

Political World Of Jesus

Gospel Foundation Of Faith: Shelf 1 — Volume 6

Our understanding of the New Testament is enhanced by knowing a few events and facts concerning the historical setting of Palestine at the time of Jesus' ministry and the establishment of the church in the first century. There are some key historical events and facts that shaped the political and religious environment of the world at that time. By understanding better the historical setting in which the early disciples lived, we can better interpret the New Testament letters. This is especially true in reference to the final years of national Israel that was consummated in A.D. 70 with the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple.

In order to understand the historical background of the New Testament, we must go back about 4,000 years to a man named Abraham. God promised Abraham that from him would come a great nation. His name would be great. God would give his descendants a land. From his seed, God promised that all people of the world would be blessed (Gn 12:1-3).

Knowing The Past
Helps Us
Understand
The Present
And Future.

In **Genesis 12:1-3**, God promised that He would give Abraham and his descendants a specific land for their possession (Gn 17:8). The Genesis 12 promise was renewed in Genesis 15. In the renewal of the promise, God specified that the land was the land of Canaan, or Palestine (Gn 15:18). When the nation of Israel (the descendants of Abraham) was eventually delivered from Egyptian captivity under the leadership of Moses, the twelve tribes of Israel were brought by God into this land (Ja 1:3,4). However, throughout their history the Israelites continued to rebel against God, and thus violated



the covenant that God had established with them at Mount Sinai. As a result, the northern ten tribes of Israel were first taken into Assyrian captivity in 722/21 B.C. (2 Kg 17). While the Assyrians scattered Jews throughout their empire, they also brought people from their existing empire into the land of Palestine (2 Kg 17:24). The intermarriage of these people with the Jews who were left in Palestine, eventually led to the Samaritan people.

In **586 B.C.** the two southern tribes of Israel, Judah and Benjamin, were likewise carried away into Babylonian captivity (2 Kg 24).

They remained in Babylonian captivity until a remnant from each tribe of Israel started to return to Palestine beginning in

Inn 586 B.C.
The Southern Kingdom
Went Into Captivity,
But Returned To
Palestine In 536 B.C.

536 B.C. Though a remnant returned to resettle Palestine, a great number of the Jews remained in the lands of their former captors, for they had by the time of the returns to Palestine established themselves in the former lands of the Assyrians and Babylonians.

The two major captivities of Israel (the Assyrian and Babylonian) are significant to New Testament studies. They are important because through these captivities the Jews were dispersed throughout the ancient world. Many of the dispersed Jews were still

living among the nations when Jesus came. It was through the conversion of these Jews that the gospel was preached to all the world. We can thus see the providence of God in the captivities of Israel.

Jesus Was The
Messiah Who
Fulfilled The
"Blessing Promise"
That God
Made To Abraham

The scattering of the Jews throughout what later became the Roman Empire led to the rapid evangelization of the ancient world. Therefore, when Jesus, as the Messiah, came into the world, it was a time ready for world evangelism. All things were ready for the Blessing that God had two thousand years before promised to Abraham (Gn 12:3; Gl 4:4).

When the Jews came to Palestine from their former lands of captivity for the annual Passover/Pentecost

feasts, a special Passover/Pentecost event was waiting for them in A.D. 30. On the Passover/Pentecost of that year, Jesus was crucified and resurrected. As the Son of God, He ascended to heaven after His resurrection. Fifty days after He was crucified on Passover, He sent forth the Holy Spirit on twelve chosen apostles on the A.D. 30 Pentecost (At 2:1-4).

It was on the Pentecost of A.D. 30 that the apostle Peter made the first official announcement of Jesus' kingdom reign from heaven (At 2:14-36; see Mt 16:18,19). When this first announcement of the gospel was made, about three thousand people initially obeyed the



gospel (At 2:41). After receiving further teaching from the apostles, these immersed Jewish disciples returned to their homes throughout the nations to which they had been formerly scattered in the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities, which territory was now under the control of the Roman government (See At 2:9-11). They returned with the message of the gospel.

