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The Holy Land Revealed

Course Guidebook

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Professor Jodi Magness holds a senior endowed chair in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill: the Kenan Distinguished Professor for Teaching Excellence in Early Judaism. Professor Magness received her B.A. in Archaeology and

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Professor Magness's book *The Archaeology of Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Eerdmans, 2002) won the 2003 Biblical Archaeology Society's Award for Best Popular Book on Archaeology for 2001–2002 and was selected as an Outstanding Academic Title for 2003 by *Choice: Current Reviews for Academic Libraries*. Her book *The Archaeology of the Early Islamic Settlement in Palestine* (Eisenbrauns, 2003) was awarded the 2006 Irene Levi-Sala Prize for Books in the Archaeology of Israel in the nonfiction category.

Professor Magness's other books include *Jewish Daily Life in Late Second Temple Period Palestine* (Eerdmans; forthcoming); *Debating Qumran: Collected Essays on Its Archaeology* (Peeters, 2004); *Hesed ve-Emet: Studies in Honor of Ernest S. Frerichs* (coedited with Seymour Gitin; Scholars Press, 1998); and *Jerusalem Ceramic Chronology circa 200–800 C.E.* (Sheffield Academic, 1993). She is currently at work on *The Archaeology of the Holy Land 586 B.C.–640 C.E.* (under contract with Cambridge University Press). In addition, Professor Magness has published numerous articles in journals

and edited volumes. Her research interests, which focus on Palestine in the Roman, Byzantine, and early Islamic periods, include ancient pottery, ancient synagogues, Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the Roman army in the East. Professor Magness has participated in 20 different excavations in Israel and Greece, including codirecting the 1995 excavations in the Roman siege works at Masada. From 2003 to 2007, she codirected excavations in the late Roman fort at Yotvata, Israel. In June 2011, she will begin a new excavation project at Huqoq in Galilee.

In 1997–1998, Professor Magness was awarded a fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies and a fellowship in Byzantine Studies at Dumbarton Oaks in Washington DC for research on *The Archaeology of the Early Islamic Settlement in Palestine*. In 2000–2001, Professor Magness was awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship for college teachers and a Skirball Visiting Fellowship at the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies for research on *The Archaeology of Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls*. In spring 2005, she received a Fulbright lecturing award through the United States–Israel Educational Foundation to teach two courses at the Institute of Archaeology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. In 2007–2008, Professor Magness was awarded a fellowship at the School for Historical Studies at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey, for research on *Aspects of Jewish Daily Life*. In 2008, she received a national teaching honor: the Archaeological Institute of America’s Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching. Most recently, Professor Magness was awarded a Chapman Family Faculty Fellowship for 2010–2011 at the Institute for Arts and Humanities at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill for work on *The Archaeology of the Holy Land, 586 B.C.–640 C.E.*

Professor Magness is a member of the Managing Committee of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens and the Program Committee of the Society of Biblical Literature. She has also been a member (and past vice-president) of the board of trustees of the W. F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research in Jerusalem, the governing board of the Archaeological Institute of America (AIA), and the board of trustees of the American Schools of Oriental Research. She also served as president of the North Carolina Society of the AIA and the Boston Society of the AIA. ■

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The Holy Land Revealed

Scope:

This course covers the ancient history of what many people know as the Holy Land, a geographic area that includes modern Israel, Jordan, and the Palestinian territories. The course also looks at other regions in the ancient Near East, including Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey) and Mesopotamia (encompassing modern Iraq and much of Iran). The timespan we will cover begins with the First Temple period (c. 960 B.C.–586 B.C.) and takes us through the Second Temple period, the time of Jesus, and the destruction of the temple (c. 516 B.C.–A.D. 70). Our historical sources for these periods of ancient history include the Hebrew Bible and related religious works, the Dead Sea Scrolls, the writings of Josephus and Philo, the New Testament, and the Mishnah and Talmud. We will also explore the archaeology of the ancient Near East, which will complement our study of the historical sources by giving us a more complete picture of ancient societies.

In Lecture 1, we begin with a look at the original inhabitants of ancient Palestine—the Canaanites—and we discuss the extent to which the Hebrew Bible can serve as a reliable source of information about the history of the Holy Land. In Lecture 2, we talk about the arrival and settlement of the Israelite tribes in Canaan; we'll see these events described in the Hebrew Bible and consider the degree to which those events are corroborated or not by archaeological evidence. In Lecture 3, we review the history of Jerusalem from biblical accounts, beginning with David and Solomon and going down to the destruction of the city by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. In Lecture 4, we then compare the archaeological remains we have from Jerusalem in this period with descriptions in the Hebrew Bible. Lecture 5 offers a detailed look at the water systems that supplied ancient Jerusalem and gives us some idea of the difficulties faced by 19th-century archaeological explorers.

With Lecture 6, we move outside of Jerusalem and look at the northern kingdom of Israel, which had split from the united monarchy after the death of Solomon in about 930 B.C. Among the problems that developed between the northern and southern kingdoms was a division over how to worship the God of Israel, Yahweh. As we'll see, evidence of this division can be found in the archaeology of the kingdom of Israel at the Tel Dan site and elsewhere. In Lecture 7, we turn from the political events that affected the kingdoms of Israel and Judah to the everyday lives of some of their citizens, focusing specifically on fortifications and cultic practices. In the next lecture, we continue our story with the Babylonian destruction of the kingdom of Judah in 586 B.C. and the Babylonian Exile, ending with the return of the Judeans from exile under Persian rule. In Lecture 9, we discuss the conquests of Alexander the Great and the effect of Hellenization, that is, the spread of Greek culture in the wake of Alexander's conquests. In Lectures 10 and 11, we look at the impact of Hellenization on the non-Jewish peoples in the area of ancient Palestine and the Jewish population of Judea. Lecture 11 also covers the Maccabean revolt and the establishment of an independent Jewish kingdom ruled by the Maccabees and their successors, the Hasmoneans. In Lecture 12, we continue the story of the Hasmoneans until their takeover by the Romans, then consider one of the important neighboring peoples of the Hasmoneans, the Nabateans.

Lecture 13 turns to some of the Jewish groups that emerged in opposition to the Hasmoneans, specifically the Sadducees and the Pharisees. Lecture 14 begins a series of four lectures concerning another sect that emerged during the Late Second Temple period, the Essenes, and the scrolls left behind by their community at Qumran. We discuss the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, tour the settlement at Qumran, and look at some of my own research on the archaeology there.

The sectarian settlement at Qumran was established during the Hasmonean period and was occupied through the period of the Roman takeover and the reign of Herod the Great. In Lecture 18, we consider the important transition from the Hasmonean period to the reign of Herod. As we'll see in Lectures 19 and 20, Herod may have been a ruthless king, but he is known among archaeologists as the single greatest builder in the history

of Palestine. We'll see his rebuilding of the Second Temple and the area of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem and his construction of another important city, Caesarea Maritima. Having looked at the archeological landscape created by Herod, in Lecture 21, we talk about his final days, his death, and the events after his death, leading up to and including the governorship of Pontius Pilate.

In Lectures 22 and 23, we study the smaller towns and villages, such as Bethlehem and Nazareth, that formed the backdrop to the life of Jesus. We also attempt to understand the socioeconomic environment of Galilee, which was polarized between an elite upper class and the majority of the population who lived at the subsistence level. Although Jesus apparently spent most of his life in Galilee, much of the information we have about him concerns his final days in Jerusalem. In Lecture 24, we review what is known from archaeology to learn what Jerusalem looked like in those last days. In Lectures 25 and 26, we explore the topic of ancient Jewish tombs and burials, setting the stage for a discussion, in Lecture 27, of Gospel accounts of the death and burial of Jesus and his brother, James.

The death of James highlights the instability in the Holy Land from the time of Herod's death until A.D. 66, when the First Jewish Revolt broke out against the Romans. As we'll see in Lecture 28, this revolt officially ended with the destruction of Jerusalem and the Second Temple in A.D. 70, but in Lectures 29 and 30, we follow the continued fighting of the Jews against the Romans, specifically in the fortresses of Herodium, Perea, and Masada. In the decades after 70, the Jews lived in expectation of rebuilding the temple, but the decision of Emperor Hadrian to rebuild Jerusalem as a pagan city led to the outbreak of additional revolts. Lecture 31 looks at these rebellions, culminating in the Second Jewish Revolt, or the Bar-Kokhba Revolt, the end of which seems to mark the parting of the ways between Judaism and Christianity. In Lecture 32, we explore Hadrian's rebuilding of Jerusalem as Aelia Capitolina before moving on, in Lecture 33, to the Byzantine period to consider how Christianity literally transformed the appearance of the Holy Land. In Lecture 34, we look at what happened to the Jewish population of Palestine during the course of this transformation, and in Lecture 35, we see the impact of the arrival of Islam. Finally, we

close this lecture series with an overview of scientific archaeological excavation and a look at the promise of even greater understanding of the past held by advances in technology, genetics, and other sciences. ■

The Land of Canaan

Lecture 1

Where archaeology and history diverge is in the types of information that they use for understanding the past.

In this first lecture, I will begin with some very key concepts, some chronologies, and some terms of dating. To start, the term “Holy Land” is not the only name for this piece of territory. The area is also called **Palestine**, the Land of Israel (or in, Hebrew, Eretz Israel), and Canaan. Basic chronological terms include the “First Temple period,” which begins with the building of the temple by Solomon c. 960 B.C. and ends in 586 B.C. with its destruction by the Babylonians, and the “Second Temple period,” which begins with the consecration of the Second Temple in 516 B.C. and ends with its destruction by the Romans in A.D. 70.

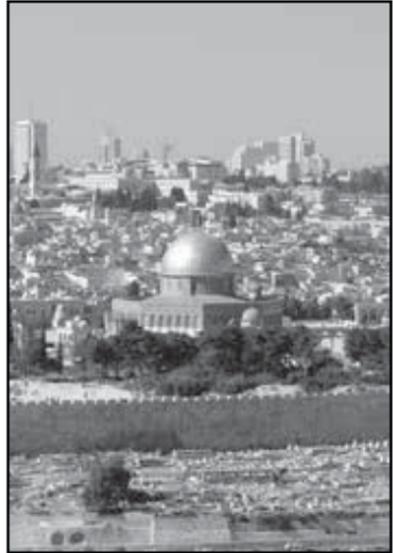
Much of our information will come from historical or literary sources, such as the **Hebrew Bible**, the **Apocrypha** and Pseudepigrapha, and the Dead Sea Scrolls. We will rely very heavily on a famous ancient Jewish historian called Josephus, as well as Philo of Alexandria and other written sources. We will also use a lot of archaeology, which differs from history in its method. Historians study written documents to understand the past; archaeologists study human material culture, the things that people have left behind. Archaeology compliments the picture of the past that we get from literary or written sources and, in periods for which we have no historical records, gives us some of our only information about the past.

Historians study written documents to understand the past; archaeologists study human material culture, the things that people have left behind.

One of the conventions that archaeologists have is dividing the past into a sequence. For our purposes, historic periods start with the 5th century B.C., when people began to keep records of history; periods before that are prehistoric. Archaeologists have divided prehistoric time in the Mediterranean basin into the sequence: Stone Age, Bronze Age, and Iron

Age. Until the invention of radiocarbon dating around 1950, there was no real way to get dates for the prehistorical remains that we dug up. To solve this problem, archaeologists tied their chronologies to Egypt, because Egypt is the only country with a continuously dated calendar going back almost 5,000 years.

The very early inhabitants of the Holy Land, whom we call Canaanites, settled in Palestine around 5,000 years ago and eventually developed a culture based around fortified city-states, of which we do have archaeological remains. The mounds, or tells, where these cities existed contain material traces of Canaanite culture, especially of their religion. Jerusalem was one of these cities. Excavations in Jerusalem have unearthed pottery and remains of houses and tombs that date back to the beginning of the Bronze Age, and we also have correspondence between the Egyptian pharaohs and the local kings in the area of Jerusalem.



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Jerusalem's Temple Mount, the religious heart of the city.

How reliable is the Hebrew Bible as a source of information about this ancient time? What makes this question difficult to answer is that the Hebrew Bible was composed and edited through many centuries, and often it refers to events that occurred centuries or millennia before they were written down. We must remember these things when we use the Hebrew Bible as a source of information.

By the end of this course of lectures, you will understand not just many different pieces of information but also the kinds of critical tools and methods that archaeologists and scholars use to evaluate the validity of historical claims presented to the public. ■

Important Terms

Apocrypha: Books included in the Catholic canon of sacred scripture but not in the Jewish and Protestant canons (examples: Tobit and Ecclesiasticus).

Hebrew Bible: Roughly corresponds with the Old Testament.

Palestine: Modern Israel, Jordan, and the Palestinian territories (ancient Canaan).

Questions to Consider

1. How do the differences between history and archaeology affect our understanding of the past?
2. How would you respond to the argument that the Hebrew Bible contains no historically reliable information at all?

The Arrival of the Israelites

Lecture 2

In fact many scholars now believe that the Exodus, if it ever occurred, occurred not in the way that is described in the Bible, but as a much smaller event, that is perhaps as a small number of people leaving Egypt wandering perhaps to some extent in the desert eventually entering the land of Canaan and joining up in Canaan with other people.

In this lecture, we'll continue talking about the arrival of the Israelite tribes in Canaan and their settlement there, how these events are described in the Hebrew Bible, and to what degree those descriptions are corroborated or not by archaeological evidence.

The Canaanites settled in Canaan at the beginning of the Bronze Age, roughly around 3000 B.C. With time, their villages grew into towns and, in some cases, large fortified cities. By the late Bronze Age—the 14th and 13th centuries B.C.—Canaan consisted of fortified city-states. It's precisely during this period that the Israelite Exodus from Egypt supposedly took place. In the last lecture, we talked quite extensively about the degree to which the Hebrew Bible can be used as a reliable source of information. To what extent is the account of the Exodus corroborated by archaeology?

On the Merneptah stele is a reference to Israel as a people: "Israel is laid waste, his seed is not."

The problem is that, if there was an exodus from Egypt, this is the sort of event that would leave little if any traces in the archaeological record. The Exodus involved people wandering around in a nomadic or semi-nomadic fashion through the desert. They were not building settlements or cities or leaving the kind of remains that would be traceable in the archaeological record.

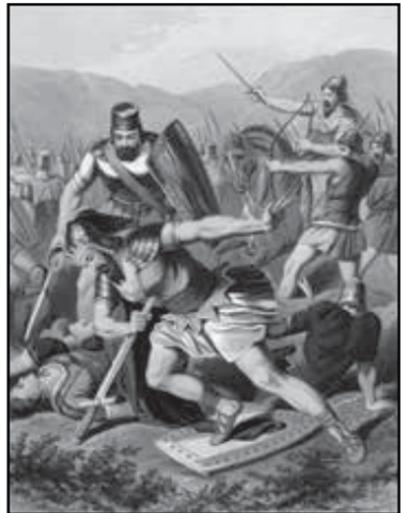
However, we do have an important piece of information about the early Israelites that comes from the time the Exodus would've taken place. This is a large standing stone called the **Merneptah stele**, named after

an Egyptian pharaoh, Merneptah, and commemorating his victories. On the Merneptah stele is a reference to Israel as a people: “Israel is laid waste, his seed is not.” This reference in no way corroborates the biblical story of the Exodus, but it indicates the existence of a people called Israel at the time they would have arrived in the land of Canaan.

In around 1200 B.C., the system of city-states in Canaan collapsed. At this time, many peoples were moving about the eastern Mediterranean world, and cities and kingdoms were destroyed. This collapse coincided with the Israelite tribes’ entry into Canaan and settlement in the hilly center of the country. At exactly the same time, other peoples also moved into the area, such as the **Moabites** and the **Philistines**, who settled more arable and richer parts of Canaan and became enemies of Israel.

Archaeological evidence sometimes supports the biblical account of the settlement and sometimes does not. For Jericho, there isn’t evidence at this time of walls that could collapse, but there is evidence of destruction by fire at the site of the northern Canaanite city Hazor. Archaeology alone, however, cannot tell us who destroyed that city.

The Hebrew Bible indicates that violence did not end with the settlement; indeed, the Bible is filled with stories about wars and battles, especially between the Philistines and the Israelites. In these accounts appear important figures, such as Samson, Saul, David, and Goliath. It is Saul’s death in a battle with the Philistines that enables David to become the next king and leads to the creation of a united kingdom under David and his son Solomon. ■



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The death of King Saul set the stage for the creation of a united Israel.

Important Terms

Merneptah stele: Monumental stone inscription of the pharaoh Merneptah, which contains the first reference to the people “Israel” (1209 B.C.).

Moabites: Iron Age inhabitants of the area south of Ammon and north of Edom.

Philistines: People of Aegean origin who settled the southern coast of Palestine in the early Iron Age.

Questions to Consider

1. To what extent does archaeology support the biblical account of the early Israelite settlement in Canaan, and what does archaeology tell us about the nature of that settlement?
2. Why does it (or should it) matter whether archaeology supports the biblical account of any event?

Jerusalem—An Introduction to the City

Lecture 3

Why did David make Jerusalem the capital of his kingdom? A couple of good reasons: First of all, Jerusalem was located in the center of the country, so geographically speaking, it's a good point to put your capital. But there is another reason: because Jerusalem ... did not belong to any one of the 12 tribes. In other words, Jerusalem was a politically neutral city.

In our last lecture, we ended by noting that the death of Saul set the stage for **David** to become king, followed by his son **Solomon**. Perhaps the most famous events in their reigns are David's bringing of the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem, his capital, and Solomon's building of the First Temple there.

Because Jerusalem is central to this course, we should understand how the city is laid out. The original settlement in Jerusalem was on a small, low-



Courtesy of Dr. Jodi Magness.

King David chose Jerusalem as his capital for its political neutrality and its geographic centrality.

lying hill and was known as the **City of David**. This hill lies outside the Old City (which dates from Ottoman times) and is dwarfed by both the Old City and the modern city. However, the only perennial source of fresh water in Jerusalem, the Gihon Spring, comes out of the ground at the foot of the eastern slope of this little hill. Furthermore, the site is protected by natural valleys on two of its three sides.

Solomon expanded the city northward to include the area of the Temple Mount, which dominated the biblical City of David and became the ancient acropolis of Jerusalem, where the most important political and religious institutions were built. Later, the city spread westward onto the Western Hill, protected by valleys on three sides.

Having reviewed the topography of Jerusalem, let's return to its history during the time of David and Solomon. David made Jerusalem the capital of his kingdom for two likely reasons: its central location and the fact that it had never been controlled by any of the Israelite tribes but was politically neutral. Into this City of David he brought the Ark of the Covenant. His son Solomon is most famous for building the First Temple on the Temple Mount north of the city. After Solomon died, in about 930 B.C., a quarrel broke out over the succession to the throne, and the kingdom split into a northern half, Israel, with its capital at Samaria, and a southern half, Judah, with its capital at Jerusalem. Each of these kingdoms had its own independent political history.

Meanwhile, to the east, a great empire arose, **Assyria**, based in northern **Mesopotamia**. Assyria expanded westward toward the Mediterranean coast and began launching invasions into the kingdom of Israel. In the year 722 B.C., the Assyrians conquered the northern kingdom of Israel, and 20 years later, they invaded the kingdom of Judah, destroying many of the major Judean cities and besieging Jerusalem itself.

Jerusalem survived the Assyrian siege but was later taken by the Babylonians, the next great power, based in southern Mesopotamia.

Jerusalem survived the Assyrian siege but was later taken by the Babylonians, the next great power, based in southern Mesopotamia. In 586 B.C., the Babylonians conquered the city, burned the temple, and forced the inhabitants of Judah into exile. This historical review of Jerusalem down to its destruction by the Babylonians is based largely on biblical accounts. In the next lecture, we will compare the archaeological remains in Jerusalem that date to this period with the descriptions in the Hebrew Bible. ■

Names to Know

David (fl. 10th century B.C.): The eighth and youngest son of Jesse, from the tribe of Judah, David succeeded Saul as king of Israel and ruled the United Kingdom for 40 years, from c. 1010 to 970 B.C. He conquered Jerusalem and made it the capital of his kingdom. David also brought the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem. He was succeeded to the throne by his son Solomon.

Solomon (r. c. 970–930 B.C.): Son of David and successor to the throne of the United Kingdom. Solomon is renowned for his wisdom; his many wives; his political and commercial alliances with Hiram, king of Tyre, and with the queen of Sheba; and for having established the First Temple on Jerusalem's Temple Mount.

Important Terms

Assyria: Ancient empire based in the northern part of Mesopotamia (modern Iraq).

Babylonia: Ancient empire based in the southern part of Mesopotamia (modern Iraq).

City of David: Eastern Hill; Lower City.

Mesopotamia: In Greek, literally means “the land between the rivers,” referring to the Tigris and Euphrates rivers; a territory that corresponds roughly with modern Iraq.

Questions to Consider

1. What combination of natural features attracted settlement in Jerusalem 5,000 years ago?
2. Why was Jerusalem a good choice to be the capital of David's kingdom?

The Jerusalem of David and Solomon

Lecture 4

In 1993 at Tel Dan, in the very northern part of the country, excavators found part of a stele, a big inscribed stone, which actually mentions the House of David and dates to the middle of the 9th century B.C.

In this lecture, we will look at the archaeology of Jerusalem in the biblical period, focusing especially on the time from David and Solomon to 586 B.C. When we talk about biblical Jerusalem, people often ask about the remains of Solomon's Temple—the First Temple—which originally stood on top of the Temple Mount. Unfortunately, we don't have any archaeological remains at all of this building, though we have descriptions of it in the Hebrew Bible.

