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EGYPT

Introduction

- Egypt's history can be divided in a number of ways; generally, it is divided into Pre-Dynastic and Dynastic periods
 - Pre-Dynastic Egypt saw her development as effectively two distinct lands, Upper Egypt to the south and Lower Egypt to the north, especially in the region of the Nile delta
 - The Dynastic period saw Egypt united under a Pharaoh, with each dynasty representing a distinct ruling family or people
 - There was also a period after the Egyptian dynasties, but by this time Egypt was a hollow shell of her former glory

Geography

- Egypt was largely a desert kingdom bounded on the north by the Mediterranean Sea, on the east by the Gulf of Suez on the Red Sea and by the Sinai Peninsula and the Wadi el Arish (the Biblical River of Egypt [Genesis 15:18]), on the west by Libya and the Libyan Desert which was the western extent of the vast Sahara, and on the south by the land of Nubia and mountainous sources of the Nile River
- The Nile was the source of life in this otherwise desert region, with its annual inundations being watched and measured closely so that farming could produce enough wheat to support not only itself, but in the time of Roman rule could make Egypt the breadbasket of the Roman Empire
 - Storing seven years of grain would have been no obstacle for Joseph (Genesis 41:41-49,54-56)

Culture

- The Egyptians were an ethnocentric people with a firm belief in their gods and a desire to serve their pharaohs
- The Egyptians were skilled hunters and brave warriors, albeit they did not often fight battles other than in defense
- They were hard workers who would not only take care of their own needs, but also see that their civil duty was accomplished by building great monuments like temples, mastabas, pyramids, and the Sphinx
- Egypt was extremely wealthy with great mining operations which are evidenced in the riches found buried in places like the Valley of the Kings
- Egyptians were very concerned with the legacies they were leaving

Religion

- Egypt was extremely polytheistic, even worshipping the Pharaoh as a god; only for a brief period under Akhenaten was Egypt monotheistic
- *For a more comprehensive look at Egypt's religion, please see the last page of this chart*

History

- Egypt's history is often divided into around thirty-one dynasties
 - The Egyptian priest and historian Manetho recognized only thirty dynasties from Menes (ca 3100 B.C.) to Nectanebo II (360-343 B.C.)
- Before the dynastic period, Egypt had already been in existence though as two separate entities, Upper and Lower Egypt--to the south and north, respectively--ruled by distinct kings for a great while
- After the dynastic period, Egypt was ruled by Persia and Greece and Rome--some will refer to the Persian and Greek periods as dynasties

Pharaohs

- Thirty-plus dynasties contain too many pharaohs to mention all--and some gaps in chronology allow for other pharaohs yet unknown; accordingly, consider a few of the more important, especially Biblically.

EGYPT (Pharaohs continued)

- Djoser (c2668-2649 B.C., Dynasty III) was the first pyramid builder Khufu, or Cheops, (c2589-2566 B.C., IV) built the Great Pyramid at Giza
- Khafre (c2558-2532 B.C., IV) built the sphinx
- Senusret III (c1878-1841 B.C., XII) may have been the pharaoh associated with Abraham in Genesis 12:10-20
- Sobeknefru (c1785-1782 B.C., XII) was the first female ruler of Egypt, perhaps as a pharaoh
- Around 1670 B.C., Joseph would have been vizier in Egypt; this was a time of upheaval in Egypt, with dynasties 13-17 all fighting for control--it is not surprising that a king, likely of a new dynasty, would arise not recognizing Joseph (Exodus 1:8)!
- Amenhotep I (c1551-1524 B.C., XVIII) was likely the pharaoh when Moses was born (Exodus 2:2)
- Tuthmosis I (c1524-1518 B.C., XVIII) was pharaoh when Moses was a child (Exodus 2:10)
- Tuthmosis III (c1504-1450 B.C., XVIII), co-regent with his mother Hatshepsut (c1498-1483 B.C., XVIII), was pharaoh when Moses fled Egypt (Exodus 2:15)
- Amenhotep II (c1453-1419 B.C., XVIII) was likely the pharaoh of the Exodus which would have occurred in 1447 B.C. according to I Kings 6:1--if Solomon's reign began in 971 B.C.
- Amenhotep IV promoted monotheism, changing his own name to Akhenaten (meaning "servant of Aten" as opposed to "Amun is pleased")
 - Note that his changing the religion was within a century of the demonstration of the superiority of one God over Egypt's pantheon
 - His mother, Queen Tiye, may have been a Hebrew--at the very least, she was not of Egyptian royalty

ISRAEL'S NEIGHBORS

Amalekites

- Amalekites, "the first of the nations" in Numbers 24:20, are first mentioned in Genesis 14:7

Ammonites

- Located east of the Jordan
- Descendants of Lot (Deuteronomy 2:19) who were often allies of Israel's enemies (II Kings 24:2) and so were destroyed (Ezekiel 21:28-32)
- Nahash (I Samuel 11:1) and Hanun (II Samuel 10:1) were Ammonite kings
- They worshipped Molech (I Kings 11:7) through human sacrifice (Leviticus 18:21)

Amorites

- Lived in the highlands of Palestine, especially toward the south
- Sihon was one of her kings (Numbers 32:33)

Bashan

- Located east of the Sea of Galilee
- Og, a giant (Deuteronomy 3:11), was one of her kings (Numbers 32:33)

- Tutankhaten (c1334-1325 B.C., XVIII) would restore polytheism and give himself, or as a boy be given, a new name: Tutankhamun (meaning "living image of Amun" as opposed to "Aten")
- Ramesses II the Great (c1279-1212 B.C., XIX) fought against the Hittites at Kadesh in 1274 B.C.
- Merneptah (c1212-1202 B.C., XIX) would boast "Israel is devastated, her seed is no more, ..."
- Siamun (c978-959 B.C., XXI) was Solomon's father-in-law (I Kings 3:1)
- Sheshonq I (c945-924 B.C., XXII) gave refuge to the exiled Jeroboam (I Kings 11:40) and fought against Israel and Judah (as recorded at Karnak); he was not allowed to capture Jerusalem, but he did take her riches (II Chronicles 12:2-9)
- Osorkon IV (c730-715 B.C., XXII) was the So to whom Hoshea sent messengers (II Kings 17:4)
- Taharqa (c690-604 B.C., XXV) was the "broken reed" of Isaiah 36:6 and pharaoh of Isaiah 37:9
- Tanuatamun (c664-656 B.C., XXV) was pharaoh when "populous No" was captivated (Nahum 3:8)
- Nekau (c610-595 B.C., XXVI) was Assyria's ally (II Kings 23:29) who killed Judah's impetuous King Josiah at Megiddo (II Chronicles 35:20-24), he was also the one who set up Eliakim as puppet king in Judah (II Chronicles 36:3-4)
- Wahibre (c589-570 B.C., XXVI) probably the pharaoh of Jeremiah 44:30; Egypt fell to Babylon in his reign (II Kings 25:1-11; cf Ezekiel 30:10-26)
- Other significant Egyptians were not Egyptian per se, but reigned as pharaohs though they were of other descent (see chart V for *Ptolemaic Egypt*)

Scriptural Significance

- Egypt, associated in Scripture with Mizraim (Genesis 10:6) [the Hebrews' name for it], played a roll in Israel's history from the times of the patriarchs (Genesis 12:10) into the time of the early church (Acts 21:38)

Canaanites

- Dwelt in the lowlands, both eastern and western, of Palestine (Numbers 13:29)
- Jabin was a king of Canaan (Judges 4:2)
 - Jabin may have been a generic title like pharaoh (Joshua 11:1)
- Often the name Canaan was applied to all the land west of the Jordan River

Cities of the Plain

- Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim, and Zoar (Genesis 14:2) were cities in the area of the Dead Sea; their destruction from God for their sinfulness (Deuteronomy 39:23) rendered them lost for good

Edomites

- Edom was the land to which Esau went (Genesis 32:3) having sold his birthright to Jacob (Genesis 25:30)
- They dwelt in mountains (Obadiah 4) and passes south of the Dead Sea to the tip of the Red Sea (I Kings 9:26)

ISRAEL'S NEIGHBORS (Edomites continued)

- They would not let the Israelites pass through on their way to Canaan (Numbers 20:18-21)
- David conquered Edom (II Samuel 8:13,14)
- Amaziah killed ten thousand Edomites (II Kings 14:7)
- Edom allied with Nebuchadnezzar against God's people and so were condemned and destroyed (Isaiah 34:5-8; 63:1-4; Jeremiah 49:17; Obadiah)
- Over time, their reach spread into southern Palestine where they were known as Idumeans
- They were compelled to convert to Judaism by the Hasmonean John Hyrcanus (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, XIII.ix.1)
- In the 60s B.C. Hyrcanus II had an Idumean officer, Antipas, who had a son (Antiquities, XIV.i. 3); that son married a Hasmonean princess, Mariamne, hence solidifying his claim to the Hasmonean throne (*Antiquities*, XIV.xvi)--the son would become the despotic Herod the Great

Girgashites

- Their locale is not known for certain; however, while some would place them southeast of the Sea of Galilee, they are listed among peoples living west of Jordan (Deuteronomy 7:1)

Hittites

- Also called "sons of Heth" (cf Genesis 23:3,10)
- Lived in the southern part of Palestine
- Abraham bought the cave of Machpelah from Ephron the Hittite (Genesis 23:2-18)
- Fought against Joshua (Joshua 9:1,2)
- Uriah the Hittite was the faithful soldier whom David had murdered (II Samuel 11:3-17)

Hivites

- Lived in the area of Mount Hermon (Joshua 11:3)
- Hamor is named as a prince (Genesis 34:2)
- In Joshua's day they were at peace with Israel (Joshua 9:7-15; 11:19)

Jebusites

- First mentioned in Numbers 13:29
- They were among a host of enemies against Joshua (Joshua 11:1-4)
- For a while they would not give up their Jerusalem capital (Judges 1:21) in spite of its having been burned (Judges 1:8); ultimately, David took the city (II Samuel 5:6-7)
- Adonizedek was one of her kings (Joshua 10:1)
- Araunah was a very honorable Jebusite (II Samuel 24:20-23)

Kenezites

- While their location is unknown, of note is that Caleb's father was a Kenezite (Numbers 32:12)

Midianites

- The land of Midian was located to the west and east of the Gulf of Aqaba on the Red Sea
- Midianites sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites, descendants of Ishmael, who carried him to Egypt (Genesis 37:28)
- Moses fled to the land of Midian after he killed an Egyptian (Exodus 2:15)

- Moses father-in-law was a Kenite (Judges 4:11), held to be a branch of the Midianites due to Jethro's dwelling place (Exodus 2:15,16)
 - The Rechabites were a branch of the Kenites who dwelt in Jerusalem when Babylon began to threaten (Jeremiah 35:11) and who faithfully honored their fathers (Jeremiah 35:6-7); they served as an object lesson to the disobedient children of God (Jeremiah 35:13-19)
- Gideon saved the Jews from Midianite oppression (Judges 8:21-26); Zebah and Zalmunna were Midianite kings (Judges 8:5) while Oreb and Zeeb were princes (Judges 7:25)

Moabites

- Located east of the Dead Sea
- Like the Ammonites, they were descendants of Lot (Genesis 19:36-38), they were often allies of Israel's enemies, and they were also punished (Zephaniah 2:8-9)
- Balak (Micah 6:5) and Ehud (Judges 3:15) were among Moab's kings; the famed Moabite stone was a victory monument of their king Mesha
- They worshipped Chemosh (I Kings 11:7)
- Ruth was a Moabitess (Ruth 1:4)

Perizzites

- Lived in the lowlands of Palestine like the Canaanites (Genesis 13:7)

Philistines

- Lived in southwestern Palestine, but were originally from Caphtor (Jeremiah 47:4; Amos 9:7)
- Gath, Gaza, Ashdod, Ekron, and Ashkelon were her prime cities or lordships (Joshua 13:3)
- Two kings of Philistia were named Abimelech (Genesis 20:2; 26:1), which may have actually been a title like pharaoh
- Shamgar slew 600 Philistines (Judges 3:31)
- Samson was the great adversary of the Philistines (Judges 13-16)
- For a short while the Ark of the Covenant was in Philistia (I Samuel 4,5)
- David slew Goliath of Gath, a giant who mocked God's people (I Samuel 17); later, David was granted asylum by the Philistine king Achish (I Samuel 27:3,4)
- Hezekiah fought against the Philistines (II Kings 18:8)

Rephaim

- Giants of whom it is reasoned were the Anakim--giants (Deuteronomy 9:2) from the southern part of Palestine (Joshua 11:21), the Emim--giants from east of the Dead Sea (Deuteronomy 2:10,11), and the Zuzim (Genesis 14:5) or Zamzummim (Deuteronomy 2:20)--giants from east of the Jordan

- Goliath and his family would have been descended of the Rephaim (Deuteronomy 2:20,21; II Samuel 21:22)

Salem

- An early name for what would become Jerusalem
- Her king Melchizedek (Genesis 14:8) was a type of Christ (Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 7)

EGYPTIAN MYTHOLOGY

Origin

- Early worship in Egypt revolved around animal and ancestor worship
- Egyptian gods were often represented by figures with human bodies and animal's heads
- Egyptian mythology was passed down through successive generations, and as such was modified by each and evolved--like other mythologies--into a worship of the forces which the Egyptians saw at work in the natural world
- As new families, or dynasties, came into power they would elevate their particular gods to chief and would ascribe to them the attributes of those being replaced--thus many gods were recognized as being over many aspects of the physical or spiritual world, often overlapping other gods' roles

Deities

- Amun, later known as Amun-Re (connected with the sun-god in one essence), was king of the gods and patron deity of the pharaohs
- Aten was the sun, at one time (under Akhenaten c1350-1334 B.C.) recognized as the only god
- Osiris was the green-skinned god of fertility and the dead who was often pictured as mummified having been murdered by Seth and resurrected
- Anubis was the jackal-headed god of the dead
- Isis was the queen of the gods, mother-goddess, fertility-goddess and sister and wife of Osiris
- Seth was the god of storms, the desert, and of darkness and murderer of his brother Osiris
- Horus was the falcon-headed sky-god of Lower Egypt, son of Osiris and Isis, and rival of Seth
- Ptah was the god of the dead, and a creator and fertility god, being primordial water
- Re was the falcon-headed sun-god, king of the gods, father of mankind, protector of kings
- Hathor, the cow-goddess, was the sky-goddess and goddess of love and alcohol
- Khnum, the ram-god, was creator-god of Upper Egypt who gave man life in the womb
- Thoth, the moon-god, was the messenger-god of learning and wisdom, and inventor of writing
- Along with countless other gods (like Nut, Shu, and Geb--the sky, atmosphere, and earth, respectively), there were some exemplary men honored as gods (such as the pharaohs, the architects Imhotep and Amenhotep, and Djoser, noted for his knowledge and wisdom)

Creed

- There was no recognized creed; this mythology merely evolved over the course of time
- There were recorded songs and prayers, books of wisdom, and spell-books
- While not a creed, per se, copies of the *Book of the Dead* reveal the trials which faced Egyptians when they entered the afterlife and reveal much about the Egyptian gods--these would be buried with the dead or copied on tomb walls

Beliefs

- A good life would bring respect from peers and pleasure to the gods

Creation

- The universe was originally filled with water
 - Over time a hill arose out of the water
 - Life, including human life, began on this hill (just as life would spring forth from the land over which the Nile had been inundated)--the gods also came from this hill

Death

- The Egyptians recognized that the physical body remained behind when one died, but felt that if it were preserved it could aid one in his afterlife; therefore, they mummified the dead--if one's body were lost, a statue could suffice in its place

Afterlife

- There would be an afterlife, the *ba*, or soul, of man would live on in the *ka*, a transcendent body which could live with the gods
 - Trials would determine whether one would be consumed by Ammit, the devourer, or walk in the Field of Offerings, the Egyptians' paradise
 - In the trials, the heart of man was weighed against Maat, a feather representing truth
 - If the person's heart were lighter, he would be allowed to live, otherwise he would be destroyed
 - This was just one part of one's postmortem trials which also involved correctly reciting incantations
- Many provisions would also be buried with the dead to help them in their next lives.

