

CTH 103 SURVEY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT ; COURSE OUTLINE

THE INTERTESTAMENTAL PERIOD

- a)** The Historical Background:
 - (i) The conquest of Persia by Alexander the Great.
 - (ii) The division of Alexander's Kingdom
- b)** The impact of Greek Culture and Philosophy on Judaism
 - (i) Hellenistic Judaism; the Septuagint
 - (ii) Greek Influence in Palestinian Judaism
- c)** The Maccabean Revolt
- d)** The Hasmonean Kingship

THE ROMAN EMPIRE

- a)** The Government of the Roman Empire
- b)** The Pax Romana
- c)** Roman Rule in Palestine:
 - (i) Herod The Great
 - (ii) Herod's sons and Roman Governors
- d)** The Jewish Administration, especially the Sanhedrin
- e)** Emperor Worship

THE RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND

- a) The Temple
- b) The Synagogue
- c) The Chief Festivals
- d) The Chief Jewish Sects:
 - (i) The Herodians

- (ii) The Sadducees
 - (iii) The Pharisees
 - (iv) The Essenes (including the Qumran Sect)
 - (v) The Zealots
- e) Rabbinic Judaism

CTH 103 SURVEY TO THE NEW TESTAMENT ; ASSIGNMENT

1. Discuss the extent Hellenism affected Palestine during the Intertestamental Period (15 Marks).
2. Discuss the impact Emperor Worship had on Christianity and the Christian reactions to it.

CTH 103 SURVEY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

THE INTERTESTAMENTAL PERIOD

This was the period between the Old Testament last Prophets (Malachi) to the birth of Jesus Christ. This period is also referred to as the silent period and covered about 400 years. At this time there was no prophet in Israel and generally nothing much happened in terms of religious development.

It covered the three rule empires in the ancient Near East i.e.:-

- (a) Persian empire (539-331 BC)
- (b) The Greek Empire (331 – 65 BC)
- (c) The Roman Empire under which the New Testament history was played out.

- After their return from Babylonian exile the Jewish people lived under the Persian rule. Little is known about their relationship with Persians.
- The Persian empire gave way in its return to the Greek established by Alexander the Great in 331 BC.
- It may have been around the same time of Alexander that the Samaritan sect had its roots though the exact circumstances of its formation are not known. This was a group of worshippers of Yahweh who formed around the ancient Biblical city of Shechem in the former Northern Israel territory. It's not known precisely what caused the split from the Jerusalem community though we have seen that there were tensions even during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah both within the community and the outsiders.
- The sect built a temple at Mt. Gerizim (overlooking Shechem) evidently a rival to that of Jerusalem and claimed to be a true Israel. It even produced its own version of scriptures narrowly defined as Pentateuch. This Samaritan version is still consulted by scholars of the Hebrew Bible as an important extra witness to the most ancient Bible text.

THE CONQUEST OF PERSIA BY ALEXANDAR THE GREAT

- The Persian empire lasted for about 200yrs
- During their rule, their most dangerous threats or enemies were Egypt and Greece
- The Greeks kept on rebelling against the Persians.
- The Persian tried their best to control the Greeks and they could not contain them fully.
- The Greeks organized themselves and fiercely sought the Persians.
- This struggle continued until Alexander the great of Greece destroyed the Persian empire and ruled the whole of the ancient world from Danube to the Indus river and beyond.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT

- The presence of Greeks as a united nation was only felt at 331BC.
- At this time the separate city states in Greece were united into a powerful league under single ruler.
- By 338 B.C. King Philip II of Macedonia had conquered the city states of Greece and had brought them, under his rule. Two years later he was assassinated but his own son Alexander took his place as a leader of the Greeks and ruled from 336-323BC

ALEXANDER'S LIFE

- Was born at C. 355 BC
- Was a son of Philip II of Macedonia.
- Was a very ambitious man and believed in himself.
- When he took over leadership from his father, he was determined to bring all the neighboring territories under his control.
- He took as a matter of priority a good military network and this he achieved in a very short time.
- In 334 BC, he entered Asia Minor and drove the Local Persian forces out of the area.
- In 333 BC the main Persian army at Issus North of Antioch and then let the great army southwards towards Egypt.
- The city of Tyre resisted his siege for 7Months and Gaza 2Months but he later defeated them.

- When he arrived in Egypt, the people welcomed him as the one who had come to set them free from the Persian rule
- Judah and Samaria came under Alexander's control at this time.
- In 331 BC Alexander had his army against the Persians in Mesopotamia and finally defeated Darius III (King of Persia) at Gaugamela east of River Tigris.
- Alexander Marched victoriously into Babylon, Susa and Persepolis and Darius III was assassinated by some of his own people.
- By 326 B.C. he had reached the R. Indus which became the Eastern boarder of his empire and it is said that he wept because he had nowhere else to conquer.
- In less than 10 years, he had destroyed the Persian Empire and created the Greek empire, covering a large part of South Western Asia.
- In 323 BC he died of a fever in Babylon aged only 32 years.

HIS RULE

- Alexander did not dismantleeexisting government structures but he did found Greek Cities which became centers for Greek culture.
- These cities included Alexandria (*named after Alexander*) Athens etc.
- Veterans were settled in these cities and Greek temples were built as well as theaters, Gymnasium, Stadium etc.
- Greek Traders established business in the vicinities to trade; they would come into contact with Greek cities which became centers for Greek culture.
- These cities included Alexandria (named after Alexandra) Athens etc.)
- Veterans were settled in these and cities and Greek temples were built as well as theatres, Gymnasium, stadium etc.
- Greek Traders established business in the cities to trade; they would come into contact with Greek culture and language.
- Alexander himself married a Persian lady and encouraged his generals to do the same as a way of bringing unity in the empire.
- Local beliefs and religions were maintained alongside Greek practices.
- Local gods were identified with Greeks ones.

- Alexander established one currency for the region. He took the Persian Silver and minted coins which he used to pay his troops. This led to good money circulation and economic development. He also expected high taxes.
- In Palestine Alexander hardly seemed to have touched the existing structures.
- The Jewish high priest continued in office.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT:

- Defeated the Persian Empire & Created the Greek Empire within a very short time.
- Conquered and controlled the rest of the regions in South Western Asia and beyond.
- Established cities like Alexandria which became centers of learning Greek culture and language.
- Enhanced the spread of Greek culture and language Hellenism.
- United in a great way the rest of the empire through language culture trade etc
- Ensured a high level of education and literacy in Arts, Science & Philosophy.

ALEXANDER'S INFLUENCE HELLENIZATION

1. CULTURE

- Alexander was a fanatic for his culture. He was genuinely convinced that civilization had reached its ultimate goals with the Greek way of life. He was there're determined to share it with the whole world.
- Greek customs, religion language, philosophy etc. were all adopted throughout Alexander's domains.
- Cities were built everywhere in the Greek styles, accompanied by Greek temples and sports arenas. The way of life that resulted.
- Hellenism was to last for nearly a 1000 years after Alexander's death.

2. GREEK RELIGION

- By reestablishing temples and identifying local gods with Greek gods, Greek religion spread far and wider.

- However, it is important to know that the Greeks believed in many gods. These gods lived together on Mount Olympus, under the rule of their chief god Zeus. The god often acted on Impulse and did not have any rules of behavior to guide them.
- Many of the most deep thinking Greek had rejected the Greek religion terming it as vague and empty.
- Because of this moral and spiritual vacuum, people through the empire were ready to seize anything that might have given them new hope in an uncertain world when Christianity came many people took it because it is more meaningful than the Roman or Greek Religion.

3. ART SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY

- The Greeks at that time were outstanding among the Nations in their study and ability, in the Arts, Science and Philosophy
- There was a higher level of education, and literacy
- In Arts, they developed special skills in drama, sculpture and painting

4. DEMOCRACY AND JUSTICE

- The Greeks were especially fond of discussing ideas of democracy and justice.
- They argued about the principles that should govern peoples choices of actions when they brought the idea of God into these debates at all it was an idea of perfection towards which everyone should strive because they thought of God ad perfect they believed that he had no need for human beings and no interest in them so that he could not be accepted to give them aid or enter into any relationship with them.

5. CENTRES OF LEARNING

Alexander had founded a new city known as Alexandria, under the rule of Ptolemy's, this city became a great city of learning. Many of the greatest scholars studied and taught there including the mathematician Eu and Archimedes (Law of gravity).

THE DIVISION OF ALEXANDER'S KINGDOM

- After Alexander's death, the new Greek Empire fell into pieces. There was nobody (from Alexander's house) strong enough to take over the role from Alexander and the generals in command of divisions of the army in different nations of the empire tried to gain power for themselves. Each general; wanted to take full over the areas which they were ruling.
- By 301 BC five 5 areas of government had come into being and were ruled by a particular ruler.

Macedonia – *Antipater*

Thrace – *Lysimachus*

Asia Minor & Phonecia - *Antigonos*

Egypt & Palestine – *Ptolemy*

Babylon – *Seleuchus*

The ruler of Egypt Ptolemy managed to keep hold of his rule without interference from the other generals.

The others however fought among themselves and by 281 BC Seleuchus ruler of Babylon had conquered the three i.e.

- Macedonia
- Asia minor
- Trace

In that some fear, however seleuchus was assassinated and Macedonia broke out from the rule of seleuchus successor. Thus there remained 3 areas of Greek power

- Macedonia
- Egypt
- Rest o the empire –

(Seleucids (i.e family of seleuchus)

- These 3 powers continued until early in the 2nd century B.C. when the Romans began to compete with Greek 4 control of world affairs.

- Palestine was on the frontier between Ptolemy and seleuchids and was a bone of contention. Palestine experienced a period of war as the 2dynasties fought for control (cp 1 Macc 1.9) of the generous who successor they brought untold miseries upon the world.

JUDAH, UNDER PTOLEMIES

- When the Greek empire broke up into separatekingdoms after the death of Alexander, Palestine was part of the Area ruled by Ptolemy and his family. The Ptolemy'sruler over Egypt throughout the remainingyears of Greek domination in the world affairs, but they lost control over Palestine in 198 BC when the seleuchids took over command of the area.
- During the 125 years of the Ptolemy (301-175 BC), life in Palestine was peaceful without great charges. The high priest as still the chief authority among the Jews in both spiritual and political mattes. How he was responsible to the ptolemies for what happened in Judah.
- The most important development for the Jews in this period was the growth of a strong Jewish community in the New Greek city of Alexander in Egypt. These Alexandrian, Jews recognized the value of Greek ideas and culture and were willing to adopt them for their own use.
- They very quickly forgot how to speak or read the languages of their homeland and used Greek instead. They found it difficult to maintain their own Jewish Heritage of history and faith, because the books of their scripture were written in Hebrew, a language most of them could not understand.
- After sometime the Jewish leaders recognized the need for a Greek translation of the books of the law.
- They translated the Hebrew Old Testament into Greek. This Greek scripture was given the nameSeptuagint or LXX because of the legend that 72 scholars spent 72 days to translated the O.THebrew into Greek Script.

Summary of the Jews life under Ptolemy

- One of the 5 wards of the town of Alexandria, was completely Jewish.