We do, however, have archaeological remains in the City of David that go back to the time of David and Solomon and even earlier. Those remains are concentrated on that little spur to the south of the Temple Mount that was the original Jebusite city of Jerusalem. There have been excavations during the last century focusing on the northern part of this site, which was higher in elevation than the rest of the City of David. Here, a massive step-stone **glacis** (slope or incline) has been discovered, which would have supported some large structure further up the steep slope. Recently, remains of a monumental building have been found above the glacis. Probably this structure was part of the original acropolis of the city before Solomon extended the city to the north to include the Temple Mount.

Excavations have also revealed in the City of David the remains of Israelite houses dating to as early as the 8th and 7th centuries B.C.

Excavations have also revealed in the City of David the remains of Israelite houses dating to as early as the 8th and 7th centuries B.C. In some of these houses have been found clay figurines that almost always depict a woman naked to the waist and cupping her breasts under her hands. Thus, we have some physical evidence for the very kinds of pagan practices that the prophets warned the



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Archaeological digs around the Temple Mount, where the Dome of the Rock stands today, reveal artifacts dating to the reigns of David and Solomon.

Israelites about. And we know these houses could have been Israelite because in at least one of them was found more than 50 **bullae** with Hebrew names written on them. Bullae are clay seals for scrolled documents.

At least one bulla seems to refer clearly to a person mentioned in the Hebrew Bible, Gemaryahu, son of Shaphan. This name is unusual, and a passage in Jeremiah refers to a scribe with this very name. Further, a scribe is the sort of person we would expect to use a personal seal on documents. This Gemaryahu was active in the court of the king of Judah roughly around 600 B.C., and the excavated house was destroyed in 586 B.C., so the dates fit very nicely together. We can say, therefore, with about as much certainty as possible, that this seal was affixed by the same figure who is mentioned in the book of Jeremiah.

We have talked in this lecture about Jerusalem in the biblical period, focusing especially on the remains in the City of David. In our next lecture, we'll look at the water systems that supplied the biblical city of Jerusalem. ■

Important Terms

bullae: A clay sealing.

glacis: In general, a plastered mound of earth piled around a town, with a fortification wall on top; a rampart.

Questions to Consider

1. What does archaeology tell us about Davidic and Solomonic Jerusalem—and, by way of extension, about David and Solomon?
2. What do the finds from houses of the 8th–7th centuries B.C. in the City of David tell us about the Israelite population of Jerusalem?

Biblical Jerusalem's Ancient Water Systems

Lecture 5

One of the most exciting things about archaeology in Jerusalem is that ongoing discoveries are constantly causing us to revise our understanding of what the original city looked like.

In this lecture, we will talk about the water systems that supplied the City of David. The main water supply was the Gihon Spring, which comes out of the ground at the eastern foot of the hill of the City of David. Unfortunately, because this spring is located at the foot of the hill inside a valley, putting a fortification wall around it wouldn't work because people on the Mount of Olives, which is higher, could shoot over the wall. Thus, the **Jebusites** placed their fortification wall halfway up the slope of the hill. This leaves the water supply outside the walls, a serious problem during times of siege.

During the Bronze and Iron Ages, three different water systems were built in order to cope with this problem: **Warren's Shaft** (named for the explorer who discovered it), the Siloam Channel, and Hezekiah's Tunnel. Warren's Shaft, which seems to date from Jebusite times, led to a gigantic rock-cut pool surrounded by massive towers. The description in the Hebrew Bible of David's conquest of Jerusalem may refer to this water system: The account indicates that David's men climbed up through the *tsinnor* to take the city. In modern Hebrew, the word *tsinnor* means a pipe, such as a water pipe, but in the Hebrew Bible, it's not clear what this term means.

Warren's Shaft, which seems to date from Jebusite times, led to a gigantic rock-cut pool surrounded by massive towers.

The second water system is the Siloam Channel. The Siloam Channel was meant to provide a place for water to go when the massive pool associated with Warren's Shaft was full. It channeled the excess water through the base of the **Kidron Valley**, where water could flow out and irrigate plots of land. Another large pool for storing excess water was located at the very southern tip of the City of

David. Because this second system worked together with the first, it also was probably Jebusite.

The most famous and latest of the three water systems is Hezekiah's Tunnel, built by this king of Judah in preparation for the Assyrian invasion and siege of Jerusalem. The Hebrew Bible tells us that Hezekiah wished to prevent the Assyrians from having access to the water from the spring that was flowing through the Siloam Channel; thus, a new tunnel was built, one that was completely underground and led to a pool inside the city walls. (Hezekiah also built a new fortification wall, more than 20 feet thick, to surround the Western Hill, where people were living by his time.)

Hezekiah's Tunnel winds its way in a very irregular, snaky manner for 500 meters underneath the City of David. What is so amazing is that the gradient, the slope, of the bottom of this water tunnel, is only 0.6 percent—a difference of only 30 cm from beginning to end. Furthermore, the tunnel was cut by two teams of men, one starting at the Gihon Spring and the other at the outlet end; both of those teams cut through solid bedrock underneath the City of David and somehow met in the middle.

In the next lecture, we will look at the history and archaeology of the northern kingdom of Israel. ■

Important Terms

Jebusites: The original (Bronze Age) population of Jerusalem.

Kidron Valley: Separates the Mount of Olives from the Temple Mount and the City of David.

***tsinnor*:** Biblical Hebrew word perhaps referring to the Warren's Shaft system in the City of David.

Warren's Shaft (along with the Siloam Channel and Hezekiah's Tunnel): Ancient water systems of Jerusalem.

Questions to Consider

1. How did Jerusalem's ancient inhabitants deal with the critical problem of water supply and access?
2. How does archaeology complement or supplement our knowledge of Jerusalem in the time of Hezekiah, as reported in the biblical account?

Samaria and the Northern Kingdom of Israel

Lecture 6

The governing principle of all ancient peoples said you worship your national deity or patron deity, but also side by side, other gods. The writers of the Hebrew Bible were against that principle.

What was going on in the kingdom of Israel, to the north, while all the things that we have been looking at in Jerusalem were going on in Judah? After the 10 northern tribes broke away from Judah and formed their own kingdom, eventually, **Samaria** became its capital, only 35 miles from Jerusalem. With these two kingdoms and their capitals in such close proximity, you can imagine that tension and rivalry developed between them.

The writers of the Hebrew Bible were pro-Judah/pro-south and anti-Israel/anti-north. They maintained that the Jerusalem temple was the only place where the God of Israel could be worshiped. And they denounced Jeroboam, founder of the northern kingdom, for setting up golden calves in the northern and southern extremities of his kingdom, at Bethel and Dan. At Tel Dan, excavations have brought to light a cultic place that at the very least was the site of some sort of shrine or temple.

With these two kingdoms and their capitals in such close proximity, you can imagine that tension and rivalry developed between them.

The House of Jeroboam is the dynasty that initially ruled over the northern kingdom. Later, Omri established himself as king; the most notorious of the northern kings of Israel was his son, Ahab, who ruled from 872–851 B.C. Ahab is infamous for, among other things, his marriage to the daughter of the king of Tyre, Jezebel, who was blamed for inducing Ahab to build a temple to the **Phoenician deity Baal**.

Excavations in Ahab's palace at Samaria have brought to light a wealth of ivories that are carved in the Phoenician style. It's not surprising to find these ivories in Samaria, given the close connections between Ahab and

his Phoenician neighbors to the north. In fact, the Hebrew Bible refers to Ahab's "ivory house," probably indicating the numerous inlays of carved ivory that were used to decorate pieces of furniture in the palace, the sort of ivories that were found in the excavations.

We should also touch on the House of Omri's relationship with the kingdom of Moab, on the eastern side of the Dead Sea. After Omri established his dynasty, he annexed Moab. Several decades later, the king of Moab, Mesha, rebelled. Not only does the Hebrew Bible report this event, but we also have a large inscribed stone called the Mesha Stone, or **Mesha stele**, which celebrates King Mesha's victory; the stone dates to roughly 840 B.C.



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Archaeology supports the Bible's stories of King Ahab's close ties to the Phoenicians.

Eventually, the northern kingdom came to an end. In 722 B.C., the Assyrians took Samaria, forcing the inhabitants of Israel to leave their land and go into exile in Assyria. The kingdom of Judah was invaded 20 years later by the Assyrians, but Judah survived this invasion under Hezekiah. In the next lecture, we'll explore daily life in Israel and Judah. ■

Important Terms

Baal: National deity of the Canaanites/Phoenicians.

Mesha stele: Inscribed stone found in Jordan that records Mesha's revolt against one of the Omride kings in the mid-9th century.

Phoenicians: The Iron Age inhabitants of modern Lebanon, descendants of the Bronze Age Canaanites.

Samaria: Capital of the northern kingdom of Israel and, later, the name of the surrounding district, as well.

Questions to Consider

1. What are the biases of the writers of the Hebrew Bible, and what do these biases tell us about the writers?
2. What do we learn from the Hebrew Bible about the adoption of foreign religious and cultic practices by the inhabitants of the northern kingdom of Israel?

Fortifications and Cult Practices

Lecture 7

One of [the silver amulets dating from 600 B.C.] is inscribed in part with the priestly benediction that is known from the book of Numbers: “The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.”

In this lecture, we turn from the political histories of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah to consider some aspects of their everyday life, focusing specifically on their fortifications and on the religious practices of their populations.

Some of the most distinctive features of the biblical landscape are artificial mounds called tells. Most people think that tells basically consist of layers of one city on top of another. That’s only partially true. Tells exist only in certain parts of the Near East, where in the Bronze Age, a certain type of defensive system called a glacis was common. Constructing a glacis involved digging a dry moat around a town, then piling the dirt from the moat to make a tall hill that either surrounded the town or formed the foundation on which it sat, encircled by a fortification wall. It was this glacis system that retained the layers of occupation as they accumulated over the centuries, forming tells.

The city walls had to have gates, which of necessity were well fortified. A distinctive Israelite gateway system found at several sites consists of a passage flanked by a series of three chambers. On the outside of the gate were two towers, and the actual passage itself was flanked with the three chambers, the projecting walls of which created spaces where large, heavy doors were hung. The purpose was to set up a series of doors that could be shut and that attackers would have to batter down one after the other.

One of the most intriguing archaeological sites related to religion is Kuntillet Ajrud, located in the northern Sinai.

Another archaeological feature of note is a 10th-century sanctuary in the frontier city of Arad. Outside of Jerusalem but within the kingdom of Judah, this sanctuary was dedicated to the worship of the God of Israel. It includes a courtyard altar made of mudbricks and unhewn fieldstones and three rooms, the innermost of which is referred to as the Holy of Holies. In the late 8th century, the altar went out of use; in the 7th century, the sanctuary was destroyed altogether, perhaps because of religious reforms instituted by King Josiah of Judah, who centralized worship in the Jerusalem temple.

Another example of correspondence between archaeological discoveries and the Hebrew Bible is a tomb from the 7th century B.C. in Jerusalem. The only unlooted ancient tomb in Jerusalem discovered by archaeologists, it contained two tiny silver amulets inscribed with texts found in the Hebrew Bible.

One of the most intriguing archaeological sites related to religion is **Kuntillet Ajrud**, located in the northern Sinai. The finds at Kuntillet Ajrud suggest strong ties with the northern kingdom of Israel. Inscriptions on pottery refer not only to the God of Israel but also to other deities, such as a figure called **Asherah**, who is mentioned in various places in the Hebrew Bible. Josiah's reforms required that the vessels made for Asherah in the temple be burned in the Kidron Valley and ground to powder.

Having talked about some aspects of daily life in the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, we are now ready to continue our story with the events after the Babylonian destruction of the kingdom of Judah and the beginning of the Babylonian Exile. ■

Names to Know

Asherah: A name possibly designating the ancient female consort of the God of Israel.

Kuntillet Ajrud: Eighth-century Israelite cultic site in Sinai.

Questions to Consider

1. Based on archaeological and biblical evidence, how would you reconstruct Solomon's Temple?
2. What do you find surprising about the finds from Kuntillet Ajrud?

Babylonian Exile and the Persian Restoration

Lecture 8

The Persian Empire was one of the most enlightened and tolerant empires of the ancient world. In contrast, for example, to the Assyrians and the Babylonians, the Persians allowed exiled peoples to return to their homelands.

In 586 B.C., the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem and the First Temple, ending the Old Testament period, or what is also known as the biblical period of archaeology. Yet just 60 or 65 years later, the Second Temple was built on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. In the interval, the exiles from Jerusalem dwelt in Babylon, where their response to their situation varied. On the one hand, as we see in Psalm 137, these exiles yearned for their homeland and Jerusalem. On the other hand, the prophet Jeremiah sent a letter to the exiles, encouraging them to make a life for themselves in Babylon and be content. In fact, the Jews who lived in exile became quite well assimilated among the local people. Nevertheless, they retained their separate identity, continuing to worship the God of Israel.

The Jews who lived in exile became quite well assimilated among the local people.

It wasn't too long after the destruction of Jerusalem that another power, Persia, became dominant in the ancient Near East. Immediately after capturing Babylon, the Persian ruler, Cyrus the Great, issued an edict in 539 B.C. allowing the exiles to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple on the Temple Mount. The homeland they returned to was divided up into Persian administrative units called *medinot* (singular: *medinah*). The district around Jerusalem was a *medinah* called **Yahud** (i.e., Judah or Judea). To the north was a *medinah* called Samaria, the heart of what had been the northern kingdom of Israel. What had been the kingdom of Ammon was governed by a Judean named Tobias. Into this political context, the Persians sent a man named Nehemiah to govern the *medinah* called Yahud. Nehemiah was, in fact, a Judean who had attained high office in the Persian administration and had requested permission from the Persian king to be sent to Jerusalem to rebuild

the city. The city that he rebuilt is small in size and population, but it included the Temple Mount with the Second Temple, consecrated in the year 516 B.C.

As Nehemiah rebuilt Jerusalem, Ezra the scribe arrived, sent by the Persian king to implement Jewish law as the law of the land. The structure of the society that he addressed was different from the one that had existed before the destruction of the city. Instead of tribes, clans or families return from exile in Babylon, and we note a new emphasis on genealogy. While in exile, these families had documented their lineage. The scribe Ezra assembled all the people together and proclaimed that anyone who had married a non-Israelite wife had to leave her. This is the first time we see a prohibition against intermarriage in Judaism.

In competition with the returning exiles in Jerusalem, the people living in the north who had survived the earlier Assyrian conquest claimed to be the true Israel. They were not allowed to participate in rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem and worshiping the God of Israel in Jerusalem because the purity of their bloodlines was suspect. Instead, they decided to worship the God of Israel on a mountain located in the heart of the district of Samaria, called **Mount Gerizim**. These northerners eventually became known as the **Samaritans**. In the next lecture, we will examine the conquest of Alexander the Great. ■



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The Jewish prohibition against exogamy began in the time of Ezra.

Important Terms

medinah (pl. **medinot**): Smaller administrative districts within Persian satrapies.

Mount Gerizim: Sacred mountain of the Samaritans, overlooking biblical Shechem (modern Nablus).

Samaritans: Descendants of the population of the former kingdom of Israel who claimed descent from the old Joseph tribes (Ephraim and Manasseh).

Yahud: The Persian medinah of Judea.

Questions to Consider

1. Compare and contrast the policies toward conquered populations of the Assyrians and Babylonians, on the one hand, and the policies of the Persians, on the other. What do you think were the rationales that motivated these policies, and which kind of policy do you think was more effective in the long term?
2. What were the reasons behind and consequences of Ezra's ban on intermarriage?

Alexander the Great and His Successors

Lecture 9

Alexander's conquest marked the beginning of a period that we call "Hellenistic," a term that comes from the word *Hellas*, the Greek word for "Greece."

In our last lecture, we talked about the Babylonian Exile and the return of the exiles to Jerusalem under Persian rule. In this lecture, we will discuss the conquests of **Alexander the Great**, which changed ancient Near Eastern peoples greatly—the Judeans perhaps more than others.

In the second half of the 4th century B.C., a powerful Macedonian king named Philip II consolidated control of all the Greek city-states to the south, then began preparations for the invasion of the Persian Empire. However, Philip was murdered before he could invade, and his 18-year-old son, Alexander, succeeded him. Alexander consolidated his rule and, just two years after becoming king, began his invasion of the Persian Empire. In 334 B.C. Alexander and the Persian king, Darius III, fought three successive battles, with Alexander always victorious. After the final battle in 331 B.C., Darius's own men murdered him, paving the way for Alexander to become ruler of all the Persian Empire. Alexander pushed even further, into lands that had not been subject to the Persians. After concluding his conquest, Alexander settled in Babylon, where he ruled until his death in 323 B.C.

In 332 B.C., during his invasion of the Persian Empire, Alexander passed through Palestine on his way to Egypt.

Judea submitted peacefully to Alexander, but Samaria revolted, and we have archaeological evidence of the suppression of this revolt. After ending the Samaritans' revolt, Alexander banished them from their most important city,



King Darius III of Persia was defeated by Alexander the Great in 331 B.C.

Samaria, the ancient capital of the northern kingdom of Israel, which he made a Greek colony. Thereafter, the Samaritans have lived at the foot of Mount Gerizim, in what is today the city of Nablus in the West Bank.

When Alexander died in 323 B.C., his empire was divided among his generals. For our purposes, the most important generals were **Seleucus** and Ptolemy. Seleucus got the territory from Asia Minor (modern Turkey) through Syria and Mesopotamia (modern Iraq). Ptolemy got Egypt, a very wealthy country in antiquity. The Holy Land lies right between the Seleucids to the north and the Ptolemies to the south. During most of the 3rd century B.C., the Ptolemies in Egypt ruled Palestine. During most of the 2nd century B.C., the Seleucids to the north ruled it.

Alexander's conquest and the policies of his successors resulted in a mixture of Greek culture with the native ancient cultures.

Alexander's conquest and the policies of his successors resulted in a mixture of Greek culture with the native ancient cultures, a mixture often referred to as "**Hellenistic**." The Ptolemies and Seleucids established many specifically Greek-style cities throughout their kingdoms, and Greek became the official language. The rulers deliberately used Greek culture as a means of unifying the diverse populations in their kingdoms. Jerusalem was not an exception to this policy. A Seleucid king, Antiochus IV Epiphanes, turned Jerusalem into a Greek **polis** named **Antiochia**. This event led to a revolt, for the Jews were not receptive to having Greek culture and religion imposed on them.

In our next lecture, we'll look at some of the native populations in the area during this period. ■

Names to Know

Alexander the Great (356–323 B.C.): Son and successor of Philip II of Macedon, defeated the Persian king Darius III and created a vast empire stretching from southern Russia and northern India through Egypt and Asia Minor. Alexander's conquests mark the beginning of the Hellenistic period.

Seleucus I (c. 355–281 B.C.): One of Alexander’s generals who established a kingdom in Asia Minor and Syria (the Seleucid kingdom).

Important Terms

Antiochia: Name given to Jerusalem by the Seleucid king Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175–164 B.C.) after he refounded it as a polis.

Hellenistic: The period beginning with Alexander’s conquests.

polis: A Greek or Greek-style city.

Questions to Consider

1. Who do you think has the stronger claim to being the true Israel—the Jews (Judeans) or Samaritans?
2. How did Alexander’s successors attempt to establish their legitimacy as his heirs?

The Hellenization of Palestine

Lecture 10

What is the principle of the Hippodamian town plan? This principle says that when you come to build a city, you do not just build randomly, or you do not just let the city grow organically, but you give thought before you start building as to how it will be laid out, with certain things laid out in certain places—all of this, by the way, going back to certain Greek philosophical ideals about what the ideal city should look like.

In our last lecture, we looked broadly at the effect of Hellenization, the spread of Greek culture in the ancient Near East in the wake of Alexander's conquests. In this lecture, we'll look specifically at the impact of Hellenization on the non-Jewish peoples in ancient Palestine.

In the Hellenistic period, the city of Ammon was renamed Philadelphia and made independent of Tobiad rule. The **Tobiads** continued to rule the rest of the district and established a new capital for themselves named Tyros, located midway between Jericho and Ammon (or Philadelphia) in a valley that is well watered with many natural springs. The ancient Jewish historian Josephus described a large building there decorated with animal carvings, with elegant fountains all around and, in a cliff nearby, caves converted into living and dining quarters. Dating from the early 2nd century B.C., these features are all evident in the archaeological remains at Tyros. We are not exactly sure what the large building was, but the best guesses are either a temple or a pleasure palace.

**The most important
Hellenistic city was Marisa.**

In Idumea, which had been settled by **Edomites** after the Babylonian capture of Jerusalem in 586 B.C., the most important Hellenistic city was **Marisa**. In this city dwelt not only Idumeans but also Hellenized **Sidonians** from Phoenicia. Excavations at this site have revealed a kind of city plan, introduced by the Greeks throughout the ancient Near East, called a Hippodamian town plan (associated with Hippodamus of Miletos, who lived around 500 B.C.). The Hippodamian town plan was based on the

principle that cities should not be built randomly or simply allowed to grow organically; instead, certain structures should be laid out in certain places. This type of planning can be traced back to Greek philosophical ideas about what the ideal city should look like. The area within the city walls is divided by a grid of north/south, east/west streets, and parts of the city are zoned for such purposes as industry, worship, education, and commerce. Also, the burial caves evidence Alexandrian influence in their layout and decoration, and the names in these tombs of local Idumeans and Hellenized Sidonians reveal that, in later generations, members of families adopted Greek names rather than their local native names.

Hellenistic influence on the Phoenicians is also evident along the coast. At Tel Dor, for example, excavations have revealed an imported marble image of Hermes. The city has a Hippodamian town plan, but interestingly, we also see houses built with a typically Phoenician kind of construction called pier-and-rubble masonry.