1. What did God promise Abraham?
(A) A land, (B) A Blessing from his seed, (C) A great name, (D) A,B & C
2. Who conquered and scattered the northern ten tribes of Israel?
(A) Romans, (B) Assyrians, (C) Babylonians, (D) Persians
3. Who fulfilled the "Blessing promise" that was made to Abraham?
(A) Abraham himself, (B) Jacob, (C) Joseph, (D) Jesus
4. **T or F:** The remnant of the northern and southern tribes of Israel were confirmed when the Messiah came, the preaching of the gospel to the world.

~ Political World Of The First Century ~

The social and political environments of the New Testament were influenced by the historical events of three world empires. These empires were the **Medo-Persian Empire**, the **Greek Empire**, and the **Roman Empire**. Before the Romans occupied Palestine, there was during the Maccabean period a local Jewish struggle within Palestine to deliver the Jews from foreign occupation and control. During

the end of the Greek Empire, and subsequent rise of the Roman Empire, the Jews were tossed from one controlling foreign power to another. In all this political turmoil, the foundation was laid for the coming of the Son of God and announcement of the gospel. The opportunity was thus set for the preaching of the gospel to the world.

Medo-Persian Empire (538 B.C. – 332 B.C.)

The Medo-Persian Empire came into prominence when Cyrus defeated Media in 550 B.C. and the Babylonian Empire in 539 B.C. Cyrus was a humanitarian, and thus, he encouraged exiled people throughout his realm of rule to return to their homelands. This policy led to the return to Palestine of a representative remnant of Jews who had been scattered throughout the world many years before by the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities.

There were three returns of Jews to Palestine that were led by three Old Testament characters: **Zerubbabel** (536 B.C.), **Ezra** (457 B.C.) and **Nehemiah** (444 B.C.). Of all the Jews who were originally scattered throughout the world in the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities, many did not return to Palestine. Those Jews who did return brought with them influences of culture, religion and language that molded the Jewish society and culture of Palestine by the time the Son of God came into the world.

The Culture, Language
And Religion
Of Foreign Nations
Had Affected The Jews
By The Time Of Jesus.

One of the greatest contributions that the returning exiles brought back to Palestine was the Aramaic language. Most of the exiles had been raised in an Aramaic-speaking culture in Babylonia and the old Persian Empire. Upon returning to Palestine, Aramaic was their first language. It is possible, therefore, that the language Jesus ordinarily spoke during



His life and ministry was Aramaic.

The scattering of the Jews throughout the ancient world was referred to as the **Dispersion** (Gr., *diaspora*, see Js 1:1; 1 Pt 1:1). This dispersion of Jews was the foundation upon which the gospel was initially preached to the world in the first century. When the early evangelists went forth to preach the gospel, they

**God Turned The
Dispersion Of The
Jews Into
An Opportunity
For World
Evangelism.**

went to the Jewish synagogues that had been built throughout the regions to which Jews had been scattered during the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities. They thus went to a religious culture of Jewish people who had a monotheistic background of faith in one God as He was revealed through the Old Testament Scriptures. From the regional synagogues, locally converted Jews then preached the gospel to the Gentile nations of the world.

5. Who was the king of the Medo-Persian Empire who eventually allowed the exiled Jews to return to the promised land?
(A) Darius, (B) Sargon II, (C) Alexander, (D) Cyrus
6. Who led the Jewish captivities back to the promised land?
(A) Nehemiah, (B) Zerubbabel, (C) Ezra, (D) A,B & C
7. What new language was brought back to Palestine when the Jews returned from captivity?
(A) Coptic, (B) Aramaic, (C) Greek, (D) Hebrew
8. What does the word "monotheistic" mean?
(A) One faith, (B) Belief in one God, (C) Idolatry, (D) Paganism

Greek Empire (332 B.C. – 167 B.C.)