- They lived under their own laws
- Has special privilege and own construction
- After one or two generation, they began to speak Greek
- Greek translation by O.T. began in Alexandria in the 3rd BC
- Jewish writes flourished in Alexandria e.g., Demetrius who wrote a chronology of Jewish History.

JUDAH UNDER SELEUCHUS

- Ptolemy and Seleuchus were always fighting over the control of Palestine.
- In 198 BC Antiochus in one of the (Family members of seleuchus) defeated the Egyptians and started ruling over Palestine.

HOW THE JEWS FARED UNDER THE SELEUCHUS RULERS

1. Antiochus III (198-188 BC)

- He was on easy ruler.
- In the 1st 3 yrs, he charged no taxes and later charged just a small tax.
- Cult officials and members of council of elders were exempted from taxation.
- The high priests were given special privileges.
- State aid was provided for repairs of the temple.
- At about 190 BC Antiochus III was defeated by the Romans at the battle of magnesia, He was forced to send his son (later Antiochus IV) to Rome as a hostage and pay a large sum of money to Rome.
- This place a financial strain on the empire, and Antiochus III demanded more in taxes.
- He ruled still 188 BC and was succeeded by Seleuchus IV.

SELEUCHUS IV (187-175 BC)

- In 2 Macc 3:3 Seleuchus (IV) is recorded as having helped the Jews so much.
- He helped them to pay the cost of temple sacrifices from the revenue which he collected.
- After sometimes a man called Simon of the tribe of Bilgah, the chief administrative official of the temple disagreed with Onias the highpriest concerning how the city market could be governed.

- Using Apollonius (The governor of Syria) he informed the King Seleuchus (IV) that there was a huge money in the temple which could as well be placed under the kings control.
- Seleuchus (IV) was tempted to take that money (which had been kept in the temple for safe keeping)
- He sent Hellodrus (His chief minister) to Jerusalem temple to get the money but according to (2 Macc 3-40) Hellodrus was beaten by a spiritual being as he tried to enter and get the money from the temple.
- This lead to a bitter dispute between the Jews and Seleuchids
- Onias the high priest was accused of causing the injuries to Hellodrus.
- Towards the end of his reign Seleuchus IV agreed to send his son Demetrius to Rome so his brother (Antiochus IV) could return and continue reigning.
- In about 175 BC, Seleuchus IV was murdered and was succeeded by his brother Antiochus (IV)

ANTIOCHUS (IV) EPHIPHANES (175-163) B.C.

- He took for himself a name Ehiphanes which means the bodily appearance of God, but because of his unpredicable behaviours, he was nicknamed Epimanes which means the mad man. Same scholars argue that his behaviours could have been unbalanced because of the psychological fortune he underwent in Rome, as a hostage which affected his mind.
- Jason, the priest Onias' brother bribed Antiochus IV Epiphanes with 12,000 kgs of silver and 2700kgs more to be paid later so that he could make him high priest.
- He also offered the king 5000kgs of silver for the authority to establish a stadium where young men could train and to enroll the people of Jerusalem as citizens of Antioch (2 Macc 4:4:7-10)
- Antiochus IV gave his approval and as soon as Jason took over the office of the high priest, he encouraged the Jews to abandon their ways and instead adopt the Greek Culture.
- He did this by first of all building a sports stadium in Jerusalem.
- Many of the priests left their temple duties to ran the Greek sports (IMacc 1:14-15) the sports were associated with the cult of the Greek god Hercules.
- Jasan even authorized the priest to join in this Pagan Worship and they did.
- Antiochus IV used the money had been given by Jasan to buy battleships (2 Macc 4:18-20)

- At about 171BC Jason sent Menelaus to take some money to Antiochus IV Epiphanes.
- The king was impressed by Menelaus who on the other hand promised Antiochus (IV) even more money i.e. 22,000kg of silver in return for the appointment as high priest.
- So Menelaus returned to Jerusalem with papers from the king confirming him as the high Priest.
- Menelaus was not able to pay the money, he had problems with Antiochus (IV) and when he was compelled to do so, he robbed the temple and paid his debt.
- Menelaus had the temper of a cruel Tyrant and could be as fierce as a wild animal. He was so unpopular and dishonest.
- He arranged the murder of Onias who had accused him of bribery and other corruptions (2 Mac. 4:27)
- In the meantime, Antiochus IV was involved in war as he tried to seize Egypt.
- Jason seems to have expected Antiochus (IV) to be defeated and killed in the war.
- He took the opportunity to lead an army against Jerusalem, drove his rival Menelaus into hiding and massacred many of the people (2 Macc 5:5-6)
- When Antiochus IV returned from Egypt after victory there he punished the Jews for what he regarded as their rebellion and robbed the temple of some of its sacred vessels. (1 Macc 1:20-24, 2 Macc 5:15-21)
- At C. 168 BC, Antiochus IV. again attacked Egypt, and final victory was within his reach when Romans interfered ordering him to leave Egypt (Dan. 11:29-30)
- Humiliated Antiochus IV, expressed his anger by attacking the Jews in Jerusalem (2 Macc 5:2, 3-6)
- The city was looted and partly destroyed and Antiochus IV built a strong house for foreign soldiers in the city (1 Macc 1:45)
- He ordered that:
 - (1) All books of the law to be burned
 - (2) Custom of circumcision be forbidden (1 Macc 16:45)
 - (3) No teaching of the law among the Jews.
- The penalty for disobedience was death (1 Macc 1:50)

- Pagan altars were set up all over the land (1 Macc 1:54) and Jews were forcibly made to eat pork (2 Macc 6:18)
- Worst of all, an altar to the Greek god Zeus was set up in the temples at Jerusalem (2 Macc 6:2). This is what is meant by Abomination of desolation in (1 Macc 1:54), Dan 9:27), Dan 11:31; 12:11 etc.
- The temple was desecrated in 167BC
- In this way Antiochus IV tried to destroy everything which was distinctively Jewish. He hoped that if the Jews were forced to adopt Greek culture they would come to support the Greek rule.
- Some Jews gave way in the face of this persecution (1 Macc 4:43-52) but there were many who refused to give up their ways of life which they believe God had given to them.
- They began to resist and the centre of resistance was a group called the Hasidim i.e. The pious ones or the Loyal ones.

THE MACCABEAN REVOLT

- The Jews soon showed their resistance to the enforcement of Greek culture (1 Macc 2)
- Active resistance was sparked off when Mattathias, an elderly priest in the village of Modain was asked to sacrifice at a Pagan altar in the village by the Kings officers.
- Mattathias refused and killed a Jew who volunteered to do so. He also destroyed the Pagan altars.
- After this, Mathias fled into the hills with his sons and gathered an army of faithful Jews there. They started fighting with the Greek soldier.
- In one occasion, they were attacked on Sabbath and many of them were killed because they refused to fight, on the Lord's day. The survivors agreed that they should defend themselves on the Sabbath if need arose.
- They caused the Greeks great trouble by frequent guerrilla tactics.
- When Mattathias died, one of his sons named Judas took command. He was nicknamed (Maccabeus) which means. "The hammer" and those independent forces became known as the Maccabeus as a result.
- The Greeks tried to conquer them several times but each time they failed.

- Judas defeated the Seleuchids at about 166-165 BC
- In 164 BC. The temple was rededicated a new feast introduced Hanukkah (1 Macc 4:42-59) was introduced to commemorate the event annually.
- Even so, the strong had built by Antiochus (IV) in Jerusalem remained staffed with foreign troops and with Jews who adopted Greek culture.
- Shortly afterwards, Antiochus (IV) was killed in battle in the Eastern part of the Kingdom.
- A period of conflict followed when several Greek leaders were fighting among themselves for power.
- Judas took advantage of time to show the strength of his forces in Palestine and across the Jordan.
- He campaigned in Idumea, Philistians, Galilee and Trans Jordan.
- The Greek authorities were forced to recognize the right of the Jews to follow their own religion and customs and they lifted the ban that had prohibited, the Jews from observing their religion and other Jewish culture.
- In 161 BC Demetrius, son of Seleuchids (IV) took over the empire.
- Hellenists in Judah appealed for his help against Maccabaeus.
- Demetrius appointed Alcimus high priest and provided military support.
- Alcimus purged some former Maccabaeus supporters and in so doing lost their support of the Jews.
- Judas continued his opposition to Seleuchid rule and entered into a diplomatic negotiations with Rome who encouraged him to seek for political independence also.
- In 160 BC however, Judas Maccabeus was killed in a battle. Hellenists controlled Jerusalem for some time.

TOWARDS POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE

- Religious freedom had been won but struggle for political independence continued under Jonathan, Judas' brother. The Hellenists were in control of Judah but Alcimus their nominee died in 159 BC.
- Bachides, the Seleucid, commander in Jordan led a campaign against Jonathan and Jonathan fought back.
- In 158 BC, Jonathan defeated Bachides and Bachides sought to make peace with Jonathan.
- Jonathan was now the leader of the Jews and ruled informally from Mithras.
- Jonathan was not as good a general as Judas but was an able politician. The disputes over the Seleucid succession enabled him to gain political influence.
- In 152 B.C, Alexander Balas who claimed to be son of Antiochus IV started a rebellion in Syria.
- He offered Jonathan the high priesthood in return for his support (although) Jonathan was not of the high priestly family.
- Balas defeated Demetrius I in 151 BC and in 150 BC Jonathan was appointed governor of the province of Judah.
- In 147 B.C.C. Demetrius II son of Demetrius I, landed in Asia and campaigned against Balas.
- He gained control of Phoenicia and Syria but his general Apollonius was defeated by Jonathan for his support by giving him the District of Accaron.
- In 145 BC Balas was killed in Battle.
- Demetrius II was recognized as ruler of the Seleucid Empire.
- Jonathan offered support for Demetrius II who appreciated him by confirming him as the high priest and also governor of Judah and again was added three Samaritan Districts.
- Trypho, A general of Balas, proclaimed Balas, Son, Antiochus VI ruler
- They drove Demetrius out of the Western part of the empire and confirmed Jonathan's position.
- Simon Jonathan's brother was also appointed governor of the coastal region from the ladder of Tyre to the borders of Egypt.
- Jonathan and Simon strengthened their position.

- Simon replaced the Seleucid garrison at Beth-Zur by a Jewish one, garrisoned at Joppa and fortified it.
- Jonathan took Gaza, blockaded the Seleucid garrison in Jerusalem and began repairing Jerusalem's walls and building fortresses in Judea.
- Trypho was alarmed by the growing independence of Judah.
- He captured Jonathan and killed him.
- Simon took over the leadership and continued to develop Judah's political and military strength.
- Simon entered into negotiations with Demetrius II and who agreed that the Jews should be free from tribute.
- In 142 B.C. – Simon expelled the Seleucid garrison from Jerusalem.
- By 141 B.C. Judah was becoming more and more independent.
- He also renewed the alliance with Rome, who acknowledged Judean independence.
- Simon was voted commander in Chief of the army Governor and high priest by a Jewish assembly in 140 BC independence had now been won (1 Macc 13:41).
- Simon was able to maintain the independence of Judah throughout his reign.
- In 141 B.C. Demetrius II was captured by the Parthians. He was held as a captive for 10 years.
- Trypho, the general of Balas seeking himself murdered Balas son Antiochus IV and proclaimed himself emperor.
- In 139 B.C. Demetrius Brother Antiochus VII claimed the Seleucid Empire. At first he was friendly towards Simon but when Trypho's power decreased he demanded the surrender of strongholds or tribute.
- Simon refused and his son defeated the Seleucid Captain Cendebeus.
- Although Simon was killed by his New Ptolemy in 134 B.C., Judah retained its independence status for some time.
- Other Hasmonean rulers after Judah became political independent

OTHER HASMONAEOAN RULERS

- These are the rulers who succeeded Mathathias whose family name was Hasmon and are therefore called Hasmonean rulers (Josephus Jews winter)

- Mattathias – Judas – Jonathan – Simon
- When Jonathan was killed his son John Hyrcanus took over the leadership.

