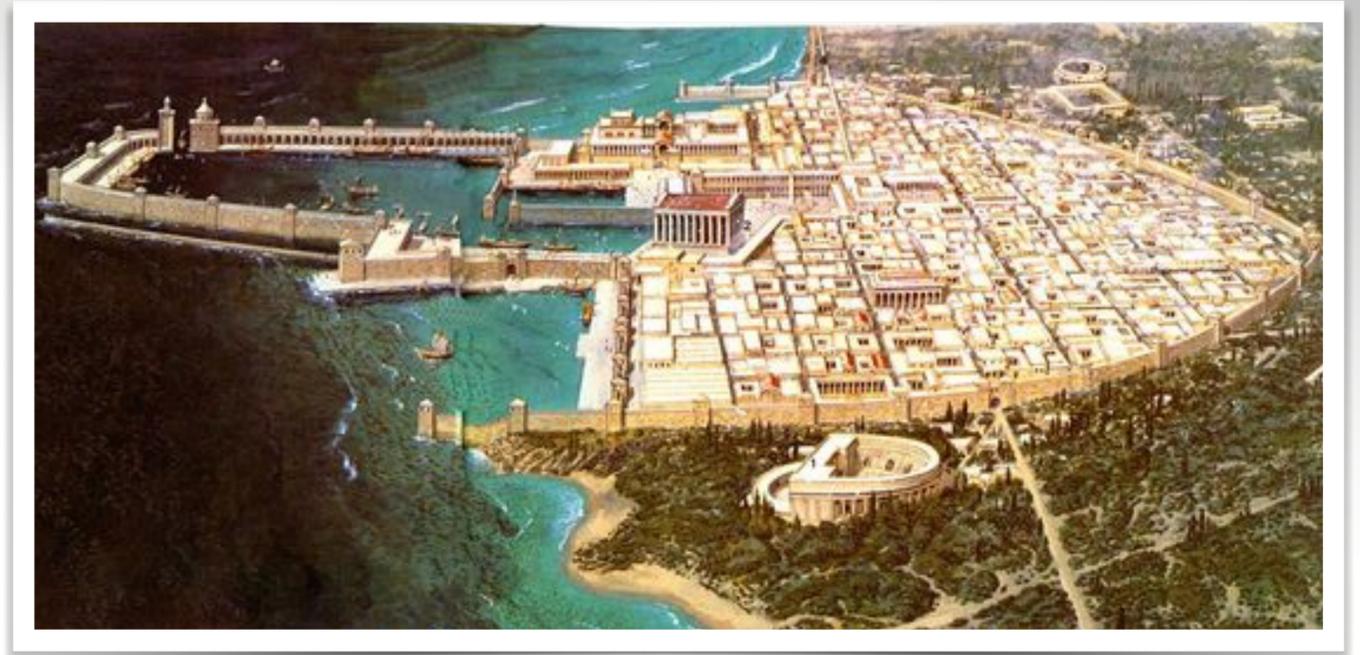
Cesarea by the Sea, a Roman Military Base

- One of the architectural wonders of the world, Cesarea (the city of Caesar) by the Sea had the first artificial bay ever built. Herod imported volcanic ashes from Mount Vesuvius to make cement, which for the first time was used to build columns under the sea.
- Cesarea was a military base. The Roman Governor and most of the Romans garrisons lived in Cesarea by the Sea.



Caesarea by the Sea

Photo and Recreation



Herod, Emperor Augustus' Friend



- The ties between Herod's family and the Julian Dynasty were strong. Octavian became Caesar Augustus, the first Emperor of Rome. He bestowed honors to Herod and gave him expensive gifts (such as the soldiers to use to guard Cleopatra).
- However, after the execution of Aristobulus IV, his widow, Berenice, fled to Rome with her children: Agrippa I, Herod and Herodias. Augustus received them, raising them as part of the Imperial family.



Herod the Pagan

- Although Herod the great kept kosher laws and observed Jewish holidays, he also lived as a pagan.
- Herod built Roman “colonies”, cities where only roman citizens were allowed to live (such as Caesarea by the Sea). Some of these cities were named after Caesar Augustus and his wife, Julia.
- He also built temples of Roman deities, such as the Temple to Pan, in Paneas (where Caesarea Phillipi was built in 2 BC).