Alexander the Great took control of Palestine in 332 B.C. He maintained control until his death in 323 B.C. After his death, his empire was divided among his generals. However, during his rule, the Greek language spread throughout the ancient world, including Palestine. Greek became the common international language of commerce, government and literature. The Greek culture permeated the Jewish culture to the extent that many Jews adopted the Greek language and culture. This led to the rise of what was referred to as Hellenism. Hellenism was the acceptance of the Greek language and culture by many Jews and other conquered people who

generally lived outside Palestine (See At 6:1).

The Greek language was so influential among the Jews after the era of Greek conquest and rule, especially among those Jews in Egypt, that portions of the Old Testament were translated from Hebrew into the Greek language around 250 B.C. This translation of the Old Testament is referred to as the **Septuagint** (LXX). This was the translation from which Jesus and the New Testament writers quoted. The Septuagint was quoted because this was the translation of the Old Testament Scriptures with which most Jews in the first century were familiar.

The Original
Old Testament
Scriptures Were
First Written
In Hebrew.

9. What is the culture called when Jews could speak only the Greek language?
(A) Judaism, (B) Romanism, (C) Hellenism, (D) Paganism
10. What name was given to the Old Testament translation into the Greek language?
(A) Copic, (B) Aramaic, (C) Septuagint, (D) Hellenism

Maccabean Period (167 B.C. – 63 B.C.)

This was a period of guerrilla warfare that was waged by zealous Jews to rid Palestine of foreign Gentile occupation. The turmoil of this period began when Antiochus IV of Syria, a Gentile who ruled Palestine at the time, tried to compel the Jewish priest Mattathias to offer sacrifices to pagan gods in Jerusalem. Mattathias refused, and then fled to the hills in order to organize a militant revolt against the Gentile occupation of Palestine. Before his death in 164 B.C., Mattathias appointed his son, Judas, as his successor.

Judas soon gained the nickname Maccabeus (“the hammer”). He conducted a guerrilla war to expel the Gentile Syrians from Palestine and to restore the Sinai law and temple worship in Jerusalem. On December 14, 164 B.C., he succeeded in his quest by restoring daily burnt offerings at the temple. This day was set aside



by the Jews as the Feast of Dedication (or feast of lights) (Jn 10:22). The day was still honored by the time Jesus came into the world.

[Optional Historical Research In Appendix 1]

Civil war broke out in Israel under the leadership of Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II (67-63 B.C.), the sons of Salome Alexandra. The Romans were eventually asked to settle the dispute. Rome decided in favor of Hyrcanus, and thus Hyrcanus was subsequently appointed high priest to rule over the provinces of Judea and Idumea. This is when Roman influence and control entered the land of Palestine. Palestine was under Roman occupation during the time of Jesus' ministry and the early history of the church. Rome remained in control until the fall of Rome in A.D. 476.

11. Who was the Jewish priest that Aniochus IV tried to compel to offer sacrifices to pagan gods?
(A) Mattathius, (B) Aaron, (C) Judas, (D) Agrippa
12. What was the feast day called when Judas restored the Jewish temple worship?
(A) Dedication, (B) Passover, (C) Pentecost, (D) Purim

[Optional Historical Research In Appendix 2]

Roman Empire (63 B.C. – A.D. 476)

In the last part of the first century B.C., the Roman Empire began to grow as a dominant world empire because of the turmoil of numerous civil regional wars that the Roman government settled. The city of Rome, that later became the capital of the Roman Empire, was founded in 753 B.C. As disputes were settled and peoples conquered by the Romans, vast areas of the ancient world came under the control of Rome. The Empire eventually encompassed North Africa, the Middle East, Europe, Asia Minor, Macedonia and Greece. Peace was secured by implementing Roman rule in troubled areas of the ancient world. As a result, Rome eventually became a world-ruling empire into which Jesus came and the New Testament church was established with the coming of the

The Roman Empire Grew As The Roman Army Settled Local Political Disputes.

Holy Spirit on the Pentecost of A.D. 30.

The Roman government laid a foundation of social and political peace for the early disciples to go forth and preach the gospel. It opened up communication with a system of roads and commerce that reached to the far corners of the Empire, which Empire extended from southern England to the Far East, and into Egypt. It was the most extensive empire of the world at the time the Son of God came into the world, thus setting the world stage for the introduction of the gospel to be preached to the world. Rome thus established an environment and system of communication and travel by which world evangelism could be accomplished in one generation.

