

# *The Westminster Historical Atlas to the Bible*

by

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## "Maccabean and Herodian Palestine"

The history of Maccabean and Herodian Palestine includes outstanding religious developments. At least one Old Testament writing, The Book of Daniel, was produced.<sup>1</sup> Formation of the Hebrew canon of the Old Testament, a process already well advanced when the Maccabean period began, was practically completed. Noteworthy Jewish sects, the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes, emerged into prominence. Among these sects, the Pharisees proved of the greatest ultimate importance; they developed the oral tradition which in its later written form gives orthodox Judaism its basic character. Above all, the Christian movement appeared and entered upon its missionary career. Obviously neither Judaism nor Christianity can be understood without careful study of this significant period.

### PALESTINE UNDER SYRIA

During the decades preceding the Maccabean period, the struggle between Syria and Egypt for the control of Palestine came to a decisive issue. For over a century after Alexander the Great's empire had been divided among his generals, Egypt dominated Palestine. For several centuries Jews had lived in Egypt, and this gave Egypt a special tie with the Jewish homeland. Syria, however, was constantly seeking to extend its power southward, and under Antiochus III (223-187 B.C.) finally succeeded. His first effort, to be sure, was thwarted when in 217 B.C. he was beaten in battle at Raphia. In 198 B.C., however, he defeated the Egyptian forces at Paneas and became master of Palestine.

It would be wrong to ignore the continuing importance of Egyptian Judaism or its many ties with Palestine. Minor threats to these ties were not lacking. As early as the sixth century B.C. there were Jews in Egypt, and the Elephantine Papyri show that one group had a temple which was destroyed about 410 B.C. and apparently rebuilt. Later, about 160 B.C., Onias IV of the Jewish high-priestly circle fled to Egypt. Josephus reports that Onias appealed to Ptolemy VI Philometor (181-145 B.C.) for permission to build a Jewish temple at Leontopolis in the district of Heliopolis. He found Scriptural support for this surprising project in Isa. 19:19-21, which promised that an altar "with sacrifice and burnt offering" would be erected among the Egyptians. Such a project must have appealed to the Egyptian ruler after he had lost control of Palestine; it would give the Jews in Egypt an Egyptian center for their worship. In the long run, however, this temple did not divert the attention of Egyptian Jews from Jerusalem; its influence was probably local. The future of Judaism still centered in Palestine, which was now securely in the hands of the Seleucid ruler.

The policy of the Syrian rulers was to promote influences that would effect unity of culture in

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<sup>1</sup> **KM Note:** That the Book of Daniel was produced in Maccabean times is the standard view of modern historical criticism. By contrast, conservative scholars argue that this book was indeed written by the sixth-century Daniel, perhaps around 530 shortly after the fall of Babylon to Cyrus in 539. For a thorough, scholarly argument for the sixth-century composition of Daniel, see Gleason L. Archer, Jr., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1974), pp. 379-403.

their territory. Hence they looked with disapproval upon the strangely different Jewish religion, and were ready to strengthen Hellenistic culture in Palestine. They were urged to this attitude by the Hellenistic wing of the Jewish people. Even some of the younger priests at Jerusalem took up the Greek language, athletic sports, and manner of dress. The Jews were deeply divided over the issue.

## THE MACCABEAN REVOLT

This was the situation when Antiochus IV, called Epiphanes or "(God-) Manifest" (175-163 B.C.), became impatient with the stubborn opponents of his policy and determined to stamp out the Jewish religion. In 168 or 167 B.C. he desecrated the Jewish Temple at Jerusalem; he prohibited the Jewish sacrifices and built a pagan altar on the Jewish altar of burnt offering; he also prescribed the death penalty for Jews who possessed a copy of their Law, kept the Sabbath, or practiced circumcision. Representatives of the king erected pagan altars in various places and tested the loyalty of the Jews by requiring them to offer pagan sacrifice.

Obviously devout Jews now faced a life-and-death decision, and resistance soon appeared. The revolt began at the little town of Modein, in the hill country northwest of Jerusalem. Here lived the aged Mattathias, a priest of the Hasmonean house. When summoned to sacrifice he refused, killed a Jew who was willing to abandon his ancestral faith, and also slew the Syrian officer. Then, with his five sons, he fled into the hills, where he was joined by many who were ready to die rather than give up their faith.

