

Class Objectives – After this class you will be able to:

- Recognize the significance of the geography of Palestine in the history of Israel.
- Recognize the significance of key events B.C. in the history of Israel.

Key Terms:

- Exile
- Palestine
- Alexander the Great
- Ptolemies
- Seleucids
- Antiochus IV
- Hasmoneans
- Pompey

Anno Domini — The First Century and the Context(s) of the New Testament

I. Devotional:

A. Matthew 1:1-6, 17

1. use of names and genealogies

2. Historical Dimension

3. Theological Dimension

B. Practical Application

II. New Testament Backgrounds:

A. maps and pictures from:

1. Mary Beard, et al., *Religions of Rome*, vol. 2 (Cambridge: CUP, 1998).
2. Barry Beitzel, *The Moody Atlas of Bible Lands* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1985).
3. John Boardman, et al., *The Oxford History of the Classical World* (Oxford: OUP, 1986).
4. William Horbury, et al., *Cambridge History of Judaism*, vol. 3 (Cambridge: CUP, 1999).

B. Geography of Palestine

1. Elevation of Palestine

2. Rainfall of Palestine

3. Fertile Crescent

4. Roads of Palestine

C. History of Palestine

1. **Assyrians, Babylonians, Medes & Persians**B.C.

721 *Assyrian Exile of Israel*

587/586 *Babylonian Exile of Judah*

539 Cyrus of Persia took Babylon

c.538 Initial return of some exiles

c.520 Rebuilding of Temple

449/448 Peace of Callias (Greeks regain autonomy)

2. Persian Empire

3. Alexander the Great

B.C.

336 *Alexander becomes king of Macedon & general of the Greeks*

330 *Alexander assumes title "Great King" of Persian Empire*

323 *Alexander dies*

4. Diadochoi (successors of Alexander)

Ptolemies of Egypt

Seleucids of Persia

Antigonids of Macedon

5. Greek Empire

6. Palestine in the Hellenistic Period

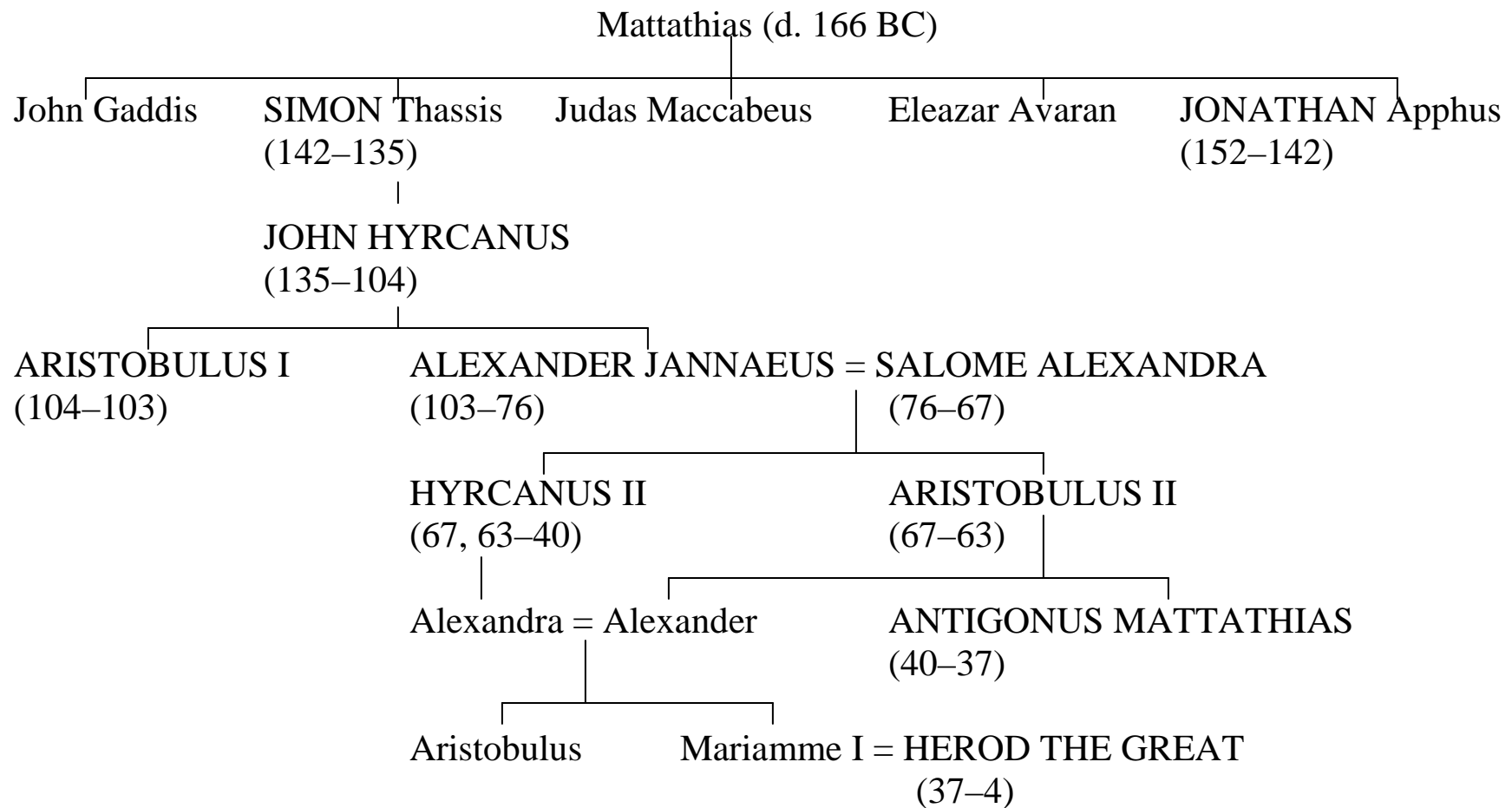
B.C.

198 *Judaea moves from Ptolemaic to Seleucid control*

167 *Antiochus IV (Epiphanes) orders defiling of Jerusalem Temple*

166 *Hasmonean revolt begins*

152 *Jonathan proclaimed high priest in Jerusalem*



Hasmonean Genealogical Chart

(after A. R. C. Leaney, *The Jewish and Christian World: 200BC to AD200*)

7. Roman History

B.C.

- 218-201 Second Punic War (w/ Carthage)
- 200-196 Second Macedonian War
- 149-146 Third Punic War
- 146 Achaean Confederacy defeated (Corinth destroyed)
- 64 Pompey makes Syria a province
- 63** *Pompey enters Jerusalem*
- 49 Julius crosses the Rubicon (civil war against Pompey)
- 44 Julius Caesar assassinated (Et tu Brute?)
- 42 Battle of Philippi (Antony and Octavian victors)
- 31 Battle of Actium (Octavian conquers Antony & Cleopatra VII)
- 27 Octavian entitled Augustus
- 23 Augustus accepts lifelong tribuneship

8. Roman Empire

9. Palestine in the Roman Period

B.C.

- 63** *Pompey takes Jerusalem, enters Holy of Holies
abolishment of Jewish monarchy*
- 37-4** *Herod the Great rules Judaea*

III. Questions for Consideration:

1. What was the significance of the location of Palestine in the history of Israel?
2. What was the impact on Israel of the key events at the following dates B.C.: 721, 587/586, 336, 330, 323, 167, 63, 37-4.

IV. Recommended Reading:

1. Ferguson, Everett. *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. Third Edition. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.