Hellenists vs. Nationalists



Social Conflict

Colonial rule tainted all aspects of life in Judea and Galilee.

- Their land was occupied by a foreign army, which explains why the NT mentions so many soldiers.
- Jews were resident aliens in his own country (for they were not Roman citizens).
- Colonies such as the Decapolis were only inhabited by Roman citizens (most of them veterans).
- Colonial rule was mediated by an Jewish elite who collaborated with the Romans to secure a higher social status.



The Herodians

- The Herodians supported Rome and the Herodian Dynasty, which ruled not only Judea and Galilee but also other non-Jewish (“gentile”) kingdoms in the region.
- After Judea was placed under military rule, they advocated for the restoration of the monarchy, with a member of the Herodian family at the throne.
- They succeeded briefly, when Herod Agrippa II was appointed King of Judea in 41 AD.



The Sadducees

- The Sadducees were members and sympathizers of the priestly families, lead by the High Priest, who ran the Temple of Jerusalem until 70 AD. They disappeared after the destruction of the Temple
- They supported Roman rule, for the Romans selected the High Priests, appoiting a different one very year. Although they all came from the same families, the elimination of lifetime tenures curtailed their power.
- They interpreted Torah literally, disregarding rabbinic interpretations (the “oral” Torah). For example, they did not believe in the resurrection.



Rabbinic Judaism



- Rabbinic Judaism traces its roots to the Babylonian Exile, when the people had no access to the Temple rites.
- The Synagogue was born during the Exile, as people unite to pray and to read Scripture. Little by little, Judaism transitioned from a religion based on animal sacrifices at a Temple to a religion of the book (“Torah”).
- Synagogues were lead by laypersons, not by priests. The teachers were called Rabbis. They created oral traditions to interpret Torah, most of which were eventually collected in the Talmud and the Mishnah.



The Pharisees



- The Pharisees were nationalists, who resisted Roman rule and expected a liberating Messiah.
- They followed Rabbinic teachings and worshipped at synagogues. Usually, the leaders of the synagogues were Pharisees.
- They followed Jewish law closely, striving to keep the 613 biblical and the 7 rabbinic “mizvoth”.



Radicalized Nationalist Groups

- Radicalized Pharisees turned to violence against the Roman rulers and their Jewish collaborators. These are:
- The Zealots, literally those who had “zeal” for the observance of the Law.
- The Sicarii were assassins who used a “sicca” or curved dagger to murder Roman soldiers.



The Essenes

- This Nationalist group despised the Hasmoneans and, thus, separated from the larger society. Their headquarters were in Qumran, close to the Dead Sea. However, some lived in cities, clustered in specific neighborhoods. All were dedicated to the study of the Hebrew Bible
- The name “Essenes” was given to them by the Romans. They probably called themselves “The Children of Light”. They expected two Messiahs, a priest and a king. They were preparing for the ends of times, for they left a writing titled “The war between the children of light against the children of darkness”.





The Poor Masses

- The large masses were not part of any group. Most people attended synagogues, if they have them close by. Over 90% of the population was illiterate and dependent on Rabbinic teachers to follow Torah.
- The poor would attend ceremonies at the Temple whenever they could. It was expected that those living far from Jerusalem would attend the Passover celebration at least once in their lifetime.



Important Places



Tel Aviv (Ancient Joppa, Jaifa or Yaffo)



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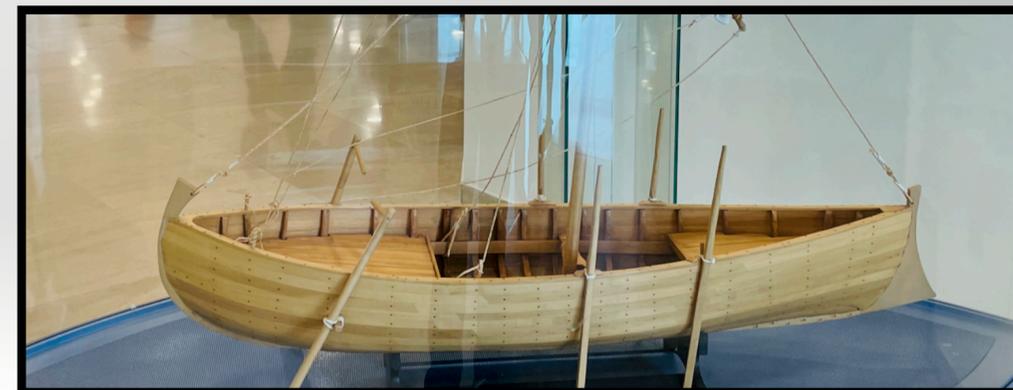
Church of the Nativity