JOHN HYRCANUS 134-104BC

- He escaped the murder plot of his cousin Ptolemy and become Simon's i.e. his father's successor
- Antiochus VII now established as in the Seleucid Empire, invaded Judah.
- He demanded tribute and the demolition of the walls of Jerusalem. Hyrcanus was forced to comply.
- In 128 BC Antiochus II was released from captivity.
- The Seleucid Empire was now too weak to threaten Judah and Judah was secure as an independent Kingdom.
- The remainder of Hyrcanus rule was viewed by Latin generation as the golden age.
- There was peace, security, prosperity. The good political atmosphere enabled Hyrcanus to have his own/or mint his own coin bearing his own name.
- At this time, the Jewish parties like Sadducees and Pharisees began to emerge.
- The Sadducees and Pharisees began to emerge.
- The Sadducees supported the Hasmonean rules while the Pharisees opposed them (accusing them of being too secular). In particular, they wanted Hyrcanus to resign as high Priest.
- Hyrcanus campaigned to extend the borders of Judah
- He conquered Idumea to the South, the Greek town of Medeba in Trans- Jordan and led campaign the Samaritan
- He destroyed the temple on mount Gerizim and took the cities of Samaria and Scythopolis.

ARISTOBULUS 104-103 BC

Aristobulus carried on the work of conquest.

The campaigned in Galilee and added much of Galilee to the territory controlled by Judah.

ALEXANDER JANNAEUS 103 -76 B.C.C

- He was the half brother of Aristobulus I
- He married Aristobulus wife and was appointed king and high priest
- The marrying of Aristobulus wife made him unpopular with his own people.
- He aimed at Territorial expansion and succeeded.
- He captured the cities of Gadara and Amathus in the Trans Jordan
- On the Philistine coast, he took Rapheah, Anthedon and Gaza.
- He then attacked the Southern Trans Jordan but the Nabatean Arabs ambushed his army and he escaped narrowly.
- News of his defeat caused opponents (predominantly Pharisees) to rebel.
- Alexander fought back with Greek Machineries but his opponents too appealed for outside help from the Seleucid Empire.
- Jannaeus finally won and drove out the rebels and returned to Jerusalem and inflicted terrible punishment on the rebels i.e. the Pharisees.
- Jannaeus campaigned in Northern Trans Jordan. He captured a number of Greek cities.
- During his death in 76 B.C, he had won control of all territory annexed by the 12 tribes of Israel. However, he died as an unpopular leader among the Jews.

OTHER HASMONEAN RULERS

SALOME ALEXANDRA

76-67 B.C.

- Alexandra had a peaceful reign
- She enlisted the aid of the Pharisees in her council
- She avoided invasion by Tigranes, the Parthian ruler through diplomacy
- Her son Hyrcanus was appointed high priest.

ARISTOBULUS II 67-63 BC

- He was the second son of Janneus and seized power following his mother's death.
- He was supported by the Sadducees and had been appointed military commander by his mother.
- His brother Hyrcanus surrendered his title in return for his freedom as private citizen.
- However, his supporter i.e. Hyrcanus supportedly wanted to see him in power.
- Antipater, the governor of Idumea persuaded Hyrcanus that he was in danger and arranged for him to take refuge with Aretas III, the Nabatean King.
- Aretas gave Hyrcanus an army and he returned to Judah, defeated Aristobulus and besieged him in the temple at about 65 BC.
- This dispute between Aristobulus and his brother Hyrcanus gave the Romans an opportunity to defeat them and take away their political independence.

THE IMPACT OF GREEK CULTURE AND PHILOSOPHY ON JUDAISM

1. The translation of the Hebrew Canon into Greek i.e. the production of the Septuagint (LXX)
 - This version which was translated from Hebrew to Greek is commonly referred as the Septuagint or (LXX)
 - It was translated for two main reasons:-
 - (a) For the Jews community who were living in Alexandria. They were so Hellenized that they are more comfortable with the Greek language than, the Hebrew language.
 - (b) The King's librarian wanted a copy of the Hebrew scripture in his Library. It had to be translated so that he could understand it.
 - Ptolemy Philadelphus appeared to the high priest at Jerusalem asking him to give him some Jews who were versed in both Hebrew and Greek so that they could translate it. The high priest sent 72 elders to go and help in the translation.
 - The 72 elders went to Alexandria and started off with the work and within 72 days, they had made a translation which was read before the Jewish community and accepted and then sent to the king.
 - From the No. of translations it became known (somehow erroneously) as the Septuagint.

- The Jews community in Alexandria no longer used the Hebrew version but the Septuagint.
- The Jews writer EUSEBIUS argues that Greek Philosophy such as Plato and Homer, borrowed some ideas from Septuagint.

2. The Hellenistic Cities

- Many Jews left their places i.e. original homes in Jerusalem or Judah and settled in the cities like Alexandria where they learnt so much of the Greek culture and philosophy.
- This was contrary to their earlier beliefs that they could not sing the Lord's in a foreign land (of Pss 137)
- The Jews now moved abroad freely caring less for their ancestral faith and had tried them to their cherished home land.

3. Spread of Judaism:

- As the Jews moved from one town to another, they were able to spread Judaism using their new language Greek.
- Because of this, some Gentiles were converted into Jews and became known as the God fearers.
- God fearers for those who just accepted the religious and ethical aspect of the faith without necessary changing into full Jews e.g. being circumcised etc.
- Proselytes for those who accepted the Jews culture and religion e.g they accepted even to be circumcised.
- This was positive because even before the birth of JesusChrist, some Gentiles had heard about Judaism and especially the Messiah and so they could understand about Jesus etc.
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4. Economic and Social Influence

(1 Macc 1:11) The Jewish community at Jerusalem felt that separation from the larger world for religious reasons had deprived them of great financial possibilities.

- Many of the Jews, including priests left their temple duties and ignored the rules, which forbade them from mixing with others and participated in the Hellenistic trades and commerce so as to get wealthy.
- The Sadducees who were ruling over the temple got so much involved in those trades that they ignored their temple duties. By the end of the 2nd BC they belonged to the new middle class of the rich people.

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5. Religion

- There was a widespread religious dilemma of Act 17 where the people of Ephesus names Barnabas Zeus and Paul Hirmy (both Greek gods)
- In Athens, altars were dedicated to the unknown god.
- Socrates and other Philosophers had made people to think about the Greek gods as simple and meaningless.
- Epicurus had been even more scornful of traditional religion, he is said to be the Greek who dared invade the realm of gods with his mind.
- Amidst this confusion in Greek religion. Judaism was more sensible to many and many were attracted to it.
- When Christianity was born, many people turned to it because it was more meaningful than the traditional Greek religion.

6. Fate, Astrology and Magic:-

- The first impact of the Greek influence on the New Testament world was to create an atmosphere of universal anxiety and fear in the face of the impersonal force that dominated many cities, namely fate.
- This created a situation in which the search for ways of coping, religiously with life was very active, even when it gave rise to practices and beliefs that could only be described as superstitious and bizarre.
- In the end, astrology, magic and sorcery did not solve the problem of fate but merely provided possibilities of escaping its clutches.
- Another philosophical school & Epicureanism taught that the link between the deity and human beings was totally severed. It was up to a person to see his/her own happiness here on earth since death marked the end of human life. So death, the most terrifying of all of us is nothing to us since so long as we exist, death is not with us but when death comes, then we do not exist.
- Some early Christian leaders such as Paul borrowed some of these ideas of (1 Corinthians 15:55) Death where is your sting. Others are Origen, Augustine etc.

- The Sadducees also borrowed some of these philosophical ideas and denied some benefits such as resurrection, existence of Angels and demons etc.

7. The Mystery Religion

-Whereas philosophy suggested ways of coping with fate, mystery religion offered the possibility of overcoming it.

-Initially the mystery religion were general religious rites but later come to be used of secret rites practiced by a particular group of devotees, celebrating one or another of the salvation, myths that arose in response to the religious need of the time.

-During the Hellenistic times, the mastery religious spread from one place to another as they tried to answer the religious needs of the time.

-Both Judaism and Christianity was influenced by these mystery religions e.g. creation stories and generally Gen. 1:11 Christian rites like baptism etc.

8. The Appeal of Philosophy

-During the Hellenistic period there arose a number of Philosophical schools which to some degree took on the role that religion had previously taken.

-These philosophical schools included the Stoics, Epicurean, Pythagoreans etc.

-A common feature for them all was the fact that they were not just systems of abstract thought for a few people but rather propagated for the many. A way of life and a set of attitudes based on a particular understanding of the universe that each had developed.

-By the N.T. times, these philosophical schools of thought were influencing people's lives and even when people did not actually belong to any of them, they were often deeply touched by their ideas and even viewed their lives in the light of these systems.

-Stoicims attempted to answer the question on the relationship between man and the universe and also on the relationship between man's inner and outer self i.e. the body and the spirit.

-The answers they worked out both questioned were based on their view of the universe as an ordered and closed system at the centre of which is the eternal principle or Logos (Reason) whose spark exist in all reality man included thereby constituting, the unity of all creation.

-From this cosmology i.e. doctrine of the world, the first task of man is to live in harmony with the universal law of nature that assigns to each place according to the particle of the divine reason it has received.

-Thus ideality the whole human race is but are sharing in the same divine Logos and inhabiting the one great city state and one house and so the difference of race, sex, class, abilities ect are of no consequence.

-Stoics taught that since it is the divine spark that constitutes men, his inner self is his true self. Everything else that he possesses even his body is really of importance. Thus man achieves happiness when he withdraws into his inner self and obtains freedom from all external things. It is at this level. That all men are equal.

-These teachings which are described as a religious philosophy also influenced the Jews e.g. Paul of Gal. 3:28

-To Stoicism, the reason or Logos is the heart of the universe can be variously described as Zeus providence destroys universal law and nature. This created climate in which monotheism (belief in one God) The hall mark of both Judaism and Christianity is more readily accepted.

-John chapter one also draws on both the Hebrew idea of the word of God in the O.T. and the idea of the world in Greek Philosophy

9. The N.T. was written in Greek

Greek language had spread so much and it became the mode of communication. The Jews were so much influenced that they wrote the N.T. in Greek a language which could be understood by almost everyone in the Gracco-Roman world

CONCLUSION

- The Jews were greatly influenced by the Hellenistic views such as the social change, mobility of population religious and philosophical questioning occasioned by the political and other upheavals taking place.
- Much of this influence was to work to the advantage of Christianity from the common language and the possibility common language and the possibility of wholesale travel to the elaboration of philosophical systems and morals values that had genuine affirmatives with the Christian world view.