Roman Government

At the top of the Roman government was the position of Caesar. He possessed the final authority of the Empire. Unfortunately, some Caesars eventually claimed deity, and thus required worship from the citizens. The following are the Roman Caesars who reigned in Rome during New Testament times:

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 1. Augustus (27 B.C. - A.D. 14; see Lk 2:1) | 25:10-12; 27:24; 2 Tm 4:16,17) |
| 2. Tiberius (A.D. 14-37; see Lk 3:1) | 6. Galba (A.D. 68) |
| 3. Caligula (A.D. 37-41) | 7. Otho (A.D. 69) |
| 4. Claudius (A.D. 41-54; see At 11:28; 18:2) | 8. Vitellius (A.D. 69) |
| 5. Nero (A.D. 54-68; see At | 9. Vespasian (A.D. 69-79) |
| | 10. Titus (A.D. 79-81) |
| | 11. Domitian (A.D. 81-96) |

[Optional Historical Research In Appendix 3]

During Rome's control of Palestine in the first century B.C., Herod the Great had more influence on the political environment of Palestine by the time of the birth of Jesus than any other Jewish king. Herod was firmly in control of the Jewish nation as a puppet ruler of Rome. According to our calendar today, Herod the Great died in 4 B.C. Since Jesus was born within two years before Herod died, and was crucified

when He was about thirty-three years old, the events of Pentecost that are recorded in Acts 2, lead us to conclude that the church established on the Pentecost of A.D. 30.

The Roman Empire was divided into provinces and districts. The provinces were divided into public and imperial provinces (At 13:7; 18:12). Public provinces were generally governed for one year by proconsuls who were chosen by lot or selected by the Roman Senate. Imperial provinces were governed by one who was directly appointed by the Roman Emperor (See Lk 2:2). Governors, or procurators, who were often military officials, were usually appointed to rule these areas for an indefinite period with the power of military legions (Jn 19:12). At the time of Jesus, Palestine was governed by Pontius Pilate who was appointed as governor by Rome (Mt 27:11).

13. The Roman Empire extended into what regions of the world?
(A) Europe, (B) Asia Minor, (C) Greece, (D) A – C
14. Who was the king of the Jews when Jesus was born?
(A) Titus, (B) Nero, (C) Herod the Great, (D) Augustus
15. **T or F:** The Roman government throughout the Empire was organized into provinces, proconsuls and governors, who were all subservient to Caesar and the Senate.

[Optional Historical Research In Appendix 4]

Roman Military

The principal military unit of the Roman army was the **legion** that consisted of 4,000 to 6,000 men. Each legion was divided into ten **cohorts** (At 10:1; 21:31). The smallest military unit was the **century** that was commanded by a **centurion**. There were six centuries to a cohort (See Mt 27:54; Mk 15:39ff; At 10:1ff).

Roman Citizenship

Roman citizenship was a prized possession. It could be acquired by birth, service in the army, purchase, special service given to the state, or a special grant by the state in honor of a particular individual. The death penalty was enacted on those who falsely claimed citizenship. A citizen could not be punished

without trial (At 16:39), or bound and scourged without thorough examination and conviction of a crime (At 22:24-29). A citizen had a right to appeal his case to Caesar (At 25:10-12).

Roman Economy

Slavery was at the center of the Roman economy. Some have estimated that at the time of Jesus, from a third to a half of the Roman Empire's population were bondservants. Support of the Roman state was through taxation that was often left in the hands of local officials. Tax collectors exacted taxes from the public, keeping a portion for themselves and sending the remainder to Rome. This system was filled with corruption. Tax collectors (publicans) thus gained the reputation for being some of the most dishonest people of society.