Such loyal Jews were in a difficult position. They faced civil war with other Jews, and they were in revolt against the king. Mattathias was too old to lead the movement; on his deathbed, shortly after the revolt began, he appointed his son Judas to captain the rebel forces. From the title given Judas comes the name Maccabean; Judas was called Maccabaeus, which is usually explained to mean "Hammerer" and to refer to his sudden, heavy blows against the enemy. But it would be quite wrong to think of Judas as the general of a large and disciplined army. The Syrian forces controlled most of Palestine, and Judas depended much upon sudden thrusts and brilliant surprise attacks. Yet the desperation of the Jews, who were fighting not only for their lives but also for their faith, made them the equal of an army many times their number.

The campaign of Judas took place mainly in the region of Judaea. Employing the methods of guerrilla warfare, he won victories at Beth-horon, Emmaus, and Bethsura. When the Syrian leaders withdrew to Antioch to prepare greater forces for the war, Judas led his forces to Jerusalem, and although the Syrians still held the Citadel, he cleansed the Temple of pagan objects, rebuilt the altar, and resumed the sacrifices in December, 164 B.C. Since that time the Jews have observed the Feast of Dedication, or Hanukkah, in memory of this occasion. The profanation of the Temple and the struggle of the Maccabees to rescue it from the control of the Gentiles is the background of The Book of Daniel (c. 166 B.C.); it describes the pagan altar built on the Jewish altar of burnt offering at Jerusalem as "the abomination that makes desolate" (ch. 11:31; 12:11).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> **KM Note:** This statement illustrates the rationalist presupposition of liberal historical criticism when it argues for a Maccabean date for Daniel: *there is no such thing as true predictive prophecy*. If a passage or book contain a prophecy of an event known in history, then that passage or book must have been written after the event. In other words, fulfilled predictions are explained as *vaticinia ex eventu* (Latin, "prophecy from the event"). Dan. 11:31 predicted an event fulfilled by Antiochus IV. Therefore, it must have been written after that event, in this case in order to encourage the Jewish patriots to join the Maccabean revolt. By contrast, scholars who believe in divine revelation

Judas and his brothers next made expeditions to Gilead, Galilee, and Idumaea to rescue loyal Jews. In other words, for a brief time the band of loyal Jews was limited to the central part of Judaea, and did not constitute the whole of the population even in that small area. Judas, however, after bringing to safety Jews in other regions who were in danger from the Gentiles or more often from their own countrymen, had to meet the armies of the Syrian king, who was now determined to crush the growing rebellion. His general, Lysias, forced Judas to withdraw from battle at Bethzacharia, where Eleazar, the brother of Judas, lost his life. Bethsura, an important military center which changed hands several times in these decades, had to surrender to the Syrians. Then, however, rivalry between Lysias and Philip for control of the boy king, Antiochus V Eupator, gave Judas unexpected help. Lysias, eager to hurry back to Antioch to forestall his rival, was forced to make peace with Judas and grant religious freedom to the Jews.

### **THE FIGHT FOR POLITICAL FREEDOM**

This concession by Lysias achieved the aim with which the revolt began. However, it did not satisfy the Maccabean leaders. They began to work for complete political independence, thinking, no doubt, that their religious freedom would never be entirely certain as long as they were politically subject to the Syrians. To strengthen their diplomatic position, they undertook to gain support from the Romans, with whom they formed a league of friendship about 161 B.C. This league, however, was of no immediate benefit to the Jews; the Romans, though glad to embarrass the Syrian ruler by showing friendship for the Jews, did not intervene in Palestine until they were ready to take it over and control it (63 B.C.). The immediate future held in store more conflict between the Maccabees and the Syrians, who were called in by the pro-Syrian party of the Jews to fight against Judas. After an indecisive fight at Capharsalama, the Syrians were defeated and their general Nicanor killed at Adasa. But the forces of Judas had suffered heavy losses. When Bacchides came down from Syria with another army and met Judas at Elasa, few Jews rallied to the battle. Judas was killed and his army crushed (160 B.C.).

His brother Jonathan assumed the leadership, but had pitifully few soldiers to support him. He was, indeed, almost a fugitive, and at first could wage only furtive guerrilla warfare. For a time he dwelt at Machmas, i.e., Michmash. His first successes were due not so much to Jewish military prowess as to Syria's internal troubles, which so occupied the Syrians that Jonathan was able to get control of all Jerusalem except the Citadel. Hard-pressed by their troubles at home, the Syrians also evacuated many of their strongholds in Judaea, although they did not give up the important fortress at Bethsura. Jonathan took Joppa, won a victory near Azotus, and was given Accaron, i.e., Ekron. In an attempt to strengthen his political position, he renewed the alliance of the Jews with Rome.