THE ROMAN EMPIRE

INTRODUCTION

- Nothing much is known about how the city of Rome began
- According to the Roman Mythology the city was named after its founder Romulus in 753 BC
- For Centuries, Rome was a small struggling city states but it was well placed at a crossing of the river Tiber in the Centre of Italy.
- The Hellenistic world came into direct contact with the Roman Empire at the end of the 3rd century BC
- When Philip V of the Antagonist dynasty in Macedonia made alliance with the commercial republic of Carthage, Rome's enemy,
- This gave the Romans a direct interest in the politics of the Greek mainland and they soon found themselves using and being used in the political manufactures of cities and princes throughout the East e.g.
- Ptolemy (VI) was supported by Romans to expel Antiochus (IV) from Egypt
- Judas Maccabaeus concluded a treaty with the Romans in 161BC as part of his campaign against Demetrius I of Syria
- In 133 BC the Pergamum King who had no heir surrendered his Kingdom to Rome. It became the Roman Province of Asia.
- In 88 BC Mithridates, the ruler of Pontus tried to expand his empire and came into conflict with Rome. The war continued for about 25 years.
- In 66 BC Rome sent the general Pompey to take control of the war. Pompey defeated Mithridates and Western Asia came under the Roman Rule.
- Pompey sent his lieutenant Scaurus to Syria.
- Scaurus hearing about the trouble in Judea between Aristobulus and Hyrcanus entered Judea.
- He supported Aristobulus and forced Antipater to withdraw
- In 63 BC Pompey came to Damascus. Aristobulus and Hyrcanus came to present their case to him. Pompey initially supported, Aristobulus but suspected his loyalty.
- Aristobulus failed to join Pompey in an expedition against Antipater and instead went to Jerusalem.

- Pompey followed him there and Aristobulus surrendered to Pompey but his supporters took up arms.
- Hyrcanus supporters let Pompey into the city and he besieged Aristobulus supporters in the temple. Eventually they surrendered.
- Pompey added the Jewish Kingdom to the Roman Empire.
- He deprived it of much of the territory won by Hermon.
- Hyrcanus was appointed high priest and (Leader-not king coz' no longer independent)
- Aristobulus was taken to Rome as a hostage
- Judea was now a Roman Province ruled from Syria
- To protect the Eastern and Southern Flank of these provinces, over the next few years, he imposed or negotiated agreements with a series of client kingdoms.
- To the south – he gave Judea to Antipater a prince of the Edomites and Arabs tribe
- To the east of the Jordan – Nabataean Arabs
- To the North East of Syria
- Made agreements with the client kings of Commagene and Armenia
- In 49 B.C Civil war broke between Julius Caesar and Pompey.
- Caesar defeated Pompey in 48 BC.
- Pompey fled to Egypt and was later assassinated.

JULIUS CAESAR

- After defeating Pompey, he took the title Dictator – a position which gave him special emergency powers.
- Was a brilliantly able and vigorous ruler
- He defeated the and conquered Gaul (Modern France and Germany) and invaded Britain
- He was murdered in 44 BC by the republicans, Brutus and Cassius (who were all members of the Senate the ruling body)
- In 43 B.C.C the avengers of Julius Caesar led by Octavian his official heir and Mark Antony the executor of his will fought against the republicans, Cassius and Brutus and defeated them at the battle of Philippi in Macedonia and defeated them in 42 B.C.

- Mark Antony controlled Syria while Octavian gained mastery in Italy and the West.
- After sometime Antony and Octavian became enemies because they both wanted Supreme power in the Empire.
- War followed between Octavian and Mark Antony.
- Mark Antony was defeated at the Battle of Actium in 31B.C. and according to Scholars both Mark Antony and his lover Cleopatra (a queen of Egypt) committed suicide.
- Octavian took for himself a new name August Caesar . Caesar-leader of a senate

AUGUSTUS CAESAR 31 BC – 14 A.D.

- Brought Peace in the Empire.
- Was the first ruler of the United Roman Empire because he was able to consolidate his power throughout the Empire.
- He soon eliminated any residual resistance, and assumed control at administration of the Roman World
- Modern Historians generally refer to him as the first of Roman Emperors because with him the Roman history moves from the period of the republic to that of the principate.
- He reigned until his death in A.D. 14
- Jesus Christ was born during his reign.
- After his death, several of his relatives followed him to power

They included:-

- Tiberius A.D. 14 – 37
- Caligula – AD 37-41
- Claudius – AD 41-54
- Nero AD – 54 – 68
- Vespasian – AD 69 – 79

ROME A WORLD POWER

- After the Romans won control of Italy, they began to extend their power base into new territories.
- Carthage on the coast of Modern Tunisia was destroyed by Rome in 146 B.C.
- Rome now controlled the sea routes and trade of Western Mediterranean Sea.

- In the near east the Romans defeated King Antiochus III of Syria.
- They destroyed Corinth in 146 B.C. and Athens in 86 B.C.
- By winning control of Greece, Rome became a World Power
- They Studied Greek language and borrowed Greek Styles of Art and Writing.
- But the Roman officials became corrupt enriching themselves by robbing their subjects.
- The senate in Rome was unable to control them.
- It was not possible to govern a world empire in the same way as a small city.
- Large armies and regular organizations were needed.

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

- At first Rome was governed by the same senate which was made up of men from the leading families in Rome. The leader of the Senate was called Caesar.
- After it became an empire it was divided into provinces and each province was ruled by a Proconsul.
- The proconsul was selected by lot and ruled for one year.
- The proconsul was given authority over the province. He had Judicial and military power and toured the major towns hearing court cases.
- Detailed administration was left to local authorities. In Palestine, these were council of elders.
- Taxes were collected by private individuals.
- In general, the Romans respected local customs and beliefs unless those customs interfered with the smooth running of the Roman government.
- When Augustus became emperor, the provinces were divided into Senatorial provinces and imperial provinces.
- Senatorial provinces were governed as before.
- Imperial Provinces – governed by legates i.e. men from the senate who were appointed by the emperor.
- The emperor decided how long the legate remained in office.
- Imperial provinces were the provinces with legions e.g. Syria
- Smaller provinces with troops e.g. Judea were governed by men of equestrian rank. They were called procurators.

- The Romans also ruled using client kings. These were local rulers who had to supply troops to Rome, follow Roman policy, pay taxes and maintain order on the frontier. Otherwise, they were free to govern as they wished and could maintain their own army.
- Client kings were common on the border of the empire
- Herod the Great was a client King

ROMANS & HELLENIZATION

- After conquering different Nations and states, the Romans continued to use Greek culture and did not attempt to suppress Greek culture in the eastern part of their empire.
- This is reflected as the Graeco Roman world i.e. it was ruled by Romans but the culture was pre-dominantly Greek.

THE PAX -ROMANA (ROMAN PEACE)

The term Pax – Romana simply means the Roman peace.

When Christianity emerged, the Romans were ruling the world i.e. all the land of Palestine and the surrounding nations that were under Rome. This included:-

- Some parts of Europe
 - England
 - Egypt
 - North Africa
 - Most Part of Asia
- The Roman empire was both politically and geographically extended to the Mediterranean civilization.
 - In its interland it had a network of cultures and people conscious of vague and sometimes occupied with perils and so before the Romans came into power, it was an empire bound together by a common interest in security.
 - During the period of the Greek empire the world experienced long periods of turmoil where corruption was the order of the day mostly from elders.
 - The office of the high priest was turned into a political office where appointments were done on corruption basis.

- People were influenced by Greek culture and even when the Romans took over, it was not easy to change their culture / beliefs.
- On the midst of these turmoils, brought beneficial changes especially peace through the empire.
- They brought civilization and good administration.
- 'The Roman rule made people to feel the oneness of humanity which did not exist before because people were grouped separately in lives of religion, language or Nation.
- During the Roman's rule, all people felt the same and equal in the sense that most separate governments were broken and one power ruled all over.
- In addition the Roman rule brought world wide peace (Pax-Romana)
- There was no longer wars among Nations due to the mighty Roman empire.
- The Pax-Romana existed for almost 400 years before it crumbled.
- Because of this, Roman rulers were highly regarded than any other imperial ruler in history.

HOW PAX-ROMANA WAS ACHIEVED

- They did not make use of force but governed effectively and intelligently.
- They did not simply impose a uniform governmental procedure upon its conquered territories.
- All areas were naturally subject to the emperor and to the Roman armies but many localities were allowed to govern their own affairs as long as they did not violate the Roman Sovereignty or directives
- The conquered areas were organized into provinces such as Bithynia Acts 16:7, Cyprus Acts 13:4 and Pamphylis Acts 13:13.
- Those provinces which were submissive were ruled by proconsuls. Acts 13:7, 18:12 who were responsible to the Roman Senate.
- The provinces that were breeders of trouble e.g. Judea were ruled by governors called procurators or prefects.

HOW DID THE PAX-ROMANA PREPARE THE WORK FOR CHRISTIANITY.

- Christianity came at a time when the Historical situation in Palestine suggested that a supreme mind, had been repairing the field in order for it to be conclusive for the Gospels.
- The Graeco-Roman world was well prepared such that all was ready for proclaiming to marry nations the good tidings of salvation.
- When Christianity came, the atmosphere was well prepared in such a way that it was very easy for the new religion to penetrate in most of the areas in Palestine.

FACTORS THAT FACILITATED AN EASY SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY

1. God Communication Network.

- The Roman administration which was strong watchful and wise made travel and communication between different parts of the world safe and easy.
- To be able to travel by sea, several sea ports were constructed e.g Herod the great spent 12 years 25 – 13 BC building the port of Caesarea.
- The sea was cleared of Pilates (sea robbers) who by their terror had hindered navigation.
- There were good roads that linked the main cities
- The roads were well maintained such that high way robbers could not disturb people.
- Due to easy communication, people traveled for business and other purposes like preaching etc.
- The early Christians missionaries were able to move from one place to another as they spread the good news.
- The missions of Paul would have been impossible without the freedom of travel due to the Roman rule.
- Ireneus in appreciating the work of Romans in preparing the world for Christianity said “The Romans have been given the world peace and we travel without fear along roads and across the sea wherever we wish”

2. Greek Language and Thoughts

- Even as the Romans took over from the Greeks, the Greek Hellenisation had spread far and wide.
- The people of different races could mix as they traded.

- The people of Greeks had the most vigorous intellectual life in the world due to their influence in thinking people started thinking about life, God, human rights etc.
- Although the Jews had the revelation of God, they had no freedom to discuss God especially with non Jews.
- The Greek philosophers provided the people to visualize about God and all those other things which they discussed,.
- ‘The Greek language was used as a means of communication.
- People used the Greek language as a medium for expressing theological and philosophical ideas.
- It was the universal language used in the Graeco-Roman world.
- When the O.T. was translated into Greek even the non Jews could read it so as to know more about Judaism.
- The earliest Christians like Paul did their preaching in Greek language.
- ‘The N. T Canon was also written in Greek and almost everybody in the Graeco-Roman world could read it.
- Christianity as a universal religion found a universal language in which it could once speak to all people.