- 16.** As a citizen of Rome, who appealed his case to be heard before Ceasar?
(A) Matthew, (B) Paul, (C) Timothy, (D) Titus
- 17.** Under the Roman system of taxation, which apostle was a former tax collector?
(A) Paul, (B) Mark, (C) John, (D) Matthew

Destruction Of Jerusalem

After the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in A.D. 30, the second greatest event that affected the disciples in the first century, was the consummation of national Israel in a special covenant relationship with God. This occurred with the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in A.D. 70. We must not underestimate the significance of this God-ordained historical event in reference to biblical interpretation and the evangelistic work of the early disciples. This is particularly true in reference to Jesus' teachings in the parables, and specifically, in the context of Matthew 24 where Jesus prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple.

In Matthew 24, Jesus Prophesied Specifically The A.D. 70 Destruction Of Jerusalem.

Abraham was called in order that his descendants become a monotheistic (belief in one God) nation

that would preserve a segment of society through which God could introduce His Son into the world (See Gn 12:1-3). It would be through this nation that God would send the Redeemer into the world, and His message of the gospel. We must understand, therefore, that through the seed of Abraham, the Messiah (the Christ) would come (Gl 3:16). Once the Seed came, then Israel was dissolved in fulfillment of the promise to Abraham (Gl 3:26-29). There was no longer a need for an earthly symbol of heavenly kingdom reign. Citizens of the new kingdom reign of the new King would be the people of all nations who would submit to the gospel of King Jesus.

Those Israelites who were sons of Abraham by faith were brought into Christ, wherein they enjoyed a special new covenant relationship with God (See Jr 31:31-33). However, with the consummation of all that God had accomplished through Israel, it was time in A.D. 70 for the visual removal of Israel as having a special national covenant relationship with God. The righteous of God, the church, would then shine forth under the kingdom reign of King Jesus that started forty years before on the day of Pentecost in A.D. 30 (See Mt 13:36-43).

After the establishment of the new covenant with God through His Son, no special covenant needed to be maintained with national Israel (Hb 8:7-13). The church of Christ is now the new Israel of God, the members of which God has now established a new covenant relationship through Jesus. It was to this end that God used the vehicle of national Israel to first bring the Savior into the world, and then take the gospel of the Savior into all the world.

**The Destruction
Of Jerusalem Was
God's Visual Sign
That Israel No Longer
Existed As His People.**

The early evangelists and writers of the epistles had in mind the prophecy of Jesus concerning the destruction of Jerusalem when they wrote to the disciples of Christ within two decades before A.D. 70 (See Mt 24). This is particularly true in reference

to those epistles that were written in the middle and latter part of the 60s. When Jesus and the New Testament writers prophesied concerning the coming of the Lord in judgment on unbelieving Jews, they were warning Jewish Christians to stay away from Jerusalem and Judaism (See Jd 14,15). When the time came for the destruction to occur, the early disciples had been thoroughly warned and prepared to accept the end of national Israel. The destruction of national Israel, therefore, was the final sign to the world that the church of our Lord Jesus Christ was ordained as God's people on earth (See Mt 13:36-43).

Jesus' prophecy of the termination of national Israel with the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple is recorded in Mt 24, Mk 13 and Lk 21. This prophecy was fulfilled in A.D. 70. The parables that lead up to this prophecy are recorded in Mt 13:3-9,36-42; 21:33-46; 22:1-14; 23:29-39. This destruction was the coming of Jesus in time in judgment on national Israel.

Matthew 24 Prophecy

1. Jewish nationalism in reference to Jerusalem (vs 1).
2. Imminent destruction of Jerusalem (vs 2).
3. Disciples question Jesus about destruction (vs 3).
4. Warning against false messiahs (vss 4,5).
5. Rumors of Roman wars against the Jews (vs 6).
6. Consequences of wars against the Jews (vs 7).
7. Beginning of Jews' sorrows from war (vs 8).
8. Jewish disciples persecuted (vs 9).
9. Jewish disciples offended and betrayed (vs 10).
10. Dangers of false teachers in times of trial (vs 11).
11. Presence of anarchy and lovelessness (vs 12).
12. Endure to end of national Israel (vs 13).
13. Preach to all the Roman Empire (vs 14).
14. Abomination of Roman armies (vss 15-18).
15. Pray for easy flight from Jerusalem (vss 19,20).
16. Great tribulation of national Israel (vs 21).
17. War shortened for the sake of Christians (vs 22).
18. Proclamation of false messiahs (vs 23).
19. Rise of false messiahs and preachers (vs 24).
20. Warning against deception (vs 25,26).
21. Final coming will be self-evident (vss 26,27).
22. Consumption of the nation of Israel (vs 28).
23. Downfall of national Israel (vs 29).