Jericho: Mount of Temptation and Sycamore



Sea of Galilee

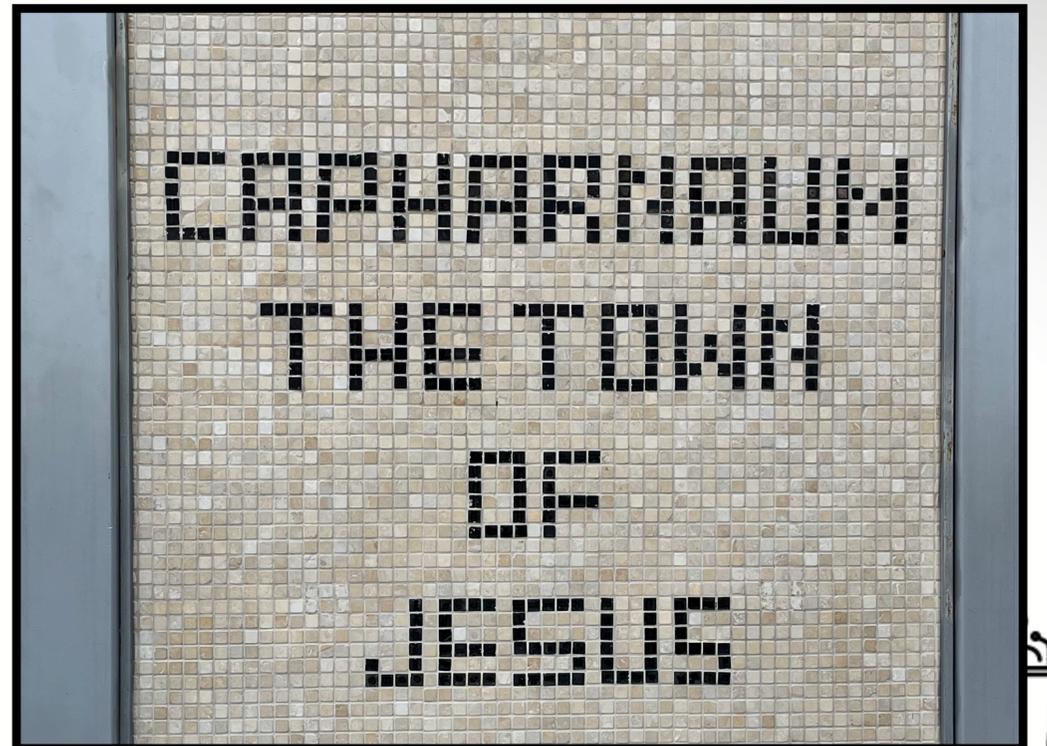


Primate of Peter





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Jerusalem (Models)



The Multiplication of the Bread (Epta Pegon)