THE ROMAN RULE IN PALESTINE

- In 63 B.C. Pompey a Roman general went to Dardanus
- Both Aristobulus and Hyrcanus presented their case to him.
- Pompey initially favoured Aristobulus but he suspected his loyalty when he refused to join him as he tried to control the Nabatean Arabs and their King Aretas.
- He defeated Aristobulus and added the Jewish kingdom to the Roman Empire.
- He deprived it of much territory worn by the Hasmoneas
- Aristobulus was taken to Rome as Hostage while Hyrcanus was appointed leader and high priest.
- Judea was now a roman Province ruled from Syria.

HYRCANUS II 63 – 40 B.C.C

Ruled peacefully

However there were a number of revolts which were quelled by the Romans e.g. in 57 B.C. Alexander son of Aristobulus revolted. He was defeated and conquered by the proconsul of Syria (Aulus Gabinius)

In 56 AD, Aristobulus escaped from Rome and raised a revolt in Judea. He was captured and sent back to Rome.

In 55 B.C. Alexander revolted again but was again defeated by the Romans.

In 53 B.C. Alex Pitholaus revolted but was defeated by Romans.

In c.42 and B.C. when Octavian and Antony came into power they favoured Antipater's family (Anti pater was the governor of Judea province)

They appointed his two sons Phasael and Herod the military commanders in Jerusalem and Galilee respectively.

Hyrchanus power was removed and was left with the power of being a high priest only.

However, while Antony was in Egypt at about 40 B.C, the Parthian from Persia captured Palestine

Hyrchanus was taken to prison in Babylon and his ears, were cut to disqualify him from being a high priest

Phasael was taken prisoner and he committed suicide.

Herod escaped and fled to Arabia while Antigonus son of Aristobulus was installed by the Parthians as king and high priest.

ANTIGONUS 40 – 37 B.C.

He was the last Hasmonean King and did not last for long.

Herod was supported by Romans and drove out the Parthians in 39 – 38 B.C.

By the end of 38 B.C Herod arrived in Palestine and with new commission, was helped by the Romans to overcome Antigonus.

Antingonus was captured, taken to Antioch and Beheaded.

Hasmonean dynasty came to an end and Herod became a dient king.

HEROD THE GREAT 37 – 4 BC

Herod the great was:-

- a) An Idumean by race (Descendants of Esau)
- b) A Jew by Religion
- c) A Hellenist in culture sympathies
- d) A Roman in his politician allegiance

He was a born leader i.e.

- (i) A skillful military commander
- (ii) A shrewd politician

- His ruling passion was a desire to maintain and extend to his own power and so was ready to eliminate anyone even if it was the closest relative.
- He was subservient (Obedient) to the Roman masters but harsh and ruthless towards his own subjects.
- He began his reign in 37 B.C. at the age of 32 years.

HIS REIGN CAN BE DIVIDED INTO 3 MAIN PERIODS I.E.

1. Years of consolidation 37 – 25 BC
2. Years of splendour 25 – 13 B.C.
3. Years of Domestic mystery 13 – 4 B.C.

YEARS OF CONSOLIDATION 37 – 25 B.C.

In this period, Herod was busy eliminating those who were a threat to him e.g

- i) Executed 45 supporters of Antigonus
- ii) executed one by one all the survivors of Hyrcanus
He killed Hyrcanus grandson Aristobulus III who was now the high priest. Aristobulus III had become so famous and Herod suspected him and so was killed.
Hyrcanus was killed immediately after being released by the Parthians
- iii) He also became suspicious of his wife Marianne (a granddaughter of Hyrcanus and Aristobulus II) whenever he went on a journey he entrusted her to a protector with instruction that if failed to return, she would be put to death.

The protector revealed the secret to Marianne and when Herod discovered, the protectors were killed and finally Marianne herself was also executed in 29 B.C.

After her execution, he was driven nearly mad by remorse.

- iv) In 28 B.C. Marianne's mother was also put to death with a charge of trying to overthrow Herod.
- v) He also suspected his two sons and put them to death.
- vi) His own brother, Joseph who was one of the protectors was also killed.
- vii) At his time of consolidation, Herod had problems which Cleopatra the Queen of Egypt who with Mark Antony's backing had taken possession of some of Herod's territories.
- viii) However following the defeat of Antony in 31 B.C. Cleopatra and Antony died and his territories were returned to him.

THE YEARS OF SPLENDOR 25 – 13 B.C.

- During these years; Herod continued to enjoy a good relationship with Augustus Caesar and as a result was given more territories to rule.
- At this time of peace, Herod embarked upon an extensive building programme i.e.: Theatres, stadiums, gymnasium, Bath, Hippodromes, temple i.e. He built the magnificent temple of Jerusalem but also built temples for the worship of Caesar (an act which caused great anger among the Jews)
- Hellenistic culture was generally promoted.
- He took courses in Greek Philosophy, Rhetoric and History.
- Several games were started in Jerusalem and Caesaria.
- He constructed Caesaria city in honour of Julius Caesar. It contained Pagan Shrines and Temples, erected in honour of the Emperor.
- Samaria was rebuilt and renamed Sebaste.
- In Jerusalem, he built a theatre and a palace for himself.
- At about 20 B.C. he started building the Temple in Jerusalem – The work which was completed in AD 64 (Just 6 years before its total destruction in AD 70).
- Although a member of Judaism, Herod had very little respect to the Jews religion. For example, he appointed and dismissed priests at will without regarding the life long tradition of hereditary succession.

- His tolerance of Pagan cults and his relation with Rome made him to be disliked by the Pharisees
- He also imposed heavy taxes which made him to be hated by the whole population.
- Every attempts at rebellion was ruthlessly suppressed.
- In 23 B.C. Herod married another wife Marianne II the daughter of Simon son of Poethus, a priest, to please her, he removed Poethus as priest and gave it to Simon who immediately became the target of universal hatred.

YEARS OF DOMESTIC MYSTERY 13-4 BC

- Four years, after Simon was appointed High priest, 2 sons of Mamrienne were recalled from Rome where they had gone to study. They were welcome by the people who acclaimed them with undisguised enthusiasm.
- The Jews saw them as descendants of the Hasmoneans through their Mother and hoped they would relieve the Jews from the Misery which were put to them by their father Herod.
- The two sons were free and spoke with one mind about their sentiments.
- As a result, they acquired hatred from their half brother Antipater (the son of Doris – Herods other wife).
- He accused them to Herod who then executed them in 7 B.C.
- Antipater then grew impatient and wanted to kill his father (through) poisoning so that he may rule but his plan was discovered and he was also executed.
- Five days later, Herod himself died and nobody mourned him.
- Herod may have been great in virtue of his building programme and in comparison with his less able descendants (especially in extending his territory and sustaining it for many years). But in another way he does not excite our admiration.
- It was during his reign that Jesus was born and the stories of killing infants Mt 2: 1 ff after the birth of Jesus Christ certainly fits Herod's ruthless and despotic character as we know from other sources.

HEROD'S SUCCESSORS

- After Herod died, his 3 sons whom he had named in his will went straight away one by one to the Roman Emperor Augustus to press their claims.

- Herod had made his own plans for the succession i.e.
 - a) Archelaus – was to be the new King and was to rule Judea, Samaria and Idumea
 - b) Herod Antipas – was to rule Galilee and Perea
 - c) Philip – was to rule over Hurea, the N. East of the sea of Galilee.
- This arrangement had to receive the Roman approval.
- As the sons went to press their claims, the people representatives also went to plead with the emperor not to allow any of the Herod's sons to be king over them.
- This brought some problems in Judea i.e. a series of rebellions were staged as people tried to show their disapprovals of Herod's sons.
- These rebellions were put down by Varus the Roman governor of Syria and Sabinus whom Augustus sent to Judea as a Procurator.
- Augustus then appointed Archelaus Ethnarch (title of a ruler of people who kept their laws and customs but accepted the supremacy of Rome) of Judea, Samaria and Idumea
- Antipas was to be Tetrarch(a ruler who received his authority from Rome and ruled on their behalf) of Galilee and Perea
- Phillip – was to be a Tetrarch of Pateneaa and Iturea.

HEROD ARCHELAUS 4BC – 6 AD

- He was a violent and ambitious man like his father
- He did not respect Judaism and he appointed and deposed high priests at will.
- This made him to be hated by the Jews that they kept on complaining to Rome about him.
- Within 10 yrs Augustus succumbed to the wishes of the people.
- Archelaus was deposed to the phone valley and his kingdom was placed under the roman procurator
- Among the procurators was Pontius pirate who tried Jesus and allowed his execution.

HEROD ANTIPAS 4BC – 39 AD

- Ruled in Galilee and Perea

- Was a keen builder and he build the city of Tiberia
- He divorced his 1st Wife (The daughter of Nabatean king Aretas (iv) to marry Herodias who was the wife of his half brother
- John the baptist rebuked him and was executed as a result.
- Jesus grew up under his rule in Galilee and according to Luke's gospel was sent to him by pirate for trial (Lk 23:6-12)
- Towards the end of his reign, he went to Rome to ask permission to call himself king.
- Caesar Caligula distrusted him and sent him into exile.

HEROD PHILLIP 4BC – 34 AD

- Philip (Lk 3:1) like his father supported Rome.
- He was a great builder. He rebuild Panion and named it Caesarea Phillip (Mt. 16:13; Mk 8:27) in honour of the Emperor.
- He also built the city of Bethsaida.
- He married Salome, the daughter of his brother Antipas and Herodia's
- His reign was peaceful and just
- He died childless in 34AD His tetrarchy was added to the province of Syria

HEROD AGRIPPA C. 34 – 44

- Was the grandson of Herod the great
- He grew up in Rome and became a personal friend to both Caesar Caligula and Claudius
- When Philip died, his territory was given to Herod Agrippa to rule and when Herod Antipas was sent to exile, his territory too was added to that of Herod Agrippa.
- In AD 41 Herod Agrippa was made ruler over Judea and the territory which had been governed by procurators there.
- Thus he became king and ruler over the whole territory which had been held by Herod the great.
- He gave complete support to the Jews and was highly regarded by the Pharisees.
- He opposed the introduction of Emperor Worship for the Jews and he also acted against the Christians when they conflicted with the Jews (cf Act 12:2)

- He died suddenly and painfully in A.D. 44 having allowed the people to praise him the reverence due only to God (cf Acts 12:20-3)
- His son did not succeed to the kingdom as he was too young to be given the responsibility of ruling.
- Instead the whole territory was placed under the rule of procurators.

PALESTINE UNDER THE ROMAN PROCURATORS

- When Agrippa died, the whole Palestine was placed under the Roman governor called procurators.
- These procurators were not Jews and had little or no sympathy with Jewish customs, ambitions or beliefs.
- Some were violent and wealth loving men, chiefly concerned with their own advancement.
- Others were weak and ineffectual in the difficult situation they faced.
- The group known as zealots which was emerging gradually from A.D. became influential at this time as they were determined to oppose and overthrow the Romans' authority because of that they termed as oppression from both procurators and the Roman government as a whole.