It's interesting that this Hellenistic culture is found among some of the native non-Jewish populations in Palestine. In our next lecture, we will consider the impact of Greek culture on the Jewish population of Judea. ■

Important Terms

Edomites: The Iron Age inhabitants of the area southeast of the Dead Sea.

Marisa (Hebrew, **Maresha**; Arabic, **Tell Sandahannah**): Main city in Hellenistic-period Idumaea, inhabited by Idumaeans and Hellenized Sidonians.

Sidonians: Natives of the Phoenician city of Sidon (in modern Lebanon).

Tobiads: A Judean dynasty that governed the district of Ammon in the Persian and Hellenistic periods.

Questions to Consider

1. What would be the significance of the Qasr el-Abd at Iraq el-Amir if it was indeed a temple?
2. What does archaeology tell us about the impact of Hellenization on local Semitic (non-Jewish) populations?

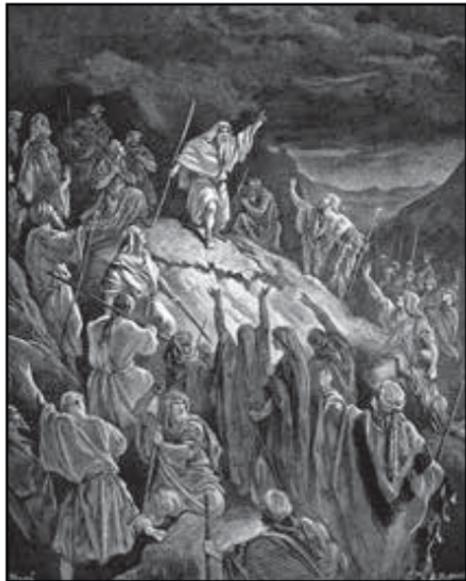
The Maccabean Revolt

Lecture 11

It is ironic that, although the Maccabees are renowned for having opposed the attempt to impose Greek culture and religion on the Jews, ... as soon as they become the rulers, we begin to see them adopting various aspects of Greek culture.

In 167 B.C., the Seleucid king Antiochus IV Euphianes issued a decree ordering the Jews to abandon the observance of Jewish law and follow Greek customs, threatening death to the disobedient. Many Jews complied readily. The Jerusalem temple was now rededicated to the Greek god Zeus, and sacred prostitution was practiced there. In reaction to this radical change in the law of the land, a revolt was initiated, led by a village priestly family called the Hasmoneans (also Maccabees, after the word for “hammer”). The patriarch of this family, Mattathias, killed another Jew who was about to participate in a pagan sacrifice and the royal officer overseeing the sacrifice.

The Maccabean family began collecting relatives and friends to form the core of a 6,000-strong insurgency. Mattathias soon died, and the Hasmonean army was then led by Judah, the third son, and his brothers, Simon, Jonathan, John, and Eleazar. Judah searched out and slew Jews who had abandoned the law and scored important military victories against royal troops. Antiochus IV died in 164 B.C.,



Mattathias, patriarch of the Hasmonean family, began the Maccabean revolt.

Courtesy of Dover Pictorial Archive Series.

and his son Antiochus V rescinded his father's edict, allowing the Jews to freely observe their law. They rededicated the temple to the worship of the God of Israel, an event commemorated by the modern Jewish holiday of **Hanukkah**.

After this rededication, the Maccabees renewed the revolt to gain complete independence from the Seleucids. Eleazar was killed, but in 161 B.C. Judah won a significant battle against the Seleucids. At about the same time, he also made a treaty of alliance and friendship with the Romans, a treaty that was renewed several times. In 160 B.C., Judah died in battle, and leadership passed to Jonathan, who established himself in 152 B.C. as ruler of Judea by supporting Alexander Balas in his struggle for the Seleucid throne. Alexander rewarded Jonathan by appointing him as both a semiautonomous ruler over his people and their high priest. For the first time, a secular ruler served in the Jerusalem temple—contrary to Jewish law, which said that a man with blood on his hands could not be a priest in the temple.

In 142 B.C., Jonathan was killed through treachery, to be succeeded by the last of the five brothers, Simon, who gained complete independence from Seleucid rule. In 134 B.C., he was succeeded by his son John Hyrcanus I, who began

to expand the kingdom by conquering Idumaea, Samaria, and parts of Transjordan. In Samaria, John Hyrcanus I destroyed the temple on Mount Gerizim. In Idumaea, he permitted the conquered to remain only if they had themselves circumcised and observed Jewish laws. Among the Idumaeans who converted was Antipas, the grandfather of Herod the Great.

John Hyrcanus died in 104 B.C., succeeded briefly by his son Aristobulus I, the first Hasmonean to call himself king. Aristobulus I conquered Galilee and the Golan to the north and, like his father, strongly encouraged the native populations to convert to Judaism. The result in Galilee was a Judaized population, mixed probably with some settlers from Judea.

The result in Galilee was a Judaized population, mixed probably with some settlers from Judea.

The stage was now set for the late history of the Hasmonean kingdom and its annexation by the Romans, which we will talk about in our next lecture. ■

Important Term

Hanukkah: Jewish holiday commemorating the rededication of the Jerusalem temple to the God of Israel in 164 B.C.

Questions to Consider

1. What were the consequences of the edict outlawing Judaism issued by Antiochus IV Epiphanes?
2. How did the Hasmonean kings deal with conquered non-Jewish peoples, and what were the consequences of this policy?

The Hasmonean Kingdom

Lecture 12

In other words, the people at Qumran who deposited the Dead Sea Scrolls in the nearby caves mocked this other group of Jews, the same group that rebelled against Alexander Jannaeus, as those who seek the easy way out in the observance of Jewish law. ... Who is this group, then, the seekers of smooth things? This is a name that the group at Qumran gave to the Pharisees.

We ended our last lecture with the Hasmonean king Aristobulus I, who ruled from 104 to 103 B.C. Aristobulus I was a ruthless man who imprisoned his brothers, killing one of them, and allowed his mother to die of starvation in prison. When Aristobulus I died of an illness, his widow, Salome Alexandra, freed his brothers and married one of them, Alexander Jannaeus. This was a **Levirate marriage**, in accordance with Jewish law. Unfortunately, Alexander Jannaeus would also be high priest and could marry only a virgin; thus, the marriage violated the law.

This violation was not to be his last. Alexander Jannaeus was a ruthless ruler who frequently disregarded the Jewish law and, therefore, aroused a great deal of opposition. Once, during the feast of Tabernacles, Alexander Jannaeus, acting as high priest, poured holy water on the ground instead of on the altar; the people became upset and threw at him the citrons they held as part of the ceremony. In response, Alexander Jannaeus massacred 6,000 of the pilgrims.

Eventually, the **Pharisees** had had enough and organized a revolt; for help, they turned to the nearest outside power, the Seleucid king, Demetrius III. Demetrius then invaded, but the rebels suddenly had a change of heart, abandoning Demetrius and returning to Alexander Jannaeus. Unfortunately for them, Alexander did not forgive them. According to one of the Dead Sea Scrolls, he crucified 800 of them, slaughtering their wives and children before their eyes as they suffered on their crosses, while he banqueted with his concubines.

Alexander Jannaeus died in 76 B.C., succeeded by his widow, Salome Alexandra. She ruled the Hasmonean kingdom rather well while her older son, John Hyrcanus II, served as high priest. When Salome Alexandra died in 67 B.C., the office of king should have fallen to John Hyrcanus II, but a younger son, Aristobulus II, also wanted to be king. A civil war broke out between the brothers, who both turned for help to an outside power, Rome. Soon, the Romans would simply step in and take over the Hasmonean kingdom.

Soon, the Romans would simply step in and take over the Hasmonean kingdom.

At around the same time, just to the south, a people called the **Nabateans** were prospering. An Arab people, they had established caravan routes through the desert, and using those routes, they brought to the Mediterranean coast expensive items from the east, such as myrrh and frankincense. With time, this lucrative trade had made the Nabateans wealthy, as is evident in the ruins of their capital, **Petra**, presently in Jordan southeast of the Dead Sea.

At this desert site appear a colonnaded street, large temples dedicated to various Nabatean gods, and a Greek-style theater cut into one of the sides of the cliffs, indicating Hellenistic influence. Most spectacular are the rock-cut tombs, miles of them, in some cases with facades cut to create the illusion of three-dimensional buildings.



Miles of rock-cut tombs create a beautiful landscape in Petra.

Our exploration of the Hasmonean kingdom and the Nabatean kingdom to its south now sets the stage for a look at some of the Jewish groups that came into existence during the Hasmonean period. ■

Important Terms

Levirate marriage: Biblical law requiring a man to marry his brother's widow if his brother was childless.

Nabataeans: An Arab people who created a kingdom in the area of modern Jordan, the Negev, and the Sinai from the mid-2nd century until A.D. 106.

Petra: Capital of the Nabataean kingdom, located to the southeast of the Dead Sea in modern Jordan.

Pharisees: Jews of the Late Second Temple period who were moderately prosperous and known for their strict observance of Jewish purity laws.

Questions to Consider

1. Considering the cruelty and atrocities carried out by Hasmonean kings, such as Aristobulus I and Alexander Jannaeus, and their blatant disregard for the observance of biblical law, why should Jews commemorate the Maccabean revolt by celebrating Hanukkah?
2. Knowing that Herod was half Idumaeon (his father's side) and half Nabataean (his mother's), what would you expect from him in terms of cultural and religious orientation?

Pharisees and Sadducees

Lecture 13

The Sadducees believed in complete human free will, so no intervention at all by God; there is complete human free will. The Pharisees, on the other hand, emphasized both divine omniscience—God is all knowing and all powerful—alongside human freedom and responsibility.

In our last lecture, we saw that Alexander Jannaeus's failure to observe Jewish law aroused the opposition of certain groups in Jewish society, and we mentioned the Pharisees and the community at **Qumran** associated with the Dead Sea Scrolls, which we will identify as the Essenes. Historical sources indicate a third major group, the Sadducees. In this lecture, we will focus on the Pharisees and Sadducees.

All three groups had separated themselves from the rest of Jewish society because they believed that the traditional values had been corrupted and that only they were practicing the law correctly. Events of the 2nd century B.C., including the revolt against Antiochus IV Epiphanes and the establishment of the Hasmonean kingdom, seem to have contributed largely to the formation of these groups.

They believed that the traditional values had been corrupted and that only they were practicing the law correctly.

The Sadducees originally were a branch of a large family called the **Zadokites**. Solomon had appointed a man named Zadok to officiate as high priest in the temple, and from his time, all of the high priests who officiated in the Jerusalem temple traced their ancestry back to Zadok. In the early 2nd century B.C., right before the Maccabean revolt, the Zadokite family lost control of the temple priesthood. This extended broke into three branches: One branch established a temple in Egypt at Leontopolis, eventually closed by the Roman emperor Vespasian in 73 A.D; another branch helped found and at least initially led the community that settled at Qumran; and a third branch stayed in Jerusalem, accommodated with the ruling powers, and became part of the

Jerusalem elite by the late 1st century B.C. This last branch was what we know as the Sadducees, but eventually, the term applied to anyone belonging to the upper class and connoted a political and religious conservatism.

The Pharisees included some of the lower ranks of priests, craftsmen, small farmers, and merchants. They were known for their recognition of oral tradition in addition to written law. Because many of the laws in the Hebrew Bible applied to situations that no longer existed, these men, who were learned in Jewish law (**rabbis**), interpreted it for their time and passed down their interpretations to disciples.

These two groups differ on some important theological issues. For example, the Sadducees did not believe in life after death because it was nowhere explicitly mentioned in the Five Books of Moses. The Pharisees, in contrast, developed a tradition that some sort of afterlife follows death. Again, the Sadducees believed in complete human free will, without divine intervention, whereas the Pharisees believed in human free will but also in the foreknowledge of God. (We will see that the Essenes believed that everything is preordained by God.)

In the next lecture, we will visit the community that lived at Qumran and deposited the Dead Sea Scrolls in caves there. ■

Important Terms

Qumran: Ancient settlement by the northwest shore of the Dead Sea, surrounded by caves in which the Dead Sea Scrolls were found.

rabbi (“my master”): Originally, a Hebrew term of respect for someone learned in biblical Jewish law.

Zadokites: Descendants of Zadok, high priest in the time of Solomon.

Questions to Consider

1. What is a sect?
2. What sorts of issues divided the various sects of the Late Second Temple period?

Discovery and Site of the Dead Sea Scrolls

Lecture 14

Here is a wonderful example of correspondence between our literary sources, both Dead Sea [Scrolls] and outside literary sources, which ... describe communal meals being held by the members of this community ... and the archaeological evidence where we clearly see evidence of communal meals practiced by this community.

In our last lecture, we talked about the major groups or sects that developed in the Late Second Temple period in Judea, focusing especially on the Pharisees and Sadducees. In this lecture and the next three, we'll discuss a group that many scholars identify with the Essenes, that is, the community that lived at Qumran and deposited scrolls in the nearby caves.

Qumran is located on the northwest shore of the Dead Sea, south of Jericho and east of Jerusalem. In 1946–1947, Bedouins discovered in caves at Qumran pottery jars, some of which contained ancient parchment scrolls. These scrolls made their way onto the antiquities market, and soon scholars realized that scrolls had been found near the site of Qumran. It had already been surveyed, but a new expedition was conducted in the 1950s to excavate the site and explore the caves nearby for more scrolls.

The remains of more than 900 different scrolls were found in 11 caves.

Eventually, the remains of more than 900 different scrolls were found in 11 caves. These remains were mostly fragmentary:

One cave yielded more than 500 different scrolls, strewn on the floor of the cave, where they had disintegrated into thousands of small fragments. Scholars literally spent decades sifting by hand through these fragments, trying to determine which pieces belonged together. This task is now done, and all of the Dead Sea scrolls have been fully accessible to the public for well over a decade.

The excavation of the site of Qumran itself revealed a settlement that had been established around 100 B.C. and was destroyed by earthquake in 31 B.C., by fire in 9 B.C. or a little later, and finally, by the Romans in A.D. 68. This Hasmonean site is very small and evidences no private dwellings. Instead, all of the rooms in the settlement were used either for communal purposes or as workshops. If most or all of the members of this community lived nearby in huts or tents, then the population could reasonably be estimated at 100 to 150.

This complex included a two-story watchtower, what was probably a scriptorium of sorts, a communal dining room, many workshops, an extensive water system, and a large cemetery nearby. The place was visually modest: Walls are made of mostly uncut fieldstone, floors are either dirt or rough flagstone, and there is no interior decoration, no stucco.

In our next lecture, we will look at some of the other interesting features at Qumran, including peculiar animal bone deposits, the potter's workshop, the water system and pools, and the large adjacent cemetery. ■



Courtesy of Dr. Jodi Magness.

The ruins of Qumran, destroyed in A.D. 68 by the Romans. Many of the Dead Sea Scrolls were likely created or copied by the community here.

Questions to Consider

1. Why did conspiracy theories arise about the Dead Sea Scrolls soon after their discovery?
2. One of the questions frequently posed in the popular media is: Who wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls? Does the identification of a room at Qumran as a “scriptorium” help us answer this question?

The Sectarian Settlement at Qumran

Lecture 15

Becoming ritually impure in Judaism has nothing to do with being bad, being sinful, being evil—nothing at all to do with that. It is simply a mechanical category that means you are ritually impure. It is something that happens to everyone in the course of everyday life. ... The Hebrew Bible also designates how to purify yourself if you become ritually impure.

In this lecture, we continue our tour of the settlement at Qumran, looking at some of its distinct features. Among the peculiarities of the settlement at Qumran are the many animal bone deposits. An analysis of these bones has indicated that all the animals represented are kosher species. This is a phenomenon that is unique to Qumran. Before we look at one possible explanation for these animal bone deposits, we have to know a little more about the group that lived at Qumran.

An analysis of these bones has indicated that all the animals represented are kosher species.

Scholarly consensus is that the community at Qumran was part of a larger movement initially founded and led by dispossessed Zadokite priests. Believing that the current priesthood in the Jerusalem temple was impure, because the priests were usurpers, and that the sacrifices were polluted, the Zadokite priests withdrew, forming an alternative community. Every full member of this sect lived his everyday life as if he was a high priest officiating in the Jerusalem temple, and apparently, partaking of communal meals was a substitute for participation in the temple sacrifices. The bone deposits mirror the designated areas outside of the temple compound in Jerusalem for the disposal of sacred refuse from the sacrifices.

The priestly lifestyle of the occupants also explains the extensive system of pools for storing water at Qumran. Evidence shows that a channel was built to bring water from a nearby riverbed during the few flash floods that occur in winter. Did the community at Qumran need to drink all the water it stored,

or were some of the pools used as Jewish ritual baths? Indeed, some of the pools have steps. Not everybody needed to be ritually pure on an everyday basis, only the priests. Ritual purity applies very specifically to entering the presence of God. All Jews, no matter who they were, took it for granted that they should ritually purify themselves before entering the Jerusalem temple, before entering the presence of God. It is no surprise, then, that we find such a large number of pools at Qumran.

On the plateau to the east of the settlement is a large cemetery that consists of 1,100 graves. Only 46 of these graves have been excavated, but almost all of those are graves of adult men. The three exceptions are adult women, no children or infants at all. We have an admittedly small sample that nevertheless suggests that the community at Qumran was one overwhelmingly of men, not an ordinary community consisting of families.



Courtesy of Dr. Jodi Magness.

Remains excavated in Qumran's cemetery point to an overwhelmingly male community.

This picture goes along with information that we have about this sect from other sources, which we will talk about together with information from the Dead Sea Scrolls in our next lecture. ■

Questions to Consider

1. What is the concept of Jewish ritual purity, and how is it reflected in the archaeological remains at Qumran?
2. Did the Qumran community offer animal sacrifices?

The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Essenes

Lecture 16

The Qumran sect, the Essenes, were an exclusive community, whereas with Jesus, we see just the opposite. We see an inclusive point of view, where everyone is welcomed to become a member of this group. In my opinion, then, we must distinguish between Jesus and his movement on the one hand and the Essenes on the other hand and show not only similarities between them but also very important and philosophical differences in their practices and in their way of life.

In this lecture, we consider how the Dead Sea Scrolls relate to the archaeology of Qumran and what they tell us about the community that lived there. The Dead Sea Scrolls are basically a library of religious literature. About one-quarter of them are copies of the Hebrew Bible. We have represented at Qumran examples of all of the books of the Hebrew Bible except for Esther (which may have simply not been preserved). These copies of the Hebrew Bible are by far the earliest that have been found, and they actually represent several versions of the Hebrew Bible that were later replaced by a standardized version called the Masoretic text. There are also a few fragments of the **Septuagint**, the ancient Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible.

Other kinds of works represented include a **Targum**, or Aramaic translation of the Hebrew Bible (Aramaic being the everyday language of the Jews); a **Peshar**, or commentary on a book of the Hebrew Bible; apocryphal works, such as Tobit and Ecclesiasticus; and so-called pseudepigrapha, such the book of Jubilees and the book of Enoch. Finally, we have works that can be described as sectarian; that is, they describe the beliefs and practices of the group that lived at Qumran. Examples of these sectarian works include the Damascus document, the war scroll, the community rule or manual of discipline, and perhaps, the temple scroll.

The sectarian scrolls identify the initial leader or founder of this sect as a figure called the Teacher of Righteousness. His main opponent was a figure referred to as the Wicked Priest. The sectarian scrolls also tell us that some

members of this sect were married, had families, and lived in towns and villages around the country, including Jerusalem, but some members went to live apart in the desert (for example, at Qumran).

To become a member of this sect was not easy. There was no private property. Full admission was open only to unblemished adult males (that is, those without physical or mental handicaps, a criterion for the priesthood). Although not all members came from priestly families, all full members lived a priestly lifestyle. Why would anyone choose to live this sort of lifestyle? The appeal was apocalyptic expectation. This sect anticipated the end of days, when there would be a war between the forces of good and evil. They called themselves the Sons of Light; everyone else, including all the other Jews, were the Sons of Darkness.

Other peculiarities of this sect include their belief in predeterminism—the idea that God preordains everything, including the moral makeup of an individual—and their anticipation of two Messiahs. To the usual royal Messiah of Israel descended from David, they added a second priestly Messiah descended from Aaron—not surprising considering the priestly orientation of the sect. ■

Important Terms

Peshar: A type of biblical commentary or interpretation that was popular at Qumran.

Septuagint: Ancient Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible.

Targum: Ancient translation of the Hebrew Bible into Aramaic.

Questions to Consider

1. What is the relationship of the Qumran community to the Essenes?
2. Do you think Jesus was an Essene?

The Life of the Essenes

Lecture 17

Josephus was writing like other ancient Greek and Roman authors to educate but also to entertain his readers. Like other ancient Greek and Roman authors, Josephus typically focuses on things that are exotic, that make them different from everyone else. ... The reason Josephus singles out the toilet habits of the Essenes is because their toilet habits were different from everyone else's.

In this lecture, we'll look at some of the archaeological evidence that sheds light on the everyday life of members of the sect at Qumran and relate it to some of my own research on the archaeology there.

The full and final archaeological report by the excavators of Qumran was never published, but in 1994, a large volume that contains photographs and raw field notes was issued. I was invited to write a review of it. In searching the book for something that would interest readers, I found a description of a room with a pit dug into its dirt floor and one doorway opening to a ritual bath. This pit was filled with layers of dirty, smelly soil and had been identified as a toilet. I was intrigued—a toilet at Qumran? But after researching toilets in the Roman world, I became convinced that this identification was correct.