Emboldened by success, Jonathan went to meet the Syrian general Trypho at Scythopolis. Trypho, however, avoided battle; instead he enticed Jonathan to a parley at Ptolemais, and treacherously took him prisoner. He then began to move against Jerusalem, using his captive as a hostage. Jonathan's brother Simon, however, assumed command of the Jews, and Trypho, finding himself balked, finally put Jonathan to death (142 B.C.).

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accept the existence of true predictive prophecy in the Scripture and thus allow the overwhelming evidence for a sixth-century composition by the historical Daniel.

Simon gained an apparent grant of political freedom in 142 B.C. from Demetrius II, who was trying to hold the Syrian throne against Trypho. The Jews dated a new era from this year. Nevertheless, as soon as Syria's internal affairs permitted, her leaders resumed attempts to subjugate the Jews. In the meantime, however, Simon won noteworthy successes. He finally forced the Syrian garrison out of the Citadel at Jerusalem. He took Gazara, Joppa, and Bethsura, and is said to have made Joppa a usable Jewish port. At Joppa he defeated the Syrian general Cendebaeus, who was attempting to reestablish the Syrian rule of Palestine.

The Jews honored Simon as "their leader and high priest forever, until a trustworthy prophet should arise" (1 Maccabees 14:41). His successful career was soon cut short, however, by the treachery of his son-in-law Ptolemy (134 B.C.). Ptolemy murdered Simon and two of his sons at Dok, near Jericho, and sent agents to seize Jerusalem and to murder Simon's other son, John Hyrcanus, who was at Gazara. John, however, learned of the plot, and hastening to Jerusalem he gained control of it before Ptolemy's supporters could reach it. John was promptly recognized as the rightful successor of his father, and became both ruler and high priest.

### THE PERIOD OF TERRITORIAL EXPANSION

John Hyrcanus had a long and successful reign (134-104 B.C.). In its early years he was forced to admit the control of the Syrian king for a time, but he later renounced this control and extended the range of Jewish power. For instance, he gained possession of Medeba, east of the Jordan. He broke the resistance of the region of Samaria, and captured Sichem. After seizing the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim, he destroyed this ancient rival of the Temple in Jerusalem (cf. John 4:20). He took the city of Samaria and razed it. He also captured Scythopolis and successfully asserted control over the Plain of Jezreel.

His son and successor Aristobulus I ruled but a year (104-103 B.C.). He extended Jewish control northward to Galilee, which Judas had abandoned to the Gentiles. Josephus states that Aristobulus was the first Maccabean to assume the title of king.

In the reign of Alexander Jannaeus (103-76 B.C.) the territory under Maccabean control reached its maximum extent. His reign was by no means without its conflicts. When he attacked Ptolemais, that city appealed to Ptolemy of Egypt for help. Ptolemy saw a chance to extend his power to the north, and undertook against Alexander Jannaeus a futile campaign which included battles at Asochis in Galilee and Asophon in the Jordan Valley. Alexander was able to take Gadara and Amathus on the east side of the Jordan. In the southwestern corner of Judaea he took Raphia, Anthedon, and Gaza. By this time, however, the worldly character of Maccabean ambitions and methods had grown until Alexander was using foreign mercenary soldiers to aid him in his warfare. The movement which started out to protect religious freedom had become so secular and nationalistic that many of his devout countrymen supported the Syrian ruler against him. He almost lost his life and throne in a battle with the Syrian Demetrius at Sichem, but was saved by last-minute support from some Jews who at first fought against him.

Further difficulty for Alexander arose when the Syrian ruler came boldly into Palestine to meet Aretas, the Nabatean king, in battle. The latter defeated and killed the Syrian king, and later overcame Alexander in battle at Adida, a town near Lydda in Judaea. By some concession Alexander induced Aretas to withdraw, and continued his attempt at further conquest until on a

campaign against Ragaba, east of the Jordan, he died.

