

## **Between the Testaments Independence, Rome, Jewish Sects, Apocalyptic Literature**

### **Jewish “Independence”**

With the beginning of the Hasmonean Dynasty Judea sought to continue the measure of independence that she had gained. As we should remember from the prior lesson the Jewish rulers had been declared part of the nobility of Syria and consequently had the respect of Syria. Although Syria was powerful enough to take Jerusalem at any time, she gave recognition to John Hyrcanus as their ruler under certain conditions. John Hyrcanus was to consider himself subject to Syria, Judea was to support Syria in war and give up their claims to all of the coastal cities of Palestine except Jaffa. We know Jaffa as Joppa in the New Testament.

This also settled, for a time, the political infighting in Jerusalem. The Hasidim represented the conservative Jews who wished to follow closely the Mosaic Covenant and resist Greek influence. The Hellenists represented those “liberal” Jews that wished to modernize their religion and culture to accept what they believed to be the benefits of “the Greek way of life”. So; even though the Hasidim tolerated rather than accepted the Maccabees they used their rebellion for their own political ends. Therefore, when the Hasmoneans became the rulers of Judea under Syria the Hasidim accepted that situation and became “loyal members of the Jewish community.” This set the stage for the development of the political parties and sects that existed during the time of Christ. The Hellenists later were identified with the Sadducees and the Hasidim conservatives, that didn’t become part of the sects that were even more zealous, were the forerunners of the Pharisees.

During the early years after making peace with Syria and establishing himself in Judea, John Hyrcanus honored his agreements. But then his ambitions began to grow. So; as soon as conditions within Syria indicated that he would not be opposed John Hyrcanus began the expansion of Judea.

First he turned to the coastal cities that he had ceded to Syria and recovered control over them. They represented the commercial highways of Palestine and literally from the time that man occupied this region had served as the roads of commerce and warfare between Egypt and Mesopotamia.

After securing the northern part of this territory, Samaria and destroying the Samaritan temple at Mt. Gerizim John Hyrcanus turned his attention to Idumea the Greek name for Edom. As we remember from earlier study, when the Jews were deported to Babylon, Idumea or Edom had occupied the southern parts of Judea because the Nabataean Arabs attacking from the east had driven them out of their mountain strongholds.

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John Hyrcanus had the support of the wealthy and the aristocracy of Judea because they all hoped to gain more wealth and power as a result. But there were problems that curtailed his efforts:

1. The general population didn't benefit from these conquests
2. They were becoming more alarmed by the growing worldly attitudes of their rulers
3. Wars are expensive both in terms of lives and money

After some success in his endeavors to restore the former boundaries of Israel his attempt to conquer his southern neighbors cost him much of his support. While we have no indications that there was a general rebellion; the unity of Judea was not threatened and peace continued until John Hyrcanus died in 104 BC.

John Hyrcanus was a devout Hasidim Jew who held strictly to the Mosaic Law but his children were not. Upon his death his eldest son, named Judah but using the Greek name Aristobulus ruled. A typical tyrant he threw two of his brothers into prison, where they died, and murdered another. He renewed the policy of expanding Jewish territory pushing north to Mt. Lebanon and took the title "King". But after one year in power; drink, disease and the constant fear of rebellion took their toll and he died.

When Aristobulus died only one brother was left named Jonathan. He preferred the Greek name Alexander and is known in history as Alexander Jannaeus. This name probably tells us something about his ambitions because he renewed Jewish efforts to expand their borders with a vengeance. In this effort he was as vicious as any pagan ruler in history. He not only restored the boundaries of the kingdom of Solomon he conquered all of Palestine proper including all of the coastal cities except Ascalon. Then he pushed into Egypt to Lake Hulah and Trans-Jordan as far as Perea. This territory was assimilated into the Jewish culture including the Idumeans. We will see some of the result of that when the Herodian family comes to power.

The division between the Pharisees and the Hasmonean rulers erupted during this period of time. They had accepted John Hyrcanus because of his devotion to the Mosaic Law but his children were another matter. Alexander Jannaeus was actually keeping his Pharisee opposition under control with foreign mercenary troops. Then during a Feast of the Tabernacles he showed his contempt for the Pharisaic rituals by pouring a drink offering at his feet rather than on the altar when serving as king and high priest. The people in the temple rioted and were put down by the soldiers of Alexander Jannaeus. Open civil war resulted and the Pharisees invited Syria to help them.