Legacy

- Alexander the Great saw Amun as the equivalent of the Greek's Zeus, so he went to the temple of Ammon (Amun) to be reassured that he was the son of Ammon/Zeus as his mother had claimed

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WORLD EMPIRES AND THE BIBLE II:

ISRAEL UNITED, ISRAEL DIVIDED



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COMPREHENSIVE CHRONOLOGY

ISRAEL UNITED

Introduction

- God has actively had His hand in history (Daniel 4:32; Romans 13:1)
- There was, from the beginning, a plan by God to reconcile man to Himself: A “scarlet thread” of redemption (Revelation 13:8; Genesis 3:15)
- In the garden after creation, God’s creation was perfect, having access to the tree of life
 - By sin, man forfeited his place in the perfect garden
 - After man was cast out of the garden, there were some righteous, e.g. Enoch, Noah; however, the majority of men were wicked, so God destroyed His creation by flood
 - After the flood civilization spread from Mesopotamia
- Over time a man named Abraham was called to leave Ur, he and his family Went to Haran then into Canaan having received promise that in him all nations of the earth would be blessed (Genesis 12:1-3)
- That covenant was renewed with Isaac and Jacob (Hebrews 11:9)
- Jacob’s beloved son Joseph was sold into slavery by brethren who ultimately followed him to Egypt
- Over time a pharaoh who did not recognize Joseph or his God arose in Egypt (Exodus 1:8); this pharaoh enslaved God’s people
- A deliverer was born: Moses (1527 B.C.)
 - The children of Israel left Egyptian bondage (c1447 B.C.)
 - On their flight, God gave His people a law (Exodus 20-23) by which they were to be governed in their dealings with Him and with other men (c1445 B.C.)
 - God prepared for his people to enter the land He promised them, but the people would be afraid, and were afraid; as punishment for their lack of faith, they wandered in the wilderness for forty years (Numbers 13,14)
 - Finally, a new generation was able to enter the promised land, along with Joshua and Caleb (c1407 B.C.)
 - Unfaithfully, however, the people did not cast out and keep out the Canaanites through and beyond the six years of conquest
- After the children had settled into the land of Canaan, they were protected by judges (c1383-1050 B.C.)
 - Due to Israel’s constant attempts to be like their neighbors, God sent a series of oppressors and deliverers: Othniel (delivered Israel from Mesopotamian oppression), Ehud (Moabites), Shamgar (Philistines), Deborah (Canaanites), Gideon (Midianites), Abimelech, Tola (defended), Jair, Jephthah (Ammonites), Ibzan, Elon, Abdon, Samson (Philistines), Eli, and Samuel
- Rejecting their Theocratic ruler, God, the Israelites demanded to have a king like their neighbors had (I Samuel 8:1-8,15-22); God granted their foolish wish, but only after giving them a warning (I Samuel 8:9-18)-- thus began the United Kingdom period of Israel

Geography

- The children of Israel dwelt in tribal allotments (Joshua 18-21)
- The land of Israel at her zenith under Solomon reached from the Euphrates River on the north, to Philistia on the west, to the Wadi el Arish which bordered Egypt to the southwest (I Kings 4:21), beyond the Jordan River into the lands of the Bashan, Ammon and Moab

ISRAEL (Continued)**Culture**

- The people of Israel were always to be a separate people (Leviticus 20:22-26; Deuteronomy 18:9-14), though God knew that they would clamor to be like their neighbors (Deuteronomy 17:14)

Religion

- Israel was monotheistic with a priesthood bridging the gap between man and God
 - Following the Exodus from Egypt and subsequent giving of the Mosaic law, God setup the Aaronic priesthood (Exodus 28:1; 29:44; 40:13-15)
 - Aaron (the first high priest) and his sons Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar (the second high priest [Numbers 20:25-28]), and Ithamar were set apart by God to serve as priests
 - It was during this time that Aaron made the golden calf for the people (Exodus 32) and Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire to the Lord (Leviticus 10)--both transgressions were punished severely
 - It was also, however, in this time that the righteous priest Phinehas stopped a plague (Numbers 25:7-13)
 - Leviticus was written for the priestly tribe (the Levites [Numbers 3:11-13]) and family (Aaron's [Numbers 25:13])
 - When the Israelites entered into the promised land the Levites were given 48 scattered cities from which to serve the other twelve tribes (Joshua 21)
 - As the time approached for Israel to have a king, Eli, the high priest (whose own sons were wicked [I Samuel 2:12-36]), reared

Samuel who would anoint the kings

- Quite a lot happened to the priesthood during this time, for one of those kings, Saul, massacred the members of the priestly community of Nob (I Samuel 22:9-19).
- David recognizing that the priests had grown to a great number divided into twenty-four courses that served a week at a time (1 Chronicles 24)-even down to the time of Zechariah, John the Baptist's father (Luke 1:5-8)
- In the time of the last kings of this period, David and Solomon, Zadok, acting at one point as co-high priest (II Samuel 8:17; 15:24-29,35; 19:11) seized the reigns of the priesthood, thereby serving as the progenitor of priests well into the Intertestament Period
- *For a more comprehensive look at Israel's religion, please see the last page of this chart*

Leaders

- Saul (1050-1010 B.C.) was a king of great stature and pride who tried to kill David
- David ([1010] 1003-971 B.C.) was a king after God's own heart, but he was not perfect, having committed adultery with Bathsheba and been responsible for the death of Uriah the Hittite
 - As a youth David killed the giant Goliath (I Samuel 17)
 - David reigned in Hebron the first seven years
- Solomon (971-931 B.C.) was a wise foolish king who went into apostasy
 - He wrote including Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon three thousand proverbs and fifteen hundred songs (I Kings 4:32)
 - The kingdom was divided from him in the days of his son (I Kings 11:11-13)

ISRAEL DIVIDED: ISRAEL

Introduction

- After the division of the kingdom, the north, composed of ten tribes, was ruled by nineteen kings composing nine dynasties (in which rule typically was past down from father to son)
 - Of the nineteen kings, not one was good in the eyes of the Lord

Geography

- Israel stretched from the area of Mount Hermon in the north into the lands of Bashan and Ammon in the east to the edge of the tribe of Benjamin in the south

Culture

- The northern kingdom was larger, richer, and more fertile than the southern kingdom

Religion

- The first king of divided Israel was worried that the northern tribes may continue their association with the southern, so he set up calves that they could worship in Dan near the northern border of the land and Bethel near the border with Judah

- He changed the object, place, and time of worship, and the priesthood (I Kings 12)

- Baal worship was brought into the northern kingdom by Ahab who married the daughter of Ethbaal, king of Sidon; she was the infamous Jezebel (I Kings 16:31)
- Prophets warned Israel of her departure from God, but Israel did not heed and fell to the Assyrians after only 210 years

Leaders

- Jeroboam (931-910 B.C., Dynasty I) led Israel into calf worship
- Nadab (910-909 B.C., I) was killed by Baasha
- Baasha (909-886 B.C., II) made Tirza his capital
- Elah (886-885 B.C., II) was killed by Zimri
- Zimri (885 B.C., III) burned himself in his palace
- Tibni (885-880 B.C.) never truly king, though half the people followed him (I Kings 16:21,22)
- Omri (885 [co-regency]/880-874 B.C., IV) was made king by his army; reigned in Tirzah briefly after Tibni died, then reigned in Samaria

ISRAEL DIVIDED: ISRAEL (Leaders continued)

- Ahab (874-853 B.C., IV) married Jezebel and incorporated Baal worship into Israel's
 - One of the best known stands against Baal was when Elijah confronted Ahab's idolatrous prophets on Mount Carmel (I Kings 18)
- Ahaziah (853-852 B.C., IV) was rebuked by Elijah for seeking the aid of Baalzebub (II Kings 1:2,3)
- Jehoram/Joram (852-841 B.C., IV) did not accept Baal, though he "wrought evil" (II Kings 3:2)
- Jehu (841-814 B.C., V) ended the dynasty of Ahab (II Chronicles 22:7; II Kings 10:17)
 - He was creative in his eradication of Baal worship (II Kings 10:18-28)
 - He accepted calf worship (II Kings 10:29)

ISRAEL UNITED: JUDAH**Introduction**

- After the division of the kingdom, the tribes of Judah and Benjamin remained under the control of the Davidic/Solomonic line of kings
 - Whereas Israel had nine dynasties, Judah had just one--a pure line from which would come the Christ, Jesus (Matthew 22:41-46)
 - Whereas no kings of Israel were good, nine of the nineteen kings of Judah are classified as good to some degree--one even great
 - One will also note that the reigns of the kings of God's more righteous people were generally longer and more peaceful and that the kingdom lasted 135 years longer

Geography

- Extended northward into Benjamin's allotment and southward to Kadesbarnea, but only to Philistia westward and the Dead Sea eastward

Culture

- Was smaller, poorer, and less fertile than Israel

Religion

- Baal worship, and worship of other gods, had been introduced by Solomon; it would be a major threat throughout Judah's history
- During this period many of the priests in Judah did what they could to keep the people close to God; such priests were Jehoiada who protected the young Joash (II Kings 11,12), Azariah who withstood King Uzziah (II Chronicles 26:16-20), and Hilkiah who, removing Baal worship from the temple, spurred Josiah's reform (II Kings 22,23)
 - This does not mean that there were no wicked priests at this time, for there were, such as Uriah (II Kings 16:10-16) and Pashhur (Jeremiah 20:1-6)

Leaders

- Rehoboam (931-913 B.C., evil) was a foolish man who heeded the counsel of young men rather than old and so contributed to the division of the kingdom (I Kings 12:3-19)
- Abijah/Abijam (913-911 B.C., evil) was given victory over Jeroboam's Israel (II Kings 13:15,16)
- Asa (911-870 B.C., good) was an early reformer (II Chronicles 15:8)

- Jehoahaz (814-798 B.C., V) was subject to Syria
- Jehoash/Joash (798-782 B.C., V) defeated Judah's Amaziah (II Chronicles 25:17-24)
- Jeroboam II (793/782-753 B.C., V) was militarily successful (II Kings 14:25,28;)
- Zachariah (753-752 B.C., V) was killed during Shallum's conspiracy
- Shallum (752 B.C., VI) was killed by Menahem
- Menahem (752-742 B.C., VII) was cruel (II Kings 15:16)
- Pekahiah (742-740 B.C., VII) was killed by Pekah
- Pekah (752-740; 742-740/740-732 B.C., VIII) became an Assyrian vassal
- Hoshea (732-721 B.C., IX) had killed Pekah
 - He had tried to make an alliance with Egypt
 - Israel fell to Assyria in his reign (721 B.C.)

- Jehoshaphat (873 [co-regency]/870-848 B.C., good) was a righteous king, but he could not defeat idol worship (I Kings 22:43)
- Jehoram (853/848-841 B.C., evil) killed his brothers as rivals (II Chronicles 21:4)
- Ahaziah (841 B.C., evil) was killed by Jehu
- Athaliah (841-835 B.C.), daughter of Israel's Ahab and queen of Jehoram, she was an interim ruler having killed all of the heirs (save one), but she was not counted among the kings
- Joash/Jehoash (835-796 B.C., good then evil) was rescued from the threat of Athaliah and was reared by the priest Jehoiada to be a reformer
 - After Jehoiada died, he went the way of his idolatrous forebears (II Chronicles 24:17-22)
- Amaziah (796-767 B.C., good and evil) was murdered
- Uzziah/Azariah (791/767-740 B.C., good and evil) was blessed by God (II Chronicles 26:4,5)
- Jotham (750/740-736 B.C., good) was righteous, but the people were not (II Chronicles 27:2,6)
- Ahaz/Jehoahaz I (736-716 B.C., evil) was a terrible, murderous idolater (II Kings 16:3,4)
- Hezekiah (716-687 B.C., good) was a reformer (II Chronicles 29-31)
- Manasseh (696/687-642 B.C., evil then good) led Jerusalem to sin, but turned (II Chronicles 33)
- Amon (642-640 B.C., evil) forsook God
- Josiah (640-609 B.C., great) the best king and a reformer for his people (II Chronicles 34:1-4)
- Jehoahaz II/Shallum (609 B.C., evil)
- Jehoiakim/Eliakim (609-597 B.C., evil)
- Jehoiachin/Jeconiah/Coniah (597 B.C., evil)
- Zedekiah/Mattaniah (597-586 B.C., evil) was a son of Josiah and uncle of Jehoiakim, and the last king before Jerusalem fell (586 B.C.)

