

Foundations (extra session)



Inter-testamental Period

“The Silent Years”

What period of time?



History of the Jews from Alexander the Great to Herod the Great (336 – 4 BCE)

After the days of Ezra to the birth of Christ

The silence after Malachi, until the voice of John the Baptist

Problems in Malachi's day



Corrupt priesthood/ leadership:

- ✘ disobedient to the covenant
- ✘ distrustful to their heritage
- ✘ desecration of the sanctuary & sacrifice
- ✘ deprivation of the poor & needy
- ✘ ...unfaithful to Yahweh

Yahweh's last words



"See, **I will send my messenger**, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; **the messenger of the covenant**, whom you desire, will come," says the LORD Almighty.

But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire or a launderer's soap. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites & refine them like gold and silver. (Malachi 3:1-3)

The faithful remnant & the promise



Then **those who feared the LORD talked with each other, and the LORD listened and heard.** A scroll of remembrance was written in his presence concerning those who feared the LORD and honored his name.

"They will be mine," says the LORD Almighty, "in the day when I make up my treasured possession. I will spare them, just as in compassion a man spares his son who serves him. And you will again see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between those who serve God and those who do not." (3:16-18)

"But for you who revere my name, **the sun of righteousness** will rise with healing in its wings.(4:2)

Elijah/ John the Baptist



"See, **I will send you the prophet Elijah** before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers; or else I will come and strike the land with a curse."
(Mal. 4:5-6)

"Many of the people of Israel will he bring back to the Lord their God. And he will go on before the Lord, **in the spirit and power of Elijah**, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." (Luke 1:16-17)

The message: the king & his kingdom



In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea and saying, "Repent, for **the kingdom of heaven is near.**"

"...after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. **He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.** His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Matt. 3:1, 11-12)

The Message of Joel?

- The Day of the Lord
 - ...is coming
 - ...is near
 - ...is great
 - ...is dreadful

Judgment

like a plague of locusts

Prepare for war!

- The Coming of the Spirit
 - ...on young & old
 - ...on male & female
 - ...on all people
 - ...like a “fountain”

Salvation

like showers of rain/ fountain

Return to the Lord!

Persian rulers - a timeline



Fall of Babylon (to Cyrus II, the Great) Oct., 539 BCE

- **Cyrus II (the Great)**, ruled 550–529 BCE
- Cambyses II, his son, ruled 530–522
- **Darius I (the Great)**, son of Hystaspes, ruled 521–486.
- **Xerxes I**, his son, ruled 486–465.
- **Artaxerxes I**, his son, ruled 465–424.

Following these rulers the Persian Empire gradually lost its power and influence, until Darius III was eventually defeated by Alexander (the Great) in 331 BC

Return from captivity – A timeline



Edict of Cyrus II, the Great (2 Chr. 36:22-23; Ez. 1:1-4; 6:3-5)

1st return 538 BCE (during 2nd year of reign of Cyrus - led by Sheshbazzar, **Zerubbabel** & Joshua)

Haggai & Zechariah

Story of Esther

2nd return 458 BCE (during the 7th year of Artaxerxes reign, cf. Ezra 7:8 - led by **Ezra** the Scribe)