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The Syrians came and helped the Pharisees force Janneaus into the Judean hills. But then the Pharisees started having second thoughts about Syria fearing that they would lose what independence they enjoyed. Assuming that Janneaus and Sadducean followers had been punished enough they deserted Syria by the thousands and went over to Janneaus. As a result Syria was defeated and Alexander Janneaus restored to power in Jerusalem. Janneaus didn't learn anything from his near defeat. When restored to power he hunted down and rounded up the leaders of the rebellion. He gave a banquet for the leaders of the Sadducees to celebrate his victory and as part of the celebration 800 Pharisees were crucified. The rift between the Pharisees and Sadducees was widened even further and they remained bitter rivals for the rest of their existence.

When Alexander Janneaus died his wife Salome Alexandra became Judea's ruler and was the only queen who ruled any part of the nation of Israel other than as a wife of a king. She could not serve as high priest so her eldest son, Hyrcanus, served in that capacity and another son, named Aristobulus commanded her army. She was a Sadducee, as was her husband, but her brother, Simeon ben Shetah, was one of the leaders of the Pharisees. So, peace reigned between the sects during her rule.

Alexandra and Simeon ben Shetah brought to the Jewish culture a situation that was a major factor in the coming of the gospel. As president of the Sanhedrin, Simeon ben Shetah decreed that every young man should be educated. The importance of teaching the scriptures was paramount in the Old Testament. It began with the destruction of Nadab and Abihu. Restrictions were placed on the priesthood so that:

"...YE MAY PUT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HOLY AND UNHOLY, AND BETWEEN UNCLEAN AND CLEAN; <sup>11</sup>AND THAT YE MAY TEACH THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL ALL THE STATUTES WHICH THE LORD HATH SPOKEN UNTO THEM BY THE HAND OF MOSES." **Leviticus 10:10-11**

This commandment was reinforced in the second giving of the Law:

**Deuteronomy 6:7** "AND THOU SHALT TEACH THEM DILIGENTLY UNTO THY CHILDREN, AND SHALT TALK OF THEM WHEN THOU SITTEST IN THINE HOUSE, AND WHEN THOU WALKEST BY THE WAY, AND WHEN THOU LIEST DOWN, AND WHEN THOU RISEST UP."

**Deuteronomy 11:19** "AND YE SHALL TEACH THEM YOUR CHILDREN, SPEAKING OF THEM WHEN THOU SITTEST IN THINE HOUSE, AND WHEN THOU WALKEST BY THE WAY, WHEN THOU LIEST DOWN, AND WHEN THOU RISEST UP."

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So under the leadership of these two leaders; a system of elementary education was established in the larger villages, towns and cities of Judea that generated a literate and informed people. So under the leaders of the synagogues many more people became acquainted with the Sacred scripture.

Salome Alexandra ruled in peace and accomplished some things that benefited the Jewish people but did not fix their political divisions or heal their wounds. The Pharisees were happy but the Sadducees were resentful. In addition the Pharisees used this occasion to get even for the massacre of Pharisees ordered by Alexander Janneaus.

The son of Salome Alexandra, Aristobulus was much more to the liking of the Sadducees and when she died he was brought into power. So when she died; and Hyrcanus, who had served as high priest, took over as King Hyrcanus II; the Sadducees supported a rebellion led by Aristobulus. The brothers fought and then reached a tenuous peace that lasted for a short time. Aristobulus took the designation of Aristobulus II and ruled as king; Hyrcanus continued as high priest. Soon Hyrcanus found it advisable to flee Judea and went to the Nabatean Arabs for refuge.

Now we have entering Jewish politics a man named Antipater, a Idumean or Edomite by birth who sought out Hyrcanus in exile. He persuaded Hyrcanus and the Nabatean Arabs to invade Judea and place Jerusalem under siege. Pompey, who was interested in building up the Roman Empire, learned about the rift between the two brothers. Using the guise of helping them arbitrate the differences between the two brothers Rome became the force that would determine the future of Palestine.

### **Rome:**

We will not dwell on the history of Rome, which began as a city state on the banks of the Tiber River. But briefly, the city was established about 753 BC, according to legend. By about 500 BC it was a thriving republic and its later history is well documented. They conquered the rest of the Italian boot and parts of southern Europe, finally defeated Carthage, gaining control of the western Mediterranean in 146 BC. In 133 BC the king of Perganum bequeathed his territory to the Romans, the province of Asia was organized and Rome then ruled much of Asia Minor or modern day Turkey. They further expanded their influence into Syria and became a near neighbor to Judea. While Pompey was in the eastern part of their growing empire he learned of the problems in Judea.

