

I. From David to Alexander and Beyond

- A. Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt - c. 1300-1200 B.C. (B.C.E.)
- B. King David - the united kingdom of Israel - c. 1000 BC
- C. Northern kingdom of Israel - taken into captivity by Assyrians - 722 BC
- D. Southern kingdom of Judah - taken into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar of the Babylonians and 1st temple at Jerusalem is destroyed - 586 BC

II. Rivalries among major Greek city states for pre-eminence - c. 1100-600 BC. Persians conquer Babylonians in east and some Greek city states in West - c. 535 BC. In Greece, Homer writes his major works (8th c. BCE); 500-600 BC (Golden age of classical Greece).

- A. Cyrus, the Persian begins to allow Jews to return to Jerusalem to rebuild temple under leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah - c. 515 BC
- B. Rivalry between Greece in West and Persia in East leads to an East vs. West worldview which extends through the Roman era.
- C. Alexander the Great, son of King Philip of Macedonia, rises to power in 336 and conquers rest of Greece and Persia to the east. He dies in 323 BC at age 32.

III. The Hellenistic Age and the Rise of the Roman Empire

- A. Alexander's conquered lands as far as India in east and Egypt in south are divided among his generals. Eventually, 3 major regions arise in west and south - Ptolemies (Egypt/Palestine); Seleucids (Syria), and Rome.
- B. Though all three regions had different political rule, they shared Hellenism as a cultural worldview. Hellenism - the advancement of Greek thought, structures, and culture. Becomes a means of ideological control of subject people groups.
- C. By 2nd century BC, Jews throughout empire with major pockets in Babylon, Jerusalem, and Alexandria, Egypt. Jews in Jerusalem enjoy period of semi-independent rule under the Hasmoneans (descendants of the Maccabees) - c. 168 BC to 64 BC.
- D. Rome rises as pre-eminent power under 1st triumvirate - Pompey, Crassus, and Julius Caesar - 64 BC.
- E. Julius Caesar made emperor, then assassinated 44 BC. His nephew, Octavian (Augustus) succeeds him, forms 2nd triumvirate with Mark Antony and later is named sole emperor after defeat of Antony in 31 BC.

- F. Emperor Augustus institutes Pax Romana (Roman Peace) - plan of Roman family values and viewed as a son of a god. Rules as emperor from 27 BC to 14 CE.

IV. Influence of Roman Social Structure

- A. Classes - Patrician (upper class); Plebeians (skilled artisans & commerce); Freedmen & Freedwomen; Slaves (as much as 50% of population in Rome).
- B. Family - Paterfamilias - Father of family had absolute rights over extended household. Women could own property and possessions only under the direction of a conservator (husband or male relative). Later under Augustus, if she had three children, she could own property without conservator.
- C. Religion - Greek gods had been assimilated by Rome with some name changes. Politics and religion were intertwined. Good Romans made sacrifices to the gods on emperor's behalf. This was considered sign of loyalty to the emperor. Increase of mystery religions into empire from the east. Many of these beliefs were assimilated into Roman religious practices.

V. Israel during the Roman period

- A. After defeat by Pompey in 64 BC, rulers of Israel are puppet kings under Rome.
- B. Herod the Great becomes king of Jews c. 37-4 BC - Idumean (region of Galilee) whose family had been forcibly converted to Judaism under the Hasmonean period. He originally supports Mark Antony but later actively supports Octavian who consolidates his power as king of Jews.
- C. Herod the Great rebuilds 2nd Temple in Jerusalem - 21 BC
- D. Four major Jewish groups in Israel at time of Jesus:
 - 1. Sadducees - upper class group which tended to emphasize Hellenistic customs. According to Gospels, they didn't believe in resurrection or visions.
 - 2. Pharisees - religious reform group which attempted to incorporate Jewish worship into every aspect of life.
 - 3. Zealots - political group which sought to overthrow Roman rule.
 - 4. Essenes - ascetic Jewish group which lived in desert in Qumran region. Originally two groups:
 - a) Maccabeans who wanted to restore rule of Davidic priestly line. Eventually gives rise to Hasmonean dynasty which preceded Herod. Originally associated.

b) More ascetic, isolated group remained in desert, emphasized spiritual teachings and apocalyptic visions, wrote Dead Sea Scrolls.

E. Jesus born c. 4 - 2 BC, crucified by Romans in 31 AD (CE)

F. Birthday of the church in Jerusalem - Acts 2

VI. The Early Christian Church

A. Leader - James the brother of Jesus, centered in Jerusalem.

B. Christians viewed as another Jewish sect. Still went to Jerusalem Temple until 70 AD. Went to synagogues. Met in homes each morning and on the Lord's Day (Sunday).

C. Persecution/death of Stephen (Acts 7) - launching of missionary work throughout world. Saul/Paul - apostle to Gentiles.

D. Paul and Peter - killed during Nero's reign. First major persecutions occur in Rome after Nero accuses Christians of setting city on fire - c. 63 AD.

E. Factors leading to complete separation of Jews and Christians:

a) Destruction of Jerusalem Temple in 70 AD

b) Jewish view of Messiah vs. Christian view:

- (1) Political vs. religious leader
- (2) Man appointed by God to deliver Israel vs. son of God.
- (3) Humanity vs. divinity
- (4) Temporal kingdom vs. eternal/spiritual kingdom
- (5) Sacrifice in the temple vs. Jesus as sacrifice

c) Jewish attitude toward Roman gov't vs. Christian view

d) Christian refusal to participate in Bar Kochba revolt - 135 AD