His widow Alexandra succeeded him (76-67 B.C.). Upon her death her two sons fought for the rule; Hyrcanus II was defeated near Jericho and Aristobulus II gained the throne. At this point a decisive change occurred. The Idumaeen Antipater took the side of Hyrcanus. He saw that he could gain power for himself by championing the cause of Hyrcanus, and enlisted Aretas III of the Nabatean Kingdom in an attempt to put Hyrcanus on the Jewish throne. Thus backed, Hyrcanus brought forces to Jerusalem and sought to gain control of that city. At this juncture both Aristobulus and Hyrcanus appealed to Pompey, the Roman general who at the time was in Syria. He came to Jerusalem and took control of it for the Romans. This was in 63 B.C. After that date the Jews never again enjoyed political independence in Palestine until the recent establishment of the State of Israel.

### THE RISE OF JEWISH SECTS

The Maccabean period saw the emergence of the Jewish sects which furnished the background of Rabbinic Judaism and New Testament Christianity. We must pause, therefore, in our historical survey to note the forms which Jewish religious life was taking.

Several factors stimulated the rise of such sects. The Temple not only symbolized for all Israel the unity of their people; it was a special concern of the dominant priestly group and their leadership in its worship and sacrifices gave them special distinction. How rigidly the Law should be applied to all of the daily life of Israel was an issue. Differences arose as to how much and which tradition to adopt in order to apply the Law to new conditions of life. The pressure of Gentile practices and culture, not only on Jews living in Gentile lands, but also in Palestine itself, raised problems which received varying answers; some Jews, especially those whose public position or business forced them to deal with Gentiles, made concessions, while others, spurning compromise, insisted on strict legal observance or in some cases even withdrew into isolation to avoid ceremonial defilement from pagan or careless neighbors. The threat to political freedom led some to make liberty for God's chosen people their first concern.

While most of the Jews never allied themselves with any specific sect, three main parties clearly emerged as the second century B.C. passed. The Sadducees, apparently so named after Zadok (1 Kings 2:35), were the priestly party; their life naturally centered in the Temple ministry. They had little interest in the prophetic movement and writings. When Palestine was under foreign rule, their official contacts with Gentiles led them to accept many Hellenistic ways. They were in general an aristocratic class, conservative in religious and political questions. When the Temple was destroyed in A.D. 70, they ceased to play any significant role in Judaism.

Out of the line of Pious Men devoted to the Law of Israel came the Pharisees, whose name seems to mean "the Separated Ones." They loyally supported the Temple, for the Law so directed, but their deep concern for separation from defilement and for strict observance of the Law led them to develop an extensive oral tradition which applied the Law to the changing conditions of life. Their interest in teaching the Law led them to emphasize the synagogue and its program of worship and education in the local community. While not a large group--Josephus says that in Herod's day they numbered a little over 6,000--their earnestness and dedication won them wide respect and influence. They were the most vital Jewish party of their time, and their group and tradition

survived the fall of Jerusalem to live on in Talmudic and Orthodox Judaism.

Least characteristic of Judaism and little known until recent times were the Essenes. For centuries they were known mainly from three literary sources. Pliny the Elder, a Roman writer who died A.D. 79, writes of them as a monastic group located on the northern stretch of the west side of the Dead Sea. Two first-century Jewish writers, Philo of Alexandria and Josephus, agree that the Essenes, while they kept aloof from normal society, were found in numerous cities, with a total number of about 4,000. They practiced community of property and lived a hard-working and frugal life under strict discipline; except for a few "marrying Essenes," they practiced celibacy.

Perhaps the most sensational archaeological discovery of recent years has been the finding of ruins of just such a monastic center on the northwest shore of the Dead Sea, at *Khirbet Qumran*. The ruins at that site had long been known, but their antiquity and importance had not been realized. The finding of the Dead Sea Scrolls in a nearby cave was the first discovery (1947). It included a magnificent complete manuscript of Isaiah, another fragmentary manuscript of Isaiah, a commentary on Habakkuk, a Manual of Discipline for the sect, an idealistic and ritualistic set of directions for the War of the Sons of Light with the Sons of Darkness, and a collection of Thanksgiving Psalms. This and nearby caves have yielded fragments of ancient pottery and cloth as well as hundreds of other (fragmentary) manuscripts of Old Testament and noncanonical works.

Kinship of the sectarian writings with other ancient Jewish works was noted at once. In 1910 some "Fragments of a Zadokite Work," found in the Cairo Genizah, had been published. They came from an ancient Jewish sect which in protest against the current religious leadership had withdrawn under their own honored leader to "Damascus" (perhaps meant allegorically rather than literally). These fragments are related to the *Qumran* writings; parts of several manuscripts of the "Zadokite Work" have been found in one of the caves near *Qumran*.