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Taking advantage of the division between the sons of Salome Alexandra, Pompey intervened in Judea and, at first, supported Aristobulus II under the theory that he would be best able to pay the bribe being sought for Roman support. But Pompey learned that Aristobulus was planning a revolt against Rome and acted to stop it. When a Roman army besieged Jerusalem, Hyrcanus supported Pompey against his brother; Pompey took the city and made Judea a part of the Roman province of Syria. The coastal cities, Samaria and the non-Jewish cities east of the Jordan were removed from Judea. Hyrcanus, as a reward for his support, was made Ethnarch (a ruler over a particular ethnic group) over Judea. At this time he also ruled Galilee, Idumea and Perea and was named High Priest. He maintained his relationship with Rome by paying an annual tribute.

The governor of Idumea under Hyrcanus is his old friend Antipater or Antipas but he used this relationship to gain more and more power away from Hyrcanus becoming literally the power behind the throne in Jerusalem. He did this in spite of the fact that the Jews resented Antipater almost as much as they did Roman rule because he was an Edomite. He sought and gained positions for his sons Phasaël and Herod.

When the murder of Julius Caesar created a crisis in the Roman Republic Herod threw his support and as much tribute (bribe money) behind Cassius as he could collect. Consequently, he was named "Procurator of Judea" with a promise that he would eventually be named their king. His plans were placed in jeopardy when Anthony defeated Brutus and Cassius at Philippi and Asia fell into a new Roman regime. But being an astute politician and an opportunist Herod quickly changed sides again and bribed his way into the good graces of Anthony.

In 41 BC the Parthians, a part of the old Persian Empire not conquered by Rome attacked and took Jerusalem. Herod fled to Rome and they made Antigonus, a son of Aristobulus II, king and High Priest. While there, Herod won the favor of Anthony who designated him "King of the Jews". So Herod, with the help of Roman forces, raised an army and drove the Parthians out of Jerusalem and the territory that Anthony had placed him over. Herod's rule of Judea spanned the years of 37 BC through 4 BC and we can readily see why when the wise men brought word to him concerning the birth of a new "King of the Jews" and then didn't return he reacted as any tyrant would react.

**Matthew 2:16** "THEN HEROD, WHEN HE SAW THAT HE WAS MOCKED OF THE WISE MEN, WAS EXCEEDING WROTH, AND SENT FORTH, AND SLEW ALL THE CHILDREN THAT WERE IN BETHLEHEM, AND IN ALL THE COASTS THEREOF, FROM TWO YEARS OLD AND UNDER, ACCORDING TO THE TIME WHICH HE HAD DILIGENTLY INQUIRED OF THE WISE MEN."

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After capturing Jerusalem from the Parthians; Herod appointed Hananiel of Babylon the High Priest continuing the practice of the governor or conqueror appointing that official with little reference to the commandments of God. Writing about the establishment of the Levitical priesthood, Moses records:

**Exodus 40:12-15** “AND THOU SHALT BRING AARON AND HIS SONS UNTO THE DOOR OF THE TABERNACLE OF THE CONGREGATION, AND WASH THEM WITH WATER. <sup>13</sup>AND THOU SHALT PUT UPON AARON THE HOLY GARMENTS, AND ANOINT HIM, AND SANCTIFY HIM; THAT HE MAY MINISTER UNTO ME IN THE PRIEST'S OFFICE. <sup>14</sup>AND THOU SHALT BRING HIS SONS, AND CLOTHE THEM WITH COATS: <sup>15</sup>AND THOU SHALT ANOINT THEM, AS THOU DIDST ANOINT THEIR FATHER, THAT THEY MAY MINISTER UNTO ME IN THE PRIEST'S OFFICE: FOR THEIR ANOINTING SHALL SURELY BE AN EVERLASTING PRIESTHOOD THROUGHOUT THEIR GENERATIONS.”

But the Roman appointed rulers of Jerusalem probably did not know or care about God's commandments. The Jews allowed men of influence and wealth to usurp the office of high priest and it became the political office we see in the New Testament rather than a spiritual office even when the high priest was a Levite.

Herod's reign was plagued with intrigue, trouble, political assassinations, even the plotting of his own wife against him as ruler of Judea. Just as he changed his allegiance before; when Anthony was overthrown by Octavian in 31 BC, Herod landed on his feet like a cat. He pledged his allegiance to Octavian and was granted the right to continue as king of Judea.