24. Signal that Jesus is presently reigning (vs 30).
25. Evangelists go forth to preach the gospel (vs 31).
26. Parable of the Fig Tree (vss 32,33).
27. Prophecy fulfilled in generation of Jesus' disciples (vs 34).
28. God's word will endure through Israel's fall (vs 35).
29. While on earth Jesus did not know when the fall would come (vs 36).
30. The wicked Jews will be taken away (vss 37-39).
31. The gospel-obedient Jews will be left (vss 40,41).
32. Watch for the signs of Roman's coming (vs 42).
33. Destruction will come upon unwatchful (vss 43,44).
34. Be a faithful and wise servant in kingdom (vss 45-47).
35. Evil servant will be destroyed (vss 48-51).

New Testament writers and termination of national Israel

1. The coming judgment of national Israel was near when James wrote in A.D. 67,68 (Js 5:7,8).
 2. It was the last times of national Israel when Jude wrote in A.D. 65 to 67 (Jd 17,18).
 3. The hour of judgment had come on national Israel when Peter wrote around A.D. 65 (1 Pt 4:17,18).
 4. Antichrists were present, and thus, John wrote in the last hour of national Israel in A.D. 65-68 (1 Jn 2:18).
18. **T or F:** Jesus never spoke of the destruction of Jerusalem that would take place forty years after His ministry.
 19. **T or F:** It was the central purpose of God's call of Abraham to bring the Seed of woman (the Savior) into the world through Abraham.
 20. **T or F:** When the promised Seed of Abraham came, there was no longer a need for the nation of Israel.
 21. **T or F:** The church is metaphorically the new Israel of God today.

CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

1. What promises did God make to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3?
2. What were the dates when the northern and southern kingdoms of Israel were taken into captivity, and by whom?
3. On whom, and why, was the Holy Spirit poured out on the Day of Pentecost?
4. What were the four world empires that led up to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost?
5. To what does the word "dispersion" refer in reference to the Jews?
6. What was the Septuagint?
7. What were some of the advantages for the church being established in the days of the Roman Empire?
8. When was Herod the Great's death in reference to the Pentecost of Acts 2?
9. What were some advantages of Roman citizenship?
10. What is the significance of the destruction of Jerusalem to understanding the New Testament?



Historical Appendix 1

After Judas Maccabee's death, his brothers assumed the leadership in the war against Syria. Jonathan (160-143 B.C.) restored the priestly aristocracy, and Simon (143-134 B.C.) restored political independence. Succeeding Jewish leaders further solidified the Jewish nation in an effort to secure independence. Under the leadership of John Hyrcanus (134-104 B.C.), the son of Simon, the Pharisees and Sadducees became prominent religious leaders by influencing political policies among the Jews. Aristobulus I (104-103 B.C.), the son of Hyrcanus, was the first Jewish leader during this intertestament period to assume the title of "king." After his rule, his widow, Salome Alexandra, designated his oldest brother, Alexander Jannaeus (103-76 B.C.), to be the high priest and king of the Jewish nation. After the death of Alexander Jannaeus, Salome Alexandra served as Israel's only queen during the intertestament period (76-67 B.C.). She was the first wife of Hyrcanus and later the wife of Jannaeus. During her reign, the Pharisees gained religious prominence in the Sanhedrin.

Historical Appendix 2

It was during the Maccabean period that the Old Testament apocryphal books were written. Though some of this literature was written during the early Roman period, the majority of the books were produced during the Jewish struggles to encourage the Jews to rid Palestine of Syrian influence. These books are 1 & 2 Esdras, Tobit, Judith, Additions to Esther, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, Letter of Jeremiah, Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Young Men, Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, Prayer of Manasseh and 1 & 2 Maccabees.