Later History

- In 516 B.C., after the return from captivity, the high priest Joshua, along with the governor Zerubbabel rebuilt the temple in Jerusalem (Ezra 3; Ezr_6:9-15; Haggai 1,2)
- In 457 B.C. Ezra restored worship
- In 444 B.C. Nehemiah rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem amid great opposition

JUDAISM

Origin

- The religion of the Israelites, or Hebrews, had originated with the father of a family making offerings on its behalf; this was known as the patriarchal age
- The next age, the Mosaic age, accompanied the giving of the law to Moses on Mount Sinai
 - The religion of that day was in worship and lifestyle governed according to the decree of God

Deities

- The Jews worshipped one God known as El, YHWH, Adonai, and other names

Creed

- The Hebrew's *Scripture* (John 5:39) largely corresponded to the *Old Testament* of the modern *Bible* although it was not called such
- The first five books, the books of Moses, were called the *Torah*
- In addition to the written word, the Jews closely held to an oral law, the *Mishnah*, which was not of Divine origin; that is, was not inspired
- Over time, Judaism also incorporated a commentary of the *Torah* into their religion; it was called the *Midrash*
- The Jews in Babylonian captivity produced the *Talmud*, which is a set of discussions based on the *Mishnah*

Beliefs

- YHWH would physically bless the sons of Abraham who faithfully followed Him
- In a future time of oppression, YHWH would send a Messiah to deliver the Jewish nation
- The Jews, over time, were more and more concerned with political matters and less concerned with spiritual matters
- The Jews believed that since they were the chosen nation of YHWH then they were superior to all who were not such covenant people

Creation

- YHWH created the heavens, the earth, and all therein in six days

Origin of Man

- Man, Adam, was created on day six of the creation week, while woman, Eve, was formed from a rib of man
 - The two were placed in the paradisiacal Garden of Eden

Origin of Evil

- The serpent, Satan, tempted the woman, Eve, to eat of a tree in the Garden of Eden--she and the man had been warned by God not to eat
 - She ate, and the man likewise ate
 - As a result the man and woman were exiled from the garden
 - Physical death--due to separation from the Tree of Life--became a reality for mortal man, and sin separated defiled man from holy God

Flood Tradition

- YHWH deemed that mankind had become too wicked to remain in existence and was determined to wipe the slate clean
- One man was found to be righteous: Noah, who was allowed to construct a boat in which he and his family could survive the deluge
- Upon the ark with Noah and his family were representatives of each kind of animal and bird which God had created
- After more than a year on the boat, the survivors of the flood stepped onto dry land and sacrificed to the God Who had saved them

Afterlife

- Constant statements in the Hebrew Bible teach the reality of a life following physical life; however, Jews who were of the sect of the Sadducees believed that there was no such resurrection

Admission

- One not born a Jew could become a Jewish proselyte by submitting to Jewish law and custom, including circumcision if male
- Proselytes were afforded lesser status with reference to temple worship; however, they could serve the Jewish cause militarily or otherwise

Worship

- Worship, under the Mosaic system, was performed on behalf of the common people by priests who were of the tribe of Levi
- Centered around ritual sacrifices of various kinds and mandatory--for Hebrew males--pilgrimages to Jerusalem on particular feast days

Legacy

- Due the national rejection of YHWH, He rejected His people and chose a new kingdom: The church of Christ, the Messiah (Romans 11:1-5)
- With the new kingdom, came a new law--put into effect by the death of the sacrificed Christ

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WORLD EMPIRES AND THE BIBLE III:

ASSYRIA, BABYLON, SYRIA



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ASSYRIA

Introduction

- Before they begin to come into Biblical view, the Assyrians are already a people with a rich history
 - In the twelfth and eleventh centuries B.C., they expanded from Mesopotamia to the Mediterranean Sea under Tiglath-Pileser I (1115-1076 B.C.)

Geography

- Assyria began as a region on the Tigris but expanded through cruel military conquest nearly to the Black Sea in the north, to the Mediterranean Sea in the west, to the Persian Gulf in the east, and into Egypt on the south
- The land was productive (Isaiah 36:17)

Culture

- This warring people were exceedingly cruel to those whom they conquered

Religion

- The Assyrians were polytheistic like other nations of Mesopotamian origin
- *For a more comprehensive look at Mesopotamian religion, please see the last page of this chart*

Leaders

- Assurnasirpal II/Ashurbanipal (883-859 B.C.) began a revival of Assyrian power
- Shalmaneser III (858-824 B.C.)
 - Attacked a federation of eleven kings, of whom one was Ahab; in a later attack, Jehu was forced to pay tribute (he may have voluntarily paid such, as Hazael--king of Israel's enemy Syria--was Assyria's enemy as well [II Kings 10:32]); this was the first recorded contact between Israel and Assyria
 - At Qarqar, or Karkar, on the Orontes defeated a force led by Benhadad that included Ahab (who contributed chariots and horsemen [Deuteronomy 17:16; Psalm 20:7])
 - Did not just plunder, but took control over conquered countries
- Samsi-Adad V (823-811 B.C.)
- Adad-nirari III (810-783 B.C.) mentioned the land of Omri in his records
- Shalmaneser IV (782-773 B.C.)
- Assur-dan III (772-755 B.C.)
- Assur-nirari V (754-745 B.C.)
- Tiglath-Pileser III/Pul (744-727 B.C.)
 - Fought against and took captives of the kingdom of Hamath
 - Invaded Israel in Menahem's and Pekah's reigns (II Kings 15:8-14, 17-20, 29-30; 16:5, 7-9)
 - Deported conquered people to other lands
 - Beseiged Damascus in 734 B.C. and took her in 732 B.C. after a two year siege
 - Crowned king of Babylon (728 B.C.)
 - Brought the deported from foreign lands into Samaria (II Kings 17:24-41)
- Shalmaneser V (726-722 B.C.) besieged Samaria three years, during which time he died (II Kings 17; 18:9-10)
- Sargon II (721-705 B.C.) completed Shalmaneser's siege (721 B.C.)

ASSYRIA (Leaders continued)

- Sennacherib (704-681 B.C.)
 - Faced rebellion of conquered nations
 - Failed to capture Jerusalem in Hezekiah's reign due to his loss of 185,000 soldiers in one night (2 Kings 18,19; 2 Chronicles 30-32; Isaiah 36-38) in spite of the fact that he claimed on the Sennacherib Cylinders to have Hezekiah shut up like a bird in a cage
 - Razed Babylon (689 B.C.)
 - Was killed by two of his sons (II Kings 19:35-37)
- Esarhaddon (680-669 B.C.)
 - Rebuilt Babylon, and made it his second capital
 - Carried Manasseh to Babylon (II Chronicles 33:11)
 - Attacked Tirhakah's Egypt (675 B.C.)
 - Made his son Assurbanipal crown prince of Assyria, and forced national officials to acknowledge that he would succeed his father; he also made another son, Samash-sum-ukin, king of Babylon

- Died going to stop an Egyptian revolt
- Assurbanipal/Ashurbanipal (668-627 B.C.)
 - In 663 B.C., mercilessly destroyed Tanuatamun, at Thebes (Nahum 3:8)
 - Stopped an attempt at independence by Samash-sum-ukin (652 B.C.)
 - Responsible for much of Nineveh's library
 - Put conquered peoples in Samaria
- Assur-etel-ilani (626-624 B.C.)
- Sin-sumu-lisir (623 B.C.)
- Sin-sar-iskun (623-612 B.C.) lost Nineveh and then fell fighting the Scythians
- Assur-uballit II (611-609 B.C.) unable to restore Assyrian power, he fled and was defeated at Haran and then at Carchemish where pharaoh Nekau had come to his aid
 - On the way to Carchemish, Nekau, the Biblical Pharaohnecho, killed Judah's king Josiah at Megiddo (II Kings 23:29)

Scriptural Significance

- Assyria had played a great and terrible role in Israel's history, even threatening the southern kingdom of Judah having Jerusalem up to the neck under her flood (Isaiah 8:8)

BABYLON

Introduction

- The Babylon one generally encounters in Scripture was actually not a Babylonian, but a Chaldean dynasty; hence, at times that dynasty is referred to as a Neo-Babylonian dynasty
 - Examples of earlier Babylonian kings not of Chaldean background are Baladan and his son Merodachbaladan/Berodachbaladan (Isaiah 39:1; II Kings 20:12), the latter of whom reigned 721-709, c703,702 B.C.

Geography

- Babylon was a fertile area on the Euphrates River and Chaldea, located about two hundred miles to the southeast, was a fertile land near the Persian Gulf; at her strength, she ruled from the Persian Gulf in the east, to near the Black Sea in the north, to the Mediterranean Sea in the west, and into Egypt in the south

Culture

- Babylon was luxurious with wonderful temples and walls and Nebuchadnezzar's famed Hanging Gardens, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World; one could see why, though sinful, Nebuchadnezzar would boast (Daniel 4:30)

Religion

- Like other Mesopotamian cultures, Babylon was polytheistic
- *For a more comprehensive look at their religion, please see the last page of this chart*

Leaders

- Nabopolassar (625-605 B.C.)
 - Had rebelled against Assyria, and within four years had become king of a Neo-Babylon
 - He began chipping large cities off of the Assyrian map

- In 614 B.C. after Cyaxeres the Mede had taken Asshur, the two leaders met and allied (an alliance apparently sealed by a marriage between Nebuchadnezzar, son of Nabopolassar and Amyitis, daughter of Cyaxeres)
- Along with Cyaxeres the Mede and Arbaces the Scythian (people inhabiting the region north and east of the Black Sea), destroyed Nineveh in 612 B.C.
- In his reign he prevented access into Babylon via the Zagros mountains to the northeast
- Nebuchadnezzar II/Nebuchadrezzar (605-562 B.C.)
 - With his father Nabopolassar in failing health, Nebuchadnezzar defeated the remnant of Assyria and her ally Egypt under Pharaoh Nekau, at the Battle of Carchemish (609 B.C.)
 - After the battle, he drove the Egyptians back to their home, without attacking Judah
 - Exacted tribute from Jehoiakim for a period of three years; Jehoiakim reared up against him (II Kings 24:1-4)
 - Sealed up Egypt (II Kings 24:7)
 - In 606 B.C. carried Daniel and the seed royal to Babylon (Daniel 1:1-3)
 - Rushed home in 605 B.C. when he learned of his father's death
 - In 597 B.C. carried a second round of captives, including Ezekiel and the skilled artisans, into Babylon (II Kings 24:10-17; II Chronicles 36:9-10; Ezekiel 1:1-3)
 - Replaced Jehoiachin with Mattaniah,

BABYLON (Leaders continued)

- renaming him Zedekiah (II Kings 24:17; 25:1-7; II Chronicles 36:9-10,13; Jeremiah 39)
- In 586 B.C. conquered Jerusalem, destroying the city and temple (Jeremiah 39:4-10; II Kings 25:8-17); all except the poorest of the land were carried into captivity as a third deportation
- Evil Merodach (562-560 B.C.)
 - Treated Jehoiachin well (II Kings 25:27-30; Jeremiah 52:31-34)
- Neriglissar/Nergalsharezer (560-556 B.C.)
 - Murdered Evil Merodach, his brother-in-law
- Labasi Marduk/La-bo-sar-chad (556 B.C.)
 - Just an infant when he ascended to the throne
 - Reigned nine months

- Nabonidus (556-539 B.C.)
 - Perhaps a son-in-law of Nebuchadnezzar
 - The father of Belshazzar
 - Disliked by the people for wanting to bring in other gods to centralize religion in Babylon, and by the military for leaving others to defend the empire
- Belshazzar (539 B.C.)
 - Perhaps a viceroy under his father (Daniel 5: 7:1; 8:1)

Scriptural Significance

- In the prophecy of Daniel 2:32,37,38, Babylon is pictured as a head of gold, a very rich but malleable metal, indicating that she had more value than the nations who would follow her but less strength
- She played a great role in the fulness of time (Galatians 4:4), but when called upon to punish the people of God exceeded her mandate

SYRIA**Introduction**

- Syria, also Aram or Hamath in Scripture, was a virtually constant thorn in the side of God's people
- In Old Testament times, she never reached the power, size, or greatness of an Egypt or Babylon or Persia or Greece or even Israel, but she played a great role in Israel's history

Geography

- For much of Bible history, Syria occupied the land northeast of the Dead Sea bordering the land of Phoenicia and the Mediterranean where the Orontes River enters it on the west and desert on the east and reaching up toward the Euphrates River
 - When the Seleucids took control, the size of Syria expanded to include the lands in western Asia Minor including much of the Ionian coast and the land beyond Mesopotamia as far as just beyond the Indus River; at times she would even control the land down to Egypt--including Judea

Culture

- Syria, perhaps due to topography, was culturally diverse, especially early when she was effectively composed of a number of smaller tribes such as Bethrebob (II Samuel 10:6), Damascus (II Samuel 8:5,6), Geshur (II Samuel 15:8), Hamath (II Samuel 8:9,10), and Zoba (II Samuel 10:8)

Religion

- The Syrians were polytheistic idolaters
- Though bordering Mesopotamia, her gods were most likely ones of Canaan and Phoenicia (like Baal and Melqart)

History

- Many events are shared histories between Syria and Israel, for example much of David's interaction with the various groups; however, one of the best known Syrians was a leprous commander in her army--Naaman who was

cleansed of his leprosy in the River Jordan finally obeying the instructions of Elisha in spite of his own desire to wash in the waters of Damascus (II Kings 5)

- An extremely important part of her history--being ruled by Seleucids--is dealt with on chart five in this series, *World Empires and the Bible V: Greece, Ptolemies, Seleucids*

Leaders

- Benhadad I (c909-885 B.C.) fought against Israel's Baasha, ultimately destroying "Ijon, and Dan, and Abelbethmaachah, and all Cinneroth, with all the land of Naphtali" (I Kings 15:20)
- Benhadad II (c885-841 B.C.) fought against Israel's Ahab (I Kings 20)
- Hazaël (c841-798 B.C.) fought against Israel's Jehu and "cut Israel short ... From Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer, which is by the river Arnon, even Gilead and Bashan" (II Kings 10:31-33) and Jehoahaz
- Benhadad III (c801/798-??? B.C.) was defeated by Israel's Jehoash (II Kings 13:24,25)
- Rezin (c750-732 B.C.) formed an alliance with Israel's Pekah against Judah (II Kings 15:37)

Scriptural Significance

- From Genesis 14:15 on Damascus and her nation played a very menacing but important role in the religious and secular history of God's people, even for a time bearing rule over her as holding the procuratorship to which Israel's procurators had to answer
- It is interesting to consider also, however, that she proved to be great for the kingdom of God, being home to the place where Paul would be converted (Acts 8,22,26) and the home of the church in which the disciples would first be called Christians (Acts 11:26) and from which missionary journeys would commence (Acts 13:1-4)

MESOPOTAMIAN MYTHOLOGY

Origin

- The many Mesopotamian cultures shared some common characteristics: all relied upon nature to provide the proper amount of rain and sunlight to grow cereal crops, to support herding animals, and to ensure proper populations of fish; and all were at serious risk of invasion by outside peoples and fellow Mesopotamians due to the lack of natural geographic barriers
- It is no wonder, therefore, that all of the Mesopotamian cultures had gods who were connected in some way to the natural forces with which the people were familiar and that all had gods who could help in their devotees defense
- Certain cultures would have one particular, essentially patron deity who would go wherever that people went, and would have lesser gods who could provide other benefits for the people; accordingly some gods/realms overlapped

Deities

- Anu or El, the king of heaven
 - Some believe that this El came from an original monotheistic El (i.e. the God of the future Israelites)
- Enlil or Ashur, lord of the atmosphere, chief of the gods, god of ever-reviving vegetation, who led his devotees into battle
- Marduk, the judge
- Inanna or Ishtar, the great mother, goddess of fertility, love, and war, queen of love and beauty, goddess of marriage
- Enki or Ea, ruler of fresh waters that come from beneath the earth; as Enki-Ea, father of Marduk
- Nanna or Sin, moon-god
- Utu or Shamash, sun-god
- Bel, father of the gods and creator
- Beltis, wife of Bel, goddess of the earth
- Hea, god of harvest and determiner of destinies
- Ninkigal, wife of Hea, queen of Hades
- Vul, god of the air
- Ninip, god of hunting and war
- Nergal, god of war
- Nebo, god of learning and knowledge
- Ninurta, son of Enlil
- Dumuzi, a.k.a. Tammuz, shepherd-god who was carried to the world of the dead