If indeed this is a toilet at Qumran, do we have any information from our literary sources about the toilets and toilet habits of this sect? Yes, in fact, there are three such sources: the war scroll, the **Temple Scroll**, and the writings of Josephus.

The war scroll, concerned with the 40-year-long apocalyptic war at the end of days, contains a passage that mandates the placement of toilets relative to war camps. In the temple scroll, which describes this sect's ideal temple and ideal Jerusalem, there is also a mandate for the placement of the toilets relative to the city. They are to be further than a Sabbath day's journey from the city (apparently, toilets weren't to be used on the Sabbath) and enclosed in roofed rooms with a pit dug into the floor. This description closely matches what we have in the archaeology of Qumran. The toilet at Qumran is a pit

that was dug into the dirt floor of a room that was completely enclosed and was roofed over.

Interestingly, Josephus says that the Essenes didn't use the toilet on the Sabbath. He also says that a new member of this sect had to find a private spot in the desert, dig a hole, cover himself with his mantle while defecating, bury the result, then wash himself. This sect had a very modern Western concern with toilet modesty and privacy, unlike any other group in the Roman world. This description in Josephus perfectly complements what we read in the temple scroll and what we see at the Qumran site. And Josephus also seems to suggest, because these people washed afterward, that this sect considered defecation to be ritually polluting, an attitude unique among the Jews. I do not think it is a coincidence, therefore, that the only doorway in the room with the toilet at Qumran opens onto a ritual bath.

The toilet room at Qumran offers a wonderful display of intersection of information from varied sources. ■

Important Term

Temple Scroll: A work found at Qumran that describes an ideal future city of Jerusalem and temple.

Questions to Consider

1. What do archaeology and literary sources (e.g., the Dead Sea Scrolls, the writings of Josephus) teach us about the lifestyle and beliefs of the Qumran community?
2. What do you think is the importance of the Dead Sea Scrolls?

From Roman Annexation to Herod the Great

Lecture 18

Augustus reportedly remarked, “It is better to be Herod’s pig than his son.” This is actually a pun in Greek because the words “pig” and “son” are very close. ... It also suggests, by the way, that Herod observed the biblical dietary laws and didn’t eat pork. It’s better to be Herod’s pig than his son, because you’re safer; he won’t kill you.

The sectarian settlement at Qumran was established during the Hasmonean period and continued through the Roman takeover and the reign of Herod the Great. How did this very important transition from the Hasmonean period to the reign of Herod come about? When civil war broke out between the two sons of Salome Alexandra, both of them turned to Rome for help. The Romans then simply came in and took over the country.

The Romans took apart the Hasmonean kingdom, leaving the older son of Salome Alexandra, the high priest Hyrcanus II, in control only of areas with concentrations of Jews or Judaized non-Jews: Judea, Galilee, Idumaea, and Peraea. How was this area with the large Jewish population administered? Hyrcanus II, the high priest, received the title ethnarch of the Jews, but Antipater, an Idumaeen Jew, was titled procurator. Antipater, the son of Antipas, is best known to us as the father of Herod the Great. Herod and his older brother Phasaël assist Antipater in administering this territory.

In 40 B.C., Syria and Palestine were suddenly overrun by the great power to the east, the Parthians.

In 40 B.C., Syria and Palestine were suddenly overrun by the great power to the east, the Parthians. With this invasion came a son of Aristobulus II, Mattathias Antigonus, who took over the country. He captured Hyrcanus II and Phasaël. Antigonus bit off the ear of Hyrcanus II so that he could no longer serve as high priest; Phasaël committed suicide; and Herod fled the country after depositing his family at the Hasmonean fortress of **Masada**.

He went south to the Nabataean kingdom to ask for help because his mother was a Nabataean. When his request was refused, he made his way to Egypt, where Cleopatra greeted him in magnificent manner, hoping that he would help her regain Palestine for the Ptolemaic kingdom. Uninterested, Herod sailed to Rome.

When Herod appeared before the Roman Senate, the influence of Mark Antony moved the Senate to appoint Herod the king of Judea and give him some forces to fight Mattathias Antigonus and the Parthians. He spent three years fighting Mattathias Antigonus and the Parthians; eventually, the Romans got involved, and in 37 B.C., Jerusalem fell after a siege. There was great slaughter in the city, and the Romans carried Mattathias Antigonus off to Mark Antony, who beheaded him. It was unprecedented for the Romans to execute captive kings, but Antony believed it necessary so that the Jews would accept Herod.

Herod was now able to govern the kingdom he'd been given. After the defeat of Cleopatra and Mark Antony by Octavian in 31 B.C., the kingdom even expanded. Herod convinced Octavian that he would be loyal to the emperor, and he eventually ruled as far north as the Golan Heights and into Syria.

However, Herod knew that many Jews didn't like or trust him. His family was also trouble: He had at least nine wives, and they jockeyed for position throughout his life, trying to influence who his successor would be. Herod's suspicions led to a great deal of family bloodshed, including the deaths of his favorite wife, the Hasmonean Mariamne, and that of his oldest son. In fact, Herod eliminated a large number of his own household, and it may be this bloody reputation that underlies the famous story of the massacre of the innocents reported in Matthew. ■

Important Term

Masada: Herodian fortified palace by the southwest shore of the Dead Sea.

Questions to Consider

1. Why would Augustus have remarked, “I would rather be Herod’s pig than his son”?
2. Do you think Herod was really as horrible as our ancient sources portray him?

Herod as Builder—Jerusalem’s Temple Mount

Lecture 19

Herod named each of the three towers after someone. The largest he named after Phasael, his older brother; the middle-sized one after Hippicus, a friend; and the smallest after Mariamne, his beloved Hasmonean.

Herod was a ruthless king who was not above eliminating members of his own household to retain his power. But among archaeologists, Herod is known as probably the single greatest builder in the history of Palestine. In this lecture, we’ll look at some of Herod’s buildings around the country, beginning with Jerusalem.

One of the first things Herod did after he became king was to build a fortress of three towers at the northwest corner of the first fortification wall around Jerusalem. This location was chosen to protect the weak northern side of the city and Herod’s new palace, immediately to the south.

Without a doubt, Herod’s most important act in Jerusalem was to rebuild the Second Temple. Actually, he not only rebuilt the temple, but he also expanded the Temple Mount, making it much bigger than it had been previously. Running around the northern, eastern, and western sides of this vast platform, Herod built porches with columns to provide shelter for the thousands of pilgrims who came to the Temple Mount.

Herod is known as probably the single greatest builder in the history of Palestine.

Along the southern side of the Temple Mount, Herod built a two-story structure called the **Royal Stoa** or Royal Basilica, a giant public building that could be used for meetings and assemblies. Note that this structure was not just a religious space but could be used to accommodate large gatherings for other purposes. In fact, when we look at the Temple Mount, what we’re looking at is analogous to a forum or an **agora** in the Greek or Roman worlds.



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Upon his succession, King Herod built a three-towered fortress to defend the northern approach to Jerusalem. Only one tower remains standing.

Herod walled in the Temple Mount complex with an enclosure wall, part of which survives today as the so-called Wailing Wall or Western Wall. Then, he built a series of gates leading in and out of this wall. We have the remains of many of these gates and of arches supporting bridges to the gates. At the base of what is now called **Robinson's arch**, excavators have found the remains of shops, which pilgrims apparently frequented as part of their visit to the Temple Mount.

At the southern end of the Temple Mount, we have the **Hulda Gates**. These two gateways worked together as the main thoroughfares in and out of the Temple Mount. Passing through the right-hand set of gates, people followed an underground corridor, beautifully decorated with carved stone and stucco, which led them underneath the Royal Stoa and up into the middle of the Temple Mount.

We don't have any remains of the actual temple building, but we do have remains of something connected with it. Around the outside of

the fortification wall of the temple was a low stone fence, which bore inscriptions in Greek and Latin denying non-Jews entry within the fence on pain of death. Clearly, non-Jews could go onto the Temple Mount, but they could not go into the temple enclosure itself.

In our next lecture, we will turn to another important city built by Herod, Caesarea Maritima. ■

Important Terms

agora: An ancient marketplace or forum consisting of a large, open, paved space surrounded by public buildings.

basilica: Roman public hall consisting of a rectangular building with rows of columns inside to support the roof.

Hulda Gates: Two sets of Herodian gates in the southern wall of the Temple Mount that were the main thoroughfares for pilgrims.

Robinson's arch: A monumental Herodian gate supported on arches that led from the Tyropoean Valley into the area of the Royal Stoa on the Temple Mount.

Royal Stoa (a.k.a. Royal Basilica): Large public hall built by Herod at the southern end of the Temple Mount.

Questions to Consider

1. What might be the reason(s) for Jesus's overturning of the tables of the moneychangers, as reported in the Gospel accounts?
2. What do we learn about Paul from the episode leading to his arrest, and what do we learn about the regulations governing entrance to the Jerusalem temple?

Caesarea Maritima—Harbor and Showcase City

Lecture 20

Near Herod's Promontory Palace is a theater that was excavated back in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The excavators found a paving stone that turned out to be in secondary use. ... The underside bore this inscription: *Tiberium Pontius Pilatus Praefectus Iudaeae*. ... This stone is the only archaeological artifact found in Israel that bears this Roman governor's name.

The kingdom that Herod was eventually given to rule over was a large one that included diverse populations. Although the core of the kingdom was Jewish, substantial territories also contained Gentile populations, many of which were Hellenized or Romanized to varying degrees. To please the Jews, Herod rebuilt the Second Temple in monumental fashion. To win the favor of his Hellenized Gentile populations, he founded Greek or Roman-style cities but named them in honor of others, not himself.



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Herod transformed a small Persian-era village into Caesarea Maritima, a showcase harbor city laid out on a Roman-style plan.

For example, Samaria, once the capital of the ancient northern kingdom of Israel and later settled by Alexander as a Macedonian colony, was rebuilt by Herod on a more monumental scale, with all of the typical amenities—a colonnaded street, a pagan temple dedicated to Augustus and Rome, a theater, a stadium, and a Roman-style forum. Instead of naming the city after himself, he ingratiated himself with Augustus by calling it Sebastos, the Greek word for Augustus.

The most famous example of a Herodian city on a Roman model was Caesarea Maritima on the coast of Palestine. Here, Herod transformed a small town that had existed since the Persian period, known as Stratron's Tower, into a beautiful, monumental showcase city, which he named in honor of Augustus. The city was most famous for its artificial harbor, named Sebastos—again, Greek for Augustus. Caesarea became Herod's main port, the outlet from his kingdom to the rest of the world.

The harbor actually consisted of two components: a small inner harbor, which was the more sheltered area, and an enormous outer harbor, which was circled by two artificial breakwaters. At the tip of the southern breakwater, Herod built a lighthouse that was also famous, modeled after the Pharos of Alexandria. In addition, there were rows of warehouses on top of the breakwaters.

Overlooking the inner harbor was a temple dedicated to Rome and Augustus, situated on a large, artificial platform serving as an acropolis. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, when I was a member of the staff in the excavations at Caesarea, we found the remains of the foundations of Herod's temple; clearly, it must have been a monumental structure.

Caesarea is a very large site. Somewhat at a distance to the south of the city, a natural promontory juts out into the sea. This promontory still has the remains of an artificial pool visible in the middle of it. This artificial pool was once in the middle of Herod's palace at Caesarea, referred to today

The most famous example of a Herodian city on a Roman model was Caesarea Maritima on the coast of Palestine.

as Herod's Promontory Palace, and probably the "Herod's **praetorium**" mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles. ■

Important Term

praetorium: Living quarters of the Roman commander.

Questions to Consider

1. What was so revolutionary about the construction of Herod's harbor at Caesarea Maritima?
2. Compare and contrast Herod's building project in Jerusalem with his refounded cities at Samaria and Caesarea. What do the differences tell us about Herod and the manner in which he dealt with different populations in his kingdom?

From Herod's Last Years to Pontius Pilate

Lecture 21

Philo of Alexandria described Pilate as “naturally inflexible, a blend of self-will and relentlessness,” and spoke of his conduct as full of “briberies, insults, robberies, outrages and wanton injuries, executions without trial constantly repeated, ceaseless and supremely grievous cruelty” (*Embassy to Gaius*, 301–2).

This lecture looks at Herod's final days, his death, and the events leading up to and including the governorship of Pontius Pilate—basically covering the period of Jesus's life and ministry.

When Herod died in 4 B.C. in his palace at Jericho, his body was buried at **Herodium**. One of the fortified desert palaces that Herod built along the edge of the Judean wilderness, Herodium is the only site that he named after himself. Apparently, he intended it be an everlasting memorial to himself and his final resting place.

Herodium is an artificial mountain created by building two gigantic concentric walls, then piling earth and rock against the outside of these walls to create the shape of a mountain. Enclosed by the two concentric walls were an open garden and palace rooms that included a reception hall and a Roman-style bath house. At the foot of the mountain were another palace, an adjacent **hippodrome**, and a gigantic pool surrounded by columns and lush gardens and fed by an aqueduct. On the edge of the Judean desert, this artificial pool with the lush green gardens around it and artificial mountain rising above it must have created quite an impression.

Herodium is an artificial mountain created by building two gigantic concentric walls, then piling earth and rock against the outside of these walls to create the shape of a mountain.



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A view of the pool at Herodium, the desert palace where King Herod was buried in 4 B.C.

In 2007, Herod's tomb was finally found on the side of the hill, on the site of a gigantic platform that had a burial monument with sarcophagi. There can be little doubt that this indeed is the tomb of Herod. It faced Jerusalem and would have been visible for miles around. The quality of the architecture, construction of the stones, stone carving, and decoration are without parallel among excavations in Israel.

Herod's kingdom was divided among the three sons who managed to survive the bloodshed in his household. Herod Archelaus received the core Jewish territories of Judea, Samaria, and **Idumaea**; Herod Antipas received Galilee and Peraea; and Herod Philip received the Golan and Syrian territories (largely non-Jewish). Herod Archelaus proved so inept and cruel that in A.D. 6, Augustus replaced him with a low-ranking Roman governor who reported to the **legate** in Syria. Herod Philip ruled until his death in A.D. 33 or 34 but died childless, and his territory was simply placed under the administration of the legate in Syria.

Herod Antipas had the longest reign and is infamous for executing John the Baptist, an act that the Gospels attribute to John's rebuking Herod for his unlawful marriage. Antipas had fallen in love with Herodias, Philip's wife, and Herodias and Antipas left their spouses and married, contrary to biblical law. Eventually, Herod Antipas was removed, and his territory was placed under the direct administration of the legate in Syria.

The local Roman prefect or procurator in Judea was a low-ranking official who usually was not one of the best Roman administrators and not particularly sensitive to local customs. Pontius Pilate, prefect from A.D. 26–36, was notorious for corruption and cruelty, and his handling of the trial of Jesus was typical of how he responded to potentially threatening situations. Eventually, Pilate's heavy-handed manner got him dismissed from his post. ■

Important Terms

Herodium (a.k.a. **Herodion**): A fortified palace near Bethlehem that is Herod's final resting place and memorial to himself.

hippodrome: Course for horse-and-chariot races.

Idumaea: The southern part of the former kingdom of Judah, inhabited after 586 B.C. by the descendants of the Edomites (Idumaeans).

legate: A high-ranking governor in the Roman administration who could command a legion.

Questions to Consider

1. What does the newly discovered tomb of Herod at Herodium tell us about Herod and how he wished to be remembered?
2. How do you think the Romans might have more effectively governed or administered Judea?

Galilee—Setting of Jesus’s Life and Ministry

Lecture 22

According to the Gospels, Jesus stayed many times in the house of Peter at Capernaum and taught in the synagogue there that was built by the Roman centurion.

Having looked at some of the major cities and monuments built by Herod the Great, in this lecture, we’ll explore some of the smaller towns and villages of the countryside—the towns and villages that formed the backdrop to Jesus’s life.

What do we know about Bethlehem in the time of Jesus? Regrettably, we have very few archaeological remains in the area of Bethlehem, although we do have remains in Galilee from the time of Jesus. The most famous site in Galilee, **Sepphoris**, was located just four miles from Nazareth and was one of only two towns or cities in Galilee that were really Romanized. However, we don’t have much evidence of Romanization from the time of Jesus (with the exception of a theater), and because the Gospels never mention Sepphoris, we cannot be certain that Jesus ever visited it.

What do we know about the smaller settlements in Galilee in the time of Jesus? A number of these villages have been excavated, and they all manifest the same elements. **Capernaum** is typical. This was a relatively modest village, covering 10 to 12 acres, with houses oriented around an interior courtyard. The economy was based on fishing, local agriculture, and trade. In fact, under Herod Antipas, Capernaum was a border village with a customs



Capernaum, a typical Roman-era Jewish village, was the home of Peter the apostle.

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house. **Chorazin**, about two and a half miles from Capernaum, reveals a similar pattern.

Another small town in Galilee from this period is **Gamla**. Technically, it's in the Golan Heights today because it is located on a hill that overlooks the Sea of Galilee on the eastern side. However, it is really a Galilean-style village, although large; thus, we can see elements of social stratification, with part of the town having nicer houses, a higher quality of stone carving, and some interior decoration. The agricultural base of the town is evidenced by an olive press, and near the olive press was a *miqveh*, a ritual bath. This indicates that the residents were concerned with pressing or producing the olive oil in a state of Jewish ritual purity, presumably because some of it was being sent to the temple for purposes of tithing.

When we pull this all together, what conclusions can we make? Villages in Galilee seem to follow the same sort of formula, with houses consisting of rooms built around a central courtyard. We see an observance of Jewish law reflected by the presence of occasional ritual baths. We see the agricultural base represented, for example, by olive presses. The people probably made their livelihood through agriculture, fishing, and perhaps, commerce.

Many people wonder what Nazareth would have looked like in the time of Jesus. We have remains of scattered farmhouses, and within the last year or so, archaeologists have discovered the remains of a small village house dating to the time of Jesus in Nazareth itself. This house is very similar to the other village houses we've seen in this lecture—a relatively modest-sized dwelling with rooms around a central courtyard. The house offers us a good illustration of the lifestyle of Galilean villagers that forms a valuable backdrop to understanding the life and ministry of Jesus. ■

Archaeologists have discovered the remains of a small village house dating to the time of Jesus in Nazareth itself.

Important Terms

Capernaum: Village on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee that was the center of Jesus's Galilean ministry.

Chorazin: An ancient Galilean Jewish village very close to Capernaum.

Gamla (a.k.a. **Gamala**): A large Jewish village or town in the southern Golan Heights that was destroyed by the Romans during the First Jewish Revolt (A.D. 67).

miqveh (pl. **miqva'ot**): Jewish ritual bath, used for repeated immersion in observance of biblical purity laws.

Sepphoris: Major city in Galilee in the time of Jesus, only four miles from Nazareth; rebuilt by Herod Antipas.

Questions to Consider

1. Why might Sepphoris be important for understanding Jesus?
2. What does archaeology tell us about Galilean village life in the time of Jesus, and what light does it shed on Jesus's socioeconomic background?

Synagogues in the Time of Jesus

Lecture 23

Most people in antiquity were not learned enough to be able to read through the law and understand what it said. Therefore, the purpose of the synagogue was to gather Jews together on various occasions—such as Sabbaths and festivals—and read and explain the law to them so that they could then live their lives according to the law.

Archaeology gives us the ability to reconstruct the world of Jesus. In our last lecture, we looked at the towns and villages of Galilee in the time of Jesus. The archaeology showed that Jewish society in Galilee was polarized between an elite class that was very wealthy and the majority of the population that lived in villages, earned their livelihood through farming or fishing, and lived just above the subsistence level but was not desperately poor. I believe that this is precisely the group to which Jesus belonged and that formed his main target audience.

The Gospels describe much of Jesus’s teaching as taking place within the setting or framework of **synagogues**. The word “synagogue” comes from Greek words meaning literally to gather together. Originally, the term synagogue referred not to a building but to the congregation or assembly itself. This is precisely the sort of practice that leaves no traces in the archaeological record because these gatherings or assemblies could occur anywhere in various kinds of places.

One of the most valuable pieces of evidence for an early synagogue in Palestine is a famous monumental dedication inscription in Greek that was found in Jerusalem in a fill to the south of the Temple Mount. The dedication is called the Theodotus inscription, dating to just before A.D. 70. Theodotus was a priest, the leader of the synagogue (no mention of a rabbi at this early date), and had the inscription done in Greek. Obviously, he was of the upper class. He built the synagogue “for the reading of Torah

The Gospels describe much of Jesus’s teaching as taking place within the setting or framework of synagogues.

and the teaching of commandments.” No mention of prayer or worship, which was reserved for the temple.

We have a handful of early synagogue buildings. Normally, they are not oriented toward Jerusalem, have no set place for the **Torah shrine**, and have no Jewish symbols. For example, on top of Masada is a room converted to a simple synagogue; it had benches around the walls and a back room where holy scrolls that were damaged and no longer used were buried for safekeeping. We have another similarly simple synagogue, dating to before the First Jewish Revolt, at Gamla in the Golan. And recently, in excavations of a synagogue in the village of **Magdala**, Mary Magdalene’s home, something very unusual and unique has surfaced: a decorated stone carved with designs, such as menorahs and candelabrum.

Synagogues were important not only for Jesus but also for Paul, though his teaching took place in Diaspora synagogues. What made Paul’s mission so different from that of other Jewish sects is that he reached outside of Judaism to non-Jews, and he did something extremely radical: He did not require any formal process of conversion to Judaism for the Gentiles he taught. ■

Important Terms

Magdala (Hebrew, **Migdal**; Greek, **Tarichaea**): Jewish town on the Sea of Galilee that was the home of Mary Magdalene.

synagogue (Hebrew, *beth knesset*): Jewish assembly hall.