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The Wailing Wall



ברוכים הבאים
אל הכותל המערבי
שריד בית המקדש

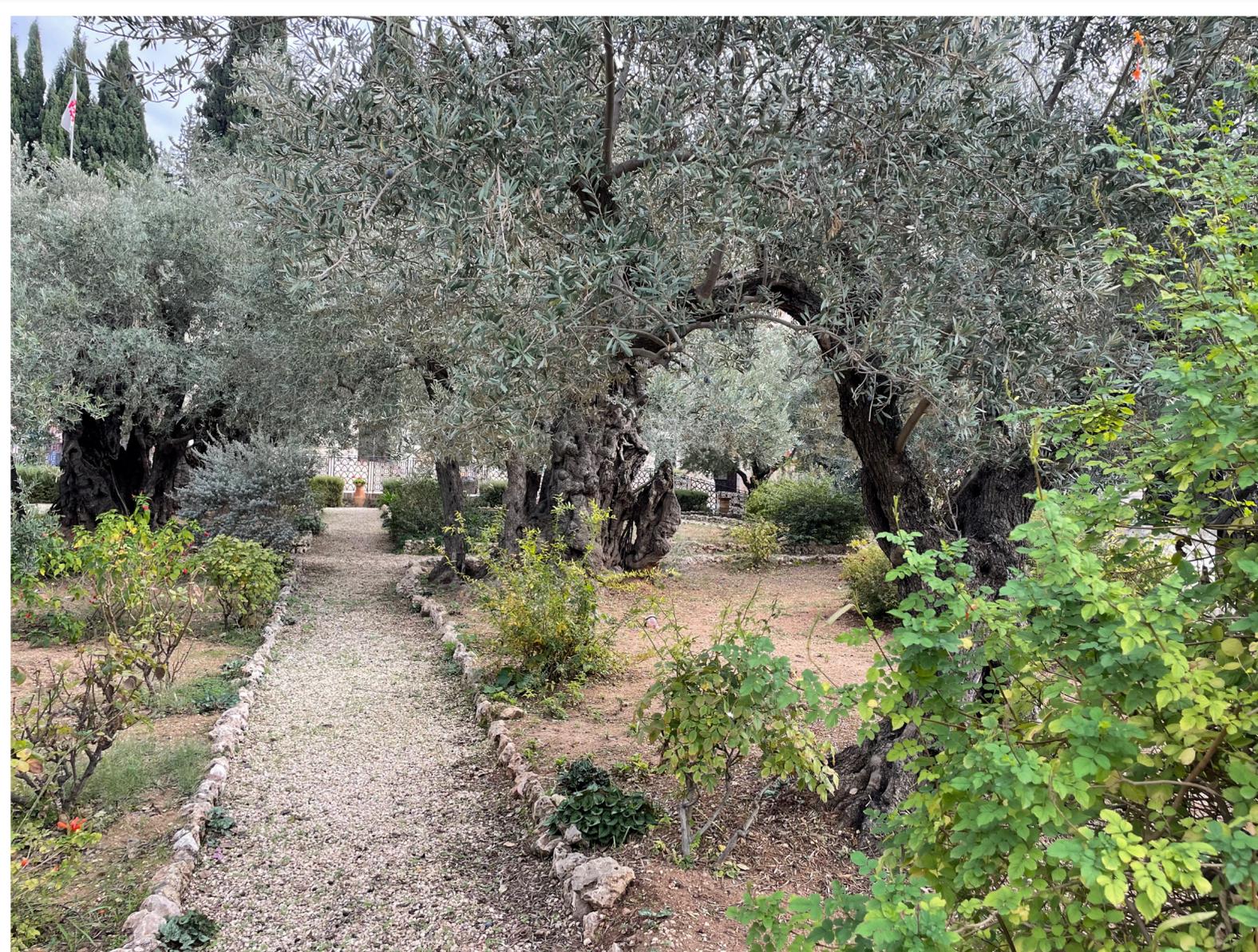
Welcome
to the Western Wall
a remnant of the Temple

”שאלו שלום ירושלים
ישליו אהביך. יהי שלום בחילך
שלום בארמונותיך”
(תהלים קכב, ו-ז)

“Request the welfare of Jerusalem;
may those who love you enjoy tranquility.
May there be peace in your wall,
tranquility in your palaces”
(Psalms 22, 6-7)



Getsemani and Gallicantu



The Garden Tomb





Roman Rule II



The Division of Herod's Kingdom



- Herod's testament divided his kingdom between Archelaus, son of Maltace, who inherited the title of "King" of Judea, Samaria, and Idumea; Antipas, Tetrarch of Galilee and Perea; and Philip, Tetrarch of the northeastern territories where the population was mostly non-Jewish.
- Augustus respected Herod's testament, although he denied Archelaus the title of "King".



Archelaus loses the kingdom



- Archelaus faced the rebellions of Judas in 4 BC and 6 AD. The Romans deposed him in 6 AD, after only 10 years on the throne, or ordering the crucifixion of 300 “rebels” at the same time.
- From that moment, Judea was governed by “prefects” or “procurators”, that is, by Roman military governors who answered to the governor or “Legate” of Syria (although in practice they were mostly independent.)