Creed

- Scribes would keep records of what was required in service to various gods

Beliefs

- The gods, like their devotees, were limited in ability: they would perform their tasks, and would fend off evil forces which might threaten them; likewise, like men,

they were capable of showing emotion and committing human-like evil

- The gods could reveal the future via omens and, later, astrology

Creation

- There are numerous accounts, among them is one of Enlil's separating heaven from earth
- Another account describes a primordial sea from which the gods came and by which the gods were threatened for disturbing it; Marduk triumphed over the sea, and was crowned king of the gods
- Another tells of Bel's splitting in two Omorka, ruler of a primordial chaos, thereby making heaven and earth
- The *Enuma Elish* is a well known creation account

Origin of Man

- In one account, when Enlil separated the earth, he broke a hole in it and from the hole sprouted man
- In another, Enki, tired of manual labor, made a figure from clay and Inanna gave birth to it, creating man
- In another, Marduk, with the help of his father, created, as a gift to other gods, man--who could work for them
- In another account, Bel had another god behead Bel so man could be formed from his blood and clay

Flood Tradition

- The *Gilgamesh Epic* tells of that Uruk king's seeking immortality
- He went to Ut-napishtim, an immortal man who though immortal was terribly old and lethargic
- Ut-napishtim told Gilgamesh about a former time when the gods were going to destroy mankind by flood because of all the noise men made.
- Enki warned Ut-napishtim of the coming destruction and told him to build a large boat
- He did escape and saved his family and many animals
- Due to his efforts, he was granted immortality

Aspiration

- To have a good physical life--which required appeasing the gods
- The gods had prepared death for men, before death men were to enjoy pleasure, dance and play, be well kempt, take care of the children, and please their wives

Death

- Death was dark and gloomy with no hope of future life

Worship

- The lives of the Mesopotamians often revolved around the services they could perform for their gods
- Often the very leaders of a given people would be both kings and high priests
- Within imposing mud-brick temples--stone was scarce--there were statues representing the chief god of the culture
- Daily this god--in an enclosed holy place--was worshipped, having been washed, dressed, and fed

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WORLD EMPIRES AND THE BIBLE IV:

MEDIA, PERSIA, PHOENICIA, CARTHAGE



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MEDIA

Introduction

- The Medes were a conglomeration of many peoples which lived in the area north of Mesopotamia; around the seventh century B.C. they unified

Geography

- At its zenith Media stretched from midway across the southern coast of the Black Sea, into the area just west of the Indus River, to the Persian Gulf in the south, and to the Caucasus and the border of Scythia in the north
- Media was extremely mountainous

Culture

- Media was a melding of Busia, Paretakenoi, Stroukhates, Arizantoi, Budioi, and Magoi tribes (Herodotus, *The Histories*, I.101,102), so there would have been much difference between the peoples culturally for aside from their having common languages and environments, they would have had different histories perhaps even against each other

Religion

- Early, Media would have had a mythology which was a mixture of Mesopotamian mythology and eastern concepts gained from her Indian neighbors to the east

History

- The history of the Medes for the Bible student begins with the unification of the various tribes

Leaders

- Deiokes (c700-647 B.C.) united the various tribes to form the Median kingdom
- Phraortes (647-625 B.C.) fought against both the Persians and the Assyrians
- Cyaxeres (625-585 B.C.) in 612 B.C., along with Nabopolassar the Chaldean and Arbaces the Scythian, succeeded in overthrowing Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian Empire
 - The Scythians wanted to continue the fight against Cyaxeres (Herodotus, I.103-106)
- Astyages (585-550 B.C.) succeeded Cyaxeres and helped the Medes to thrive
 - He dreamed that his daughter, Mandane, would have a son who would rule Asia--apparently in his stead; accordingly he determined to wed her to the king of Persia, named Cambyses (Herodotus, I. 107,108)
 - Ultimately a son was born to Cambyses and Mandane; having had another dream, Astyages sent a man named Harpagos to kill this newborn grandson (Herodotus, I.109)
 - Harpagos could not bring himself to kill the child whom he knew was rightful heir of the aging Astyages, so he passed the child to a herdsman named Mitrades who was apt to carry out the order
 - Mitrades' wife had recently given birth herself, but to a still-born child; together, they concocted a plan to pass their own baby off as this grandson and to raise the grandson of Astyages as their own child (Herodotus, I.110-113)

Scriptural Significance

- The Medes are important to the Bible student in their relationship with the Persians

PERSIA

Introduction

- As the Medes were enjoying great power, little did they know that a vassal people to the south, the Persians, were a people on the rise who would soon wrest control of Media

Geography

- The Persian empire at its strength controlled land east to the Indus River, northeast to the Aral Sea, north to the Caucasus mountain range, northwest in Macedonia, southwest into Libya, and south to the border of Ethiopia

Culture

- The Persians were ethnically similar to the Medes also being from a mountainous region
- The Bible student will note that the Medes and Persians created an unalterable law (Daniel 6:8)

Religion

- Early the religion of the Persians would have been similar to the mythology of the Medes, but out of her would grow one of history's lesser known but extremely influential religions: Zoroastrianism
- For a more comprehensive look at this religion, please see the last page of this chart*

History

- Persia, a vassal people under Media, would soon create one of the great empires of the world--the Medo-Persian religion

Leaders

- Cambyses (c600-559 B.C.)
- Cyrus II the Great (559 [Persia], 550 [Media], 539 [Medo-Persia]-530 B.C.)
 - When Cambyses died, his son took his place as king of Persia
 - Harpagos who had saved him from his grandfather's fear urged him to move against Media--he did
 - Croesus, king of Lydia and ally of Babylon and Egypt and the Lacedemonians--Sparta, sought to put Cyrus down due to his treatment of Astyages but was unable without the troops of his allies--foolishly, expecting for Cyrus not to attack Sardis, released his small number of troops which were composed of mercenaries expecting to make war with Cyrus five months later--after winter (Herodotus, I.77)
 - Rich (Herodotus, I.86) Croesus' desire to save money (assumedly, since he would not be paying mercenaries) ultimately cost him, for Cyrus did march upon Sardis when he heard that Croesus had released his troops--in fact, Cyrus attack was "with such speed that he himself was the first to announce his coming to Croesus" (Herodotus, I.79)
 - Cyrus destroyed Lydia's capital Sardis
 - By the time his reign ended, Cyrus had survived numerous attempts on his life, had united Media and Persia, and had defeated the Lydians and the Babylonians and the

Egyptians

- More important than these accomplishments is the fact that he fulfilled prophecy, being the Lord's shepherd when he released the Jewish captives from Babylonian captivity
- The pronouncement of 2 Chronicles 36:22,23 and Ezra 1:1-3 was the culmination of prophecy which had begun in Isaiah's day (Isaiah 41:2-5, 25-29; 44:24-28; 47:1-3) and carried over into Jeremiah's (Jeremiah 25:12-14; 29:10; 33:7-13)
- The seventy years of bondage (606-536 B.C.) were ended!
- He died attempting to quell a revolt in the eastern part of Persia and was buried in Pasargadae in a tomb which stands to this day, though not in its original grandeur
- Cambyses II (529-522 B.C.)
 - When his father, Cyrus II, died, he assumed his title, "king of Babylon, king of lands"
 - He killed his brother, Barduja, or Bardiya, who had been put over affairs in the east
 - He continued fighting against Egypt and even fought down into Ethiopia
 - While returning home to face a usurper, he died, supposedly, trying to mount his horse [it has been suggested that he committed suicide, had epileptic fits, or was insane]
- Barduja/Smerdis/Pseudo-Smerdis (522 B.C.)
 - His real name was Gaumata
 - This was not the brother of Cambyses II, but a usurper claiming to be his brother
 - He was largely accepted as the new ruler [he won favor remitting taxes, and reforming religion]
 - He was executed by Cambyses II's army two months after Cambyses II died
 - He may be the Artaxerxes of Ezra 4:7
 - He ordered the rebuilding of the temple to cease (Ezra 4:17-24)
- Nebuchadnezzar III (522 B.C.)
- Nebuchadnezzar IV (521 B.C.)
- Darius I Hystaspes the Great (521-486 B.C.)
 - The temple was rebuilt during his reign (Ezra 1:8; 2:64-66; 3:1-8; 4:4-5, 4:24; 5:1-16; 6:15 [finished 515 B.C.]; Haggai 1:1; Zechariah 1:1)
 - May have been the Ahasuerus of Ezra 4:6
 - As the seat of power had been moved to Susa, or Shushan, Babylon who had been preparing to revolt found an opportunity
 - When the Babylonians revolted, they were defeated when a Persian sympathizer, Zopyrus, who had in an underhanded way gained control of the Babylonian army, allowed Darius to simply take Babylon
 - Three thousand leaders of the rebellion were impaled
 - Babylon fell, as had been prophesied (Isaiah 13; 47:8-9; Zechariah 2:6-9)

PERSIA (Leaders continued)

- After the fall of Babylon and defeat at the hands of the Scythians in 513 B.C., Darius Hystaspes turned his attention to Greece, specifically the Ionian states who had left Persian control
- In 490 B.C., in trying to punish the rebellious states and their supporters and allies, he was defeated in Greece itself at Mount Athos and Marathon (where Darius lost over six thousand men to Greece's less than 200)
- Failing in Ionia, Darius Hystaspes turned his attention to a rebellious Egypt
- Despite his defeats, he had added in his reign the provinces of India, Thrace, and for a time Macedonia, and Ionia
- He divided his land into twenty satrapies
- Xerxes I/Ahasuerus (485-465 B.C.)
 - This was Esther's husband (Esther 1:1-3,18; 2:16-18; 8:9; 9:30; 10:1)
 - His land was divided into 127 satrapies
 - He attacked Greece with what Herodotus described as five million Persians (VII.21)
 - At Thermopylae Xerxes opposed a Spartan force led by Leonidas [while a victory of sorts, 20,000 Persians were killed by a 300 man Spartan force that fought to the death of the last man]; Xerxes lost two brothers, Abrocomes and Hyperanthes in this battle

- Ultimately, Xerxes and, after he left, his general Mardonius were defeated at sea [at Salamis (480 B.C.) by a cunning Themistocles and at Mount Mycale] and on land [at Plataea (on the same day in 479 B.C. as the defeat at Mount Mycale)]
- No Persian after him would again cross the Hellespont to fight Greece
- Bel-Shimanni (464 B.C.)
- Shamash-Eriba (464 B.C.)
- Artaxerxes I Longimanus (464-424 B.C.)
 - Ezra left for Jerusalem during his reign (Ezra 7:6-8 [457 B.C.]) as did Nehemiah (Nehemiah 2:1-6 444 B.C.) who later returned to Persia (Nehemiah 13:6-7 [432 B.C.])
 - Xerxes II (424 B.C.)
 - Sodgianus (424,423 B.C.)
 - Darius II Narthus (423-405 B.C.)
 - Artaxerxes II Mhemnon Arsikas (404-359 B.C.)
 - Artaxerxes III Ochus (358-338 B.C.)
 - Arses (337-336 B.C.)
 - Darius III (335-331 B.C.) who was defeated by Alexander the Great

Scriptural Significance

- Medo-Persia was Daniel's colossal image's breast and arms of silver (Daniel 2:32,39), indicating that she was not quite as valuable as Babylon, but less malleable as well--she was more valuable to God than those that followed her but not as strong

PHOENICIA

Introduction

- Phoenicia was a coastal nation best known for its cities Tyre and Sidon

Geography

- Phoenicia stretched west of the Anti-Lebanons from just below Tyre to nearly the tip of Cyprus

Culture

- The Phoenicians were fisherman and merchants who traded their cedars of Lebanon all the way across the Mediterranean Sea (Ezekiel 27,28)

Religion

- The Phoenicians were polytheistic worshipping

Baal, Tanit, Astarte, Tammuz, and Melqart

History

- 3200 years before Christ Phoenicians had already hit the seas

Leaders

- Hiram (981-947 B.C.) was a friend of David
- Ittobaal (899-867 B.C.) was a puppet of Sennacherib

Scriptural Significance

- While Phoenicia is not mentioned in Scripture, Tyre and Sidon had dealings both with and against God's people

CARTHAGE

Introduction

- Carthage was effectively established as a trading post by Phoenicia's queen Dido near the end of the ninth century B.C.

Geography

- Carthage started out as a city in North Africa basically southwest of the island of Sicily; she grew into a trading power even controlling the eastern coast of Spain where she had founded Carthago Neo, New Carthage

Culture

- Like Phoenicia, she was a nation of merchants

Religion

- She was polytheistic receiving with her establishment a god, Phoenicia's Melqart

- It might also be mentioned that mythology must have had a strong role in the Carthage's history, for even the founding and measuring out of the land by Dido are the subject of mythology

History

- Carthage is most famous for her battles with Rome

Military Leaders

- Hamilcar Barca (247-228 B.C.)
- Hasdrubal (228-221 B.C.)
- Hannibal the Great (221-195 B.C.)

Scriptural Significance

- Carthage is most significant for what she is not--she is not the fly in the ointment which is Daniel's colossal image and sea of beast (Daniel 2,4)

ZOROASTRIANISM

Origin

- Indo-Iranians, a.k.a. Aryans ("the wise ones"), who settled in Persia between 2000-1500 B.C. brought with them a mythology drawn from natural things and phenomena and virtues
- The religion at that time had good and bad gods and demons and included a paradise-afterlife which was only for the priests and the rich and influential
- One of the recognizable gods, by name, was Mitra, a.k.a. Mithra
- Around 628 B.C. (some would even date him around 1500 B.C.) a Persian named Zarathushtra, a.k.a. Zoroaster, was born
 - He was a priest of the Persian's religion who began to have visions at the age of thirty, and thereafter promoted a new religion
 - His new religion brought opposition and persecution, and ultimately he was driven from his home
 - After preaching ten years he converted his cousin; this was his first convert
- Ultimately this prophet's new religion became the state religion of a part of Syria ruled by a convert named Vishtaspa (perhaps the father of Darius I Hystaspes)
- Darius I's Behistun Inscription repeatedly speaks of Ahura Mazda
- Ultimately all the land of Persia held to Zoroastrianism, and by the time of Christ it was the most powerful religion of the known world

Deities

- Ahura Mazda, a.k.a. Ohrmazd, is the good god, the Wise Lord, who created all good things and who will eventually put down his rival, Angra Mainyu
- Angra Mainyu, a.k.a. Ahriman, is the bad god, the Destructive Spirit; the creator of all that is evil. His dominion is hell
 - Angra Mainyu and god are constant foes, and have been since before the world and man were created (these were created by god to aid in the fight against Angra Mainyu)
 - Angra Mainyu created demons, Daevas, to respond to the men created by Ahura Mazda
- Amesha Spentas are created sons and daughters of Ahura Mazda, Bounteous Immortals
 - They are Vohu Manah, Good Mind; Asha, Righteousness; Aramaiti, Devotion; Kshathra, Dominion; Haurvatat, Wholeness; Ameretat, Immortality

Creed

- The *Gathas* which contained seventeen hymns, or devotional poems, revealed directly to the prophet, Zarathushtra
- The *Avesta* is the holy prayer book composed of the ancient traditions of Zoroastrianism

Beliefs

- This is a personal religion, with each adherent--male or female--having personal responsibility and free-will

Flood Tradition

- Yima, a mortal, is asked by Ahura Mazda to rule over and nourish the earth
 - Over time, overpopulation troubled Ahura Mazda and he asked Yima to solve the problem
 - Three times such problems were solved by having the Amesha Spenta Aramaiti increase the earth's size by two-thirds
- Later, Yima was warned by Ahura Mazda of a universal blizzard which would reach the tops of the highest mountains
- Yima was told to build an enclosure, *vara*, measuring two miles square to hold two thousand of the best people and two each of every animal, bird, and plant; it was closed using a golden signet ring, and artificial lights were created in it
- Every forty years the animals and people would produce a male child and a female child for each couple

Aspiration

- The aim of man is to harmonize both the spiritual and physical aspects of his being; to become married and produce offspring; to be fruitful agriculturally; to neither fast (emphasizing the spiritual) nor be gluttonous (emphasizing the physical); to enjoy the good creation of Ahura Mazda; and to avoid anything associated with evil, disorder, and decay
- A saying, "*humata, hukta, huvarashta*," echoes this: "Good thoughts, good words, good deeds."