Torah Shrine: Structure holding the Torah scrolls in a synagogue.

Questions to Consider

1. What is the relevance of the institution of the synagogue for understanding the ministries of Jesus and Paul?
2. What did synagogue buildings look like in the time of Jesus?

Sites of the Trial and Final Hours of Jesus

Lecture 24

In what had been the basement of one of these wealthy urban houses burned by the Romans in A.D. 70 was found the skeletal arm of a 20-year-old woman, apparently killed when the burning house collapsed on top of her. These are the only human remains ever found connected with the Roman destruction of Jerusalem.

Although Jesus apparently spent most of his life in Galilee, much of the information that we have about him concerns his final days in Jerusalem. Are there archaeological sites in Jerusalem that we can connect with places mentioned in the Gospel accounts of the death of Jesus?

We begin by looking north of the Temple Mount. At the northwest corner of the Temple Mount, Herod built the **Antonia** fortress, named after Marc Antony. This structure sat on a natural high point that physically dominated the Temple Mount, and Herod garrisoned it with non-Jewish soldiers to send a clear message to the Jews that they were being watched and to ensure that troops were on hand if trouble broke out. According to a modern Christian tradition, the Antonia fortress was where Pilate sentenced Jesus, which is why the Via Dolorosa begins near this spot.

What did the city of Jerusalem look like when it was destroyed by the Romans in the year A.D. 70? Josephus tells us that, by this time, there were three successive lines of fortification walls protecting the northern side of the city. The first wall was built by the **Hasmoneans**, and the third wall was begun by the grandson of Herod—a man named Herod Agrippa I—and completed by the Jewish rebels on the eve of the First Jewish Revolt against the Romans in A.D. 66. Josephus does not tell us, however, who built the line of the second wall, and unfortunately, we have no archaeological remains that all scholars agree can be identified with either the second or third walls.

Israeli scholars identify the third wall with a fortification wall that has been found far to the north of the Old City. The stones in the wall are Herodian-style masonry, characteristic of the reign of Herod and the period up to A.D.

70. Opponents of this position have never been able to adequately explain what this line of wall is if it is not the third wall. We'll talk more about this line of wall in a later lecture.

Outside the Old City and not far from where Herod's palace was located are the remains of wealthy urban villas on top of the Western Hill. In the time of Jesus, the Western Hill was the area where the wealthiest Jews of Jerusalem lived. Excavations in the 1970s in Jerusalem's

Jewish Quarter—which was on the Western Hill—uncovered the remains of some of these wealthy urban villas. It is evident that the Jews living there decorated their houses in the latest Roman fashion and acquired imported pottery to set their tables with, as well as expensive imported glassware.

In the next lecture, we'll examine other aspects of Jerusalem in the Late Second Temple period before we turn to the aftermath of the city's destruction. ■

In the time of Jesus, the Western Hill was the area where the wealthiest Jews of Jerusalem lived.

Important Terms

Antonia: Fortress built by Herod the Great at the northwest corner of the Temple Mount.

Hasmoneans (a.k.a. **Maccabees**): Priestly family from the town of Modiin that led a Jewish revolt against Antiochus IV Epiphanes and ruled the kingdom founded after the revolt.

Questions to Consider

1. Can you imagine the archaeological setting of Jesus's final hours?
2. Does an accurate understanding of Jesus's world help us better understand his message as reported by the Gospels, and if so, how?

Early Jewish Tombs in Jerusalem

Lecture 25

The Maccabees didn't have to see the Mausoleum at Halicarnassos to construct a tomb in its manner. By their time, this fashion was widespread in the Mediterranean. Everybody pretty much knew or had an idea of the major elements of the Mausoleum.

In order to understand the Gospel accounts of Jesus's burial, we must understand how the ancient Jews of Jerusalem buried their dead. Ancient Jewish tombs in Jerusalem were almost always located outside the walls of the city, and each of these rock-cut tombs was used by a family over the course of several generations. By definition, these rock-cut tombs belonged to the wealthier members of Jewish society.

A number of cemeteries around Jerusalem date to the Late First Temple period. These tombs typically had a doorway opening into an underground burial chamber with rock-cut benches on three sides. A decedent's remains would be placed on top of the bench side by side with the remains of other family members. When all the spaces on top of the benches became filled, the family would carve out a hollow space under the benches, which we call a **repository**. There would be placed the bones of family ancestors, along with whatever burial gifts had been placed with the bodies, such as jewelry or pottery vessels.

The capture of Jerusalem in 587 B.C. interrupted this custom. After the return to Jerusalem, no rock-cut tombs were used until a local Jerusalem elite reemerged during the Hasmonean period. In the interim, a significant burial custom emerged outside of Palestine. In the 4th century, shortly before the conquest of Alexander the Great, a local king named Mausolus built a monumental tomb in his city of Halicarnassos in Asia Minor. It was very large and visible from the sea, with columns and a pyramidal roof. This tomb, the Mausoleum, became a wonder of the ancient world and imitated everywhere, even in Judea.

Ironically, after the Maccabees and Hasmoneans organized a Jewish revolt against a Greek successor of Alexander and became rulers themselves, they began to adopt Greek customs and culture. Simon, the youngest of the five Maccabee brothers and the last one to rule, constructed a monumental family tomb in the family's hometown of Modiin. This monument, like the Mausoleum, was very tall and visible from the sea, with columns and seven pyramids. Interestingly, the Hasmoneans also adopted this foreign, outside fashion early on to build their own family tomb. And quickly, members of the Jerusalem elite began building rock-cut family tombs with monumental entrances echoing the Maccabean monument.



Jason's Tomb, a Hasmonean-era tomb just outside Jerusalem's walls.

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In the next lecture, we'll look at Jewish tombs and burial customs in Jerusalem in the Herodian period, which is the time of Jesus. We will then be able to more closely examine the Gospel accounts of Jesus's burial. ■

Important Terms

Mausoleum at Halicarnassos: Monumental tomb of King Mausolus of Caria (c. 350 B.C.) at modern Bodrum on the southwest coast of Turkey.

repository: Pit in a rock-cut tomb to collect remains of burials.

Questions to Consider

1. What does the Hebrew Bible mean when it says that someone "slept and was gathered to his fathers"? How does this correspond with archaeological evidence?
2. What were the major elements and source of inspiration of the lost tomb of the Maccabees at Modiin, as reflected in the descriptions in 1 Maccabees and Josephus? What does this tell us about Simon the Maccabee?

Monumental Tombs in the Time of Jesus

Lecture 26

This custom of collecting the remains and putting them into stone boxes was actually common not just in Rome but all throughout the Roman Empire.

In this lecture, we learn about Jewish burial customs in Jerusalem in the Herodian period up until the year 70, specifically, the Jewish custom of burying their dead in rock-cut tombs. By the Herodian period, this fashion of rock-cut tombs spread so widely among the Jerusalem elite that the city is now ringed by 900 to 1,000 documented rock-cut tombs.

The slopes of the Mount of Olives have served as a cemetery going back to the earliest periods of Jerusalem's history. Today, we can see a series of monumental rock-cut tombs along those slopes that date to the Herodian period. These tombs are among the wealthiest and are located on prime burial real estate. One of these tombs bears the following inscription: "This is the tomb and the *nefesh* of the family of Bene Hezir." The tomb of this priestly family manifests the usual Mausoleum-style elements, but it has a particularly impressive *nefesh*, or monumental marker, next to it—a solid pillar cut out of the bedrock and carved to look like a tomb itself.

Another famous rock-cut tomb is the large complex that belonged to Queen Helena of Adiabene. In the middle of the 1st century A.D., this Queen Helena, who had ruled a kingdom to the north, converted to Judaism and moved with her family to Jerusalem. Her enormous burial complex, cut out of bedrock, must have been made with much time and expense.



The Tomb of Zachariah, a monumental Herodian-era tomb on the Mount of Olives.

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On top of Mount Scopus is yet another extensive tomb complex that has more burial chambers than any other tomb complex discovered so far in Jerusalem. This tomb belonged to a wealthy Jew from Alexandria in Egypt whose name was Nicanor; according to ancient sources, he donated a set of gates to the Jerusalem temple. Inside the tomb, an ossuary was found—that is, a small stone box—inscribed as follows: “The remains of the children of Nicanor of Alexandria who made the doors.” This is a wonderful confluence of archaeological discovery and literary information.

The **ossuaries** first appeared in Jerusalem during the middle of Herod’s reign and spread like wildfire, remaining very common until the destruction of the city in A.D. 70. They are often crudely inscribed with the names of people whose bones they contain. In 1990, two ossuaries were discovered bearing the name Caiaphas. These inscribed ossuaries and other evidence suggest that we have, in fact, found the family tomb of the high priest associated with the trial of Jesus.

These inscribed ossuaries and other evidence suggest that we have, in fact, found the family tomb of the high priest associated with the trial of Jesus.

The prevailing explanation for why ossuaries suddenly appeared in Jerusalem’s rock-cut tombs points to the Pharisaic belief in the individual physical resurrection of the dead. In my opinion, however, what we see here reflects just another Roman influence on the tombs and burial customs of the Jerusalem elite. Specifically, this innovation reflects the practice of the Romans, who cremated their dead and kept the ashes in urns that typically were small stone boxes. The appearance of ossuaries is part of a larger picture of Roman cultural influence on the Jerusalem elite during the reign of Herod. ■

Important Terms

nefesh: From the Hebrew for “soul”; a monumental marker, often in the shape of a pyramid, marking the site of a rock-cut tomb.

ossuaries: Small lidded containers, which in Jerusalem are made of the local stone, used to contain remains removed from loculi.

Questions to Consider

1. Do ancient Jewish tombs and burial customs reflect religious beliefs (for example, in the afterlife) or other factors?
2. What are ossuaries, and why were they introduced into Jerusalem's rock-cut tombs in the middle of Herod's reign?

The Burials of Jesus and James

Lecture 27

Had Jesus and his family owned a rock-cut tomb in Jerusalem with family members buried in this tomb during the course of 1st century ... surely we would expect some hint in some Christian tradition about this. Somebody would have mentioned it. We have not a single reference to anything like this in any Christian source.

Our review of the archaeological evidence for burial customs and tombs of the Jews of Jerusalem in the Second Temple period has set the stage for us to discuss the evidence for the death and burial of Jesus and his brother, James.

According to the Gospel accounts of Mark and Matthew, Joseph of Arimathea buried Jesus in his own rock-cut tomb, sealing the tomb by rolling a great stone over the doorway. These accounts are consistent with archaeological evidence about how the wealthy Jews of Jerusalem buried their dead. Of course, in this case, someone who is not a family member was placed in Joseph's family tomb. This was not something that usually happened and raises the question of how Jesus would have otherwise been buried. In other words, where was the majority of the population buried?

It is a well-known archaeological phenomenon that, in antiquity, the majority of the population was disposed of in a way that leaves few if any traces—in a manner that is archaeologically invisible. Most people were buried in individual trench graves dug into the ground. The bodies were laid at the base of the trench, the trench was refilled with dirt, and a headstone was erected to mark the grave. Such graves are easily covered over, plowed, bulldozed, and destroyed. When they are found, they are difficult to date because often these people were not buried with any grave goods.

Most people were buried in individual trench graves dug into the ground.

However, it's a different story when it comes to the wealthy Jews. The Tomb of Queen Helena of Adiabene, for example, shows this precise arrangement of a great rolling stone that was rolled in order to seal the access from the porch of the tomb into the burial chambers. In other words, one of the things



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Only the wealthiest Jews of Jerusalem in Jesus's time were buried in rock-cut tombs like this one, the Tomb of Queen Helena.

that is so interesting about these gospel accounts is that they are consistent with archeological evidence about how Jews of Jerusalem, the wealthy Jews of Jerusalem, in the time of Jesus, buried their dead.

Now back to Joseph and Jesus. What led Joseph of Arimathea to place the body of Jesus in his own family's rock-cut tomb? It's likely that his motivation was a concern with observance of Jewish law, which required both that burials not take place on the Sabbath and that they take place within 24 hours of death. All of this background knowledge sheds light on a recent claim relating to the death and burial of Jesus. In March 2007, the Discovery Channel aired a broadcast on a Jerusalem tomb that the filmmaker claimed was the tomb of Jesus and his family—not the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. In my opinion, the claim about this tomb being the tomb of Jesus and his family is based on a long series of misunderstandings of archaeology, the information we have from the Gospel accounts, and what we know about how the Jews of Jerusalem in the time of Jesus buried their dead.

Historical sources and archaeology also bring light to the discussion of another object that has been the subject of much media coverage in recent years, the **James ossuary**. The problem with identifying this ossuary with James the Just, leader of the Christian community in Jerusalem, is that all available evidence indicates that James would have been buried in a simple trench grave dug into the ground, not in a rock-cut tomb. If this is so, then

there is no associated ossuary, which would have been used only in a rock-cut tomb. ■

Important Term

James ossuary: An ossuary bearing an Aramaic inscription (all or part of which might be a modern forgery) that reads, “James son of Joseph brother of Jesus.”

Questions to Consider

1. What do we know about the death and burial of Jesus from the Gospel accounts and from contemporary Jewish tombs and burial practices?
2. How would you respond to claims that the Talpiyot tomb is the tomb of Jesus and his family and that the so-called James ossuary contained the remains of Jesus’s brother, James the Just?

The First Jewish Revolt; Jerusalem Destroyed

Lecture 28

The Jewish Revolt against the Romans broke out because of infighting among the Jews and between Jews and non-Jews; an absence of Jewish leadership, with Herod having eliminated the old Hasmonean aristocracy and made the high priest a political appointee; the weak Roman governorship in the province; and Messianic and eschatological beliefs that stirred up the people.

The events surrounding the death of James the Just highlight the instability in the Holy Land in the 1st century A.D. A tinderbox slowly developed, with increasing tensions and escalating violence among various groups. In A.D. 66, the First Jewish Revolt started as a result of tensions and hostilities between Jews and non-Jews at Caesarea and very quickly spread to Jerusalem and the rest of the country. Rebels took over such fortresses as Masada and Herodium. In Jerusalem itself, the captain of the temple ended the practice of offering customary sacrifices on behalf of the Roman emperor and state.

The First Jewish Revolt started as a result of tensions and hostilities between Jews and non-Jews.

The Roman legate in Syria, **Cestius Gallus**, invaded in September of 66 with four legions and a large number of local forces. Moving along the coast, he took Jaffa, secured Galilee, and set up camp on Mount Scopus, a high point overlooking Jerusalem. His assault on the city was repulsed, and his retreat turned into a bloody rout. With this event, all-out war became inevitable. Strongly pro-Roman Jews fled Jerusalem. The rebels set up a government and divided the country into districts, with a general in charge of each district. Galilee was put under the command of a young Jewish man named Joseph, son of Mattathias, whom we know as Josephus.

The Romans invaded again in A.D. 67 under the general Vespasian. Galilee fell fairly quickly; Josephus surrendered after the last major fortress fell. Vespasian occupied Peraea and took Jericho. Meanwhile, in Jerusalem,

conditions became dire as refugees flooded the city and the supply of food began to dwindle. To make matters worse, extreme rebel factions took over, dividing the city and fighting among themselves, destroying much of the food supply.

At this point, Vespasian was stalled because of a civil war in Rome. Eventually, he made himself Roman emperor, leaving his son Titus to take Jerusalem. When the Romans finally attacked from the north, they took the Antonia fortress; Josephus reports that, on that day, the daily sacrifices in the temple ceased. Fighting then spread onto the Temple Mount itself: Jewish rebels took refuge within the temple building, and Titus attacked the temple and set it on fire. The Western Hill was the last part of the city to be taken.

A triumph was held in the streets of Rome, with a parade of prisoners and booty taken from Jerusalem and the temple. A carved panel underneath the Arch of Titus depicts loot rescued from the burning Jerusalem temple, notably, the seven-branched **menorah** and the showbread table.

Although the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in A.D. 70 officially marked the end of the First Jewish Revolt against the Romans, fighting in other parts of the country continued. Our next two lectures will cover this continued fighting, focusing on perhaps the most famous fortress to hold out against the Romans, Masada. ■



The Arch of Titus in Rome commemorates the Roman destruction of Jerusalem.

Name to Know

Cestius Gallus (fl. 1st century A.D.): Roman legate of Syria at the outbreak of the First Jewish Revolt (A.D. 66).

Important Term

menorah: Seven-branched candelabrum in the Jerusalem temple.

Questions to Consider

1. What is significant about the minting of coins by the Jews during the First Jewish Revolt?
2. Do you think the outbreak of the First Jewish Revolt against the Romans could have been avoided?

Masada—Herod’s Desert Palace and the Siege

Lecture 29

If you look just inside the area of the circumvallation wall and the camp, you can see a path. ... The line of communication between the Roman camps because, of course, there was no walkie-talkie or field telephone back then. The Roman commander at Masada communicated with his troops by sending out runners—slaves—whose job it was to run along that path and take his orders and commands from camp to camp.

After the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple in 70, there remained three former Herodian fortresses in the hands of Jewish rebels: Herodium; Machaerus, on the eastern side of the Dead Sea; and Masada. This lecture focuses on Masada, the most famous of the three fortresses and the site of a very controversial recorded mass suicide by the Jewish rebels.

Masada included a fortification wall that runs around the edge of the mountain and two large palace complexes decorated in the latest Roman fashion. Because Masada was located in such a remote spot in the middle of the desert, Herod provided for a good deal of food to be stored in the storerooms that serviced the palace and supplied cisterns by an aqueduct.

When the Romans sent out troops to mop up these last holdouts, Herodium fell quickly, apparently almost without a fight, and **Machaerus** was taken after a siege. Finally, in A.D. 72 or 73, 8,000 to 10,000 Roman troops arrived at the foot of Masada. There were, at this point, on top of Masada, 967 men, women, and children. The Romans sent such enormous force against a relatively small band of Jewish rebels partly to save face and partly because they wanted to make sure that they stamped out every last spark of Jewish resistance.

This lecture focuses on Masada, the most famous of the three fortresses and the site of a very controversial recorded mass suicide by the Jewish rebels.

The Roman siege works at Masada are well preserved because the fortress is in the desert and the area has never been built over. Further, the siege works here are made of stone, unlike those in Europe, which were typically made of perishable materials, such as dirt, sod, and wood. At this site was a 4,000-yard stone wall, originally 10 to 12 feet high, that went all the way around the base of the mountain. Eight camps, which look square-shaped, encircled the base of the mountain. These camps were all built according to the same pattern but varied in size. The large camps, occupied by the legionaries (the professional soldiers), were close to the shore of the Dead Sea, where supplies were being brought in, and close to the siege ramp.

In the summer of 1995, I had the privilege of co-directing the excavations of these Roman siege works, which focused on the large legionary camp near the siege ramp. These excavations revealed the camp walls, originally 10 to 12 feet high and made of dry fieldstones, as well as interior walls that were the bases for the officers' mess, the headquarters, and ordinary soldiers' tents. We found very little in the way of military equipment in our excavations. However, earlier excavations had found a good deal of military equipment on the top of Masada, the remains of fighting that went on during the course of the siege. This equipment includes numerous barbed arrowheads, bronze scales that would have originally been sewn onto a leather or cloth backing to make the kind of scale armor worn by auxiliary soldiers, and (a rare find) an almost complete iron sword.

In our next lecture, we'll talk about the siege of Masada and the controversies surrounding the fall of the mountain as reported by the Jewish historian Josephus. ■

Important Term

Machaerus: Herodian fortified palace in Perea (eastern side of the Dead Sea).

Questions to Consider

1. Do you think the Jews could have defeated the Romans?
2. What does archaeology tell us about the Roman siege of Masada?

Flavius Josephus and the Mass Suicide

Lecture 30

The *Jewish War* [a work by Josephus] communicates the message that revolt against Rome will have disastrous consequences. It also depicts the Jewish Revolt as the work of extremists and fanatics, not of the majority of the Jewish population, including the aristocracy.

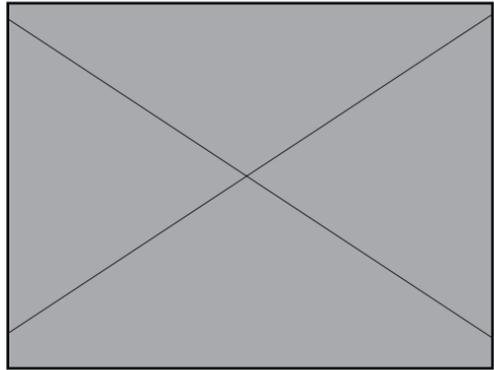
The siege of Masada took place during a winter/spring season and probably lasted no longer than two or three months, certainly no more than six months. Under ordinary circumstances, having sealed off the mountain, the Romans might have simply waited for the besieged residents to run out of food and water and surrender. But because the Romans had 8,000 or more troops at the base of the mountain, along with slaves, animals, and all sorts of other people that needed to be fed and watered every day, they had to attack the mountain.

On the western side of the mountain, the Roman commander noticed a natural low hill with an incline going partway up the mountain. He had his men use dirt and stones to build on this incline a gently sloping artificial ramp, which would enable the Roman soldiers to ascend in greater mass than just a single-file line and carry their siege machinery up to the fortification wall at the top.

The Romans constructed the ramp, erected their battering ram at the top of it, then started to batter through the wall at the top of the mountain. At this point, the Jewish rebels realized that their stronghold would fall to the Romans. The leader of the rebels convinced his followers that the best way to rob the Romans of their hard-won victory would be to commit mass suicide. We know this because, as the ancient Jewish historian Josephus reports, two old women overheard the suicide plans, hid in a cistern, and later gave themselves up to the Romans.