These books were never accepted as inspired books by the Jews, Jesus, the apostles, or the first century church. They were written simply for the purpose of encouraging Jews during their time of struggle for freedom before Jesus came into the world to offer them a freedom that was far greater than national freedom. The apocryphal books were accepted by the Jews only as letters of encouragement, not as inspired messages from God.

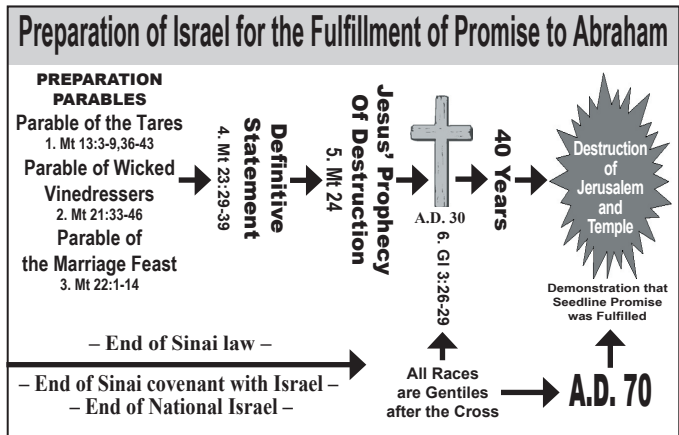
Historical Appendix 3

The Roman Senate was generally made up of about three hundred members who were Senators for life. They were an advisory government body in Rome. At times in Roman history, however, they acted as the ruling body to maintain continuity in the government of the Empire when there was turmoil during those times when there was a change of Caesars. Historians generally concur that the Caesars, with the advice of the Senate, continued to rule the Roman Empire until the fall of the city of Rome in A.D. 476. After this date, the former territories that were originally controlled from Rome were then ruled by regional governments.

Historical Appendix 4

During the time of Jesus and the early church in Palestine, Rome allowed the Jews to govern themselves to some extent by their own kings. This succession of kings began with Herod the Great (37 B.C. - 4 B.C.), who brutally reigned over the Jews (See Mt 2:1-18; Lk 1:5). By his wife, Doris, Herod had a son named, Antipater. By Mariamne II of Simon he had Herod Philip I (Mt 14:3; Mk 6:17; Lk 3:19), the first husband of Herodias (Mk 6:17-28; Lk 3:19). By Malthace, he had Herod Antipas (Mt 14:1-10; Mk 6:14ff; Lk 3:1,19) and Archelaus (Mt 2:22). By Cleopatra, he had Herod Philip II (Lk 3:1). By Mariamne I, he had Alexander and Aristobulus. From Aristobulus came Herod Agrippa I and Herodias (Mt 14:1-12), who left Herod Philip I for his brother Herod Antipas (Mk 6:17). From this marriage came Salome (Mt 14:6-11). From Herod Agrippa I (At 12) came Bernice (At 25:13), Drusilla, who married Felix (At 24:24), and Herod Agrippa II (At 25:13-17,26).

After Herod's death, his territory was given to his sons, though they did not receive the title of "king." Herod's son, Archelaus (4 B.C. - A.D. 6), was made a tetrarch and given Judea, Samaria and Idumea. Philip (4 B.C. - A.D. 34) was made tetrarch of Auranitis, Betanea and Trachonitis (Lk 3:1). Antipas (4 B.C. - A.D. 39) was made tetrarch of Galilee and Perea (Mt 14; Lk 23:7-12). Herod Antipas appointed his brother-in-law Agrippa I as overseer of markets in Tiberias from A.D. 37 to A.D. 44 (At 12). One of the daughters of Agrippa I, Drusilla, married Felix, the procurator of Judea. Eventually, the only son of Agrippa I, Agrippa II, was given the areas formerly ruled by Philip and Lysanias. He was also given Galilee and Perea (See At 25:13-23,32). Agrippa II died in A.D. 100.