Afterlife

- A paradise with Ahura Mazda is for all who are judged righteous; while a temporary hell awaits the wicked
- Ultimately, All humans will be granted immortality, and Angra Mainyu will be shut in hell

Admission

- One is born into Zoroastrianism, not converted from another religion

Worship

- An act of worship, *yasna*, includes the *Gathas*, as well as prayer and other rites
- Representatives of Ahura Mazda's creation, which also serve as symbols of the Bounteous Immortals who protect them, are present in worship activities--these include cattle, an eternal fire (which is regarded as a sacred fire), earth, metal, water, and plants; man, the seventh creation is present in worship as priest

Legacy

- With the rule of the Seleucids came a melding of Zoroastrianism with Greek mythology; traditional Zoroastrianism was restored beginning about 250 B.C.
- It remained the state religion of Persia until A.D. 651

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WORLD EMPIRES AND THE BIBLE V: GREECE, PTOLEMIES, SELEUCIDS



WORLD EMPIRES AND THE BIBLE

CHART I

EGYPT

ISRAEL'S NEIGHBORS

EGYPTIAN MYTHOLOGY

CHART II

UNITED ISRAEL

DIVIDED KINGDOM (ISRAEL)

DIVIDED KINGDOM (JUDAH)

JUDAISM

CHART III

ASSYRIA

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CHART IV

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CHART V

GREECE

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CHART VII

ROME

ROMAN JUDEA

ROMAN MYTHOLOGY

COMPREHENSIVE CHRONOLOGY

GREECE

Introduction

- Early in her history, Greece was inhabited by a people known as the Mycenaeans
- There was some level of advancement in those early days, but with the collapse of the Mycenaeans around the 12th century B.C. came a time of isolation and poverty
- Around 900 B.C. things began to change as trade routes were opened with Italy, Iberia, Ukraine, and Phoenicia

Geography

- Greece extended south from Macedonia in the northeast and Epirus in the northwest between the Ionian and Aegean Seas down into the Peloponnesus; she also had many island composing the Archipelago her land; to the south she also had the large island of Crete
- It was a country of fertile land divided by rugged mountain ranges
- She colonized extensively, especially in western Asia Minor, southern Italy, and northern Africa in Cyrenaica

Culture

- She had a diverse culture, for the people of ancient Greece retained some of the Mycenaean influence, in that while they were akin culturally and linguistically, they were often polarized politically; this characteristic of the people along with its geographic characteristics led to the rise of villages that were rather ethnocentric
- Around 700 B.C. these villages began to take on urban characteristics, with some ultimately developing into what has been termed city-states, with each known individually as a *polis*
- Each city-state would be self governing and independent of others or of a nationalistic government
- As great as city-states such as Athens and Sparta were, they were relatively small in population
- As evidence of the political polarization, over time Athens became a democracy and Sparta was a bi-archy (with two kings and twenty-eight elders ruling)

Religion

- Greece was polytheistic with a very thorough mythological tradition
- *For a more comprehensive look at Greek mythology, please see the last page of this chart*

History

- While there was no official unity among the city-states, when there was a threat to one, or more, of the others, there was a sense of unity that caused the others to move in defense; such was the case when the Persians crossed the Hellespont under Darius I Hystaspes and later Xerxes I and were forced to withdraw each time
- Sparta had been the dominant city-state prior to the Persian wars, but in the course of the wars Athens, with her naval prowess, was able to gain some respect
- Over time friction between these two city-states and their respective allies led to a series of wars, the Peloponnesian Wars
- The First Peloponnesian War between the city-states and their allies (461-446 B.C.) ended in the signing of a peace treaty
- The Second Peloponnesian War began after Athens made moves such as allying with Corcyra who was about to go to war with Corinth (a Spartan ally); it lasted from 431-404 B.C. with Sparta being victorious

GREECE (History continued)

- After the wars, Sparta tried to assert herself as the controller of all of Greece
- Many other city-states immediately rejected the Spartan yoke and declared independence

- Over the next few years, more Greek infighting took place--often between former allies like Corinth and Sparta
- One such war was finally ended by the Persian Artaxerxes II in 388 B.C.); Persia, in fact, had her hands in much of the disputes

MACEDONIA**Introduction**

- With Greece in turmoil, Greece was ripe for unification--under an invader
- The invader actually was her cultural cousin, Macedonia

Geography

- Macedonia was bordered by Thrace to the north, and Illyris and Epirus to the west, then stretched along the northern coast of the Aegean Sea from Thessaly on the southwest to another border with Thrace on the east
- This was not even a hint at what she would possess by the end of the fourth century B.C., ruling all of Greece and down into Egypt and across eastward to beyond the Indus River

Culture

- Macedonia was effectively Greek; especially was Alexander the Great a Hellenist--a spreader of Greek culture

Religion

- Like Greece she believed in the Greek pantheon

Leaders

- Philip (359-336 B.C.)
 - Philip was an opportunist, not unlike the meddling Persians, who saw the political instability of Greece as an opportunity to expand his holdings
 - By 354 B.C. he had pressed into Epirus and Thrace and by 340 B.C. he controlled Thessaly
 - In 338 B.C. he defeated Athens, Thebes, and other Greek allies in the battle of Chaeronea, thus solidifying Greek unity under him with the League of Corinth
 - Philip was ultimately assassinated
- Alexander the Great (336-323 B.C.)
 - He was born in 356 B.C., the son of Philip and his first wife, Olympias (who would later tell Alexander he was of divine descent)
 - Alexander was educated under the renowned Aristotle (342-336 B.C.)

- At eighteen Alexander controlled the left arm of Philip's forces at Chaeronea
- After Philip's death, Alexander dealt harshly with any found to be a part of his father's assassination--though some implicated him
- Athens and other Greek cities left Philip's League of Corinth due to the coming of a young man to the throne, but Alexander's cunning enable him to restore the league
- Alexander then moved against tribes in the frontiers of Macedonia
- In 334 B.C. Alexander crossed the Hellespont to invade Persia's holdings
- He defeated Darius III at the river Granicus, Issus, and Damascus
- He then took the cities of Phoenicia (only Tyre had to be fought; Alexander reached the city via causeway after a seven month siege [c.f., Ezekiel 26:4-5])
- Alexander then marched to Jerusalem where he met the high priest, Jaddua, and honored him (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, XI.viii.2-7)
- Alexander entered Egypt where he established Alexandria to celebrate Macedonian conquest and where he visited the temple of Ammon (where it was confirmed by an oracle that he was Ammon's son and would conquer the world)
- At Gaugamela (331 B.C.), Alexander defeated Darius for good
- He then took Babylon, Susa, Persepolis, and Ecbatana--all Persian capitals
- After having reached India, he returned to Babylon with his weary army and died at 33

Scriptural Significance

- Macedonian Greece is the belly and thighs of brass in Daniel 2:32,39, indicating that she was less valuable than Babylon and Medo-Persia, but that she being less malleable was also stronger than they

THE DIADOCHI**Introduction**

- After Alexander the Great died, his generals fought for his kingdom; originally there were seven vying for the throne, by 301 B.C. that number was four; the successors are called the Diadochi

Leaders

- Ptolemy took Egypt
- Eumenes took Cappadocia and Paphlagonia, but died in 318 B.C.
- Lysimachus took Thrace

- Seleucus took Syria and Babylon
- Antigonus took Lycia, Pamphylia, and Phrygia, but died in 301 B.C. fighting Lysimachus and Seleucus in the Battle of Ipsus
- Antipater took Macedonia, but died in 319 B.C.
- Cassander took Caria

Scriptural Significance

- Daniel prophesied that Alexander's kingdom would be split four ways (Daniel 7:6; 8:8; 11:4); it was: Ptolemy, Lysimachus, Seleucus, Cassander

PTOLEMAIC EGYPT

Introduction

- When Alexander's empire split, Ptolemy took the holdings in Egypt

Culture

- Ptolemaic Egypt was Hellenistic, though some rulers embraced Egyptian tradition

Leaders

- Ptolemy I Soter (323-285 B.C.) was a biased biographer of Alexander
- Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285-247 B.C.) had the Hebrew Old Testament translated into Greek
- Ptolemy III Philadelphus/Euergetes (247-222 B.C.)
- Ptolemy IV Philopator (222-205 B.C.) defeated Antiochus III Magnus

- Ptolemy V Epiphanes (205-181 B.C.) was defeated by a vengeful Antiochus III Magnus
- Ptolemy VI Philometer (181-146 B.C.)
- Ptolemy VII Physcon/Euergetes (146-117 B.C.)
- Ptolemy VIII Soter II/Lathyrus (117-107,89-81 B.C.)
- Ptolemy IX Alexander I (107-90 B.C.)
- Ptolemy X Alexander II (81 B.C.)
- Ptolemy XI Dionysus/Auletes (80-51 B.C.)
- Cleopatra VII Philopator (51-30 B.C.) was co-regent with Ptolemy XII-XIV and was allied with Julius, then Mark Antony
- Ptolemy XII/Neos Dionysus (51-47 B.C.)
- Ptolemy XIII (47-44 B.C.)
- Ptolemy XIV Caesarion (47-30 B.C.)

SELEUCID SYRIA

Introduction

- When Alexander's empire split, Seleucus took the holdings in Syria and Babylon

Culture

- Seleucid Syria was Hellenistic

Leaders

- Seleucus I Nicator (312-280 B.C.)
- Antiochus I Soter (293/280-261 B.C.) had controlled one branch of his father's cavalry at Ipsus
- Antiochus II Theos (261-246 B.C.) fought against his father's nemesis, Ptolemy II Philadelphus in the Second Syrian War (260-253 B.C.)
 - Married Ptolemy II Philadelphus' daughter, Berenice (fulfilling the prophecy of Daniel 11:6), two years before Ptolemy II died; the marriage was conditioned on his divorce of Laodice (whom he remarried at Ptolemy II's death)
 - Berenice and her children were poisoned while in Daphne where they had fled
 - Laodice had Antiochus II assassinated
- Seleucus II Callinicus/Callinicus (246-226 B.C.) fought against Ptolemy III Euergetes without much effect
- Seleucus III Soter/Ceraunus (226-223 B.C.) fell from his horse and died
- Antiochus III Magnus the Great/Megas (223-187)
 - At fifteen moved against Egypt, and ultimately controlled her when he defeated Ptolemy V Epiphanes' general Scopas at the battle of Panion
 - Fought against Rome's Lucius Cornelius Scipio Asiaticus after Antiochus III had taken some islands in the Mediterranean from Rome
 - Asiaticus defeated him at Magnesia in 190 B.C.; a peace treaty followed which demanded Antiochus to surrender all possessions west of Tarsus, pay the cost of the war, lose his elephants, decrease his navy to twelve ships, and deliver twelve hostages one of which was his own son Antiochus

- Seleucus IV Philopator (187-175 B.C.) sent Heliodorus to collect taxes from the Jews (II Maccabees 3:6-14); the politically motivated Heliodorus poisoned Seleucus IV Philopator as Daniel had prophesied (Daniel 11:20)
- Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-163 B.C.)
 - He was born in Athens, reared in a Hellenistic environment, and had been the son turned over as a hostage
 - After the death of his brother, Seleucus IV Philopater, he assumed the throne and began efforts to unite Syria and Egypt
 - On his invasion of Egypt, Antiochus IV permitted Hellenistic Jews to build a gymnasium where the Jews would compete in the manner of the Greeks--nude (II Maccabees 4:12-15); in a later invasion, he was met by a Roman commander who drew a circle around him and told him to agree to leave before he left the circle, or else (I Maccabees 1:16-20; II Maccabees 5:1); bullied by a bigger bully than himself, decided to exercise his rage on Jerusalem by attacking her with 22,000 men
 - He vandalized and looted the temple, forbade the Jews to offer their daily sacrifices, built an idol to Zeus upon the altar in the temple, offered pigs upon it, forbade circumcision, and tortured and killed those who would not do as he wished (I Maccabees 1:10-64; 2:12-13; *Antiquities*, XII.v.4,5)
 - He called himself Epiphanes, "manifest one," the Jews called him Epimanes, "mad man"
- Antiochus V Eupater (163-162 B.C.)
- Demetrius I Soter (162-150 B.C.) had been traded to Rome for Antiochus
- Alexander Balas (150-146 B.C.)
- Demetrius II Nicator (146-144, 128-125 B.C.)
- Antiochus VI Dionysus/Theos (144-142 B.C.)
- Diodotus Tryphon the Usurper (142-137 B.C.)
- Antiochus VII Sidetes (137-128 B.C.)
- Seleucus V (125-124 B.C.)
- Antiochus VIII Grypus (124-96 B.C.)
- Seleucus VI Epiphanes (95-93 B.C.)