CUSPIUS FADUS 44 – 46 A.D.

- During his reign a rebellion started by a self-styled prophet Theudas emerged.
- Theudas claimed that the water of Jordan would part at his command as a proof of his divine mission.
- Fadus set troops to fight Theudas and his followers were captured.
- Theudas was beheaded.

TIBERIUS JULIUS ALEXANDER 46-48 A.D.

- He had been born a Jew but left the faith.
- The famine referred in Acts 11 occurred during his reign.
- The son of Judas of Gamala, James and Simeon tried to revolt both of them were crucified.

VENIUS CUMANUS 48 – 52 A.D.

- The most serious incident that took place during this time was the murdering of Galilean Jews in Samaria by some Samaritans
- Cumanus accepted some bribes from the Samaritans and therefore took no action against the killers.
- This angered the zealots who took the law into their hands entered Samaria, and killed people and destroyed villages.
- Cumanus punished the Zealots and the Jews complained to Quadratus (The legate of Syria) who sent them to the emperor Claudius at Rome.
- Claudius sided with the Jews and Cumanus was removed from the office.

FELIX A.D. 52 – 60

- He was a freed slave and a brother of Pallas who was also, a freed slave and the head of civil service.
- He was favoured by Emperor Claudius party because they were related by marriage
- As a governor, he was incompetent and cruel
- The Zealot's activities took momentum during his reign. They were prepared to kill not only the Romans but also the Jews who collaborated with the Romans.
- A new sect developed from Zealots who used to kill the Romans and Jews collaborators using a dagger. They were referred as Sicarii (Latin word for assassins Acts 21:38).
- In A.D. 54, an Egyptian prophet held about 4000 men to revolt around Jerusalem but the Romans defeated them (Acts 21:38)
- Felix is also mentioned in Acts 23:24 as the one who tried Paul and let him in prison for 2 years.
- In A.D. 60, Felix was recalled by Nero after some rioting in Caesarea (which he was not able to stop) and dismissed as a procurator

PORCIUS FESTUS 60 – 62 A.D.

- He is mentioned in Acts 25 and 26 as the one who sent Paul to Rome to be tried by the Emperor
- During this time, James the brother of Jesus was executed.

ALBINUS 62 – 65 A.D.

- According to Josephus (The Jewish Philosopher) Albinus left no wickedness explored. He was
 - a) Notorious
 - b) Corrupt
 - c) Accepted bribes from all those who offered him.
- The only prisoner left in jail were those who could not buy their freedom.
- In 65 AD he was recalled to Rome and released all the prisoners from all prisons, the jails were let empty while the country was full of criminals.

GESSIUS FLORUS 65 – 66A.D.

- This was the last of the roman procurators in Palestine but probably the worst.
- Plundered cities and towns
- Committed these crimes openly
- In 66 A.D. he sparked off the Jews anger when he robbed the temple a lot of money.
- The Jews were now set for war aiming to gain their own independence.

THE GREAT JEWISH WAR 66 – 70 A.D.

- The Rebellion in Jerusalem was started by Eliezar the captain of the temple.
- He was also the son of the high priest Ananias
- He was joined by the zealots group led by Manahem who seized the fortress of Masada.
- They armed themselves with the weapons they found at Masada and marched to Jerusalem.
- They fought and took over the city of Jerusalem and started controlling it.
- The Roman legate of Syria heard about the rebellion and marched to Jerusalem.
- When he saw how the rebels were controlling Jerusalem, he returned to Syria for more troops.
- On his way to Syria, he was ambushed by the Jews rebels and some of his soldiers were killed.
- This success persuaded the majority of the Jews to join the rebellion.

- Unfortunately, differences developed among the Jews for some wanted the rebellion to end and make peace with the Romans but others wanted to continue with the war.
- In 67 A.D. Emperor Nero heard about the war. He sent Vespasian to curb the Rebellion.
- By the end of 67 A.D. he had conquered Gallille.
- In 68 A.D. he had conquered Perea, Idumea and Judea.
- Vespasian was no ready to conquer Jerusalem but news came from Rome that Emperor Nero had committed – suicide.
- In 69 A.D. he was proclaimed Emperor and he left Palestine to Rome.
- His son Titus continued with war
- In A.D. 70, Titus besieged Jerusalem
- By sep A.D. 70 the whole city was in Roman hands except the 3 towers of Herod's Palace and part of the Western wall.
- The Romans set fire to the temple and while it brunt set up their standards in the temple court and offered sacrifice to them.
- The temple was destroyed and many Jews were massacred
- Those captured alive were taken to Rome as slaves or to be used in graditorial games
- A Roman garrison was stationed in the ruins of Herod's palace
- This defeat marked the end of Jewish state.
- Later, the Pharisee established a religious community at a place called Jamnia to preserve the Jewish traditions and scriptures.

EMPIRE WORSHIP

- Emperor worship is also referred to as ruler worship.
- It is an act of directing prayer and worship to the ruling person.
- Ruler worship was common in Egypt and Asia
- Pharaoh's were regarded as divine sons to gods.
- Babylonians King were also referred as the representative of the gods one earth
- When Alexander the great conquered Egypt and as he was referred by locals as a god.
- He was treated as a liberator from Persians and so equalized with a god.

- In Greek thought, the gods were not essentially different from human beings. The only different from human beings was that the gods lived forever and were very powerful.
- It was possible for a person who had served humanity in an exceptional way to become a god
- These heroes became gods after the death of Alexander the great.
- When the Romans conquered the Eastern Mediterranean, they inherited the practice of ruler cult.
- Some emperors were reluctant to be worshipped as gods when they alive but when they died they were deified as gods.
- Augustus Caesar (30 BC – 14 A.D.) was seen more of a god than human because of the benefits he brought to the Roman Empire i.e. peace and prosperity.
- It was called saviour and Lord. Temples were set in every provincial capital where the emperor could be worshipped.
- Augustus Caesar on his part linked any cult or temple to himself with the goddess Roma representing Rome
- While most of the Roman emperors in the 1st century were not worshipped during their life time they were some exceptions i.e. Caligula 37 – 44 AD. Considered himself to be divine and commanded worship from all his subjects.
- He had ordered that his statue be set up in the temple of Jerusalem
- He was considered to be mad and was assassinated by his own body guard in AD 41.

DOMITIAN 81 – 96 A.D.

- He also demanded to be worshiped
- He ordered his subjects to call him Lord and God
- It is thought that the book of Revelation was written during his reign.
- He is represented by a beast who wishes to be worshipped in the place of God.
- During his reign there was severe persecution of the church because the Christians refused to worship the Emperor.

EMPEROR TRAJAN 98 – 117 A.D.

- Although Trajan did not wish to be worshipped, his governors e.g. Pliny wanted the subjects to worship him.

EMPEROR DECIUS 250 A.D.

- Wanted to destroy Christianity because it had contributed to the decline of Rome by refusing to worship the emperor.
- Disputes between Christians were taken to non – Christian Roman magistrates.
- The Non Christians felt that by Christians refusing to worship the emperor (which was a symbol of loyalty and unity in the empire) they were living in a state within a state.
- This made the Christians to be severely persecuted.
- To ensure and enforce the Christians to worship him, Decius ordered that everyone who worships him and the empire gods, got a certificate to show that one is loyal to the emperor coz willingness to worship the emperor was seen as a sign of loyalty to Rome and the emperor
- The Christians who refused and hence not given certificates were severely persecuted
- They were regarded as potentials rebels and were killed.
- They were blamed for all the evils in the empire and many were killed through
 - a) **Crucifixion**
 - b) **Beheaded**
 - c) **Being thrown to the wild animals' e.t.c.**

HOW EMPEROR WORSHIP AFFECTED CHRISTIANITY

- (i) Some lost their faith and left Christianity
- (ii) Some were killed – This act of courage made some people to join Christianity for the realized there was something special in Christianity.
- (iii) Some ran away but in their new places, they spread the Gospel far and wide.

THE JEWISH ADMINISTRATION ESPECIALLY THE SANHEDRIN

Introduction

- The history of the Jewish people shows that most of the times, they were under the foreign rulers especially Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks and Romans.
- They did not have much freedom to govern themselves. In their own ways however they tried to retain their dignity as a nation by observing their own rules and regulations.
- The Jewish did not have a cut line between what is political or secular and religious matters.
- The local quarrels continued to be settled by the village elders to be settled by the village elders.
- Bigger issues were settled by a smaller council made up of 23 elders.
- But the most famous council that administered the Jewish affairs was the Sanhedrin council.

THE SANHEDRIN TERMINOLOGY

-The term Sanhedrin is derived from the Greek (**Synedrion**) which means council.

-The NT refers to any council as Sanhedrin or boule eg the Jerusalem council is referred as Sanhedrin. Act 1 is but according to Josephus Sanhedrin was mainly used to describe the Jews' supreme Council or court which administered the internal affairs of the nation.

ORIGIN AND HISTORY

- -The rabbis at Jamnia traced this council back to 70 elders chosen to share Moses' administrative.
- However the 70 elders were not very active or visible until the time of Ezra and Nehemiah.
- The Davidic governor at Jerusalem and Joshua the high priest ruled the community together Haggai 1:1, Zech 4:4.
- These two represented the people in the Persian provincial government. The reconstruction of the temple Ezra 5:5.
- With the death of Zerubbabel of Davidic leadership dominance was replaced by the priests. The high priest emerged.

- From that time the council was dominated by priests and headed by the high priests.
- Some of the Greek rulers gave the council a lot of power e.g. Seleucus. He allowed the Jews to have a form of government in accordance to the laws.
- The scribes, the priests and even the temple singers were exempted from tax poll.
- Other leaders like HEROD the great suppressed their powers and even had some of them killed
- He abolished the privilege of serving for life once a high priest was appointed
- He took it upon himself to appoint the high priest with ceremonial powers and political power
- The Roman leaders around the council to hear cases and to give any disciplinary action except the death penalty.
- After the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in A.D 70 the Sanhedrin was recreated at Jamnia in North West of Judea.
- It later moved to Galilee in A.D 118

MEMBERSHIP

- According to the Jewish Historians Josephus the Council had 71 members
- The high priest was always the head or leader of the council Acts 5:17, Matt 26:57
- Other members consisted of chief priests and majority of them were Sadducees and Pharisees Acts 4:1-5
- However there were few sub tribes Act 5:34, 23:6 and few lay people
- The high priest was assisted by the temple captain Lk 22:52
- According to Josephus, there were two separate secretaries i.e.
 - (i) One to write what was passed on favour of the accused
 - (ii) To write what was passed against the accused
- Little is known about how people were elected to the council but administration to the council was always done through laying of hands.

FUNCTIONS

- Their sphere of authority extended over spiritual, political and legal affairs of all Jewish
- They judged cases and could give punishment of all sorts except death sentence.
- All complicated cases from the lesser council including those in diaspora were taken to the Sanhedrin.

TIMES AND PROCEDURE

- Used to meet on the western side of the temple
- Used to meet during the day when need be.
- The members sat in a half or semi-circle so that they could see each other.
- Jesus case (where council meet at night) was special because of the emergency of the matter.