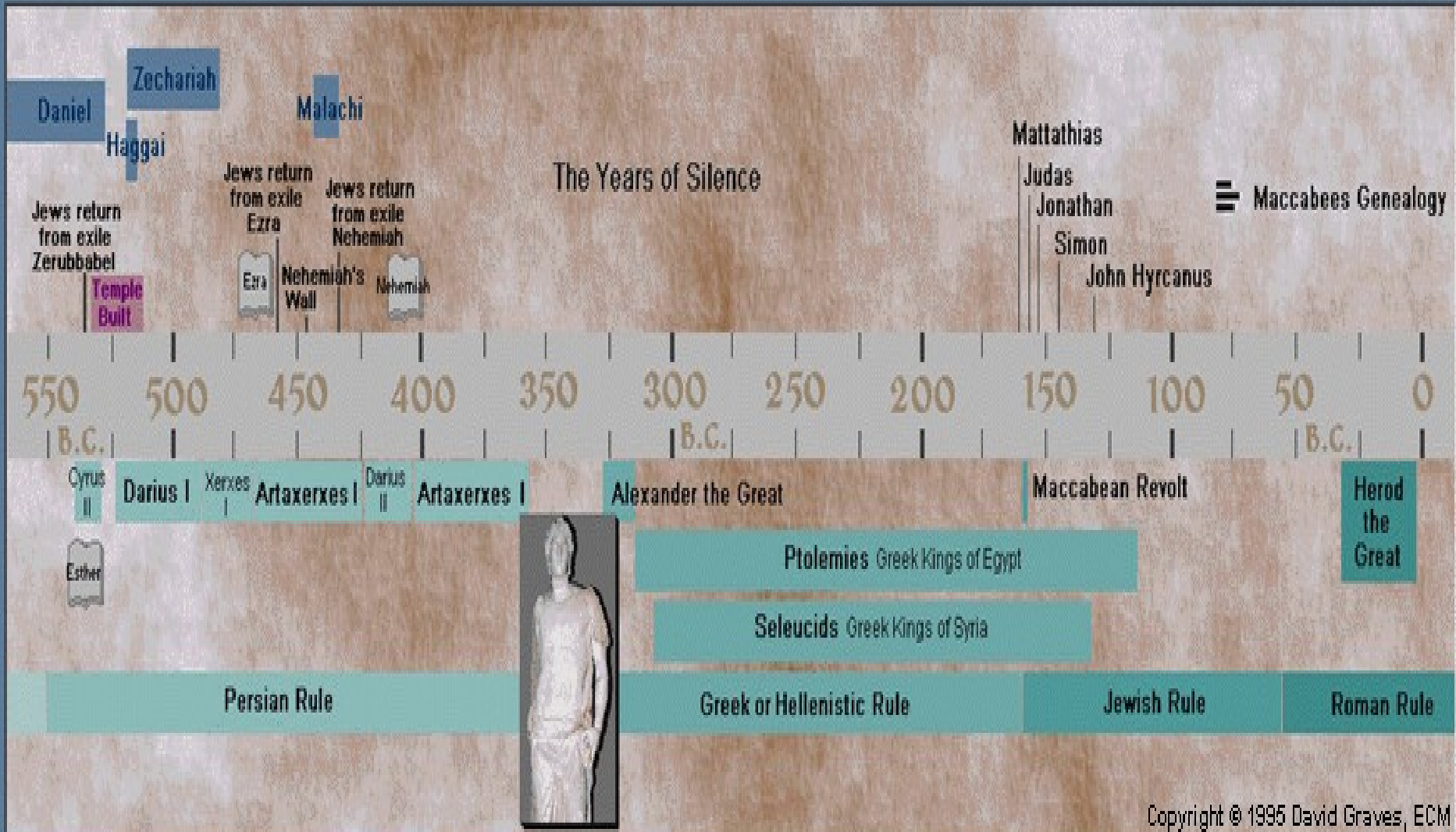
3rd return 445 BCE (during the 20th year of Artaxerxes reign, cf. Neh. 2:1 - led by **Nehemiah** the governor)

The “Silent years”



- **Timeline** of the silent years
- **History...**
- **Culture/ religion...**
- **Literature...**

Timeline of the 'Silent years'



History of the 'silent years'



Cyrus II/ Darius III
Alexander (the Great)

331 BCE

Ptolemy

Seleucus

Antiochus (Epiphanes)

167 BCE

Hasideans
(Pharisees)

Hasmoneans
(Freedom fighters)

Mattathias

Judas Maccabeus

Jonathan

John Hyrcanus

Aristobulus

Alexander = Salome

Hyrcanus

Aristobulus

History of HEROD (The Herodians)

Esau (Edomites/ Idumeans)