GREEK MYTHOLOGY

Origin

- The mythology of Greece developed over time and was transmitted at first orally and then in writing by men like Homer and Hesiod
- The gods of the Greeks were associated with natural forces and everyday events

Deities

- Uranus was the sky god
- Gaia was the earth goddess
- Cronus murdered his father and took leadership of the Titans, the first authoritative pantheon
- Zeus with the aid of his mother Rhea killed his father Cronos and seized control from the Titans
- Hera, queen of Zeus, was goddess of marriage
- Poseidon was god of sea and earthquakes
- Hades was the wealthy god of the underworld
- Apollo was god of prophecy, light, archery, et al; he was represented by a python (see Acts 16:16)
- Athena was goddess of wisdom, craftsmanship, and warfare
- Aphrodite was goddess of love and fertility
- Ares was the god of war
- Artemis was goddess of virginity and hunting
- Demeter was goddess of agriculture
- Dionysus was god of wine and celebrations
- Eros was god of love and sexual desire
- Hephaestus was god of fire and smithing
- Hermes was the messenger god
- Hestia was goddess of the hearth and family
- Heroes, men or part men, like Heracles, Jason, and Achilles were viewed as gods themselves

Beliefs

- One wanted to control his *hubris*, his pride which was exhibited in immorality

Creation

- Originally there was Chaos from which sprang Gaia, the earth, and Tartarus, the underworld
- From Chaos was born night and day of night; from Gaia came Uranus, heaven, and Pontus, sea
- From Uranus and Gaia came the Titans, the cyclops, and other monsters
- The Olympian pantheon was born of Cronus who had learned that a child of his would be a rival
 - Due to this threat, Cronus swallowed his children one by one as they were born
 - His wife Rhea ultimately fooled Cronus by wrapping a stone in a blanket and allowing the son to live

- After the son has grown, he confronted his father and caused him to spew out the other children
- Zeus and his brothers Poseidon and Hades then confronted the Titans and gained their dominion--Zeus became king of the gods

Origin of Man

- Prometheus and his brother Epimetheus created man
 - Prometheus gave man the gift of fire and so he angered the Olympian gods; as punishment he was bound to a rock where daily his liver is plucked out by an eagle and it is regrown by night to be devoured again
- Women were created separately
 - At Zeus command, Hephaestus created a woman as punishment for men receiving the gift of fire
 - The woman, Pandora, was given a box full of evil and suffering; she could not withstand the temptation to open it

Origin of Evil

- Evil entered the world when Pandora opened her box; accompanying the evil, though, was hope

Flood Tradition

- There were several flood myths associated with Greek mythology; perhaps the best known is that involving the overnight destruction of the advanced civilization Atlantis

Aspiration

- To reach the Elysian Fields rather than Tartarus

Death

- Death preceded a wandering or, if one had a coin placed in his mouth, a journey into the underworld

Afterlife

- If one could pay the ferryman Charon, he would carry them across the Styx into Hades' realm

Admission

- One born a Greek would grow up accepting the existence of these gods and so honoring them

Worship

- Altars and idols were characteristic locations of worship--the manner of which varied
 - Many were worshipped in numerous temples

Legacy

- Greek mythology strongly influenced Roman mythology, and even early Christianity
- Greek mythology continues to influence today

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WORLD EMPIRES AND THE BIBLE VI:

MACCABEES, HASMONEANS, SAMARIA



WORLD EMPIRES AND THE BIBLE

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MACCABEES

Introduction

- The Maccabees were inhabitants of Judea in the days of Seleucid Syria Leaders

- Mattathias (d. 166 B.C.)
 - Mattathias was a priest who lived in the town of Modin, northwest of Jerusalem
 - When the command came from Antiochus IV Epiphanes for every town throughout Judea to build an altar and offer pigs, Mattathias was enlisted for the cause, but refused
 - Upon his refusal another Jew stepped forward to perform the deed; Mattathias killed him and began a revolution (I Maccabees 2:24-27)
 - With his five sons, John Gaddi "the holy," Simon Thassi "the guide," Judas Maccabeus "the hammer" (I Maccabees 3:4,9), Eleazer Avaran "the beast sticker," and Jonathan Apphus "the cunning," he turned to flight the representatives of Antiochus IV (I Maccabees 3:2)
 - On his death bed Mattathias suggested Judas Maccabeus take control of the resistance
- Judas Maccabeus the Hammer/Judas ben Mattathias (d. 160 B.C.)
 - With an army made up of fugitives, Judas Maccabeus killed the governor of Syria, Apollonius, who controlled a force much larger than his own; the sword of Apollonius would be used by Judas Maccabeus from that point onward (I Maccabees 3:10-12)
 - A vengeful Syrian general, Seron, sought to make Judas Maccabeus pay, but was himself defeated at the battle of Beth-horon near Emmaus (I Maccabees 3:13-26); Syria lost 800 men, the rest fled into Philistia (I Maccabees 3:24)
 - Another Syrian governor, Lysias (I Maccabees 3:32), attacked with 40,000 men and 7,000 cavalry (I Maccabees 3:39) against Judas' 3,000 men (there were 6,000 until he sent the fearful home as Gideon had done [Judges 7:3]), but he too was defeated
 - He cleansed the temple in Jerusalem, and ordained a yearly feast of dedication, i.e. Hanukkah (I Maccabees 4:46-59, John 10:22)
 - The following year he defeated the same governor at Beth-zur (Judas lost 5,000 of his 10,000 men, but he was facing 50,000 men and 5,000 cavalry)
 - He faced opposition from several directions, including from Hellenists and others who opposed the "Hasidim" (the faithful Jews who evolved into the Pharisees)
 - He fought against Idumaea and eastern Palestine, while his brother, Simon, was fighting for the relief of the faithful Jews in Galilee
 - He then took Hebron back from the Idumaeans and moved on to fight the Philistines and subdue Ashdod
 - At the death of Antiochus IV Epiphanes, Judas Maccabeus saw an opportunity to take back Jerusalem (since the rededication of the temple, the city had again fallen into Syrian hands); at Beth-Zechariah as he neared Jerusalem, he faced a Syrian force of 100,000 men, 20,000 cavalry, and 32 elephants (I Maccabees 6:30-46) with only 8,000 men under his control (163 B.C.)
 - In the battle, his brother Eleazer rushed an elephant he wrongly supposed belonged to the leader of the Syrians; having stabbed the elephant, he was crushed as the elephant fell

MACCABEES (Leaders continued)

- The battle ended with a peaceful resolution, but only after the Jews accepted the Syrian's terms (I Maccabees 6:58); Lysias controlled Jerusalem, but was called to Antioch to put down a supposed usurper who was actually the rightful heir, Demetrius I Soter
- Under Demetrius I Soter, Nicanor, a former admirer of the courage and skill of Judas Maccabeus and the commander of the Syrian forces, began massacring the hated Jews
- At Beth-horon Judas Maccabeus won his last victory, defeating Nicanor's force of 9,000 with only 3,000 men; Nicanor lay dead and his army was chased to Gezer over twenty miles away (II Maccabees 15:25-28)
- Recognizing the reality of his situation, Judas Maccabeus sought and received an alliance with Rome, which did not help him much (I Maccabees 8:17-29)
- Judas Maccabeus died at the battle of Elasa, facing 20,000 men and 2,000 cavalry with but 800 men; the unrelenting Jews fought throughout the day, but being surrounded by the enemy were ultimately defeated (I Maccabees 9:4,18-22)
- Jonathan Apphus [high priest] (imprisoned 142 B.C.)
 - Recognizing the Syrian threat, Jonathan sent his brother John Gaddi, with the women and children of his people, across the Jordan where they were killed by Arabs; Jonathan avenged those deaths by defeating the Arabs (I Maccabees 9:31-42)
 - On a Sabbath day, the Syrian Bacchides sought a fight against Jonathan Apphus who broke through the Syrian ranks and swam across a river to escape into Judea (I Maccabees 9:43-49)
 - Recognizing his failure, Bacchides signed a peace treaty with Jonathan Apphus and returned to Syria (I Maccabees 9:50-53, 9:68-73)

- Through political wrangling, Jonathan attained the position of high priest (a position which would become tantamount with military leader)
- Ultimately, Tryphon (a Seleucid usurper who killed the young Antiochus VI Dionysus) invited Jonathan--who had supported his usurping--to come see him; since Tryphon viewed Jonathan as a political threat, he imprisoned him (I Maccabees 11:39,40; 12:39-48; 13:31)
- Simon Thassi [hp] (142-134 B.C.)
 - Simon vowed to avenge his people and the temple against the wicked Tryphon (I Maccabees 13:3-6)
 - Simon sent money to Tryphon so that Jonathan might be released, but Tryphon killed Jonathan and kept the money (I Maccabees 13:15-23)
 - Now backing Demetrius II Nicator (the rightful heir to the Syrian throne), Simon was confirmed by Demetrius II, called his friend, and granted immunity from taxes; furthermore, the Jews were recognized as independent for the first time since the beginning of the sixth century B.C. (I Maccabees 13:34-42; cf John 8:33)
 - Simon overthrew Gaza and populated it with Jews (I Maccabees 13:43)
 - He then attacked the the remaining Syrian garrison in Jerusalem (I Maccabees 13:49-51)
 - He also secured the favor of Rome (I Maccabees 15:16-21)
 - As Simon's life drew to a close he turned the reins of leadership over to two of his sons, one of whom, John Hyrcanus, had led in a victory over the attacking Syrians (I Maccabees 13:53)
 - Simon was put to death by his son-in-law, Ptolemy

Scriptural Significance

- These were the people who did "know their God" (Daniel 11:32-35)!

HASMONEANS

Introduction

- The Hasmoneans, descendants of Simon Thassi, were the recipients of the blessings associated with the remarkable faith, courage, and skill of the Maccabees

Leaders

- John Hyrcanus/Yehohanan [hp] (134-104 B.C.) (I Maccabees 13:53)
 - After Simon died, John Hyrcanus sought to take vengeance upon Ptolemy; however, Ptolemy threatened to kill John's mother and brothers whom he had taken hostage, so John backed down, but they were killed anyway
 - John Hyrcanus, the last of the Maccabees, took charge as high priest and political leader

- Recognizing the turmoil after Simon's death and Ptolemy's treachery, the Syrian, Antiochus VII Sidetes, moved into Judea but was forced by John to submit to terms
- The Syrians still held some towns of Judea, but ultimately John Hyrcanus threw off the Syrian yoke
- In 107 B.C. John moved against the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim and destroyed it and Samaria (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, XIII.ix.2,3)
- John Hyrcanus also forced the Idumaeans to convert to Judaism (*Antiquities*, XIII.ix.1)
- In later years, John Hyrcanus, offended that the Pharisee Eleazar questioned whether he should be high priest as well as ruler (there

HASMONEANS (Leaders continued)

is some thought that Eleazar even implied that John was a descendant of Antiochus IV not of Mattathias) left the Hasidim sect of the Pharisees and joined the Sadducees (*Antiquities*, XIII.x.5-6)

- Aristobulus I/Yehudah [hp] (104-103 B.C.)
 - Aristobulus threw his mother, John Hyrcanus' wife, into jail and starved her to death, and he killed his brother Antigonus
 - He died of disease after one year
- Alexander Jannaeus/Yehonatan [hp] (103-76 B.C.)
 - He was brother of Aristobulus
 - He increased the land of Judea to a size larger than that possessed by the twelve tribes
 - Before his death he encouraged his wife, Alexandra Salome, to become a Pharisee (to focus on the political not the religious), though he had been a Sadducee
- Alexandra Salome (76-67 B.C.)
 - She was the widow of both Aristobulus I and Alexander Jannaeus
- Aristobulus II/Yehudah (67-63, d. 49 B.C.)
 - He fought a civil war with his brother, Hyrcanus II

- Was defeated in battle by Hyrcanus II's Idumaean officer Antipas, a.k.a. Antipater (who ultimately was poisoned); Antipas had a son named Herod who married the granddaughter of Aristobulus II and Hyrcanus II, Mariamne
- Impatient, he rushed to Jerusalem and began a war with Hyrcanus and Pompey
- He wound up a slave of Pompey in Rome
- Hyrcanus II/Yehohanan [hp] (63-40, d. 30 B.C.)
 - Hyrcanus willingly surrendered to Pompey in exchange for wealth and position (*Antiquities*, XIV.i.2)
 - To try to find satisfaction for the feud, the brothers had turned first to Rome's general Scaurus and then to Pompey (*Antiquities*, XIV.ii.3)
 - Pompey took Jerusalem, and entered into the Most Holy Place
 - Hyrcanus was made, by Pompey, an ethnarch over roughly a tenth of that over which Alexander Jannaeus had ruled
- Antigonus/Mattiyyah (40-37 B.C.)
 - Antigonus was the son of Aristobulus II
 - When civil war broke out in the Roman Republic between Pompey and Julius Caesar, Antigonus rightly took the side of Caesar

SAMARITANS

Introduction

- The Samaritans were hated by the Jews; this is exemplified by the amazement of the woman at the well in Sychar (John 4:6,7,9) who said, "the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans," and by a statement found in the apocryphal *Ecclesiasticus*: "There be two manner of nations which my heart abhorreth, and the third is no nation: They that sit upon the mountain of Samaria, and they that dwell among the Philistines, and that foolish people that dwell in Sichem" (50:25,26)

Geography

- Samaria inhabited an area that stretched west to east from near the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River, and from just below Mount Gerizim northward to the Valley of Esdraelon which runs southeast from Mount Carmel

Culture

- To understand their culture, one must understand the background of the Samaritans
 - When the Assyrians conquered new land, they distributed those captive peoples among other captured lands (II Kings 15:29; 17:24; 16:9; Ezra 4:9-10; cf *Antiquities*, IX.xii.3, xiv. 1; X.ix.7)
 - In the case of Israel, or Samaria, these foreign peoples became assimilated into Samaritan society via intermarriage with Israelites; consequently, the Samaritans from that time forward were no longer 100% Jewish

- Accordingly, one will note that Jesus referred to the grateful Samaritan whom He healed of leprosy as a "stranger" (Luke 17:18) and will note that Samaria was outside of the scope of the "limited commission" which reached to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 10:5-6)
- They were very fickle, seeking to gain any political advantage (*Antiquities*, IX.xiv.3)

Religion

- The "new" Samaritans brought with them false gods and false worship practices from their homelands (II Kings 17:24-41; c.f., *Antiquities*, IX.xiv.3) and incorporated the Hellenistic worship of mythological gods into their worship

History

- When Judah returned from captivity, the Samaritans tried to intimidate and hinder the work of Nehemiah and the other Jews as they rebuilt the temple and walls of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 4:1-8; cf Ezra 4; *Antiquities*, XI.iv. 3,4,6, XI.v.8); furthermore, when ordered to make tribute payments to the Jews, the Samaritans would refuse (Ezra 6:8; *Antiquities*, XI.iv.9)
- Over time the Samaritans were allowed by Alexander the Great to build their own temple on Mount Gerizim (*Antiquities*, XI.viii.2,4) ostensibly for the worship of Jehovah [they later denied that purpose changing the worship to that of Jupiter Hellenius--that is, Jupiter of the Greeks: Zeus (*Antiquities*, XII.v.5)]; Jesus could rightly say "Ye worship ye know not what." (John 4:22)

JEWISH SECTS

PHARISEES

Origin

- Were a product of the Maccabean struggle for freedom from the Syrians around 160 B.C.
- The name means “the separated ones”
- Their roots are from the Hasidim, the scribes and lawyers

Authority

- The *Torah* (the *Law of Moses*), the prophets, and their own traditions, both oral and written

Character

- Exceptionally legalistic, prideful, and hypocritical
- Enthusiastically proselytized
- Were largely what might be called middle class
- Controlled the synagogues

Relationship with Jesus

- They often tried to band with scribes and even the Sadducees in opposition to Jesus (Matthew 16:1)
- Jesus attacked their self-righteousness (Luke 18:9-14; Matthew 5:20) and hypocrisy (Matthew 6,23)

Relationship with the Church

- No record of their standing against the church

SADDUCEES

Origin

- It is difficult to know from whence they arose
 - Likely had their beginning among Hasmonean priests middle to late first century B.C.
 - They could have been descendants of Zadoc (II Kings 8:17)
 - They could have been a shoot of the judges
- Their name means “the righteous ones”

Authority

- They accepted only the *Torah*

Character

- They were wealthy, but coarse
- Controlled the temple and much of the Sanhedrin
- They rejected the existence of angels and spirits and the reality of a resurrection (Acts 23:8)

Relationship with Jesus

- They railed against resurrection (Luke 20:27-40)

Relationship with the Church

- Their rejection of resurrection made them opponents of that church doctrine (Acts 4:1,2)

HERODIANS

Origin

- This was a movement more than a sect
- The movement was one which supported Herod the Great and his position as king of the Jews; it began, therefore, sometime around 37 B.C.