THE TEMPLE

Introduction

The Hebrew word translation temple is (****)

- It was a connotation of a holy place where public worship was performed
- The temple was the most important building in the Jewish lives.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- Some of the earliest structures built by man were temples or shrines where the council worshipped his god.
- Mesopotamia, In Mesopotamia every city had a temple dedicated to its patron deity
- In the semi nomadic patriots like Abraham, Isaac and Jacob e.t.c show no need of building a temple for God revealed Himself where he willed
- Such occasions sometimes, Sometimes the sin of sacrificial alter were at times commemorates by a pillar Gen 22:9, 28:22.
- After Israel had grown into nation hood, a central shrine became a necessity as a gathering point for all the people, as a symbol of their unity in the worship of their God
- These need was supplied by the tabernacle during the trek through the wilderness and by recognized shrines
- The need for a better and perhaps a permanent temple was first pin pointed by David.
- In 2Sam2:7 The king said that he was dwelling in a house of cedar, while the arch of the covenant was dwelling in a tent.
- He started planning of how to build a temple for the Lord
- However , Because David ha shed a lot of blood as he fought Israel enemies and as he established Israel as a nation, God did not allow him to built a temple but chose his son Solomon to do it.

- However, David laid the plan of the temple, collected the materials and gathered the treasures and bought the site 1Chron2:8 ,2Sam 24:18-25
- Solomon then was the first to built the 1st temple in the Jewish lives.

SOLOMON'S TEMPLE

- Solomon began the actual building of the temple in his 4th year of his reign and completed in his 11th year of his reign 1Kings 6:37
- The description of the whole temple is found in 2Chron 3 and 4.
- Solomon hired the Phoenicians craft men to built the temple, and after it was finished it was clear that it was:-
 - Most magnificent building in Jerusalem
 - The most expensive building such that the most important treasures were stored in the temple 1King 14:26
- These temple remained standing for 400yrs after its foundation
- Throughout this time, its structure was never changed and its buildings were only modified e.g King Asha put 2 upper storerooms in order to put offerings he had made to the temple. 1Kings15:15
- It was again altered by Josaphat at when he laid down a new court which was lower than the original court.
- All the Kings of Judah after Solomon were anointed in the temple court.
- The kings controlled the temple's treasury
- In 587 B.C the temple was destroyed and the temple treasures looted by Nebuchadnezzar 2nd King of Babylon.

THE POST - EXILIC TEMPLE

- Prophet Ezekiel while still in exile prophesied about the new temple which was to be built by the remnant
- After Cyrus of Persia defeated the Babylonians he allowed the Jewish to go back to their country and rebuild the temple
- This temple was initiated by Zerubbabel and the high priest Joshua Ezra 1:3
- In 520 B.C the Jewish started building the temple
- Although they tried to follow the measurement of the first temple, at the end of it all, this 2nd temple was less magnificent than the first one.
- Those who had seen the 1st temple wept because this 2nd was poorly built.
- In 169 B.C Antiochus the 5th Epiphanes looted from this temple Malachi 1:21

- In 167 B.C, the temple was profaned and worship of Zeus Olympas was introduced.
1st Macc 1:44-9.
- In 164 B.C Judas Maccabeus purified and repaired the temple.
- The Jews continued using this temple until Herod's temple was finished

HEROD'S TEMPLE

- Built by Herod the Great when he became the king of Judea.
- Began in 19 B.C
- 1000 Priests were trained as masons so as to respect the sacred area during the construction work
- Built with a great splendor.
- Main structure was finished within 10 yrs. i.e. by 9 B.C, but the work continued until 64 A.D
- To provide gathering place an area of about 300 yards from north to South and 325 yard from East to West was made level.
- The whole building was enclosed by a wall of massive blocks
- It had 3 main courts i.e.
 - a) Court of Israel-only Jewish men were around there.
 - b) Court of the women
 - c) Court of the Gentile
- Notice, In Greek and Latin warned that no responsibility could be taken for the probable death of any gentile who ventured within the courts of Israel.
- The magnificent structure of cream stone and gold was barely finished in A.D 64 before it was destroyed by the Romans soldiers in A.D 70.
- The golden Candelabrum, the table of show bread and other temple treasure were carried in triumph to Rome.

THE TEMPLE OFFICIALS

1. THE HIGH PRIEST

- The high priest was the top official or leader of the temple.
- He had to be from a descendant of Aaron and the family of Zadok.
- He was assisted from the captain of the temple.

- In the most cases he was also involved in political matters

2. PRIEST

- They were divided into 24 teams called divisions lk 1:5
- Each team was on duty in turn for a week
- Each division was divided in to 3- 5 small groups who were on duty each day
- Their income was from tithe and offerings or the 1 st fruits, shares of sacrifices, temple tax and free will offerings

3. THE LEVITES

- They mainly did the manual work in the temple
- They also provided music and were concerned about the up keep of the temple.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TEMPLE

- In Jer 7:1 .The Jewish had taken the temple as a magical building and exaggerated d its worth
- From Jeremiah and other prophets we learn that the temple was very important in the following ways:-

- i. It was regarded as a place where Yawhel lived and ruled in the midst of Israel and where through sacrificial system which reached its climax in the great festivals, he lived in grace, forgiving them, restoring them and enabling them to be cleansed of defilement and so to continue as his people
- ii. It was a symbol of holiness .The deeper ones penetrated the temple and enclosure the greater the sanctity one encountered Act 21:28,Ephe 2:14
- iii. The temple was also a potent symbol of God's victory over his enemies 2sam7 and a peaceful settlement in the Land
- iv. The temple was also pictured as embodiment of Gods people longing for justice, peace and blessings.

-10 males had taken place

v. The temple is related to the dispensation of law and Justice. In it, the law was both taught and practiced. The prophets always reminded people to stop temple worship that is not accompanied by justice (Isaiah 1:10-17, Hosea 6:6; Amos 5:21).

vi. The temple also symbolized peace and rest.(Psalm 13:2-14; Isaiah 66:1) Solomon is chosen to be its builder because he was a man of peace(1 Chr 22:9).

vii. The temple was not just a religious cente of Israel but also combined in itself the functions of all three i.e. Religion, political and even economical matters e.g. the main slaughter house was in the temple and butchery was one of the skills a priest had to possess.

-The high priest was not just a religious figure but also a political figure.

CONCLUSION

The temple to the Jews meant everything to them. It was a centre of every aspects on their national existence and the focal of all what they did. When the temple was destroyed by Romans in AD 70 it was like the whole of the Jewish life came to an end.

THE SYNAGOGUE

INTRODUCTION:

- The Greek term synagogue is used frequently in LXX for the assembly of Israel.
- The basic scene is the place of meeting and thus it came to denote a Jewish place of worship.
- Later it came to be referred to the building in which such meetings were held.
- Synagogues were erected for prayers, reading of the law and for instructions.

ORIGIN

- Neither the O.T nor the N.T gives any information as to the origin of the synagogues.
- However, the general opinion among the scholars is that worship in the synagogues instituted during the Babylonian exiles.
- Before the Babylonian captivity worship was centered at the temple in Jerusalem.
- When the Jews were exiled and the worship at Jerusalem was an impossibility the synagogues arose as a place for instruction in the scriptures and prayers.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

- In the 1st C,AD, Synagogues existed whenever the Jews lived (Acts 8:5)
- Large cities, such as Jerusalem and Alexandria had numerous synagogues.
- Jesus at times ministered in the synagogues of Nazareth Lk 4:16; Mk1:21; Jn 6:5)
- St. Paul also first preached in the synagogues of whenever he went.

- The synagogues were first constructed on the model of the temple in Jerusalem, However it was much more smaller in size and magnificent.
- There was a portable Ark in which the scrolls of the entrance of the building.
- Before the Ark and facing the worshippers were the chief seats for the religious and governing leaders of the synagogues (Mt 23:6)
- The law was read from the platform.
- Men and women sat apart.

OFFICIALS

- Each synagogue was governed by a ruler or rulers.

These Included:-

- a) **Elders**:- who were empowered to exercise discipline and punish the erring members usually through scourging or ex-communication.

The chief officer was referred as the ruler of the synagogue (Acts 15:5). He supervised the service to see that it was carried on in according with Tradition.

- b) **The attendant** (Lk 4:20) brought the scrolls of scriptures for reading and also replaced them in the Ark. He also instructed children and ensured there was order in the synagogue.

- c) **The Interpreter**:- Paraphrased the law and the prophets into vernacular Aramaic.

- d) **The dispenser of alms**: received alms from the synagogue and distributed them to the needy.

- e) **Service Leaders** were divided into:-

- i. Those who conducted the shema which was the first part of the service (Deu 6:4-9)
- ii. The synagogical prayers.
- iii. Reading of the law.
- iv. Reading and expounding the scriptures.
- v. The benediction which concluded the service.

- By the end of the synagogical worship almost ten males had taken place.

SIGNIFICANCE

1. Now that Judaism had spread far and wide, some people would not always travel to Jerusalem for worship. This needed synagogue where they could conduct prayers, read the law and educate their children on the Jewish ways of life. These included the Jews in the diaspora, proselytes etc.
2. The application of law insisted of the sole sanctuary and so the synagogues prayed this role.
3. Acted as center of religious and social life of the Jewish community.
4. In the midst of Hellenization, the Jews and those who have been converted to Jerusalem needed a lot of training on how to stand firm for ones faith. Synagogues played the role.
5. After the destruction of the temple, worship continued in the synagogues.
6. When Christianity began, they also used synagogues to propagate their faith.

THE CHIEF JEWISH FESTIVALS

INTRODUCTION.

- The term feast or festival is derived from the Greek 'Heorte' which has a connotation of a pause from normal work.
- It denotes the passage of time marking high points and breaks in the rhythm of life in the ancient world.
- Among the Jews, the festivals expressed the day or season of religious joy because almost all festivals had a religious origin.
- The Jewish year in which these feasts were celebrated consisted of twelve lunar months(shorter year i.e it was 11 days shorter than the solar year)
- This religious year began with the first month in which the Passover(the first great feast of the Jewish cycle) was observed.
- There are seven major feasts i.e. :-
 - a) The Passover
 - b) Pentecost
 - c) Tabernacles

- d) Blowing of Trumpets
- e) The day of atonement
- f) Purim
- g) Hanukkah

THE PASSOVER

- It was also known as the feast of the unleavened bread.
- Observed on the 14th day of Nisan (The first month) equivalent to March-April.
- Established to commemorate the historical deliverance from Egypt(Ex 10:8,14)
- This was the 1st and most important of all feasts historically and religiously.
- It was supposed to be observed for seven days with the use of unleavened bread.
- It was required to be celebrated annually. However, there were occasions when it was not celebrated due to religious dissension.
- It was still observed in the N.T era of Lk 2:41 –Joseph and Mary took the boy Jesus to the temple at the Passover feasts.
- For seven days, unleavened bread was eaten and no service work was done.
- During the 1st and the last day being holy convocations-sacrifices were offered Num 28:16-25; Deut 16:1-8
- All the Jews were expected to participate in observing the Passover.