Antipater (Gov. of Judea) 47-43 BCE

Herod (the Great) 37-4 BCE

Aristobulus

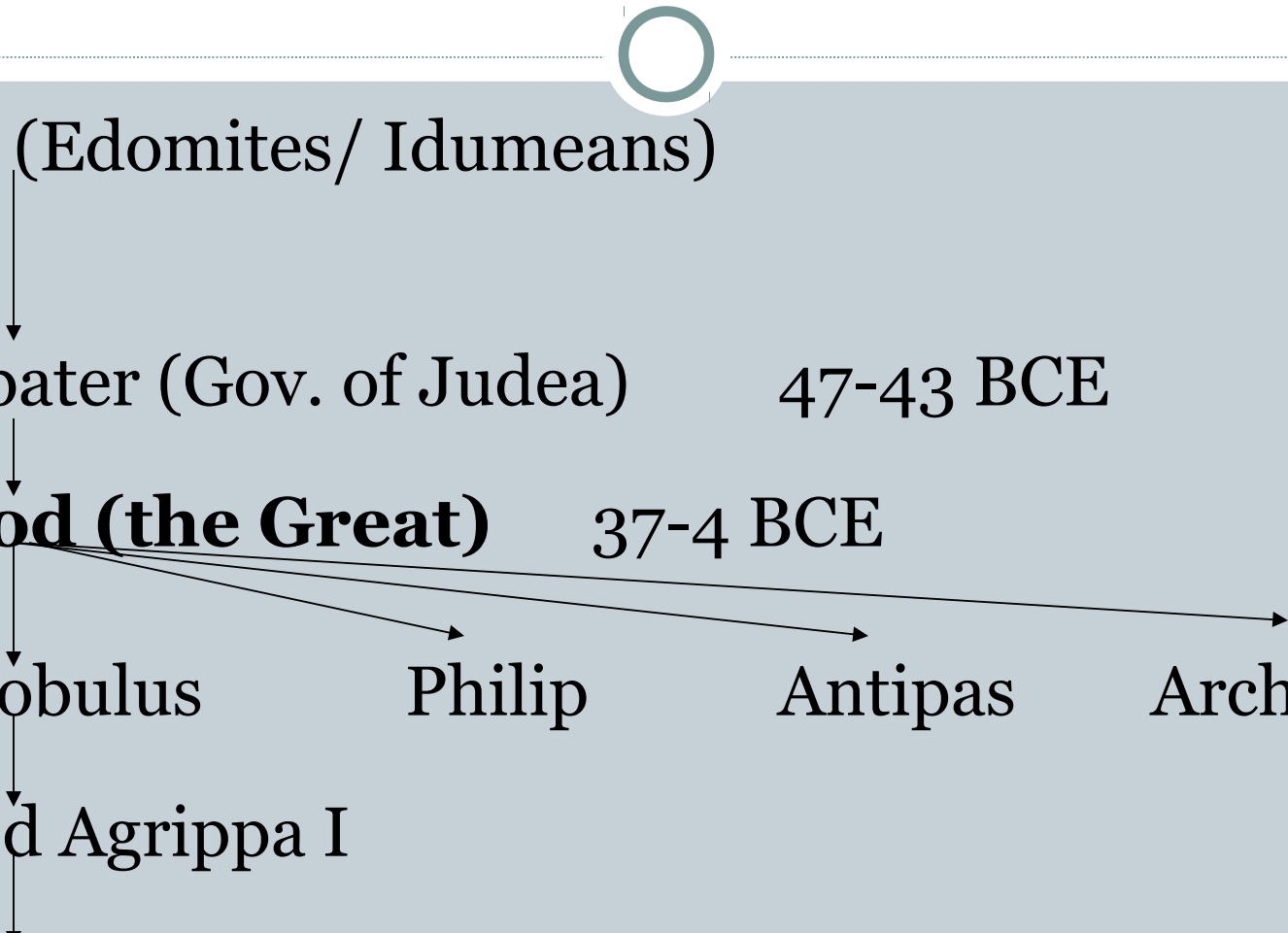
Philip

Antipas

Archelaus

Herod Agrippa I

Herod Agrippa II



Edom (Edomites/ Idumeans)



"I have loved you," says the LORD.

"But you ask, 'How have you loved us?'

"Was not Esau Jacob's brother?" the LORD says.