Herod is known in the secular world as one of the great builders of that age and did build or rebuild cities, harbors and fortresses. One of his greatest projects was to rebuild the temple beginning in about 20 BC. This work was still going on during the ministry of Jesus 46 years later. On one of the occasions when the Jews asked Jesus for a sign:

**John 2:19-20** “JESUS ANSWERED AND SAID UNTO THEM, DESTROY THIS TEMPLE, AND IN THREE DAYS I WILL RAISE IT UP. <sup>20</sup>THEN SAID THE JEWS, FORTY AND SIX YEARS WAS THIS TEMPLE IN BUILDING, AND WILT THOU REAR IT UP IN THREE DAYS?”

Secular history tells us that the construction was not actually completed until about 62-64 AD, just a few years before the Roman general, Titus, leveled it permanently.

This Herod, called “the Great”, is reported to have died in 4 BC, afflicted with dropsy and cancer of the stomach.

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### **The Jewish Sects:**

As we noted briefly earlier in our study this period of Jewish history gave rise to the various sects and political divisions we find in Judea during the time of Christ. This was a result of the influence of the Greek culture. The fact that the Greek culture existed didn't cause the Jews to divide but rather the various levels of its acceptance or lack of acceptance among the Jews. Many Jews embraced the Greek philosophies and practices readily and became Hellenized. Other Jews reacted violently against the Hellenists and strongly opposed the Greek influence. This is a normal occurrence when cultures and philosophies collide. We're going through a similar cycle of apostasy within the Lords' church today. It's root is the influence of the worldliness that is around us and the changing of moral stability and the liberalization of modern thought in our own culture.

The Jews who reacted against Hellenism are known as Hasidim or Assidians. They were, by definition at least, the party of the pious. The Hellenizers became the party of the Sadducees and the Pharisees and Essenes sought to hold to the Mosaic Covenant.

The party of the Pharisees is first mentioned by name during the reign of John Hyrcanus (134-104 BC). According to Josephus, Hyrcanus expressed his friendship to his fellow Pharisees by inviting them to a feast during which he urged them to tell him anything unbecoming in his conduct to correct him. They told him that if he was serious about his request he should resign the office of high priest because he was not a Levite. He promptly abandoned them and joined himself to the Sadducees.

The word "Pharisee" means separated one. Some had suggested that this separation was due to their efforts at pious living and their high opinion of themselves that we find evidenced in several places in the gospels. Others think that this separation was related to their refusal of Hellenism. Josephus says that the Pharisees "appear more religious than others and seem to interpret the laws more accurately."

The Pharisees, and their Hasidim forerunners are credited with the beginning of the synagogue and during the time of Christ they ran the synagogues. The parents of the man blind from birth that Jesus healed refused to answer questions because:

**"THESE *words* SPAKE HIS PARENTS, BECAUSE THEY FEARED THE JEWS: FOR THE JEWS HAD AGREED ALREADY, THAT IF ANY MAN DID CONFESS THAT HE WAS CHRIST, HE SHOULD BE PUT OUT OF THE SYNAGOGUE."**

**John 9:22**

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We also see evidence of their rule in the words of Jesus when he condemned them in Matthew 23.

**Matthew 23:33-34** “Ye SERPENTS, *ye* GENERATION OF VIPERS, HOW CAN YE ESCAPE THE DAMNATION OF HELL? <sup>34</sup>WHEREFORE, BEHOLD, I SEND UNTO YOU PROPHETS, AND WISE MEN, AND SCRIBES: AND *some* OF THEM YE SHALL KILL AND CRUCIFY; AND *some* OF THEM SHALL YE SCOURGE IN YOUR SYNAGOGUES, AND PERSECUTE *them* FROM CITY TO CITY:”

Which was exactly what Saul was doing when Jesus appeared to him on the road to Damascus.

Even though they resisted Hellenism the Pharisaic Jews sought to make the law workable within the changing culture of the Greco-Roman world. Again, we see about us today among our own brethren working to make the Word of God more like our own culture. This led to the development of the oral traditions and writings that we would call commentaries today. They began with scripture but gathered also the writings of famous rabbis and scholars and opinions of hakamim or sages that they had expressed concerning the scriptures. This “oral law” or traditions were collected into the Talmud and Mishna. The Pharisees ultimately developed these traditions beyond the status of just being a commentary to the level of scripture itself. We see the same thing in some denominations today beginning with the Catholic Church. To justify their attitude they claimed that this “oral law” was given by God to Moses at Mt. Sinai, along with the “written law” or the Torah. Eventually they gave even more value to the “oral law” than they did the writing of Moses and the prophets because they claimed it related better to the daily activities of men.