Authority

- Their concern was physical, not spiritual

Character

- Had political influence due to their acceptance of foreign rule

Relationship with Jesus

- Saw Jesus as a political rival (Matthew 22:16-22)

Relationship with the Church

- No record of their standing against the church

ZEALOTS

Origin

- Probably a late off-shoot of the Pharisees formed in reaction to Roman rule; when exactly is unknown, but probably 63 B.C. or later

Authority

- The zealots were very Pharisaical, so likely used the same authorities

Character

- Extremely patriotic; they looked for the coming of the Messiah as a military leader

Relationship with Jesus

- No record of their standing against Jesus

Relationship with the Church

- No record of their standing against the church

ESSENES

Origin

- Seem to have been formed as a reaction to corruption among the Sadducees around the end of the first century B.C.

Authority

- Primarily the *Torah*

Character

- They were monastic and ascetic

Relationship with Jesus

- No record of their standing against Jesus

Relationship with the Church

- No record of their standing against the church

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WORLD EMPIRES AND THE BIBLE VII: ROME, ROMAN JUDEA



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ROMAN JUDEA

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ROME

Introduction

- Rome: That name inspired fear in the hearts of nations for nearly a thousand years
- In 753 B.C. when she was founded, no one could have imagined what would come--nobody except for God (Daniel 2:33-35,40-45; 7:7-14,23-27)

Geography

- Rome is the “City of Seven Hills” but she started out as a village on just one and grew to reach across North Africa into Spain and Gaul and Brittania and Germania and Dacia and Bosporus and Armenia and Mesopotamia and Egypt--she engulfed the Mediterranean Sea!

Culture

- In her heyday Rome was a thriving business center with “all roads leading to Rome”
- She welcomed the peoples whom she conquered to maintain their own cultures and, insomuch as they served her, to keep their own governments
- She might rightly be called “the melting pot” of the ancient world

Religion

- Rome was polytheistic, believing in a pantheon modeled upon Greek mythology
- *For a more comprehensive look at Roman mythology, please see the last page of this chart*

History

- Around 753 B.C. Rome was founded
- Then she was a small village which over time grew into numerous villages until in the 6th century B.C. she could rightly be called a city
- While she was a city, she was not free, for Rome was overseen by the Etruscans, a civilized people who inhabited the northern part of Italy
- Around 510 B.C. the Romans were able to throw off the Etruscans and the new Republic began to grow, as it were a sleeping giant preparing to awaken
- Rome grew, unnoticed by the Grecians to the east or the Carthaginians to the south, until she controlled all of Italy in 264 B.C.
- Around 264 B.C. Rome took into its control what had been the Greek city-states, and with them and the new found maritime opportunities received an enemy and a series of wars also: Carthage and the Punic Wars (264-146 B.C.)
- The First Punic War was an attempt by Rome to take Sicily from the Carthaginians
- A fourth Roman fleet (a new tool for Rome) successfully defeated the Carthaginians in 241 B.C. off the western coast of Sicily; the island fell
- The Second Punic War began in 218 B.C. when the Carthaginians attacked a town in Spain that was allied with Rome
- The Carthaginian Hannibal took the fight to the Romans when in 216 B.C. he killed 70,000 Romans in one day at Cannae in Eastern Italy--he lost only 5,700
- Though Hannibal wanted to go into Rome, he ended up being stalled for thirteen years, for he was halted in central Italy by more than Roman allies--he was halted by the providence of God who had only allowed for four empires before the church would be established in Daniel's prophecy of the colossal image (Daniel 2)

ROME (continued)**Culture**

- In 203 B.C. the Roman Scipio Africanus beat Hannibal in Spain (winning it as a province for Rome) and pushed into North Africa where he defeated Hannibal at Zama near Carthage in 202 B.C.
- The Third Punic War began in 146 B.C. when Rome decided to destroy her weakened foe for good
- The city of Carthage fell after a six month siege and was destroyed
- No inhabitant was left without being killed or captured, and after the city was razed, salt was spread upon its fields
- Rome expanded very quickly, but the days of Rome as a republic were numbered, she would soon be an empire with her senate losing its power

Leaders

- Pompey consul with Marcus Licinius Crassus (70 B.C.)
- First Triumvirate (60-54 B.C.): Pompey, Julius, Crassus--this Julius was Caius Julius Caesar for whom all subsequent emperors would be called "Caesar"
 - Julius was a brilliant military strategist as well as a historian of some ability
 - Intimidation was a tool which he used to superb effect
- Julius consul (47-44 B.C.) with Mark Antony (44 B.C.)
- Second Triumvirate (43 B.C.): Antony, Octavian, Lepidus
- Octavian/Octavianus Caesar Augustus (27 B.C.-A.D. 14)
 - His original surname was Thurinus
 - He was Julius Caesar's nephew who was adopted by Caesar and named heir
 - He was the first Caesar to reign truly as a king would, though he was afraid to wear the title "king;" instead he was the "imperator"
 - He secured the *Pax Romana*, i.e. the peace of Rome
 - He gave himself the name--or had conferred on him by the senate--"Augustus," i.e. "the august one," "venerable . . . worthy of honor and reverence" and encouraged emperor worship~religious places were called "August" or in Greek texts, "Sebastos"
 - As all emperors after Julius were called Caesar, so all emperors after Octavian were called Augustus (Acts 25:21, of Nero)
- Tiberius Nero Caesar (A.D. 14-37) was a despot
- Caligula/Caius Caligula Caesar (A.D. 37-41)
 - He was an immoral, egotistical tyrant who was cruel, wasteful, and essentially mad
 - He really pushed emperor worship
 - He was assassinated
- Claudius/Tiberius Claudius Drusus Caesar (A.D. 41-54)

- He drove the Jews from Rome in A.D. 52 (Acts 18:2; Suetonius, *Twelve Caesars*, "Claudius," XXV)
- Nero Claudius Caesar (A.D. 54-68)
 - The cruelest of the Caesars
 - He selfishly burned Rome to clear out slums for a new palace and blamed the burning on the Christians there
 - He instituted the first persecution of the church by Rome; which persecution may have been basically limited to Rome's environs
 - He committed suicide
- Galba/Sergius Sulpicius Galba (A.D. 68-69)
 - He could be cruel
 - He was not liked by his legions
 - Otho assassinated him
- Otho/Calvius Otho (A.D. 69)
 - He was opposed by Vitellius' army, and realizing all was lost he committed suicide
- Vitellius/Aulus Vitellius (A.D. 69)
 - He was lazy and allowed mismanagement of Roman affairs by his subordinates
 - He died in Cremona as his army was defeated by Vespasian's
- Vespasian/Flavius Vespasianus Augustus (A.D. 69-79)
 - He had led the siege of Jerusalem
 - He was proclaimed emperor by his army
- Titus Flavius Vespasianus Augustus (A.D. 79-81)
 - He was Vespasian's son
 - He completed the siege and destruction of Jerusalem
 - He enjoyed a peaceful reign
- Domitian/Titus Flavius Domitianus (A.D. 81-96)
 - Another of Vespasian's sons
 - He was a despot who demanded emperor worship calling himself "*Dominus et Deus*," i.e. "Lord and God"
 - He brought about a most thorough persecution of the early church; a persecution which spread into the provinces
 - John was banished to Patmos in his reign
- Nerva/Marcus Cocceius (A.D. 96-98)
- Trajan/Marcus Ulpius Trajanus (A.D. 98-117)
- Hadrian/Publius Aelius Hadrianus (A.D. 117-138)
 - He was nicknamed the "Greekling"
 - He pushed the limits of the empire well into Britannia
- Antoninus Pius/Titus Aurelius Fulvius Boionius Antoninus (A.D. 138-161)
- Marcus Aurelius (A.D. 161-180)
 - A stoic philosopher who, ironically, was one of the worst persecutors of the early church
- Commodus/Lucius Aurelius (A.D. 180-192)
 - A mad despot

Scriptural Significance

- Rome was represented by the legs of iron and feet of iron and miry clay in the colossal image of Daniel 2:22,40-43; while they were the strongest of the nations the prophecy concerned, they were the least valuable in the eyes of God

ROMAN JUDEA

Introduction

- Pompey conquered Judea in 63 B.C.; afterward, Judea was a realm of Rome, even through two serious attempts at revolution A.D. 66-70 and 132-135
- Until 37 B.C. Roman interference in Judean affairs had been limited with the Hasmoneans retaining power; that changed when Augustus appointed a king for the Jews

Leaders

- Herod the Great (37-4 B.C.)
 - He was an Idumaean by birth
 - Octavian appointed him the king of the Jews before he became imperator
 - At his death his sons reigned in his stead as organized by Octavian
- Archaelaus (4 B.C.-A.D. 6)
 - Was given control of Judea, Samaria, and Idumaea
 - Was banished by Augustus
 - Procurators assumed Archaelaus' dominion:
 - Coponius (A.D. c6-9)
 - Marcus Ambivius (A.D. c9-12)
 - Annius Rufus (A.D. 12-15)
 - Valerius Gratus (A.D. 15-26)
 - Pontius Pilate (A.D. c. 26-36) who was procurator when Jesus was crucified (John 19:4-15)
 - Marcellus (A.D. 37)
- Herod Antipas (4 B.C.-A.D. 39)
 - Was given control of Galilee, but was banished by Caligula
- Herod Philip (4 B.C.-A.D. 34)
 - Was given control of northeast Palestine
- Agrippa I (A.D. 37,41-44)
 - Was banished by Tiberius, but reinstalled by Caligula
 - Actually was able to convince Caligula not to put his image in the Jew's temple
 - Procurators assumed Agrippa's dominion:
 - Cuspius Fadus (A.D. 44-46)
 - Tiberius Alexander (A.D. 46-48)
 - Ventidius Cumanus (A.D. 48-52)
- Agrippa II (A.D. 48-70)
 - At 21, he was given some territory by Rome-- he had been too young at his father, Agrippa I's death
 - In A.D. 52, Agrippa was given territories in the area east and northeast of the the Sea of Galilee which had belonged to Philip II
 - In A.D. 55, Agrippa's reign was increased to include Galilee and Perea
 - It was before Agrippa II that Paul appeared prior to his going to Rome in bonds (Acts 25:13; 26:32)
 - Was rumored to have had an affair with his sister, Bernice
 - Given position of Praetor in Rome; he was there with Bernice, and there he died around A.D. 100

- Procurators continued to reign while Agrippa II was in power:
 - Felix (A.D. c52-56) who "Exercised the authority of a king with the spirit of a slave ... He supposed he might perpetrate with impunity every form of villainy" (Tacitus, *The Histories*, V.9); at one point he hired assassins to kill the high priest, Jonathan; Felix' wife, Drusilla (Acts 24:24), had been the wife of Azizus the king of Emesu--which is northeast of Lebanon, in Syria--before Felix persuaded her to leave him [Drusilla, a great grand-daughter of Herod the Great, was the sister of Agrippa II and Bernice (Acts 25:13)]; he had no qualms about taking bribes (most procurators would have been of a like mind in this matter)
 - Antonius Festus (A.D. c56-62)
 - Clodius Albinus (A.D. 62-64)
 - Gessius Florus (A.D. 64-66)

A STUDY OF THE OFFICE OF PROCURATOR

- Having procurators over a kingdom ensured that Rome would have a loyal representative exerting Rome's will over the captive peoples
- Among other responsibilities, these governors would keep the Roman peace in the conquered land (Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, II.xiv.1), would be Caesar's voice (Tiberius referred to one governor in this way, "Cuspius Fadus, my procurator" [*Antiquities*, XX.i.2]) when they held council, and would serve as the directors of financial operations and tax collection
- Also of interest to the Bible student are these two considerations: no Sanhedrin meeting could be convened without their approval (*Antiquities*, XX.ii.1) and these governors had the power of life and death when judgment was issued (*Wars*, II.viii.1)
- Judea was not the only land that had such rulers; in fact, her neighbor to the north, Syria, was also so ruled; in the early days the Jews' governors were required to report to the Syrian governor (*Fausset's Bible Dictionary*, "Procurator"), for this reason, some will call their early procurators prefects or legates; however, "it is convenient to follow common usage and assume that this title [procurator-DFC] was current from the first" (*International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, "Procurator")
- Judea's governors ultimately were not so restricted and would have such authority that any complaints about their rule had to be brought before the Caesar himself; such power occasioned abuse of the office, and contributed to the Jews' rebellion against Rome in A.D. 66 which hastened the destruction of Jerusalem (A.D. 70)--the fulfillment of Matthew 24:5-35

ROMAN MYTHOLOGY

Origin

- The mythology of Rome was, in part, a bi-product of the pervasion of Greek mythology, for the Roman gods were generally renamed from their Greek counterparts
- Like Greek mythology, Roman mythology developed over time and was transmitted at first orally and in writing by men like Ovid and Virgil
- The Romans viewed their mythology as history
- The gods of the Romans were associated with natural forces and everyday events

Deities

- Jupiter, king of the Roman pantheon, was god of sky and thunder
- Juno, queen of the gods, was goddess of marriage, the community, and fertility
- Mars was god of war
- Quirinus was an early Roman god taken to be Romulus
- Neptune was god of water and the sea
- Pluto was god of the underworld and wealth
- Apollo was a Greek god whose name was typically retained in Roman mythology, perhaps due to the Romans' long reliance upon his oracle at Delphi in Greece
- Minerva was goddess of wisdom and commerce
- Venus was goddess of love, beauty, and fertility
- Diana was goddess of hunting, the moon, and childbirth
- Ceres was goddess of agriculture and fertility
- Bacchus was god of wine, celebration, and the theater
- Cupid was the god of love and sexual desire
- Vulcan was god of fire and smithing
- Mercury was the messenger god
- Vesta was goddess of the hearth and the home
- Heroes, men or part-men like Hercules, were viewed as gods themselves
- Caesars would often promote themselves as gods and demand worship be directed to them, from whence came Caesar cults
- Conquered nations were able to continue the worship of the gods of their mythologies

Beliefs

- The gods had been involved throughout Roman history as maintainers of natural order and as providers of military victories, commercial success, agricultural produce, etc

Creation

- The Romans believed that a god had formed the earth, skies, etc, from disorganized primordial elements
- Perhaps the best known Roman creation myth is actually a formation, the myth of the founding of Rome
 - There were two brothers, Romulus and Remus
 - Depending on the source myth, they are variously described as children of Mars or of Hercules or of a Vestal virgin or even descendants of the fugitive Trojan prince Aeneas
 - These two boys were reared by a she-wolf
 - Romulus and Remus were shepherds who chose hills on the Tiber River and built walls thereon; Remus ultimately went over Romulus' wall and was killed by Romulus
 - Rome grew from that hill in 753 B.C. to cover seven hills and then the first century world