Historical Appendix 5

► **Matthew 13:3-9,36-43:** The harvest of the parable of the tares reveals the ministry of Jesus and the disciples that would take place before the end of the age of national Israel (Mt 13:39). Jesus first initiated the reaping during His earthly ministry, while His disciples continued to reap from the field of national Israel unto A.D. 70. When national Israel was terminated, then the righteous in Christ were revealed as the true people of God.

▶ **Matthew 21:33-46:** The manifestation of the kingdom of God on earth was taken from the Jews who crucified the Messiah, and given to those who believed in the Stone that was rejected by national Israel (See Dn 2:34,35).

▶ **Matthew 22:1-14:** Jesus announced to the Jews that they should come to His feast of the gospel. They refused by rejecting Him. They also rejected the disciples as they went forth preaching the gospel to the Jews after the ascension. King Jesus subsequently destroyed the murderers who crucified Him in their city.

▶ **Matthew 23:29-39:** All the rejection of the religious leaders throughout past history would come upon those leaders of Jesus' generation. It would come in the destruction of Jerusalem.

▶ **Matthew 24:** Judgment on the generation to whom Jesus delivered this final declaration of the termination of Israel would come to pass in the lives of some of those who were in His immediate audience (Mk 9:1). The fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 was God's final proof that Jesus was the Son of God.

▶ **Galatians 3:26-29:** Abraham was a Gentile. All Abraham's descendents were Gentiles until God established a covenant with the descendants who came through Isaac and Jacob. Jews (Israelites), therefore, existed only from the time God established a national covenant with the descendants of Abraham at Mount Sinai. When this covenant was terminated at the cross of the Messiah, then the Israelites (Jews) as a covenanted people with God ceased to exist as a distinct people in the eyes of God. All people of the world today are Gentiles. The gospel, therefore, is to go to all nations of the world as it did in the first century (Mt 28:20; see At 9:20; 13:5,14,42; 14:1; 17:1,2,10,17; 18:4,19,26; 19:8; Jn 20:30,31).

ABBREVIATIONS

OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis - **Gn**, Exodus - **Ex**, Leviticus - **Lv**, Numbers - **Nm**, Deuteronomy - **Dt**, Joshua - **Ja**, Judges - **Jg**, Ruth - **Rt**, 1 Samuel - **1 Sm**, 2 Samuel - **2 Sm**, 1 Kings - **1 Kg**, 2 Kings - **2 Kg**, 1 Chronicles - **1 Ch**, 2 Chronicles - **2 Ch**, Ezra - **Er**, Nehemiah - **Ne**, Esther - **Et**, Job - **Jb**, Psalms - **Ps**, Proverbs - **Pv**, Ecclesiastes - **Ec**, Song of Solomon - **Ss**, Isaiah - **Is**, Jeremiah - **Jr**, Lamentations - **Lm**, Ezekiel - **Ez**, Daniel - **Dn**, Hosea - **Hs**, Joel - **Jl**, Amos - **Am**, Obadiah - **Ob**, Jonah - **Jh**, Micah - **Mc**, Nahum - **Nh**, Habakkuk - **Hk**, Zephaniah - **Zp**, Haggai - **Hg**, Zechariah - **Zc**, Malachi - **Ml**

NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew - **Mt**, Mark - **Mk**, Luke - **Lk**, John - **Jn**, Acts - **At**, Romans - **Rm**, 1 Corinthians - **1 Co**, 2 Corinthians - **2 Co**, Galatians - **Gl**, Ephesians - **Ep**, Philippians - **Ph**, Colossians - **Ci**, 1 Thessalonians - **1 Th**, 2 Thessalonians - **2 Th**, 1 Timothy - **1 Tm**, 2 Timothy - **2 Tm**, Titus - **Ti**, Philemon - **Pi**, Hebrews - **Hb**, James - **Js**, 1 Peter - **1 Pt**, 2 Peter - **2 Pt**, 1 John - **1 Jn**, 2 John - **2 Jn**, 3 John - **3 Jn**, Jude - **Jd**, Revelation - **Rv**

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