Since the Pharisees had separated themselves from the normal riffraff of the world and their fellow Jews; they took great pride in the precise observance of legal precepts. Some examples:

**Matthew 23:23** “WOE UNTO YOU, SCRIBES AND PHARISEES, HYPOCRITES! FOR YE PAY TITHE OF MINT AND ANISE AND CUMMIN, AND HAVE OMITTED THE WEIGHTIER *matters* OF THE LAW, JUDGMENT, MERCY, AND FAITH: THESE OUGHT YE TO HAVE DONE, AND NOT TO LEAVE THE OTHER UNDONE.”

**Matthew 23:14** “WOE UNTO YOU, SCRIBES AND PHARISEES, HYPOCRITES! FOR YE DEVOUR WIDOWS' HOUSES, AND FOR A PRETENCE MAKE LONG PRAYER: THEREFORE YE SHALL RECEIVE THE GREATER DAMNATION.”

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**Matthew 23:5** “BUT ALL THEIR WORKS THEY DO FOR TO BE SEEN OF MEN: THEY MAKE BROAD THEIR PHYLACTERIES, AND ENLARGE THE BORDERS OF THEIR GARMENTS,”

But this mindset was not found in all Pharisees. We have the example of Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea and Gamaliel and the greatest of all:

**Acts 23:6** “BUT WHEN PAUL PERCEIVED THAT THE ONE PART WERE SADDUCEES, AND THE OTHER PHARISEES, HE CRIED OUT IN THE COUNCIL, MEN *and* BRETHREN, I AM A PHARISEE, THE SON OF A PHARISEE: OF THE HOPE AND RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD I AM CALLED IN QUESTION.”

Men face the same problems of being satisfied with ourselves and taking too much pride in our spirituality today just as they were then.

The Sadducees were the party of the Jewish aristocracy and the high priesthood. The office of high priest became a political football and concerned itself less and less with religion. That seemed to have been left to the Pharisees. The Sadducees did not accept the “oral law” of the Pharisees and held themselves to the Torah or Pentateuch. They did not believe in resurrection, spirits or angels. Paul used this contention to divide the mob who were trying to take him in Acts 23. The Pharisees recruited and accepted proselytes but the Sadducees were a closed society. None but the families of the high priest and aristocracy of Jerusalem could be Sadducees. When the temple was destroyed in AD 70 the Sadducee party disappeared. Modern Judaism is rooted in the party of the Pharisees.

The Essenes continued the precepts of the Hasidim as did the Pharisees but were more strict in their observances. They were communal in their living. The life of the Essene was one of hard work and simplicity. Devotion and religious study occupied an important part of their lives. Scripture and religious books were studied and copied by members of the Essene community, and each member was expected to labor for the good of the group. They held their goods in common; strict discipline was enforced by an overseer. They renounced marriage and adopted young boys into their communities to perpetuate their existence. They claimed to have originated in ancient Israel. Philo states that they originated with Moses, Josephus says that they existed “ever since the ancient time of the fathers.” Another historian, Pliny agrees that their history covers “thousands of ages.” Their greatest commune was probably located at Qumran, northwest of the Dead Sea and they are not mentioned in the New Testament. They did exist at least two hundred years before Christ and history does not tell us when they died out or were destroyed.

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The existence of a group called the Zadokites was not discovered until 1896 and the document then discovered was not translated or interpreted until 1910. It seems to indicate that they sprang from the Sadducees and called themselves the “sons of Zadok”. Zadok was the high priest during the time of David and we first find him in:

**II Samuel 8:17** “AND ZADOK THE SON OF AHITUB, AND AHIMELECH THE SON OF ABIATHAR, **were** THE PRIESTS; AND SERAIAH **was** THE SCRIBE;”

Without this document little would be known about them and scholars continue to debate their activities and their origin even today.

The last of the sects that we will consider are the Zealots. To say that Roman rule was not popular to the majority of the Jews is an understatement. The Pharisees accepted it as God’s punishment for the sins of Israel but the Zealots didn’t accept it at all. Most of what we know about them comes from the writings of Josephus. They first appeared in Galilee and were led by Judas the son of Ezekias during the early part of Roman rule. They refused to pay taxes and considered it a sin to acknowledge loyalty to Caesar. God alone was to be King of Israel! We find a Zealot among the twelve:

**Luke 6:15** “MATTHEW AND THOMAS, JAMES THE SON OF ALPHEUS, AND SIMON CALLED ZELOTES,”

Pheiffer says that “Ultimately the Zealots succeeded in winning the bulk of the people to their side. Their continual defiance of Rome brought on the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.”