Herod Antipas

- Antipas took his father's name as a dynastic title, calling himself "Herod" Antipas.
- He ordered the assassination of John the Baptist (Mk 6.14-29 and parallels) and took part in the Passion of Jesus (Lk 23.6-12).
- Both Herod Antipas and his brother Philip ruled until AD 37, when their lands were ceded to their nephew, King Agrippa I.



Imperial Province

- Judea was an "imperial province." Its procurators or prefects were appointed directly by the Emperor, not by the Senate. They were nobles (Decisions) of the Equestrian Order (knights).
- As the Emperor's direct representative, the governor had full civil, military, and judicial powers. Roman rulers held power in Judea from AD 6 to AD 41 and in all of Palestine from AD 44 to AD 66.



Pontius Tiberius Pilate



- The best known procurator of Judea was Pontius Tiberius Pilate, who ruled from 26 to 36 AD. Pilate defied the Jewish colonial leadership. He was summoned to Rome by Tiberius, and was deposed in AD 37 by Gaius (Caligula).
- Pilate presided over the political assassination of Jesus, in a summary trial (“cognition extra ordines”), which allowed for him to arrest, judge, and execute the accused on the same day.



Emperor Gaius (Caligula)



- Gaius' nickname was "Caligula" ("little boots"). He spun a crisis when he insisted on placing a statue of himself in the Temple in Jerusalem. He made the decision in retaliation against the Jews of Alexandria, who refused to worship the Emperor.
- The construction of the statue was delayed by a Roman soldier of Jewish origin, who was a nephew of Philo of Alexandria. Caligula's assassination by his own guards put an end to that plan.



Herod Agrippa I

- Agrippa grew up in Rome, as part of the Imperial family. He was a childhood friend of Gaius and of Claudius, both of whom became Emperors.
- In 37 AD, Gaius appointed him “king” of the territories formerly ruled by his uncles Antipas and Phillip. He also took the name Herod as a dynastic title.
- In 41 AD, Claudius granted Herod Agrippa I the procuratorship of Judea, Samaria and Idumea, thus being the last semi-independent "king" of Juda.
- This is the Herod named in Acts 12, who ordered the execution of James, the brother of John, and tried to execute Peter.



Herod Agrippa II

- Upon his death, the Romans did not allow Agrippa's son, Marcus Julius Agrippa, to inherit the throne of Judea. Therefore, from this point on both Judea and Galilee were under military rule, which explains why the Jewish War exploded in 66 AD.
- However, the Romans did appoint him as Herod Agrippa II, King of Chalcis (also known as Iturea), a region of Syria. According to Acts, Agrippa II helped Poncius Festus to judge Paul (Acts 25.13–26.32). Josephus affirms that Agrippa II was sent by the Romans to ask the Jewish revolutionaries to surrender, to no avail.



Corruption



- In the late 1950s and early 1960s, Jerusalem was plagued by corruption.
- Roman procurators, such as Antonio Felix and Portius Festus plundered the people of Judea.
- The violence was such that even James the Just, the brother of Jesus of Nazareth and leader of the Church in Jerusalem, was assassinated in 63 AD.



The War Begins

- In AD 66, the procurator Gessius Florus lost control of Jerusalem. The Jews increased the fighting, taking control of the fortresses built by Herod, such as Masada, and of Jerusalem.
- Once in charge of the Temple, Eleazar ben Hanania ordered the daily sacrifice to be suspended in favor of the emperor. Thus, the rebellion was declared.



Revolutionary Leaders



The key leaders of the revolt were:

- Joseph Ben Mathias, lead the fight in Galilee.
- John of Giscala began in from Galilee (where he opposed Josephus) and moved to Jerusalem (where he opposed Bar Goria)
- Simon Bar Goria lead the guerrilla in Jerusalem, which was divided between the forces of Giscala and those of Simon.
- Even so, the struggles among the Jews charged many lives. But Giscala and Simon joined for the final battle.



Vespasian & Titus



- Vespasian was the governor of Egypt, known by his military prowess. He was chosen to quench the Jewish revolt.
- In AD 67 Vespasian invaded Galilee with an army of 60,000 men. Vespasian took the territory methodically.
- However, in the summer of 68 AD, the war halted due to Nero's death. Vespasian marched to Rome, leaving Titus, his son, in charge.