Josephus is the only ancient author who described the mass suicide at Masada.

Josephus is the only ancient author who described the mass suicide at Masada, and it is not the only mass suicide that he recounted. Could it be that he used this kind of event as a literary device to make his story more compelling? After all, in the ancient world, history was entertainment. Notably, excavators have not found the remains of 967 skeletons. There might be plausible explanations for this, but the fact is that we have no archaeological evidence that either proves or disproves the suicide story.



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The Snake Path, the only route into Masada in ancient times, made access difficult.

Who was Flavius Josephus? He was a Jewish aristocrat born in A.D. 37 as Joseph, son of Mattathias. Originally a leader in the revolt, he was taken captive by Vespasian but was later freed and adopted by the emperor. After the fall of Jerusalem, Josephus settled in Rome and was commissioned by the imperial family to write histories of the Jewish people. In A.D. 80, he completed a massive account, the *Jewish War*, which is an extremely important source of information for the Second Temple period.

Jewish tradition did not preserve Josephus's writings because the later rabbis viewed the rebellion as a disaster and did not care to keep accounts of it. Ironically, Josephus's writings were preserved in the Christian tradition, which valued them primarily because they testified to the destruction of the second Jewish temple, an event foretold by Jesus. ■

Important Term

Jewish War: Josephus's seven-volume account of the First Jewish Revolt against Rome, ending with the fall of Masada (completed c. A.D. 80).

Questions to Consider

1. Should Masada be a symbol of the modern state of Israel?
2. What is the importance of Josephus's writings?

The Second Jewish Revolt against the Romans

Lecture 31

A coin minted during the Bar-Kokhba Revolt bears the earliest known depiction of the Jerusalem temple, showing a building with a flat roof and four pillars in front of it. This coin was minted 60 some years after the destruction of the Second Temple, when presumably, there were people still alive who had actually seen the Second Temple. Much of our understanding of what the temple building originally looked like comes from this coin.

After A.D. 70, the Jews awaited the day when the Romans would grant them permission to rebuild the temple, just as the Persians had done earlier. As the decades went by and permission was not forthcoming, the Jews became increasingly anxious. Initially, revolts broke out among Jewish Diaspora communities in Egypt and North Africa, in Mesopotamia, and on Cyprus between A.D. 115 and 117, during the reign of the emperor Trajan. We are not sure what kindled these revolts; they were suppressed harshly.

In A.D. 129, Trajan's successor, Hadrian, decided to rebuild Jerusalem as a Roman city with a new temple dedicated to Capitoline Jupiter on the Temple Mount. This imperial decision crushed the expectation of the Jews, who immediately prepared for an uprising. In A.D. 132 the revolt broke out, named after its leader, a messianic figure called Bar-Kokhba, meaning "the son of a star" in Aramaic. This uprising ended in A.D. 135 when the last rebel fortress fell and Bar-Kokhba himself was killed.

Without a Josephus, we have far less information about this Second Jewish Revolt than we have about the first one. There are scattered references among church fathers and rabbinic Jewish sources and an important source in Cassius Dio. However, archaeological finds within the last 50 years have shed a great deal of new light on the Bar-Kokhba Revolt. A couple of caves in a large canyon called **Nahal Hever** have preserved the remains of many refugees from the nearby Oasis of **Ein Gedi**, along with their most valuable

belongings and some documents, including correspondence from Bar-Kokhba himself to the Jewish communities in the area.

The Bar-Kokhba Revolt presents an interesting contrast with the First Jewish Revolt against the Romans. That first revolt had taught the Jews that they could not fight the Romans on the Romans' own terms. Thus, in the second revolt, they employed guerilla warfare, taking advantage of their superior knowledge of the countryside, hiding during the day, and ambushing the Romans at night. The Romans were not trained to counter this type of warfare, and initially, the Jews scored tremendous successes against the Roman army, apparently wiping out a legion. The emperor Hadrian had to send one-third of the entire Roman army to Judea in order to put down the revolt. When the tide turned, the Jewish population in Judea was wiped out. In the case of the refugees in Nahal Hever, the Romans discovered they were hiding in these inaccessible caves and put them under siege.

The Bar-Kokhba Revolt presents an interesting contrast with the First Jewish Revolt against the Romans.

The end of the Bar-Kokhba Revolt made clear that there would not be any rebuilding of the temple in the near future. During the ensuing centuries, Judaism transformed itself from a religion centered on a temple serviced by a priestly caste into something quite different. ■

Important Terms

Ein Gedi: An oasis on the western shore of the Dead Sea that was the site of an ancient Jewish village.

Nahal Hever: Canyon to the south of Ein Gedi.

Questions to Consider

1. What factors led to the outbreak of a Second Jewish Revolt against the Romans?

2. What is the significance of the finds from the Cave of Letters in Nahal Hever?

Roman Jerusalem—Hadrian's Aelia Capitolina

Lecture 32

One of the hallmarks of Hadrian's buildings in Aelia Capitolina is the fact that they incorporate or reuse a lot of the old Herodian masonry.

After the Bar-Kokhba Revolt, Hadrian punished the Jews by issuing a series of edicts restricting the practice of Judaism, something the Romans had never done before. For example, Jews were prohibited from circumcising their sons. Furthermore, Judea was now largely empty of its Jewish population, and to erase the memory of the people who had inhabited this province, Hadrian renamed it Palestine, a name that harkens back to the ancient Philistines. When Hadrian rebuilt the city as **Aelia Capitolina** (a combination of his family name and Capitoline Jupiter), he banned Jews from living in or near it.

The layout of the Old City of Jerusalem today closely reflects Hadrian's plan.

The layout of the Old City of Jerusalem today closely reflects Hadrian's plan. When we look at this layout and other evidence, we see that Hadrian gave Aelia Capitolina a characteristically Roman layout, which is roughly square and has two major streets running north/south and east/west and intersecting in the middle of the city. These main streets tend to follow valleys. Because he could not ignore the Tyropean Valley, Hadrian gave Jerusalem a second main north/south street. On the Temple Mount, he apparently built some sort of temple dedicated to Capitoline Jupiter, the new patron deity of the city. In addition, Hadrian built two forums, that is, two Roman-style marketplaces in the city, one on the north side of the Temple Mount in the area where the old Antonia fortress of Herod had been and another on the western side of the city.

The western forum is particularly interesting because it is located in the area where the Church of the Holy Sepulcher was later built. The Romans placed here a large public space with a monumental triple-arched gateway leading into the forum. On the north side is a Roman basilica, and behind it is a temple dedicated to Aphrodite or Venus. The basilica later became part of

the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, though its remains lie outside the current church, rebuilt by the Crusaders.

Excavations in the southern part of the Old City to find the southern end of the north/south street have revealed nothing dating from the time of Herod or even Hadrian but, rather, pottery and coins going up to the 6th century A.D. (i.e., late Christian Jerusalem). This has caused an ongoing controversy among archaeologists who study Aelia Capitolina. The leader of the excavation, observing that the majority of the evidence for Aelia Capitolina is concentrated in the northern half of the Old City of Jerusalem, has suggested that the southern half of the city founded by Hadrian was not populated until Christian times, when the city population began to grow. My suggestion is that the Roman city was actually further north than currently conceived, with what the Israelis identify as the third wall is actually the north wall of Aelia Capitolina.

Current excavations promise that within the next 5 to 10 years, we will have to completely reevaluate our understanding of the layout of Aelia Capitolina. ■

Important Term

Aelia Capitolina: Name given by Hadrian to his rebuilt city of Jerusalem, combining his name (Publius Aelius Hadrianus) and Capitoline Jupiter, the new patron deity.

Questions to Consider

1. How did Hadrian's reconstruction of Jerusalem as Aelia Capitolina forever alter the face of the city?
2. What is the importance of the Madaba Map for understanding the layout of Aelia Capitolina?

Christian Emperors and Pilgrimage Sites

Lecture 33

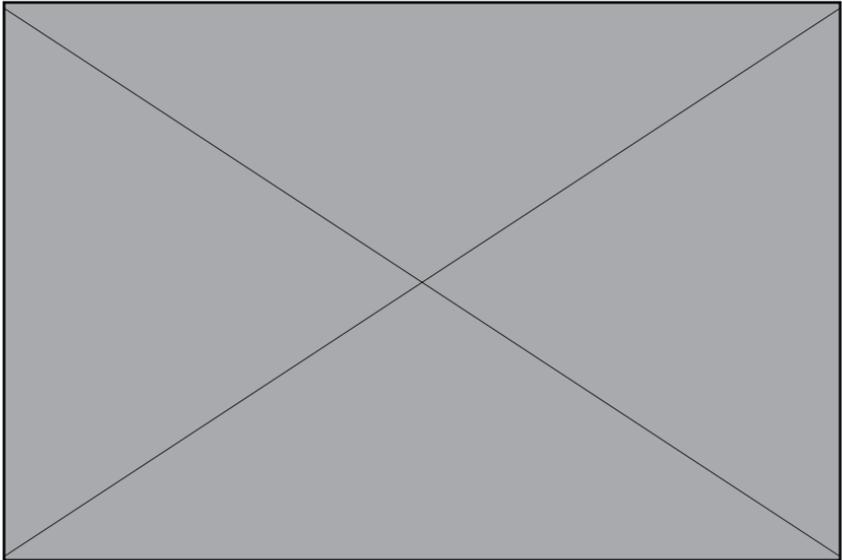
The Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem survives largely intact from the Byzantine period and follows a plan similar to that of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Both buildings enshrine a main focal point—in one case, the tomb of Jesus; in another, the grotto of his nativity.

In this lecture, we'll look at the Byzantine period and consider how Christianity literally transformed the appearance of the Holy Land. When we talk about the Byzantine period in Palestine, we are talking about the Roman Christian period that started with the legalization of Christianity by the emperor **Constantine** in the early 4th century A.D. and ended in A.D. 640 with the Muslim capture of the Holy Land.

The legalization of Christianity by Constantine had an immediate and significant impact on the landscape of the Holy Land. Up until the time of Constantine, the area of Palestine had been a marginal province on the fringes of the Roman world. Under Constantine, the Holy Land was catapulted into a central position in the Roman Empire. In fact, Jerusalem became the seat of one of the five patriarchates.

Thousands of pilgrims began to pour into the Holy Land to visit the sites associated with Jesus and the Bible. Imperial money and private donations poured into the Holy Land to build churches, monasteries, hostels for pilgrims, and other kinds of buildings. All of this brought with it flows of both people and income. The province flowered, becoming more densely settled than in any period until the 20th century. In Jerusalem, the area enclosed within the city walls at the height of the Byzantine period was larger than the area enclosed within the walls of the Old City today. The central feature in Christian Jerusalem was not the Temple Mount, which was left lying in ruins as a visual fulfillment of Jesus's prophesy that the

The legalization of Christianity by Constantine had an immediate and significant impact on the landscape of the Holy Land.



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According to Christian belief, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher is built on the site of Jesus's tomb.

Jewish temple would be destroyed; rather, the most important feature was the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

The Church of the Holy Sepulcher stood where Hadrian's western forum had been in Aelia Capitolina. Along the north side of the forum, there had been a Roman-style basilica and, behind it, a temple apparently dedicated to Aphrodite. Constantine tore down Hadrian's temple to reveal rock-cut tombs dating to the Late Second Temple period (some of the nearby rock-cut tombs survive today). He removed the rock around the tomb identified by tradition as the burial place of Jesus, then enshrined the tomb within a huge circular building covered with a dome called the **Rotunda**. This rotunda and the tomb remain to this day.

Hadrian's old basilica became a church, with its altar not, as usual, facing eastward but westward, toward the sepulcher; on the south side of the basilica was enshrined yet another important spot: the rocky hill of Golgotha. This Church of the Holy Sepulcher has had a very unfortunate history. The worst

destruction it suffered occurred in A.D. 1009, when a fanatic Muslim caliph ordered that it be dismantled from top to bottom. The church now standing is the Crusaders' replacement, smaller than the original. This, in fact, was the whole point of the Crusades: to retake the Holy Land and rebuild the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

The legalization of Christianity literally transformed the face of the Holy Land. In our next lecture, we will consider what happened to the Jewish population of Palestine during the course of this transformation. ■

Name to Know

Constantine: Roman emperor who issued the Edict of Milan in A.D. 313, legalizing Christianity.

Important Term

Rotunda: The circular structure in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher that enshrines the tomb of Jesus.

Questions to Consider

1. What were the original plan and appearance of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher compared with its current plan and appearance?
2. How was the appearance of Jerusalem transformed after Constantine's legalization of Christianity?

Judaism and Synagogues under Christian Rule

Lecture 34

The synagogue at Beth Alpha shows the influence of contemporary Byzantine church architecture. The layout of this synagogue consists of chambers closely corresponding to a narthex, a nave with aisles, and a big apse. The difference is that the iconography is Jewish, the direction of prayer is toward Jerusalem, and the apse has, instead of an altar, a Torah Shrine.

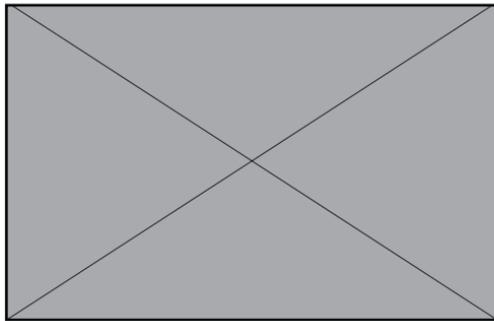
After the Bar-Kokhba Revolt, the synagogue became increasingly important in Jewish religious life. Synagogue buildings became larger and more elaborate to accommodate the assembly gathered for the purpose of reading and studying the law, as well as prayer and liturgy services. In this lecture, we'll explore the archaeology of synagogue buildings dating from Byzantine times.

One of the most famous ancient synagogues in Palestine is the one at Capernaum in Galilee. It was a monumental rectangular building that oriented prayer toward Jerusalem and had a good deal of carved stone decoration, including Jewish designs, such as a menorah, the paramount Jewish symbol in this period. Another interesting synagogue is located at a site called **Hammath Tiberias**. It is important for its mosaics, which have many Jewish symbols, including the menorah. However, in the middle of the floor is a circular design featuring the Greco-Roman sun god Helios surrounded by depictions of the 12 signs of the zodiac, labeled in Hebrew. This is not the only synagogue with this floor mosaic imagery. One located at the foot of Mount Gilboa, at **Beth Alpha**, also has this central panel with the Helios zodiac cycle, as well as a wonderful depiction of the offering of Isaac by Abraham.

Many of the images in these synagogues hark back to the Jerusalem temple.

Many of the images in these synagogues hark back to the Jerusalem temple. Even the offering of Isaac echoes a tradition that Mount Moriah, where it took place, is also the Temple Mount in

Jerusalem. Before A.D. 70, Jewish art was almost completely aniconic; Jews strictly interpreted and adhered to the Second Commandment. However, after the Bar-Kokhba Revolt and in the Byzantine period, Judaism not only began to use images in its art but also included pagan images. How do we explain this shift? The Jewish images may have been chosen to convey the message that, despite the official status of Christianity in the Roman Empire, the Jerusalem temple was still relevant and would be rebuilt.



Courtesy of Dr. Jodi Magness.

The mosaics at Hammath Tiberias show the Roman influence on Jewish art.

What about the pagan imagery? Why would Jews put the figure of the Greco-Roman sun god in the middle of their synagogue buildings? There is no scholarly consensus on this question. I believe these images to be simply symbols of the heavens and the circular floor design in the middle of a rectilinear building to be a substitute for a decorated dome, which these Jewish builders could not afford. In other words, the images of Helios and the zodiac cycle on the floor may be a two-dimensional representation of a three-dimensional idea.

The Judaism of late antiquity—in the Byzantine period in Palestine—presents a complex picture of the interaction between the Jewish and Christian populations. In the next lecture, we'll consider the added impact of the arrival of Islam. ■

Important Terms

Beth Alpha: Site of an ancient synagogue in the Jordan Valley, near Mount Gilboa.

Hammath Tiberias: Town to the south of Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee with the remains of an ancient synagogue.

Questions to Consider

1. What is so surprising about the decoration of synagogues of the 4th to 6th centuries?
2. What is the possible meaning or significance of the images decorating ancient synagogue buildings, especially images of Helios and the zodiac cycle?

Islam's Transformation of Jerusalem

Lecture 35

Muslims congregate on top of the Temple Mount for worship at the al-Aqsa mosque, not the Dome of the Rock, because the latter is a centralized building, whereas the mosque is a large hall intended for congregational prayer and focused in the direction of Mecca. In 1977, when Anwar Sadat visited Jerusalem and went to pray on the Temple Mount, he prayed not in the Dome of the Rock but in the al-Aqsa mosque.

In the year A.D. 614, the Sassanid Persians overran the Holy Land, only to be repulsed in A.D. 627 by the Byzantines. But this Byzantine reconquest of Palestine did not last long, for it was precisely during this war that the spread of Islam began.

In A.D. 622, the prophet Mohammed fled from Mecca to Medina, an event that marks the beginning of the Muslim calendar. A decade later, in A.D. 632, Mohammed died, and almost immediately, Muslims launched conquests into the Holy Land. Jerusalem surrendered in A.D. 638, and Caesarea Maritima was the last major city to fall in A.D. 640 after a seven-month siege.

What did this new power out of Arabia do with Jerusalem? The Muslims transformed the abandoned Temple Mount into what they called al-Haram al-Sharif (that is, “the noble or sacred enclosure”) because of its long tradition of having been a sacred mountain and because of its association with Abraham’s offering of his son. They built two monuments on top of the Temple Mount: the Dome of the Rock and the **al-Aqsa** mosque.

The Dome of the Rock is the earliest surviving Muslim monument anywhere in the world.

The Dome of the Rock is the earliest surviving Muslim monument anywhere in the world. Its octagonal shell enshrines a rock that is the natural high point of the Temple Mount and that had many sacred associations. The purpose of a centralized building like this is to enshrine

the sacred focal point in the center and to make it possible for masses of people—pilgrims—to come and visit that focal point. The Muslims used the most visible piece of sacred property in Jerusalem, which had been lying in ruins, to establish on monument that overshadowed the rotunda of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

Many years ago, a famous art historian pointed out that the Muslims got the idea, apparently, of building this kind of structure from the rotunda of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher itself. The decorations inside the Dome of the Rock today must also resemble those of Constantine’s rotunda, with extensive use of marble columns with gilded capitals and, above that, various colored-glass mosaics highlighted by gold leaf.

After the Six Day War in 1967, when the Israelis took the Old City of Jerusalem, they instituted a series of large-scale excavations. One of the most surprising finds was a series of enormous buildings surrounding the southern and western sides of the Temple Mount and dating from early Muslim times. In this early Muslim period, there was rapid and very intensive development around the Temple Mount, as well as construction in other parts of the city, including the rebuilding of the walls of the city.

The establishment of Muslim rule in the Holy Land beginning in the 7th century would last for centuries; not until World War I, with the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, did Muslim rule finally come to an end. ■

Important Term

al-Aqsa: Arabic for “the farthest spot”; the name of the mosque on the Temple Mount, built by the Umayyad caliph Abd al-Malek or his son al-Walid.

Questions to Consider

1. What is the significance of the Dome of the Rock?
2. What impact did Islam have on Jerusalem?

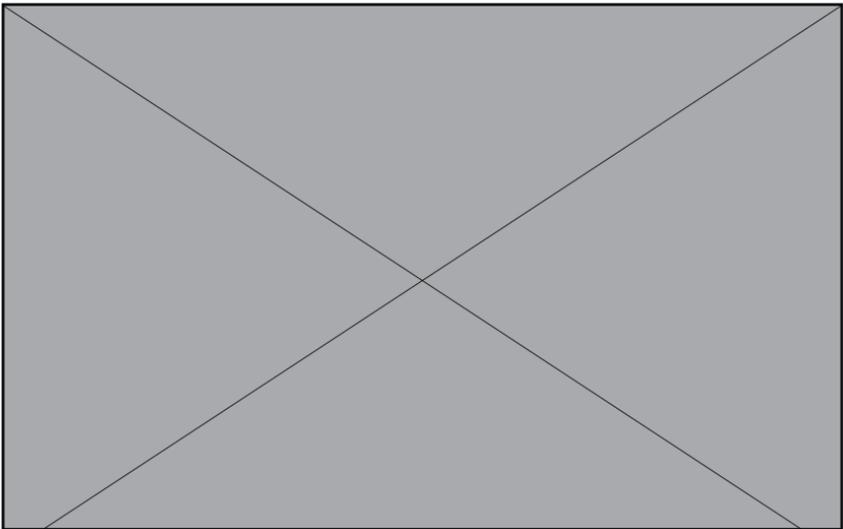
What and How Archaeology Reveals

Lecture 36

Some of the most exciting directions in the future for archaeology are going to be the increasing use of technology for such things as three-dimensional virtual reconstruction of sites and DNA analysis of organic remains.

This course has taken us on an amazing journey through the Holy Land, and it has given me an opportunity to share my passion for archaeology. Archaeology is a long process in which we find pieces of a puzzle and put them together in order to better understand the past.

Archaeology as a scientific discipline has evolved over the course of time. The first person to conduct a scientific excavation in Palestine was William Flinders Petrie, who excavated a site in a stratigraphic manner (understanding newer layers to be on top of older ones) and, on the basis of the layers he



Courtesy of Dr. Jodi Magness.

An archaeological dig is a careful and regimented process that seeks to preserve as much information as possible about a site.

discerned, was able to establish a chronology based on pottery types found in the layers. This is how we develop chronologies—either with common finds at excavations (such as pottery) or with individual objects that can be dated (such as dated coins or object that can be subjected to radiocarbon dating).