THE PENTECOST

- This feast is also called the feast of harvest or the feast of the 1st fruits.

(Ex 23; 16 34:22)

It was celebrated 50days after the Passover i.e on 16th of siwan (June-June)

Originally it was a harvest festival i.e fruits and spring grain harvest but it was later associated with the giving of the law at Sinai and the renewal of covenant.

The special feature of the feast with the offering of two loaves made from a new flour.

Though it was not as important as Passover in the O.T, it was prominent in the N.T as the day when the Holy Spirit was poured upon the disciples of Jesus Christ.

TABERNACLES

It is also called the feast of ingathering or the feast of booths (Lk 23;34-39)

Took place on Tishri 15 (Sep –Oct) and lasted for seven days

The celebration included camping out in gardens and rooftops in tents or huts made from branches of trees as they remembered the days they stayed in tents in the wilderness.

People also carried palm branches and citrons and waved these aloft while, singing Hallel (Halleluya) (Ps:113-118)

Priests brought water from pool of Siloam and poured on altar as part of convocations.

For large candle sticks were set in the temple area and a light all night burnt

There were dancing. Singing and praising all night.

This was the most popular and joyful of all feasts

FEAST OF THE TRUMPETS

Seems to have been celebrated on the 1st day of Tishri

It was also referred to as a blowing feast Num 29:1

Celebrated in the synagogue as well as in the temple.

It did not attract many Pilgrims in Jerusalem.

During this feast sacrifices were offered and hard labour ceased

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

Observed on 10th of Tishri (Sep-Oct)

It was not a feast but a fast i.e a day of repentance and confession and asking for forgiveness.

The high priest entered the Holy of Holies offered incense and sprinkled blood on the mercy seat
He also laid hands on the scape goat which was then driven out into the wilderness carrying people's sins

PURIM

Recorded in Esther 9:26 ff it was established by Mordecai in the time of Ahasuerus.

It is also called the feast of lots

It commemorated the time when Esther and her cousin Mordecai saved the Jewish people from massacre during the reign of Anasuerus the Persian king.

During this time lots were casted by Haman the Kings minister in order to decide which day he would kill the Jewish (Esther 3:7-9; 24; 26)

HANUKKAK -I MACC 4:42-59; 2 MACC 10:1-8

Observed on Kislev 25(Nov-Dec) and continued for the following 8 days

Commemorated the cleansing and rededication of the 2nd Temple by Judas Maccabeus in B.C 165

The temple had previously been defiled by Antiochus (iv) Epiphanes

A lamp was lit in the temple each day and people reminded about what happened during the time of Maccabeus for the benefit of the children to know why it was celebrated.

Other festivals included

- a) The Sabbath day
- b) The new Moon festival
- c) Celebration to mark the end of Iterodian Temple

SIGNIFICANCE

- 1) Reminded the Jewish about their salvation History especially God's deliverance. Their commitment to God way renewed
- 2) Manifested the beneficence of God towards the creatures.
- 3) Through these festivals, Israelites acknowledged God as their provider but also recorded the Lord's unbound and free favour to them as the chosen race.
- 4) The festivals and feast enacted the end Jewish world view and gave regular reinforcement to the fundamental Jewish hope.
- 5) Used these days to educate their child about their history
- 6) The sacrifices offered bespoke forgiveness of sin and reconciliation with God.

CONCLUSION

- So, to the Jews, these festivals were very important.
- To be withheld from the feast was considered a loss and a bar from privilege (Num 9:7)

THE CHIEF JEWISH SECTS

The Jewish had remained as one united Nation for many years

It is believed that Hellenization was one of the factors that made the Jewish to have different issues.

After being introduced to Hellenistic Ideas, e.g Greek philosophy e.t.c they were no longer the Naive Nation. Some of them borrowed the Hellenistic ideas while some of them remained conservative.

When Judaism was challenged by the new ideas, some members were influenced by some new ideas but some were determined to defend the faith in all ways possible

Hence a number of parties/ groups came up from the from the 2nd century B.C

These groups had different beliefs practices etc. The included:-

THE PHARISEES

ETYMOLOGY

The term Pharisee probably comes from the Hebrew root parash which means-separate ones.

Separate may refer to being separate from other Jews or from their chief enemies the Sadducees.

ORIGIN & HISTORY

- Emerged during the reign of John Hyrcanus 134-104BC.

- It is believed that they were the spiritual descendants of the Hasidim who supported the Maccabees in the 160's BC

- They fell out of favour with John Hyrcanus at the end of his reign.

- They also disagreed with Alexander Janneus and engaged him in a civil war.

- They Supported Alexandria Salome 76-67 BC and also Herod Agrippa 41-44 AD

- During the Roman period, they did not involve themselves in politics.

-They seem to have supported the Romans and this explains why they were the only party to survive the great Jewish war intact. After which Jerusalem became synonymous with pharisaism

COMPOSITION

Most of them were lay-men from the middle-class.

Some were professional lawyers

Some of them were members of the sanhedrin.

In the time of Jesus, they totalled to C.6000

However the Pharisees were also divided into 2 main schools of thought

- a) Hillel
- b) Shammai-more strict in observation of the law.

BELIEFS

They were concerned that Israel should be a holy nation(Lev 19:2)

Hence they applied purity regulations for priests to ordinary life of:

- a) Ceremonial cleansing Mk7:1-5
- b) Preparation of food
- c) Tithing etc.
 - They accepted the oral tradition as the written law.
 - Believed in the resurrection of the dead, the existence of the angels and demons, divine control of history and the coming of the Davidic messiah.
 - Applied the law in their current situation by:-
 - a) Adding extra rules to the main commandment. These rules were to ensure that the person was breaking the law.
 - b) Making explicit what the law implies
 - Through quite popular with the people in the teaching of Jesus they are seen to be hypocritical of Mt 6:1ff, 12:1ff;Lk 18:9ff

THE SADDUCEES

Their names may be connected with Zadok, the high priest during Solomon's reign 1King 2:35.It may also be connected with Hebrew saddiq- righteous

ORIGIN AND HISTORY

- They emerged as a group during the reign of Jn Hyrcanus (9134-104 BC).
- The reason for their formation is not clear.
- Favoured by Hyrcanus at the end of his life.
- Apart from Alexander Salome 76-67BC, all other leaders favoured them.

From 63-70 AD they were naturally irritated by the Roman rules disrespect for the office of the high priest and hence fell out of them.

After the great Jewish war of AD 70 they disappeared from history.

COMPOSITION

Most of them were priests.

Most of them well from well-up families(upper class of the society)

Most of them members of the Sanhedrin

BELIEFS

-Very conservative and opposed the Pharisees bitterly.

Only accepted the torah 5 books of Moses

Rejected the oral traditions

The prophets & the writings also came lower to the Pentateuch

Denied resurrection of MK12:8

Denied existence of angels, demons, fate, rewards and punishment after death.

Rejected the belief about the coming Messiah

Only believed in a shadowy kind of existence in sheol after death (Mt 22:23-33)

As members of Sanhedrin, they played a big role in Jesus crucifixion.

In the Gospels & acts of Apostles they appear as great opponent for both Jesus and the early church (Acts 4:1,5:17)

THE ESSENCES

- Essence is derived from Hasidim which means devout ones.
- Essence were the Jewish religious community which flourished in the 1st century B.C . it is likely that they were members of the Hasidim who fled to the desert during time of Maccabean revolt.
- They started as a protest movement against the priest influence on Judaism and against the corrupt leaders including the temple leaders.
- According to them temple had lost its meaning and they saw no need of attending the temple.
- Convinced that God could not live in a house built by human hands and be served by evil priest, rejected the temple.
- Again they were so disgusted by the behavior of their fellow Jews that they run away and stayed in desert
- According to both Josephus and Philo of Alexandria, they lived as community, worked in agriculture and had nothing to do with women.
- They shared all their belongings
- They also shared most of the beliefs with the Pharisees but were strict than the Pharisees

THE QUMRAN COMMUNITY

Little is known about them until 1947 when scrolls were found in caves beside the dead sea

They were also building belongings to the community.

Some scholars suggested that originally belonged to the essenes group but separated themselves from essenes

They disagreed with all the other Jews in many issues including the dates of the major Jewish festival.

Like the essene, they were also disgusted with the careless ways the other Jews were living and also the way the Temple was being used e.g high priest becoming corrupt.

They withdrew from these sons of darkness (themselves being sons of the light) and went to the desert to prepare for the Lord (Isa 40:3)

They believed that a messiah who came and lead them to a great victory over their enemies after which they would worship as they wish at the temple.

This great hope did not come with reality for the Romans broke their community and dispersed them.

The Zealots

Their name indicated Zeal for God. Number 25:11; 1 Macc 2:24-7 the tradition of being Zealous for God goes back as Phineas time Numbers 25 and certainly the Maccabe could be so described.

However for most modern scholar the Zealous as a party emerged in the 1st Century A.D with the rebellion of Judas the Galilean in A.D 6 at the time the Romans were carrying a census for tax purposes.

Judas and his followers believed that paying taxes to the emperor was an act of treason against Gods Israel's true King

The Romans , they agued must be resisted by force.

They believed that if they resisted the Romans by force, God would work through them to establish His Kingdom on earth

This belief i.e violent resistance distinguished them from the Pharisees, otherwise they concurred in so many other belifs.

Some of Jesus disciples were Zealots i.e Judas, Symon and even Thomas.

The Zealots continued with armed struggle and many of them were killed by Romans e.g Judas two sons, James and Symon who were both killed through crucifixion by proculator Tiberius Alexander in A.D 50's called Sicarii (uterary -deggermen) Acts 21:38 who assassinated not only the Romans but also Jews who collaborated with them.

They played a leading role in the great Jewish war and when the Jewish, were defeated they made their final stand at Masada A.D 74 when they all committed suicide rather than fall into the hands of the Romans

The Herodians

Little is known about them,

They were more of a political party than religious party,

They are mentioned in the scriptures as enemies of Jesus ones in Galilee and against at Jerusalem
Mk 3:6 ,12-13; Mt 22:16

They were friendly to both Herod and the people to accept the Herod family as their leader.

Herodians were similar to Sadducees in their beliefs but supported the Herodians dynasty which were not supported by other Jews

The Rabbinic Judaism

Rabbinic Judaism is the name given to the Judaism that developed after 70 A.D i.e after defeat of Jews and destruction of the Temple.

In the N.T Rabbi – Uterary my great ones is used for a teacher.

Later it was used for formerly trained and ordained scribes. After 70 A.D a leading Pharisee, Rabbi Johanan Ben Zakkai set up a school at Jamnia.

Gradually this academy exercised control over Jews in Palestine equal to the Jerusalem Sanhedrin.

The school emphasized on worship ethics and diary living.

Later, some other schools which disagreed with Jamnia on certain issues were also set up.

These disagreements brought the need for the individual authority to be replaced by a group authority to be replaced by a group of authority

Decisions were made by consensus by the end of 2nd Century A.D Rabbis were recognized by romans as leaders of the community.

These Rabinic schools produced the Mishnah (how Jews should behave to guide the Jews now that there were no temple, no Sahhedrin and general no organization as before)