"Yet I have loved Jacob, but Esau I have hated, and I have turned his mountains into a wasteland and left his inheritance to the desert jackals." Edom may say, "Though we have been crushed, we will rebuild the ruins."

But this is what the LORD Almighty says: "They may build, but I will demolish. They will be called the Wicked Land, a people always under the wrath of the LORD."
(Mal. 1:2-4)

Alexander the Great



- Daniel 8:5-7; 11:3
- 1 Maccabees 1:1-7
- Education & background
- Military conquest
- Hellenism (Greek culture)
- Premature death
- Division of his empire

Alexander's Campaigns of Conquest

336-323 B.C.



Alexander's Routes

- Conquering the Mediterranean Area
- From Egypt to Babylon
- Conquering the East
- His Return to Babylon
- Decisive Battles

N
300 Miles

Religion & culture of the 'silent years'



- Hellenism
- Language
- Literature
- Culture
- Religion

Response of Judaism



Hasmonean

Hasidim

Herodian

Revolt

Religion/ Torah

Compromise

Maccabees

Pharisees

(Idumean)

Freedom-
fighters

“separated
-ones”

Kings

Herod the

Independence

Great

People of the Torah



The rest of the people—priests, Levites, gatekeepers, singers, temple servants and all who separated themselves from the neighboring peoples for the sake of the Law of God, together with their wives and all their sons and daughters who are able to understand—all these now join their brothers the nobles, and **bind themselves with a curse and an oath to follow the Law of God** given through Moses the servant of God and to obey carefully all the commands, regulations and decrees of the LORD our Lord.

(Nehemiah 10:28-30)

Reforms in days of Nehemiah



- Guard the **Sanctuary**, the sacrifice-rituals & offerings (tithing) – Neh. 13:1-14
- Guard the **Sabbath** - Neh. 13:15-22
- Guard the **sanctity of marriage** & distinctiveness of who they were (circumcision) – Neh. 13:23-31

Jewish sects



- Priests & Scribes
- Pharisees
- Sadducees
- Essenes (Qumran)
- Zealots

- Herodians (Edomite/ Idumean)
- Samaritans (mixed race)

Literature of the 'silent years'

● **Apocrypha**

1 Maccabees

2 Maccabees

Tobit

Judith

Wisdom of Solomon

Ecclesiasticus (Wisdom
of Jesus, Son of Sirach)

Baruch (inc. Letter of
Jeremiah)

1 Esdras

2 Esdras

Additions to the Book of
Daniel

Prayer of Azariah &

Song of the Three Jews

Story of Susanna

Story of Bel & the Dragon

Additions to Book of Esther

Prayer of Manasseh

Psalms 151

Characteristics of Apocalyptic



- **Revelations** (“lifting of the veil”)
- **Visions** (communicated through angels)
- **Symbolism** (mysterious, cryptic & fantastic)
- **Pessimism** (& catastrophic divine intervention)
- **Rigid determinism** (everything preordained)
- **Dualism** (triumph of good over evil)
- **Transcendent** & other-worldly
- **Radical transformation** of cosmos
- **Non-chronological** (though history will end!)
- **Written form** (through Pseudonymity)

Other Apocalyptic Texts



- “The War Scroll” (Qumran)
- “1 Enoch” (OT Pseudepigrapha)
- “Apocalypse of Peter” (NT Pseudepigrapha)
- “Apocalypse of James” (Gnostic Text)
- “Sibylline Oracles” (12 Ancient Greek texts)

“Tracts for bad times” (Ladd)