Jewish Collaborators



- As stated earlier, some Jewish leaders collaborated with the Romans. Agrippa II called the rebels to surrender and his sister, Berenice, even became the lover of Titus.
- After capturing Galilee, Vespasian imprisoned Joseph Ben Mathias. However, he became a Roman collaborator subservient to Vespasian. He chronicled the war in his writings, changing his name to Flavius Josephus.



The Year of the Four Emperors

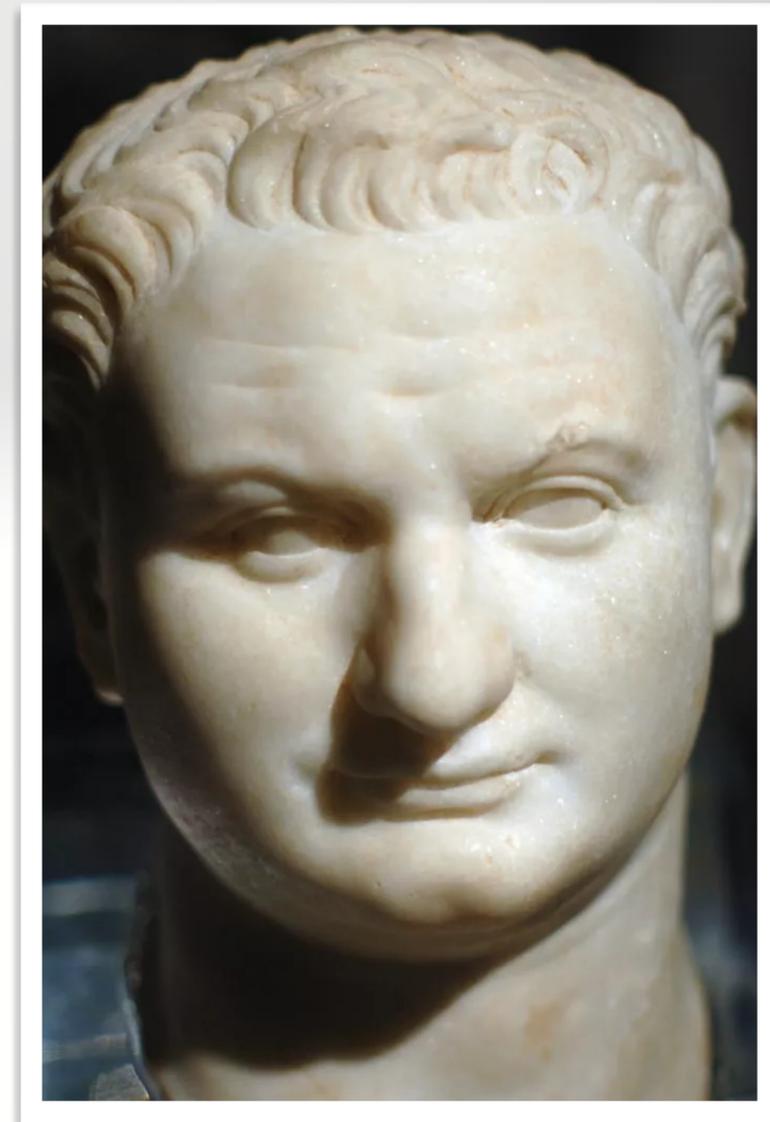
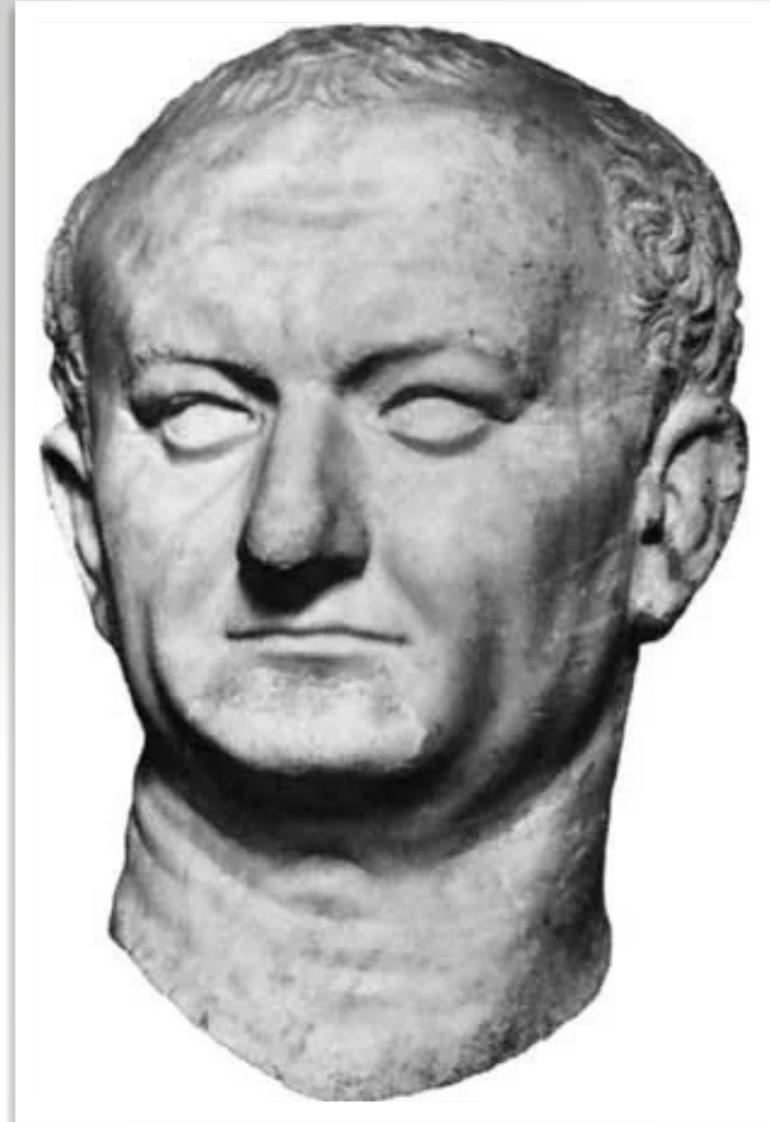