### **Apocalyptic Literature:**

During the last two centuries before Christ and the first century afterward literature was produced among the Jews that is termed apocalyptic. An apocalypse is an unveiling. The book of Revelation bears that name in some Bibles and this type of writing is also found in Isaiah, Ezekiel (38-39), Daniel, Joel and Zechariah (12-14).

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During the period between the testaments the silence of God and the end of prophecy and the closing of the canon of scripture was obvious to the Jews. They looked for no further revelation of divine truth until the Messiah should come. Thinkers and scholars, however, felt that they had a message that should be provided to their generation. In order to give their writing more authority, the sanctity of age and increase their audience they assigned some ancient man of God, like Enoch, to their work. A count of the list found on Wikipedia indicates that there were about 70 of these books. We will review briefly those accepted by the Catholic Church and included in most Catholic Old Testaments and some more popular to the Jews. First three Jewish:

These pointed to the coming of the Messiah that was promised:

1. The Testament of Reuben speaks of a Messiah from the line of Levi
2. The Damascus Zadokite fragment we spoke of earlier speaks of a Messiah coming from the lineage of Aaron.
3. The Similitude of Enoch, written before 63 BC calls the Messiah the "Anointed One", "The Righteous One", "The Elect" and "The Son of Man."

Now to the Catholic Bible, from the 1899 American Version Douay-Rheims:

4. The book of Tobit or Tobias was accepted by the Catholic Church as canonical and added to the Vulgate by the council of Carthage in AD 397. This decision was confirmed by the Council of Trent in 1546. It is supposed to have been written by Tobit or Tobias, a devout Israelite of the tribe of Naphtali living in Nineveh after the destruction of the northern kingdom by Assyria.
5. The book of Judith is included in the Septuagint and both the Roman and Eastern Catholic Bibles. It was not accepted by the Pharisaic Jews and Rabbis. It was originally written in Hebrew and reads much like a historical novel telling a story about a Jewish woman who urges her people to depend on God for their relief from Assyria but eventually saves them herself.
6. 1 Maccabees is basically a book of history probably written around 100 BC and covers the period from 175 to 134 BC. It is accepted as scripture by both Roman and Orthodox Catholics and the Coptics of Egypt and eastern Africa. Even though it was included in the Septuagint Bible; translated from Hebrew into Greek at Alexandria, Egypt it is not accepted as scripture by Judaism. It traces the

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Maccabean rebellion against the Seleucid part of the old Greek Empire and attributes their salvation from Syrian rule to the intervention of God. The author is unknown.

7. While 1 Maccabees is historical in nature and gives a chronology of the Maccabean revolt the book of 2 Maccabees is much more theological. It does follow somewhat the events in the first few chapters of the first book but includes a lot of Pharisaic tradition and doctrine. Scholars think that it was written at Alexandria, Egypt and was written in Koine Greek. Only the Roman and Orthodox Catholics accept it as scripture.
8. The Book of Wisdom is attributed to Solomon, its writer claims to be a king and ruler of Israel but the beliefs given regarding the afterlife are drastically different than what we find in Ecclesiastes. This perhaps indicates its writer was under Sadducean influence. There are also verses that are patterned after the writing of Isaiah. In spite of the fact that it was written in Greek it attempts to follow the writing style and pattern of Hebrew poetry. The author is not identified in the text nor is the author known.
9. The book of Sirach is also called Ecclesiasticus. This book is the work of Ben Sira or Jesus ben Sira and was written in the second century BC. It was written in Hebrew and translated into Greek by the author's grandson. It is a book of proverbs and ethical sayings and patterned after the writing of Solomon. It is accepted as scripture by the Roman, Orthodox and Oriental Catholics and was part of the Septuagint Bible. While it is not accepted by Orthodox Jews as scripture it is quoted in the Talmud and some of the traditions of the Jewish Elders.
10. The book of Baruch is attributed to Baruch ben Neriah, Jeremiah's scribe but some scholars contend that it was written during the time of the Maccabees. This is supported by our knowledge of the various books, claiming to be scripture, that were written during the 400 years of silence between what is accepted as scripture. It was not in the Hebrew Bible but was added to the Greek translation, the Septuagint. It is accepted by the Roman and Greek Catholics and was included in the Latin Vulgate.

This closes our study of the period of time between the testaments.