Other ancient Jewish writings contain parallels to the Dead Sea Scrolls. The Book of Jubilees and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs show the most striking kinship, but other books, such as the Psalms of Solomon, have important points of similarity.

Excavation of the ruins at *Khirbet Qumran* was carried out, beginning in 1951, with striking results. The site proved to be the residence of an ancient monastic sect which practiced frequent lustrations, for which there were a number of pools or cisterns. The group ate at a common table and practiced community of goods. They carried on active literary work. The long writing table found shows that the hundreds of manuscripts in the cave were not put there by temporary refugees from Jerusalem, but by members of the sect, who continuously copied the Scriptures and wrote and copied other religious works. The fact that their Scriptural writings usually have a better format, script, and writing material than do their other writings indicates that the sect had clear ideas concerning the canon of the Old Testament.

The numerous burials near the main building are almost all of men. The burials number about twelve hundred. This may imply that about 200 members of the order were resident at one time. The caves nearby may well have been used as living quarters by many.

The date of the manuscripts and ruins has been vigorously debated. It now seems clear, however, that the *Qumran* site was occupied by the sect from about 100 B.C. to about A.D. 68. The manuscripts found are in some cases older than the first use of the site by the sect, but none is

later than the middle of the first century A.D. These conclusions are supported by the converging evidence of style of writing, pottery, cloth (tested by the carbon-14 process), coins, and masonry. Some evidence suggests temporary withdrawal from the site during the time of Herod the Great. The sect abandoned it about A.D. 68, and Roman soldiers then occupied it for a time.

It is not yet possible to write a clear history of this sect. It appears that the group originated with Jewish priests who withdrew to the wilderness in violent protest against what they considered evil religious leadership at Jerusalem. About 100 B.C. or shortly thereafter a Teacher of Righteousness, evidently an able leader, gave definite form to the life of the sect. It lived under strict discipline, with severe penalties for infractions of rules. Each member was ranked annually on the basis of his record. New members had to undergo a time of probation and searching examinations. The sect shared property and common meals, and maintained a continuous study of the Law. It lived with a strong eschatological expectation, and looked forward to a Messianic age. In fact, two Messiahs may have been expected. At least, in rules for the common feast, probably described in anticipation of the eschatological banquet to come, we find a Messiah of Aaron, who is given first place; next to him appears the priestly group; and only then is mentioned the Messiah of Israel, who may be assumed to be of Davidic descent.

The importance of these discoveries at *Qumran* is at least fivefold. First of all, this group appears to be Essene; at the least it was closely related to the Essene sect. In the second place, the discovery of over a hundred ancient Biblical manuscripts provides our earliest material for study of the text of the Old Testament books. In the third place, the presence in the sect's writings of Iranian and other Near Eastern influences throws light on the complex nature of ancient Palestinian Judaism, and shows the presence in Palestine of features which some scholars had felt compelled to seek in Gentile lands. In the fourth place, the relation of the sect's writing to other noncanonical documents calls for restudy of the Jewish literature of that period; and the parallels with several New Testament works, such as the Gospels of Matthew and John and the letters of Paul and Hebrews, show that the background of these writings was more Palestinian than has often been thought. Finally, the presence of such a sect in Jesus' day raises again the question of his relation to the Essenes. He was not an Essene, and there is no evidence that he knew the *Qumran* monastery. But it is possible--though not certain--that John the Baptist in his wilderness stay did know the *Qumran* sect and their monastery.

The importance of these new discoveries is great, but it must not be overestimated. The *Qumran* sect left no lasting impress on Judaism. And for all its parallels with New Testament writings, the differences are even more striking. It does not explain the rise of Christianity, and Jesus is no mere duplicate of its great Teacher of Righteousness. The "friend of tax collectors and sinners" (Luke 7:34) lived in an entirely different atmosphere than did the priestly, hierarchical, ritualistic sect. So we resume the history of the Jews under the Romans, knowing that while the *Qumran* sect illumines first-century Judaism and Christianity, it does not represent their central nature and content.

## ROME TAKES CONTROL

Pompey removed from Jewish control the coastal cities, Samaria, and the non-Jewish cities on the east of the Jordan. However, he left Judaea, Idumaea, Galilee, and Peraea under Jewish rule. The entire region was put under the supervision of the Roman representative in Syria. Thus the link

with Syria, which had continued to a greater or lesser extent since 198 B.C., continued under Rome in a new form.