Nero died in 68 AD; the **Year of the Four Emperors**, 69 AD, saw a civil war during which four emperors ruled in succession:

- Galba: Governor of Hispania (Spain)
- Otho: Governor of Lusitania (Portugal)
- Vitellius: General of the Roman forces in Germania (Germany)
- Vespasian: Acclaimed by the Eastern forces, he became Emperor, marking the transition from the Julio-Claudians, the first imperial dynasty, to the Flavian dynasty.



Emperors Vespasian and Titus



The Fall of Jerusalem



- In the summer of AD 69 fighting resumed. Titus sieged and destroyed Jerusalem in May 70 AD.
- Even though some revolutionaries fled, their exploits were of no consequence. For all practical purposes, the war had ended with a resounding defeat of the Jews.
- Only two Jewish groups survived the war, because they had leaders un the diaspora: The Pharisees and the Christians.



Repression



- The years that followed the destruction of Jerusalem were very difficult for Judaism. On the one hand, the Jewish sects found themselves decimated by the war. On the other, from that moment the Jews suffered more persecution and were afflicted with high taxes.
- Of the Jewish sects existing at the time of the fall of Jerusalem, only the Pharisees and the Christians survived the slaughter.



Rupture of the synagogue and the Church



- After the war, the Pharisees reorganized as a group in the city of Jamnia around the leadership of such important rabbis as Johannan ben Zakkai. As a result of this reorganization, Pharisees violently rejected Jesus followers, expelling them from the synagogue.
- That point marked the initial break between the movements that evolved into Judaism and Christianity.



Other Rebellions



- In 115 there was another rebellion that was crushed.
- In 130, the Emperor Hadrian decided to turn Jerusalem into a Roman colony called *Aelia Capitolina*, with temples to Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva. Jews were forbidden to enter the city, as was circumcision.



From Judea to Palestine



- In 132, a warlord named Simon of Kosiba arose, nicknamed Bar Kokba (son of the star, cf. Num. 24.17). Some rabbis believed that he was the Messiah.
- Roman legions put down the revolt in 135. Since then, the region officially became "Palestine" (which comes from the "Philistine"), replacing the name "Judah".





THE END

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