Apocalyptic literature - books

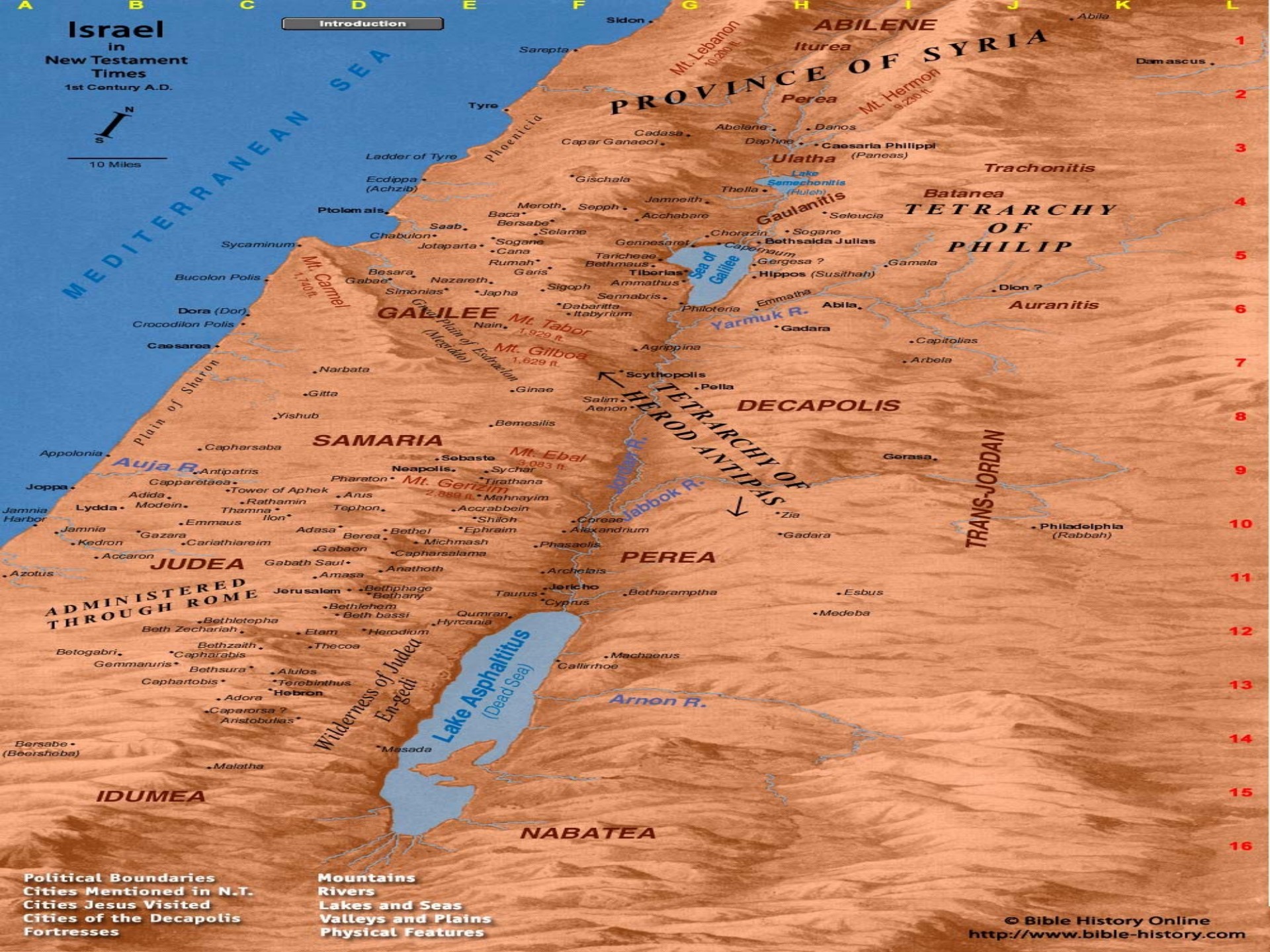


- “The Method & Message of Jewish Apocalyptic”
- “Apocalyptic- Ancient & Modern”
- “From Early Judaism to Early Church”
- “The Jews from Alexander to Herod” (D.S. Russell)
- “Apocalyptic” (Leon Morris)
- “The Apocalyptic Imagination” (John J. Collins)
- “The Four Hundred Silent Years” (H.A. Ironside)

Israel
in
New Testament
Times
1st Century A.D.



Introduction



Political Boundaries
Cities Mentioned in N.T.
Cities Jesus Visited
Cities of the Decapolis
Fortresses

Mountains
Rivers
Lakes and Seas
Valleys and Plains
Physical Features