Rome was entering upon the series of internal struggles which finally resulted in the establishment of the empire. Pompey was defeated by Julius Caesar, who made Hyrcanus II the ethnarch of the Jews. Caesar recognized, however, that the brains behind Hyrcanus were those of Antipater, and he therefore made Antipater procurator of Judaea. He also gave Joppa back to the Jews (47. B.C.). Antipater used his sons Phasael and Herod in the administration of his territory; Herod, though only twenty-five years old at the time, showed special skill and energy in suppressing brigands in Galilee.

Caesar was assassinated, however, in 44 B.C., and Palestine again suffered from uncertainty. Cassius demanded seven hundred talents from Judaea, which Antipater raised and paid. Shortly thereafter (43. B.C.) Antipater was murdered, and Antigonus, son of Aristobulus II, tried to gain control of Judaea. To further his purpose he called upon the Parthians, who at the time were trying to expand westward into Syria, and the Parthians helped him to gain control of Jerusalem (40 B.C.). This temporary success proved his undoing. The Parthians were not able to maintain their westward thrust, and the Romans naturally did not want a Parthian ally in control of Judaea. Herod sought the help of Rome, and in 40 B.C. was declared king of Judaea; the term Judaea was here used in its wider sense, practically equivalent to Palestine. It was three years, however, before he was able, with Roman help, to establish effective rule over all his realm. Thus he held his kingdom by the grant and power of Rome.

### **THE REIGN OF HEROD THE GREAT**

The reign of Herod the Great lasted until his death in 4 B.C. It is notable in history as the reign under which Jesus was born (Matt. 2:1). The early years of his rule were not easy. The Roman Antony gave to Cleopatra, whose political ambitions reached far beyond her kingdom of Egypt, the coastal cities of Palestine and the commercially lucrative balsam groves near Jericho.

When Octavian, later known as Augustus, defeated Antony and became ruler of Rome (31 B.C.), he confirmed Herod's position as king of Judaea. After the death of Cleopatra in 30 B.C., Herod also received the cities which Antony had given her. He further received a number of other cities--Gadara, Hippos, Samaria, Gaza, Anthedon, Joppa, and Strato's Tower. These cities, which had been taken from the Jews in order to protect their Gentile population and culture, could be given to Herod because, while he sought to keep on good terms with the Jews, he also was eager to promote Hellenistic culture and loyalty to Rome. A short time later, for helping the Romans, Herod was given Trachonitis, Batanaea, and Auranitis. In 20 B.C., it seems, he was given that part of the former lands of Zenodorus which lay between Galilee and northern Trachonitis.

Indeed, Herod seemed on the verge of becoming even more widely influential. Augustus appointed him procurator of all Syria. However, his effective power was exercised in Palestine and the wider extension of it did not materialize. To add distinction to his rule and to promote Hellenistic influences, Herod undertook numerous ambitious building projects. He rebuilt Samaria and named it Sebaste, a name which still survives in its modern Arabic Name Sebastiyeh. He rebuilt Strato's Tower on a grand scale, and named it Caesarea in honor of the emperor. Antipatris in the Coastal Plain and Phasaelis in the Jordan Valley he laid out and named after his father and

brother, respectively. He restored Anthedon and renamed it Agrippias or Agrippium in honor of Marcus Agrippa, the friend and son-in-law of Augustus; but this new name soon fell into disuse. It was probably Herod rather than his son Archelaus who originally built the winter palace, fortresses, and hippodrome at New Testament Jericho. Part of Herodian Jericho has recently been excavated. Herod constructed many fortresses for the defense of his territory--Alexandrium, Hyrcania, Herodium, Massada, and Machaerus; at the first two of these he built palaces.

One of his most ambitious projects, not finished in his lifetime, was the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem. This was begun in 20-19 B.C. (which suggests A.D. 27-28 for the date of the debate in John 2:20). The main building was soon finished, but the outlying structures were not completed until A.D. 64, only a few years before the whole was destroyed (A.D. 70). Herod was not content, however, to build magnificent cities and buildings in Palestine. With the taxes from his burdened subjects he constructed buildings and made gifts not only in many cities near Palestine, such as Damascus, Tyre, and Sidon, but also in places as far away as Rhodes and Athens. He thus sought to make his zeal for Hellenistic architecture and culture widely known and recognized.

"Maccabean and Herodian Palestine" in George Ernest Wright and Floyd Vivian Filson, *The Westminster Historical Atlas to the Bible* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1956).