How exactly do archaeologists dig? First, we do not dig entire sites from top to bottom, because that approach would destroy everything. Because excavated evidence can never be put back, we choose part of a site to excavate and leave the rest unexcavated so that future archaeologists can check our results. What part of the site we dig depends on what we're looking for. After making this choice, we then lay out a grid, leaving, as we dig down into these squares, an unexcavated bank of earth called a **baulk**. Baulks help us see the distinction between one layer and another as we dig.

The main point here is to record as fully as possible every single thing that we do by every means possible (e.g., writing field notes, taking photographs, drawing pictures). Once material is unearthed, it must be processed (e.g., washed, sorted, read). Some of it gets sent for restoration, that is, to be put back together again. Once all of the material has been processed and recorded, then archaeologists decide what finds will be published—typically, representative samples, either special objects or objects that are from good contexts.

The ultimate goal of every archaeological excavation is a full and final scientific publication that documents everything that has been dug up and is no longer in place at the site. That documentation includes a description of the layers that have been excavated, along with the architecture and all the various categories of objects that have been found. The idea, ultimately, of a final publication is that the reader should be able to come along, go through the excavation report, and reconstruct where everything was found.

The ultimate goal of every archaeological excavation is a full and final scientific publication that documents everything that has been dug up and is no longer in place at the site.

I hope you've enjoyed our journey through the Holy Land, and I hope that this course, in addition to introducing you to the actual material, has also given you the ability to critically evaluate claims that are made about archaeological discoveries in the Holy Land. I further hope that this course has whetted your appetite so that you will continue to keep abreast of ongoing archaeological discoveries in the Holy Land. ■

Important Term

balk (a.k.a. **balk**): A bank of earth left standing between the excavated squares in an archaeological dig.

Questions to Consider

1. What kinds of questions can archaeology answer, and what kinds of questions is archaeology unable to answer?
2. In what ways might developments in science and technology affect archaeology—specifically archaeology in the Holy Land—in the future?

Topographic Map of Jerusalem



Administrative Division of Palestine
in the Persian Period (6th to 4th centuries B.C.)



Map of Palestine in the Biblical and Post-Biblical Periods (1st millennium B.C.)



Timeline

B.C.

- c. 1200..... Moses dies; the Israelite tribes enter Canaan and settle in the hill country.
- c. 1000..... Death of Saul and establishment of the kingdom of David.
- c. 950..... Solomon builds the First Temple on Jerusalem's Temple Mount.
- c. 920..... Solomon dies; the United Kingdom splits into Israel (north) and Judah (south).
- 8th century..... Period of the prophets Isaiah, Amos, Hosea, and Micah.
- 722..... Kingdom of Israel falls to Assyria.
- 701..... Assyrians invade Judah, destroy Lachish, and besiege Jerusalem (under King Hezekiah).
- 641/40–610/09..... Reign of King Josiah and the period of the Deuteronomistic reform.
- c. 625–580..... Activity of the prophet Jeremiah.
- 586..... Kingdom of Judah falls to Babylonia; destruction of Solomon's Temple and beginning of the Babylonian Exile.

- 516..... The Second Temple is consecrated.
- c. 450..... Ezra and Nehemiah in Jerusalem.
- 332..... Alexander conquers Palestine.
- 323..... Alexander dies.
- 301..... Final division of Alexander's empire, with Seleucus in Asia Minor and Syria and Ptolemy in Egypt; Palestine comes under Ptolemaic rule.
- 198..... Palestine comes under Seleucid rule.
- 167..... Antiochus IV Epiphanes outlaws Judaism and dedicates the Jerusalem temple to Olympian Zeus, sparking the Maccabean revolt.
- 164..... Antiochus IV rescinds his edict outlawing Judaism; the Jerusalem temple is rededicated to the God of Israel, but the Maccabean revolt continues.
- c. 150–140..... Maccabees establish an independent Jewish kingdom ruled by their descendants (the Hasmoneans); in the decades that follow, the Hasmoneans increase the size of their kingdom through territorial expansion.
- c. 100..... A sectarian community settles at Qumran (site associated with the Dead Sea Scrolls).

- 63..... Romans annex the Hasmonean kingdom.
- 40..... Parthians invade Syria-Palestine; Herod flees to Rome and is appointed king of Judea.
- 37..... Herod defeats the last successor to the Hasmonean throne.
- 31..... Octavian defeats Marc Antony and Cleopatra at the Battle of Actium; afterwards, reconfirms Herod as king of Judea and increases the size of his kingdom.
- 4..... Herod dies and his kingdom is divided among three of his sons; Jesus is born around this time.

A.D.

- 6..... Herod's son Archelaus is deposed and replaced by the Romans with low-ranking governors (prefects), who establish their base of administration at Caesarea Maritima.
- 26–36..... Pontius Pilate is Roman prefect; executes Jesus.
- 37–44..... Rule of Herod Antipas I, grandson of Herod the Great and his Hasmonean wife, Mariamne.

- 44–66..... All of Palestine is placed under the administration of low-ranking governors (procurators).
- 62/63 James the Just (brother of Jesus) is executed by the Jewish Sanhedrin in Jerusalem; Paul is executed in Rome.
- 66..... Outbreak of the First Jewish Revolt against Rome.
- 67..... Galilee is subdued by the Romans and Josephus surrenders to the general Vespasian.
- 68..... The sectarian settlement at Qumran is destroyed; the community flees, depositing the Dead Sea Scrolls in the nearby caves.
- 69..... Vespasian becomes Roman emperor; leaves his son Titus in charge of subduing the revolt.
- 70..... Jerusalem falls to the Romans and the Second Temple is destroyed.
- 73/74 Masada falls after a siege.
- 2nd–3rd centuries..... Period of rabbinic Judaism.
- 115–117..... Diaspora Revolt (during the reign of Trajan).
- 132–135..... Second Jewish Revolt against the Romans (Bar-Kokhba Revolt) (during the reign of Hadrian).

- 313..... Constantine and Licinius issue the Edict of Milan, legalizing Christianity.
- 324..... Constantine establishes Constantinople (formerly Byzantium) as the new capital of the Roman Empire.
- 395..... Roman Empire splits into two halves, west and east; the east becomes the Byzantine Empire.
- 527–565..... Reign of the Byzantine emperor Justinian.
- 614..... Sasanid Persian conquest of Palestine.
- 634–640..... Muslim conquest of Palestine.
- 661–750..... Umayyad dynasty rules Palestine.
- 750..... Abbasid dynasty replaces the Umayyads, and the capital of the empire is moved from Damascus to Baghdad.
- 1800..... Beginning of Western exploration of Palestine.
- 1914–18..... World War I and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire.
- 1948..... The British Mandate ends, Palestine is partitioned, and the State of Israel is established.

Glossary

Aelia Capitolina: Name given by Hadrian to his rebuilt city of Jerusalem, combining his name (Publius Aelius Hadrianus) and Capitoline Jupiter, the new patron deity.

agora: An ancient marketplace or forum consisting of a large, open, paved space surrounded by public buildings.

al-Aqsa: Arabic for “the farthest spot”; the name of the mosque on the Temple Mount, built by the Umayyad caliph Abd al-Malek or his son al-Walid.

ancient Near East: Modern Middle East.

Antiochia: Name given to Jerusalem by the Seleucid king Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175–164 B.C.) after he refounded it as a polis.

Antonia: Fortress built by Herod the Great at the northwest corner of the Temple Mount.

Apocrypha: Books included in the Catholic canon of sacred scripture but not in the Jewish and Protestant canons (examples: Tobit and Ecclesiasticus).

Arch of Ecce Homo: Hadrianic triple-arched gateway marking the entrance to a forum, identified in Christian tradition as the spot from which Pontius Pilate displayed Jesus to the crowds.

Asherah: A name possibly designating the ancient female consort of the God of Israel.

Asia Minor: Modern Turkey.

Assyria: Ancient empire based in the northern part of Mesopotamia (modern Iraq).

Avdat (a.k.a. **Oboda**): Nabataean city in the central Negev desert.

Baal: National deity of the Canaanites/Phoenicians.

Babylonia: Ancient empire based in the southern part of Mesopotamia (modern Iraq).

Barclay's Gate: A small Herodian gate leading from the Tyropoean Valley into the Temple Mount.

baris (a.k.a. **Qasr el-Abd**): Building at Tyros described by Josephus, made of stone and decorated with carved animals.

Bar Kathros: Name of a priestly family inscribed on a stone weight from the Burnt House.

Bar-Kokhba Revolt: The Second Jewish Revolt against Rome (132–135 C.E.).

basilica: Roman public hall consisting of a rectangular building with rows of columns inside to support the roof.

Battle of Chaeronea (338 B.C.): Philip II of Macedon unites Greece under his rule.

baulk (a.k.a. **balk**): A bank of earth left standing between the excavated squares in an archaeological dig.

Ben-Hinnom Valley: Encircles Jerusalem's Western Hill on the west and south.

Beth Alpha: Site of an ancient synagogue in the Jordan Valley, near Mount Gilboa.

Bethar: The last fortress of the Second Jewish Revolt to fall to the Romans and the site where Bar-Kokhba died.

bullae: A clay sealing.

Burnt House: A house in the Jewish Quarter excavated by Nahman Avigad that yielded vivid evidence of the Roman destruction of A.D. 70, including human remains.

Caesarea Maritima: The old coastal town of Straton's Tower, rebuilt by Herod and renamed in honor of Augustus.

Capernaum: Village on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee that was the center of Jesus's Galilean ministry.

cardo: North-south street in a Roman city.

Cave 4 at Qumran: Yielded fragments belonging to more than 500 different scrolls.

Cave of Horror and Cave of Letters: Caves in Nahal Hever in which Jewish refugees from Ein Gedi hid from the Romans and died; the caves were excavated by the Israeli archaeologist Yigael Yadin.

Chorazin: An ancient Galilean Jewish village very close to Capernaum.

Church of the Sisters of Zion: Convent located today on the north side of the Via Dolorosa, inside of which are the Struthion pools, Lithostratos pavement, and Arch of Ecce Homo.

City of David: Eastern Hill; Lower City.

columbarium (pl. **columbaria**): Caves or structures with rows of small niches in the walls, apparently used for raising pigeons and doves.

Constantinople (modern Istanbul): The former city of Byzantium, which Constantine rebuilt and made the capital of the Roman Empire.

contubernium: A group of eight Roman legionaries.

cuneiform: Ancient script made by making wedge-shaped impressions into a raw clay tablet.

Dagon: National deity of the Philistines.

Damascus Gate (Arabic, **Bab el-Amud**: the Gate of the Column): The main gate in the north wall of Jerusalem's Old City.

Decapolis: A league constituted by the Romans of the most Hellenized cities in Syria, including Beth-Shean (Scythopolis), Pella, and Abila.

decumanus: East-west street in a Roman city.

denomination: A legitimate religious group.

Deuteronomistic reform: Reform instituted by Josiah in 622 B.C. that eliminated the worship of other gods and centralized the cult of the God of Israel in the Jerusalem temple.

Ebernari: The Persian satrapy that included Judea.

Edomites: The Iron Age inhabitants of the area southeast of the Dead Sea.

Ein Gedi: An oasis on the western shore of the Dead Sea that was the site of an ancient Jewish village.

elders: Jewish communal leaders during the Babylonian Exile.

Essenes: A Jewish sect described by such ancient authors as Flavius Josephus, Philo Judaeus, and Pliny the Elder, members of which apparently lived at Qumran.

es-Suk: The largest columbarium cave at Marisa.

Gamla (a.k.a. **Gamala**): A large Jewish village or town in the southern Golan Heights that was destroyed by the Romans during the First Jewish Revolt (A.D. 67).

Gerasa: One of the Roman Decapolis cities; modern Jerash in Jordan.

Gihon spring: Jerusalem's only perennial source of fresh water.

glacis: In general, a plastered mound of earth piled around a town, with a fortification wall on top; a rampart.

Hammath Tiberias: Town to the south of Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee with the remains of an ancient synagogue.

hand (a.k.a. **place of a hand**): The Qumranic term for a toilet.

Hanukkah: Jewish holiday commemorating the rededication of the Jerusalem temple to the God of Israel in 164 B.C.

Hanukkah menorah: Nine-branched candelabrum used in the celebration of Hanukkah.

Hasmoneans (a.k.a. **Maccabees**): Priestly family from the town of Modiin that led a Jewish revolt against Antiochus IV Epiphanes and ruled the kingdom founded after the revolt.

Hebrew Bible: Roughly corresponds with the Old Testament.

Hegira (a.k.a. **Hejira**): Muhammad's flight from Mecca to Medina (A.D. 622).

Hellenistic: The period beginning with Alexander's conquests.

heresy: A doctrine of which we disapprove.

Herm: A stone pillar with the head of Hermes, usually erected at the entrance to an ancient Greek marketplace (agora).

Herodium (a.k.a. **Herodion**): A fortified palace near Bethlehem that is Herod's final resting place and memorial to himself.

hippodrome: Course for horse-and-chariot races.

horreum (pl. *horrea*): Warehouse.

House of Ahiel: A four-room Israelite house of the 8th–7th centuries on top of the glacis in the City of David.

Hulda Gates: Two sets of Herodian gates in the southern wall of the Temple Mount that were the main thoroughfares for pilgrims.

Idumaea: The southern part of the former kingdom of Judah, inhabited after 586 B.C. by the descendants of the Edomites (Idumaeans).

Iraq el-Amir: A site located between Jericho and Amman that was the capital of the Tobiads in the early Hellenistic period; ancient Tyros.

Ituraeans: Native population of the Golan, forcibly converted to Judaism by the Hasmoneans.

James ossuary: An ossuary bearing an Aramaic inscription (all or part of which might be a modern forgery) that reads, “James son of Joseph brother of Jesus.”

Jason’s Tomb: A Hasmonean period rock-cut tomb in western Jerusalem.

Jebusites: The original (Bronze Age) population of Jerusalem.

Jewish Antiquities: Josephus’s massive history of the Jewish people, beginning with creation (completed c. A.D. 93–94).

Jewish War: Josephus’s seven-volume account of the First Jewish Revolt against Rome, ending with the fall of Masada (completed c. A.D. 80).

Jordan Valley: The valley between the Sea of Galilee (north) and Dead Sea (south) through which the Jordan River flows.

Jotapata (a.k.a. **Yodfat**): Last fortress in Galilee under Josephus’s command to fall to the Romans.

Ketef Hinnom: The site of a late Iron Age cemetery on the northwest slope of Jerusalem's Ben-Hinnom Valley; one of the tombs in the cemetery contained a silver amulet inscribed with the priestly benediction.

The Khazneh: Most famous rock-cut tomb at Petra, reached at the end of a narrow canyon called the Siq, probably the tomb of the Nabataean king Aretas IV (time of Jesus).

Khirbet Qazone: A large Nabatean cemetery on the southeast side of the Dead Sea.

Kidron Valley: Separates the Mount of Olives from the Temple Mount and the City of David.

Kuntillet Ajrud: Eighth-century Israelite cultic site in Sinai.

Lachish: Important city in the southern part of the kingdom of Judah, destroyed by the Babylonians in 701 B.C.

legate: A high-ranking governor in the Roman administration who could command a legion.

Levirate marriage: Biblical law requiring a man to marry his brother's widow if his brother was childless.

Lithostratos pavement: Stone pavement of a Hadrianic forum in Jerusalem overlying the Struthion pools; identified in the Christian tradition as the spot where Pontius Pilate sentenced Jesus to death.

loculus (pl. **loculi**; Hebrew, *kokh*, pl. *kokhim*): Niche cut into the wall of a burial cave to accommodate a single inhumation (whole body).

Machaerus: Herodian fortified palace in Perea (eastern side of the Dead Sea).

Madaba Map: Mosaic floor of circa A.D. 600 in a church in the town of Madaba (Jordan), decorated with a map of the Holy Land as it appeared at that time.

Magdala (Hebrew, **Migdal**; Greek, **Tarichaea**): Jewish town on the Sea of Galilee that was the home of Mary Magdalene.

Marisa (Hebrew, **Maresha**; Arabic, **Tell Sandahannah**): Main city in Hellenistic-period Idumaea, inhabited by Idumaeans and Hellenized Sidonians.

martyrium: A site associated with a martyr (someone who gave witness to the truth of Christianity).

Masada: Herodian fortified palace by the southwest shore of the Dead Sea.

Mausoleum at Halicarnassos: Monumental tomb of King Mausolus of Caria (c. 350 B.C.) at modern Bodrum on the southwest coast of Turkey.

medinah (pl. **medinot**): Smaller administrative districts within Persian satrapies.

menorah: Seven-branched candelabrum in the Jerusalem temple.

Merneptah stele: Monumental stone inscription of the pharaoh Merneptah, which contains the first reference to the people “Israel” (1209 B.C.).

Mesha stele: Inscribed stone found in Jordan that records Mesha’s revolt against one of the Omride kings in the mid-9th century.

Mesopotamia: In Greek, literally means “the land between the rivers,” referring to the Tigris and Euphrates rivers; a territory that corresponds roughly with modern Iraq.

miqveh (pl. **miqva’ot**): Jewish ritual bath, used for repeated immersion in observance of biblical purity laws.

Moabites: Iron Age inhabitants of the area south of Ammon and north of Edom.

Mount Gerizim: Sacred mountain of the Samaritans, overlooking biblical Shechem (modern Nablus).

Nabataeans: An Arab people who created a kingdom in the area of modern Jordan, the Negev, and the Sinai from the mid-2nd century until A.D. 106.

Nahal Hever: Canyon to the south of Ein Gedi.

Nea (New) Church: Church dedicated to Mary the Mother of God (Greek: Theotokos), built by Justinian at the southern end of Jerusalem's main cardo.

nefesh: From the Hebrew for "soul"; a monumental marker, often in the shape of a pyramid, marking the site of a rock-cut tomb.

Nemrut Dagi: A burial tumulus in eastern Asia Minor that is the final resting place of a local king and that might have been a source of inspiration for Herod's tomb at Herodium.

Nicanor's Gate: A gate donated to the Herodian temple by a wealthy Jew named Nicanor of Alexandria.

Nicanor's Tomb: Tomb on Mount Scopus of the Alexandrian man who donated a gate to the Jerusalem temple.

Omrises: Dynasty that ruled the biblical kingdom of Israel, founded by Omri and including his son Ahab.

opus reticulatum (a.k.a. **reticulate work**): Bricks used in Roman concrete construction, laid in a net-like pattern.

ossuaries: Small lidded containers, which in Jerusalem are made of the local stone, used to contain remains removed from loculi.

Palestine: Modern Israel, Jordan, and the Palestinian territories (ancient Canaan).

patera: Handled bowl for pouring liquid offerings (libations).

Pentateuch: Torah; Five Books of Moses.

Persia: Roughly, modern Iran.

Peshar: A type of biblical commentary or interpretation that was popular at Qumran.

Peshar Nahum: A Dead Sea Scroll that refers to Demetrius's attempt to take Jerusalem and to Alexander Jannaeus's crucifixion of his Pharisaic opponents.

Petra: Capital of the Nabataean kingdom, located to the southeast of the Dead Sea in modern Jordan.

Pharisees: Jews of the Late Second Temple period who were moderately prosperous and known for their strict observance of Jewish purity laws.

Philistines: People of Aegean origin who settled the southern coast of Palestine in the early Iron Age.

Phoenicians: The Iron Age inhabitants of modern Lebanon, descendants of the Bronze Age Canaanites.

pilaster: Square column engaged in a wall.

polis: A Greek or Greek-style city.

Pool of Siloam: Pool for storing water from the Gihon spring, at the southern tip of the City of David.

praetorium: Living quarters of the Roman commander.

prefect/procurator: Low-ranking governors who administered Herod's former kingdom after his sons died or were removed.

principia: Camp headquarters.

Pseudepigrapha: Jewish religious works of the Late Second Temple period that were not included in the Catholic, Jewish, or Protestant canons of sacred scripture (examples: Enoch and Jubilees).

Qumran: Ancient settlement by the northwest shore of the Dead Sea, surrounded by caves in which the Dead Sea Scrolls were found.

rabbi: Originally, a Hebrew term of respect for someone learned in biblical Jewish law (“my master”).

repository: Pit in a rock-cut tomb to collect remains of burials.

Robinson’s Arch: A monumental Herodian gate supported on arches that led from the Tyropoean Valley into the area of the Royal Stoa on the Temple Mount.

Roman luxury latrine: A sophisticated type of Roman toilet, usually attached to a bath house, with rows of seats above a water channel that carried the waste away.

Rotunda: The circular structure in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher that enshrines the tomb of Jesus.

Royal Stoa (a.k.a. **Royal Basilica**): Large public hall built by Herod at the southern end of the Temple Mount.

Russian Alexander Hospice: Building to the east of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, belonging to the White Russian church, that contains the remains of Hadrian’s western forum and the original Constantinian Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

Sadducees: Elite Jews (upper-class priests and aristocracy) of the Late Second Temple period.

Samaria: Capital of the northern kingdom of Israel and, later, the name of the surrounding district, as well.

Samaritans: Descendants of the population of the former kingdom of Israel who claimed descent from the old Joseph tribes (Ephraim and Manasseh).

Sanhedria tombs: Rock-cut tombs in the northern Jerusalem neighborhood of Sanhedria.

satrap: Governor of a Persian satrapy.

satrapy: Enormous administrative districts within the Persian Empire.

scabbard chape: The reinforced metal tip of a sword sheath.