Flood Tradition

- Jupiter, angered at man, was going to destroy the earth by fire; however, fearing that fire would destroy his realm as well, he decided to send a flood instead

Aspiration

- To maintain a good relationship with the gods through piety and appropriate worship

Death

- Burial, at times, was a very elaborate process, especially for the rich--whose burial would often be accompanied by sacrifice; generally, they viewed death and beyond as the Greeks did

Admission

- One born a Roman would grow up accepting the existence of these gods and so honoring them

Worship

- Altars, idols, and temples were characteristic locations of worship--the manner of which varied
 - Both vegetable matter and animal were often sacrificed, and on rare occasions men were as well
 - Temples were often the location of prostitution as a means of gathering money for the gods

Legacy

- Like Greek mythology, Roman mythology continues to influence today

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WORLD EMPIRES AND THE BIBLE:

COMPREHENSIVE CHRONOLOGY



WORLD EMPIRES AND THE BIBLE

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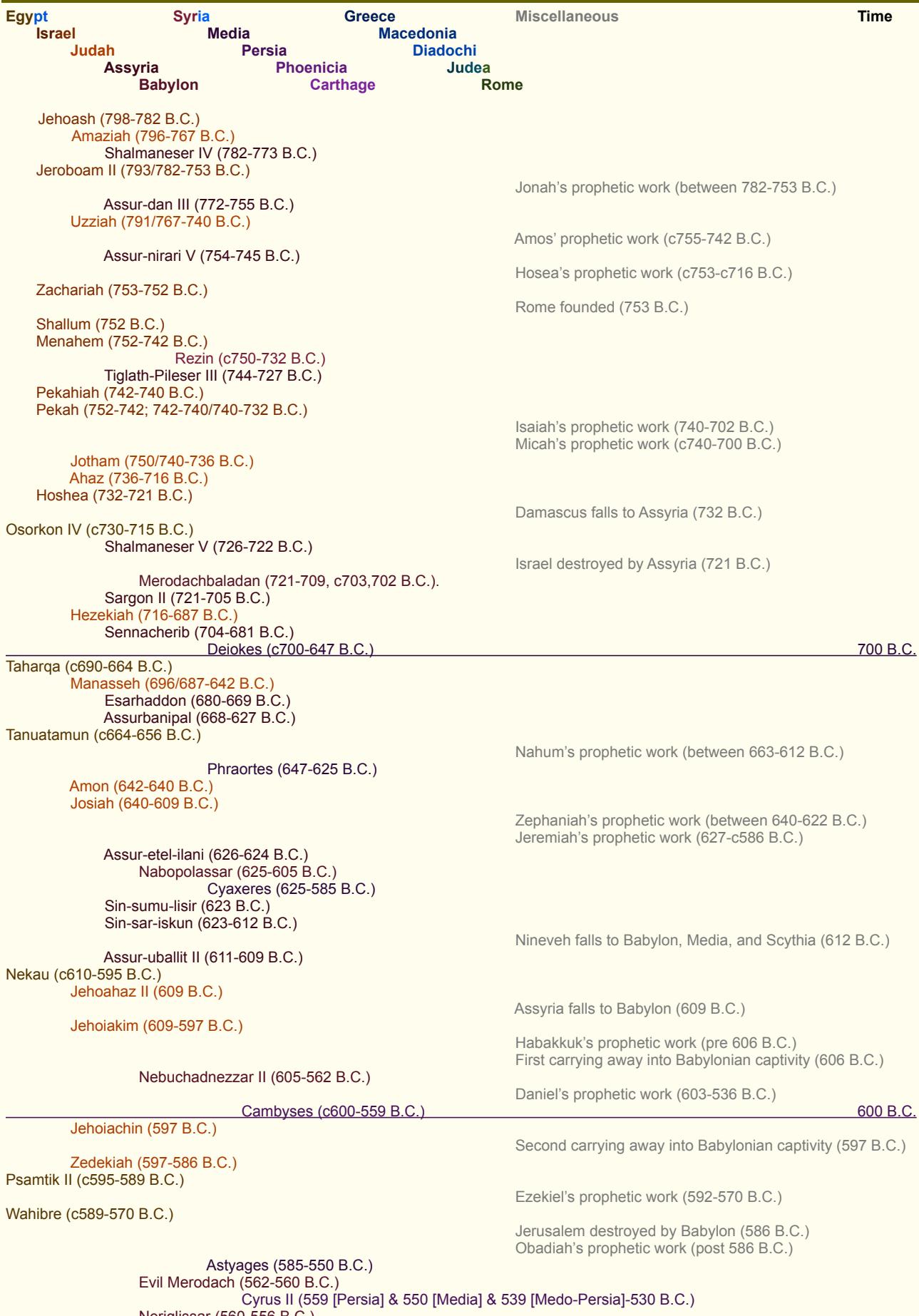
ROMAN JUDEA

ROMAN MYTHOLOGY

COMPREHENSIVE CHRONOLOGY

Egypt	Israel	Syria	Media	Greece	Macedonia	Diadochi	Miscellaneous
Assyria	Judah	Persia	Phoenicia	Carthage	Judea	Rome	Time

Menes (c3100 B.C.)							3100 B.C.
Djoser (c2668-2649 B.C.)							
Snefru (c2613-2589 B.C.)							2600 B.C.
Khufu (c2589-2566 B.C.)							
Khafre (c2558-2532 B.C.)							2500 B.C.
Userkaf (c2498-2491 B.C.)							2400 B.C.
Sobeknefru (c1785-1782 B.C.)							1700 B.C.
Kamose (c1573-1570 B.C.)							
Amenhotep I (c1551-1524 B.C.)							
Tuthmosis I (c1524-1518 B.C.)							
Tuthmosis III (c1504-1450 B.C.)							1500 B.C.
Hatshepsut (c1498-1483 B.C.)							
Amenhotep II (c1453-1419 B.C.)							
							Exodus from Egypt (1447 B.C.)
							Entry into Canaan (1407 B.C.)
							1400 B.C.
Amenhotep IV (c1350-1334 B.C.)							
Tutankhaten (c1334-1325 B.C.)							1300 B.C.
Ramesses II (c1279-1212 B.C.)							
Mernephtah (c1212-1202 B.C.)							1200 B.C.
Tiglath-Pileser I (1115-1076 B.C.)							1100 B.C.
Saul (1050-1010 B.C.)							
David (1010-971 B.C.)							1000 B.C.
Amenemope (c993-984 B.C.)							
							Hiram (981-947 B.C.)
Siamun (c978-959 B.C.)							
Solomon (971-931 B.C.)							
Sheshonq I (c945-924 B.C.)							
Rehoboam (931-913 B.C.)							
Jeroboam I (931-910 B.C.)							
Abijah (913-911 B.C.)							
Asa (911-870 B.C.)							
Nadab (910-909 B.C.)							
Benhadad I (c909-885 B.C.)							
Baasha (909-886 B.C.)							900 B.C.
							Ittobaal (899-867 B.C.)
Elah (886-885 B.C.)							
Benhadad II (c885-841 B.C.)							
Zimri (885 B.C.)							
Tibni (885-880 B.C.)							
Omri (885 [co-regency]/880-874 B.C.)							
Assurnasirpal II (883-859 B.C.)							
							Elijah's prophetic work (c875-850 B.C.)
Ahab (874-853 B.C.)							
Jehoshaphat (873/870-848 B.C.)							
Shalmaneser III (858-824 B.C.)							
							Elisha's prophetic work (c855-800 B.C.)
Ahaziah (853-852 B.C.)							
							Battle of Qarqar (853 B.C.)
Jehoram (852-841 B.C.)							
Jehoram (853/848-841 B.C.)							
Hazaël (c841-798 B.C.)							
Ahaziah (841 B.C.)							
Athaliah (841-835 B.C.)							
Jehu (841-814 B.C.)							
Joash (835-796 B.C.)							
							Joel's prophetic work (835-830 B.C.)
Samsi-Adad V (823-811 B.C.)							
Jehoahaz (814-798 B.C.)							
Adad-nirari III (810-783 B.C.)							
Benhadad III (c801/798-??? B.C.)							800 B.C.



Egypt	Syria	Greece	Miscellaneous	Time
Israel	Media	Macedonia		
Judah	Persia	Diadochi		
Assyria	Phoenicia	Judea		
Babylon	Carthage	Rome		
Labasi Marduk (556 B.C.)				
Nabonidus (556-539 B.C.)				
Belshazzar (539 B.C.)				
Cambyses II (529-522 B.C.)			Restoration to Promised Land (536 B.C.)	
Gaumata (522 B.C.)				
Nebuchadnezzar III (522 B.C.)				
Nebuchadnezzar IV (521 B.C.)				
Darius I Hystaspes (521-486 B.C.)				
Xerxes I (485-465 B.C.)				
Bel-Shimanni (464 B.C.)				
Shamash-Eriba (464 B.C.)				
Artaxerxes I Longimanus (464-424 B.C.)				
Xerxes II (424 B.C.)			Ezra restored worship (457 B.C.)	
Sodgianus (424,423 B.C.)			Nehemiah rebuilt walls of Jerusalem (444 B.C.)	
Darius II Nartthus (423-405 B.C.)				
Artaxerxes II Mnemnon (404-359 B.C.)				400 B.C.
Philip of Macedon (359-336 B.C.)				
Artaxerxes III Ochus (358-338 B.C.)				
Arses (337-336 B.C.)				
Alexander (336-323 B.C.)				
Darius III (335-331 B.C.)				
Antigonus (323-301 B.C.)				
Antipater (323-319 B.C.)				
Cassander (323-297 B.C.)				
Eumenes (323-318 B.C.)				
Lysimachus (323-281 B.C.)				
Ptolemy I Soter (323-285 B.C.)				
Seleucus I Nicator (312-280 B.C.)				
			Battle of Ipsus (301 B.C.)	300 B.C.
Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285-247 B.C.)				
Antiochus I Soter (293/280-261 B.C.)				
Antiochus II Theos (261-246 B.C.)				
Ptolemy III Philadelphus (247-222 B.C.)				
Hamilcar Barca (247-228 B.C.)				
Hasdrubal (228-221 B.C.)				
Seleucus II Callinicus (246-226 B.C.)				
Seleucus III Soter (226-223 B.C.)				
Antiochus III Magnus (223-187 B.C.)				
Ptolemy IV Philopator (222-205 B.C.)				
Hannibal (221-195 B.C.)				
			Battle of Cannae (216 B.C.)	200 B.C.
Ptolemy V Epiphanes (205-181 B.C.)				
Seleucus IV Philopator (187-175 B.C.)				
Ptolemy VI Philometer (181-146 B.C.)				
Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-163 B.C.)				
			Mattathias (d. 166 B.C.)	
			Judas Maccabeus cleanses the temple (164 B.C.)	
Antiochus V Eupater (163-162 B.C.)				
Demetrius I Soter (162-150 B.C.)				
Ptolemy VII Physcon (146-117 B.C.)				
Demetrius II Nicator (146-144* B.C.)				
Antiochus VI Theos (144-142 B.C.)				
Tryphon the Usurper (142-137 B.C.)				
			Jonathan Apphus (imprisoned 142 B.C.)	
Antiochus VII Sidetes (137-128 B.C.)			Simon Thassi (142-134 B.C.)	
Demetrius II Nicator (*128-125 B.C.)			John Hyrcanus (134-104 B.C.)	
Seleucus V (125-124 B.C.)				
Antiochus VIII Grypus (124-96 B.C.)				
Ptolemy VIII Soter II (117-107* B.C.)				
Ptolemy IX Alexander I (107-90 B.C.)				
			Aristobulus I (104-103 B.C.)	

Egypt	Syria	Media	Greece	Macedonia	Diadochi	Judea	Miscellaneous	Time
Israel		Media		Macedonia				
Judah		Persia		Diadochi				
Assyria		Phoenicia		Judea				
Babylon		Carthage		Rome				
	Seleucus VI Epiphanes (95-93 B.C.)						Alexander Jannaeus (103-76 B.C.)	100 B.C.
Ptolemy Soter II (*89-81 B.C.)								
Ptolemy X Alexander II (81 B.C.)								
Ptolemy XI Dionysus (80-51 B.C.)								
Cleopatra VII Philopator (51-30 B.C.)							Alexandra Salome (76-67 B.C.)	
Ptolemy XII Neos Dionysus (51-47 B.C.)							Pompey (70, 60-54 B.C.)	
Ptolemy XIII (47-44 B.C.)							Aristobulus II (67-63, d. 49 B.C.)	
Ptolemy XIV Caesaron (47-30 B.C.)							Hyrcanus II (63-40, d. 30 B.C.)	
							Judea conquered by Rome (63 B.C.)	
							Julius (60-54, 47-44 B.C.)	
							Antigonus (40-37 B.C.)	
							Herod the Great (37-4 B.C.)	
							Marc Antony and Cleopatra defeated by Octavian (31 B.C.)	
							Octavian (27 B.C.-A.D. 14)	
							Jesus Christ born (4 B.C.)	
							Archaelaus (4 B.C.-A.D. 6)	
							Herod Antipas (4 B.C.-A.D. 39)	
							Herod Philip (4 B.C.-A.D. 34)	A.D. 0 B.C.
							Coponius (A.D. c6-9)	
							Marcus Ambivius (A.D. c9-12)	
							Annus Rufus (A.D. c12-15)	
							Tiberius (A.D. 14-37)	
							Valerius Gratus (A.D. 15-26)	
							Pontius Pilate (A.D. c. 26-36)	
							Jesus Christ crucified (A.D. 29)	
							Church of Christ established (A.D. 29)	
							Marcellus (A.D. 36/38-41)	
							Caligula (A.D. 37-41)	
							Agrippa I (A.D. 37,41-44)	
							Claudius (A.D. 41-54)	
							Cuspius Fadus (A.D. 44-46)	
							Tiberius Alexander (A.D. c46-48)	
							Agrippa II (A.D. 48-70)	
							Ventidius Cumanus (A.D. 48-c52)	
							Antonius Felix (A.D. c52-56)	
							Nero (A.D. 54-68)	
							Porcius Festus (A.D. c56-62)	
							Luceius Clodius Albinus (A.D. 62-64)	
							Gessius Florus (A.D. 64-66)	
							Galba (A.D. 68-69)	
							Otho (A.D. 69)	
							Vitellius (A.D. 69)	
							Vespasian (A.D. 69-79)	
							Jerusalem destroyed (A.D. 70)	
							Titus (A.D. 79-81)	
							Domitian (A.D. 81-96)	
							Nerva (A.D. 96-98)	
							Trajan (A.D. 98-117)	A.D. 100
							Hadrian (A.D. 117-138)	
							Antoninus Pius (A.D. 138-161)	
							Marcus Aurelius (A.D. 161-180)	
							Commodus (A.D. 180-192)	

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