Sebaste (a.k.a. **Sebastos**): Greek for “Augustus”; name given by Herod to Samaria and to the harbor at Caesarea.

sect: A group characterized by separation and exclusivity.

sectarian works: Works that describe the beliefs and practices of the Jewish sect that lived at Qumran (examples: Damascus Document, Community Rule [Manual of Discipline], War Scroll).

“seekers of smooth things” (Hebrew, *dorshay halakot*): Term used in the Dead Sea Scrolls to denote Pharisees. It is a pun on the Hebrew *dorshay halakhot*, meaning “those who seek the law”.

Sepphoris: Major city in Galilee in the time of Jesus, only four miles from Nazareth; rebuilt by Herod Antipas.

Septuagint: Ancient Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible.

sheqel: Ancient Jewish coin (originally a weight).

shofar: Ram’s horn blown during ceremonies on the Jewish high holidays.

Sidonians: Natives of the Phoenician city of Sidon (in modern Lebanon).

Siwa: Oasis in the Egyptian desert with an oracular shrine dedicated to Zeus Ammon.

Solomon's Stables: A later name given to the underground arches built by Herod to support his extension of the Temple Mount to the south.

Solomon's Temple: First Temple.

soreg: Low stone fence surrounding the temple building on top of the Temple Mount, into which were set Greek and Latin inscriptions prohibiting non-Jews from entering on pain of death.

stratigraphy: The accumulation of layers (strata) in an archaeological site.

Struthion pools: Originally, pools in the open moat to the north of the Antonia fortress, later covered by Hadrian.

Sukkot (a.k.a. **Feast of Tabernacles**): One of the three Jewish pilgrimage holidays to the Jerusalem temple.

synagogue (Hebrew, *beth kneset*): Jewish assembly hall.

Syria-Palestina: The new name given to the province of Judea after the Bar-Kokhba Revolt.

Talpiyot tomb: A rock-cut tomb in the southern Jerusalem neighborhood of Talpiyot, in which were found several ossuaries inscribed with names corresponding to figures mentioned in the New Testament.

Targum: Ancient translation of the Hebrew Bible into Aramaic.

tel (a.k.a. **tell**): Artificial mound.

Tel Dan stele: Monumental stone inscription of the mid-9th century mentioning the House of David (the dynasty founded by King David).

temenos wall: Wall surrounding a sacred enclosure.

temple: The house of a deity.

Temple Scroll: A work found at Qumran that describes an ideal future city of Jerusalem and temple.

Tenth Legion: The Roman legion that participated in the siege of Masada.

Theodotus inscription: Dedicatory inscription of a Jerusalem synagogue antedating A.D. 70.

Tiberias: New capital city built by Herod Antipas on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, named in honor of the emperor Tiberius.

Tobiads: A Judean dynasty that governed the district of Ammon in the Persian and Hellenistic periods.

Tomb of Bene Hezir: Tomb at the foot of the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem that belonged to the priestly family of Bene Hezir.

Tomb of the Kings: The family tomb of Queen Helena of Adiabene, who converted to Judaism in the mid-1st century C.E. and moved from Syria to Jerusalem.

Tomb of Zachariah: A solid, rock-carved cube adjacent to the Tomb of Bene Hezir in Jerusalem that apparently served as its *nefesh* (marker).

Torah Shrine: Structure holding the Torah scrolls in a synagogue.

tribunal: Podium or dais on which a Roman commander could stand to review and address his troops.

triclinium: Dining room.

***tsinnor*:** Biblical Hebrew word perhaps referring to the Warren's Shaft system in the City of David.

Tulul Abu al-Alayiq: Herodian Jericho; the site of the Hasmonean and Herodian palaces, on the banks of Wadi Qelt.

Tyropoeon Valley (a.k.a. **Central Valley**): Literally, Valley of the Cheesemakers; separates the Temple Mount and the City of David from the Western Hill.

Umayyads: The first Muslim dynasty (A.D. 661–750).

Umm el-Amed: Rock-cut tomb in northeast Jerusalem with walls cut in imitation of Herodian-style masonry.

Via Dolorosa (“Way of Sorrow”): The route walked by Jesus from the point where he was sentenced to death by Pontius Pilate to the place where he was crucified and buried (today enshrined within the Church of the Holy Sepulcher).

Wadi Daliyeh: Site of a cave in a riverbed near Jericho, in which Samaritan families who rebelled against Alexander the Great took refuge.

Warren’s Shaft: Along with the Siloam Channel and Hezekiah’s Tunnel, one of three ancient water systems of Jerusalem.

Western Hill: Upper City.

Wilson’s Arch: A Herodian bridge connecting the Temple Mount with the Western Hill.

window wall: Interior wall in Galilean village houses pierced by windows to let light and air into rear rooms.

Yahud: The Persian medinah of Judea.

YHWH: Name of the God of Israel.

Yotvata: The site of a late Roman fort in Israel’s southern Arava.

Zadokites: Descendants of Zadok, high priest in the time of Solomon.

Biographical Notes

Abd al-Malek (646/647–705): The Umayyad caliph who built the Dome of the Rock (A.D. 696) on Jerusalem’s Temple Mount (Arabic: al-Haram al-Sharif).

Alexander and Aristobulus (fl. 1st century B.C.): Sons of Herod the Great by Mariamne; strangled to death on Herod’s orders in 7 B.C.

Alexander the Great (356–323 B.C.): Son and successor of Philip II of Macedon, defeated the Persian king Darius III and created a vast empire stretching from southern Russia and northern India through Egypt and Asia Minor. Alexander’s conquests mark the beginning of the Hellenistic period.

Alexander Jannaeus (r. 103–76 B.C.): Hasmonean king who married his brother’s widow (Salome Alexandra) and was known for his cruelty and disregard for the observance of Jewish law. Josephus and the Peshet Nahum from Qumran report that he had 800 Pharisaic opponents crucified while dining with his concubines.

Alexandra (fl. 1st century B.C.): Mariamne’s mother; an ambitious woman who attempted to maneuver the Hasmoneans back into power and was executed on Herod’s orders in 28 B.C. after she moved to take over the Jerusalem garrison.

Antiochus IV Epiphanes (r. 175–164 B.C.): A Seleucid king whose rededication of the Jerusalem temple to the Greek god Olympian Zeus led to the outbreak of the Maccabean revolt.

Antipas (late 2nd–early 1st century B.C.): An Idumaean who was forcibly converted to Judaism by the Hasmoneans and was the grandfather of Herod the Great.

Antipater (c. 100–43 B.C.): Son of Antipas and father of Herod the Great; served as governor of Judea for the Romans from 47 B.C. until he was murdered.

Antipater (fl. 1st century B.C.): Herod's oldest son by his first wife, Doris; was executed by Herod just five days before Herod himself died (4 B.C.).

Aristobulus I (d. 103 B.C.): Son and successor of John Hyrcanus I (134–104 B.C.); a Hellenizer and the first Hasmonean to adopt the title “king.”

Aristobulus III: Mariamne's younger brother (grandson of Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II); served briefly as high priest before being drowned in a swimming pool at Jericho on Herod's orders in 35 B.C.

Athanasius Yeshua Samuel (1907–1995): Patriarch of the Syrian Orthodox Church in Jerusalem who purchased four of the seven scrolls from Cave 1 from Kando.

Avigad, Nahman (1905–1992): Israeli archaeologist who conducted excavations in Jerusalem's Jewish Quarter after 1967.

Bar-Kokhba (d. A.D. 135): Nickname for the leader of the Second Jewish Revolt, meaning “son of a star” and, thus, reflecting messianic expectations; his real name was Simeon Bar Kosiba.

Bliss, Frederick (1859–1937): British archaeologist who excavated Marisa in 1900 with Robert Macalister.

Cestius Gallus (fl. 1st century A.D.): The Roman legate of Syria at the outbreak of the First Jewish Revolt (A.D. 66); suffered a humiliating defeat at the hands of the Jewish rebels.

Cleopatra VII (70/69 B.C.–30 B.C.): A descendant of the Ptolemies who was the lover of Julius Caesar and later married Mark Antony; she was a rival of Herod the Great and coveted his kingdom. After being defeated by Octavian at the battle of Actium in 31 B.C., Antony and Cleopatra returned to Egypt and committed suicide.

Constantine I (after A.D. 280?–337): Roman emperor who issued the Edict of Milan in A.D. 313 legalizing Christianity; he built the first Christian churches, including the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem and the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem.

Cyrus (a.k.a. **Cyrus the Great**; 590/580 B.C.–c. 529 B.C.): Persian king who repatriated the Judean exiles and granted permission for the construction of the second Jerusalem temple.

Darius III (d. 330 B.C.): King of Persia from 336 to 330 B.C.; defeated and replaced by Alexander the Great and subsequently murdered by his own men.

David (fl. 10th century B.C.): The eighth and youngest son of Jesse, from the tribe of Judah, David succeeded Saul as king of Israel and ruled the United Kingdom for 40 years, from c. 1010 to 970 B.C. He conquered Jerusalem and made it the capital of his kingdom. David also brought the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem. He was succeeded to the throne by his son Solomon.

Demetrius III (r. c. 95–88 B.C.): Seleucid king and opponent of Alexander Jannaeus.

Eleazar Ben-Yair (fl. 1st century A.D.): The leader of the Jewish rebels at Masada (A.D. 66–73), who according to Josephus, persuaded the rebels to commit mass suicide rather than surrender to the Romans.

Ennion (fl. 1st century A.D.): A glass maker from Phoenicia who signed some of his vases, one of which was discovered in a Herodian mansion in Jerusalem's Jewish Quarter.

Ezra (fl. mid-5th century B.C.): Scribal leader of Persian Judea (Yahud); he was sent by the Persian king to oversee the implementation of Jewish law (Torah) as the law of Yahud.

Flavius Josephus (a.k.a. **Josephus ben Mattitياهو**; A.D. 37–c. 100): Jewish leader and later historian put in charge of the district of Galilee on behalf of the Jews at the time of the First Jewish Revolt. After surrendering

to the Romans, Josephus became a client of the Roman imperial family (the Flavians); he spent the rest of his life in Rome, where he wrote a series of history books on the First Jewish Revolt and the history of the Jews, as well as an autobiography. He provides valuable information about the Essenes and is our only ancient source on the siege of Masada.

Flavius Silva (fl. 1st century A.D.): The commander of the Roman troops during the siege of Masada (A.D. 72/73 or 73/74).

Gemaryahu son of Shaphan (dates unknown): Israelite name impressed on a bulla from the City of David, apparently the same scribe mentioned in Jeremiah 36:10.

Herod Agrippa I (A.D. 10–44): Grandson of Herod the Great and Mariamne and a childhood friend of Gaius Caligula; ruled Herod's former kingdom from A.D. 37/41 to 44.

Herod Antipas (21 B.C.–A.D. 39): Herod's son and successor, who ruled Galilee and Peraea (the territory on the eastern side of the Jordan River and Dead Sea) from 4 B.C. to A.D. 39. Known for having beheaded John the Baptist.

Herod Archelaus (22 B.C.–c. A.D. 18): Herod's son and successor, who ruled Judea, Samaria, and Idumaea from 4 B.C. to A.D. 6.

Herod Philip (20 B.C.–A.D. 34): Herod's son and successor, who ruled the mostly Gentile territories of Gaulanitis, Trachonitis, Batanea, and Panias from 4 B.C. to A.D. 33/34.

Herod the Great (73/4–4 B.C.): In 40 B.C., the Romans appointed Herod client king of Judea. Herod was unpopular among the Jewish population because of his cruelty and because he was not a member of the Hasmonean dynasty (the native Jewish royal family). In archaeological circles, Herod is known as the single greatest builder in the history of the land of Israel, having changed the face of the country with his massive projects, including the reconstruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem.

Herodias (d. A.D. 39): Granddaughter of Herod the Great; she divorced Herod Philip in order to marry his half-brother, Herod Antipas; their marriage was condemned by John the Baptist on the grounds that it was prohibited by biblical law.

Hezekiah (r. c. 715–c. 686 B.C.): King of Israel during the Assyrian invasion of the southern kingdom of Judah at the end of the 8th century B.C.

Hippicus (fl. 1st century B.C.): A friend of Herod the Great, after whom Herod named one of the three towers at the northwest corner of Jerusalem’s Western Hill.

Hippodamus of Miletus (c. 500 B.C.): Ancient Greek architect credited with developing a grid plan for cities (a “Hippodamian town plan”).

Hyrchanus (d. 175 B.C.): Tobiad governor in the early 2nd century B.C. who built Tyros (Iraq el-Amir); he committed suicide when Antiochus IV Epiphanes became king.

Jesus of Nazareth (c. 7 B.C.–33 C.E.): Charismatic teacher and prophetic figure who was the leader of a Jewish sect in Galilee, was crucified by the Romans, and is believed to be the messiah by his followers (Christians).

Jezebel (d. 843 B.C.): Phoenician wife of Ahab, king of Israel (r. 872–851); condemned by the prophet Elijah and reviled by biblical authors for having introduced the cult of the Canaanite god Baal into Samaria.

John Hyrcanus I (c. 175–104 B.C.): Hasmonean ruler (134–104 B.C.) who was Simon’s son and successor; he conquered Idumaea and territories in Transjordan, forcibly converting the native populations to Judaism. He also conquered Samaria and destroyed the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim.

John Hyrcanus II (d. 30 B.C.): Older son of Salome Alexandra. He served as high priest (76–40 B.C.) under Salome Alexandra and became embroiled with his brother Aristobulus II in a civil war over the succession to the throne after their mother’s death.

John son of Levi of Gischala (a.k.a. **Gush Halav**; fl. 1st century A.D.): Leader of a rebel band at the time of the First Jewish Revolt against the Romans and bitter enemy of Josephus. He was captured by the Romans in Jerusalem in A.D. 70 and sentenced to life in prison in Rome.

Jonathan (d. 142 B.C.): One of Mattathias's sons, who assumed leadership after the death of Judah Maccabee in 160 B.C. and became ruler of Judea; he died through an act of treachery in 142 B.C.

Josephus: *See Flavius Josephus.*

Josiah (r. c. 640–609 B.C.): King of Judah at the end of the 7th century B.C. who instituted the Deuteronomistic reform, eliminating the worship of other gods and centralizing the cult of the God of Israel in the Jerusalem temple.

Judah Maccabee (d. 161/160 B.C.): Third son of Mattathias and military leader of the Jewish revolt against Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Under his leadership, the Jerusalem temple was returned to the Jews and rededicated to the God of Israel (164 B.C.), an event commemorated by the Jewish holiday of Hanukkah.

Justinian (483–565): Byzantine emperor from A.D. 527 to 565. He built the St. Sophia in Constantinople and carried out a reconquest of the Roman Empire; he also built the Nea Church (New Church of Mary, Mother of God) in Jerusalem.

Kando (fl. 20th century A.D.): Cobbler in Bethlehem who, in 1947, purchased the seven Dead Sea Scrolls found by the Bedouin in Cave 1 at Qumran. He sold four of the scrolls to Athanasius Yeshua Samuel, the Patriarch of the Syrian Orthodox Church in Jerusalem, and the other three scrolls to Eleazar Lipa Sukenik.

Kenyon, Kathleen (fl. 20th century A.D.): British archaeologist who worked in Palestine in the mid-1960s, including conducting excavations in Jerusalem and Jericho.

Macalister, Robert (1870–1950): Irish archaeologist who worked in Palestine in the early 20th century and excavated in Jerusalem and at Marisa.

Manassah (fl. 4th century B.C.): Brother of the Jewish high priest Jaddua; he became the first high priest in the Samaritan temple (c. 332 B.C.).

Mariamne (c. 57–29 B.C.): Herod's Hasmonean wife, mother of Alexander and Aristobulus; beloved of Herod but executed on his orders on a charge of infidelity.

Mattathias (d. c. 167 B.C.): Patriarch of the Hasmonean clan, whose opposition to the ban imposed by Antiochus IV Epiphanes on the practice of Judaism sparked the outbreak of the Maccabean revolt in 167 B.C.; he died shortly thereafter.

Mattathias Antigonus (fl. 1st century B.C.): Hasmonean set up on the throne after the Parthian invasion of Palestine in 40 B.C.; defeated and killed by Herod in 37 B.C.

Menahem (fl. 1st century B.C.): An Essene mentioned by Josephus as having foretold to Herod that he would one day be king.

Mesha (dates unknown): King of Moab who rebelled against the Omrides, as commemorated in a victory stele from ancient Dibon (in Jordan), c. 850 B.C.

Nehemiah (fl. 5th century B.C.): A high-ranking Judean in the Persian administration who was sent by the Persian king to be governor of Yahud from 446 to 424 B.C. and oversaw the rebuilding of Jerusalem's city walls.

Octavian (63 B.C.–A.D. 14): Roman ruler who was given the title Augustus in 27 B.C. and ruled until his death in A.D. 14. After the Battle of Actium in 31 B.C., Octavian reconfirmed Herod as client king of Judea and increased the size of his kingdom.

Omar (fl. 7th century A.D.): An elected caliph, during whose administration Jerusalem surrendered to the Muslims (A.D. 638).

Omri (fl. 9th century B.C.): Ruler of the northern kingdom of Israel (r. 884–872) who moved the capital to Samaria and established the Omride dynasty; father of Ahab.

Petrie, William Flinders (1853–1942): A British archaeologist who conducted the first stratigraphic archaeological excavations in Palestine (at Tell el-Hesi in 1890).

Phasael (fl. 1st century B.C.): Younger son of Antipater and brother of Herod; committed suicide during the Parthian invasion of Palestine in 40 B.C. Later, Herod named one of the three towers at the northwest corner of Jerusalem's Western Hill in his memory.

Philo Judaeus (b. 15–10 B.C., d. A.D. 45–50): A Jewish philosopher from Alexandria in Egypt, who applied allegorical interpretation to the Hebrew Bible; he is one of our sources of information on the Essenes.

Pliny the Elder (a.k.a. **Gaius Plinius Secundus**; A.D. 23–79): Roman author, naturalist, philosopher, and naval commander known for his massive work, *Natural History*. Pliny died during the eruption of Mount Vesuvius. He is one of our sources of information on the Essenes and the only one who indicates their geographical location (by the Dead Sea).

Pompey (106–48 B.C.): Roman general who entered the Jerusalem temple and annexed the Hasmonean kingdom (63 B.C.).

Pontius Pilate (d. A.D. 36): Roman prefect of Judea from A.D. 26 to 36; during his administration, Jesus was crucified.

Ptolemy I (Soter) (c. 365–c. 283): One of Alexander's generals who established a kingdom in Egypt (the Ptolemaic kingdom).

Salome Alexandra (139–67 B.C.): Wife of Aristobulus I and, later, his brother Alexander Jannaeus; she ruled the Hasmonean kingdom after Jannaeus's death.

Sanballat I: Governor of Samaria in the second half of the 5th century B.C. and a contemporary of Nehemiah.

Sanballat III: Governor of Samaria at the time of Alexander the Great's conquest (332 B.C.); established a Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim.

Seleucus I (c. 355–281 B.C.): One of Alexander's generals who established a kingdom in Asia Minor and Syria (the Seleucid kingdom).

Shiloh, Yigal (1937–1987): Israeli archaeologist who conducted excavations in the City of David in the 1970s.

Simon (d. 134 B.C.): The youngest of Judah's brothers, he ruled the Hasmonean kingdom after Jonathan's death in 142 B.C.

Simon bar Giora (fl. 1st century A.D.): Leader of a rebel band during the First Jewish Revolt; he was captured by the Romans during the siege of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 and was executed in Rome.

Solomon (r. c. 970–930 B.C.): Son of David and successor to the throne of the United Kingdom. Solomon is renowned for his wisdom; his many wives; his political and commercial alliances with Hiram, king of Tyre, and with the queen of Sheba; and for having established the First Temple on Jerusalem's Temple Mount.

Sosius (fl. 1st century B.C.): Legate of Syria who assisted Herod in his battle against Mattathias Antigonus in 37 B.C.

Sukenik, Eleazer Lipa (1889–1953): Israeli archaeologist and biblical scholar (and father of Yigael Yadin) who purchased three of the seven scrolls from Cave 1 from Kando; apparently, the first scholar to identify the Qumran sect with the ancient Essenes.

Titus (A.D. 39–81): Vespasian's older son, he was put in charge of taking Jerusalem (A.D. 70) after his father was proclaimed emperor; succeeded his father to the throne.

Vaux, Roland de (1903–1971): French archaeologist and biblical scholar affiliated with the École Biblique et Archéologique Française de Jerusalem. He excavated Qumran and explored the surrounding caves between 1951 and 1956 and identified Qumran as the settlement of a Jewish sect (apparently the Essenes) that deposited the Dead Sea Scrolls in the nearby caves.

Vespasian (A.D. 9–79): General sent by Nero to quell the First Jewish Revolt; proclaimed emperor of the Roman Empire in A.D. 69 and established the Flavian dynasty.

Warren, Charles (1840–1927): Nineteenth-century British explorer of Jerusalem who discovered a water shaft that was part of Jerusalem's ancient water system. He later became London commissioner of police and investigated the murders by Jack the Ripper.

Yadin, Yigael (1917–1984): Israeli archaeologist, politician, and chief-of-staff of the Israeli army, who arranged for the purchase of the four Dead Sea Scrolls that were in the possession of Athanasius Yeshua Samuel. Later, Yadin excavated Herod's palaces atop Masada and explored the Bar-Kokhba caves in Nahal Hever.

Zadok (fl. 10th century B.C.): High priest in the time of Solomon, whose priestly descendants became known as the Zadokites.

Zedekiah: Last king of Judah (597–587/586 B.C.), who was taken captive to Babylonia in 586 B.C. The last thing he saw before the Babylonians blinded him was the execution of his sons; he died in Babylonian captivity.

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