



KATOOMBA

— BAPTIST CHURCH —

CHRIST'S CHURCH THROUGH THE AGES

LESSON 2: THE WORLD OF THE NEW TESTAMENT (PART 1)

THE JEWISH BACKGROUND

- Cyrus the Great (600-530 B.C.) founded the Achaemenid (Persian) Empire in 550 B.C.
- Persian Empire conquers the Babylonian Empire in 539 B.C.; the Jews are set free by Imperial decree.
- Some Jews relocate to Judea and rebuild Jerusalem (Ezra-Nehemiah); some stay in Babylon; some move further in to Persia (e.g. Daniel the Prophet).
- Judea becomes a vassal of Persian Empire.
- Judea is conquered by Alexander the Great in 332 B.C., and the Persian Empire falls to him in 330 B.C.
- Alexander the Great builds what was then the largest empire in history ('The Macedonian Empire').
- Following Alexander's death, the empire then splits into four kingdoms (Diadochi - "Successors").
- Hellenistic (Greek) culture spreads around the world, and becomes the dominant sociocultural system for centuries to come.



FIGURE 1: THE MACEDONIAN EMPIRE (c. 323 B.C.)

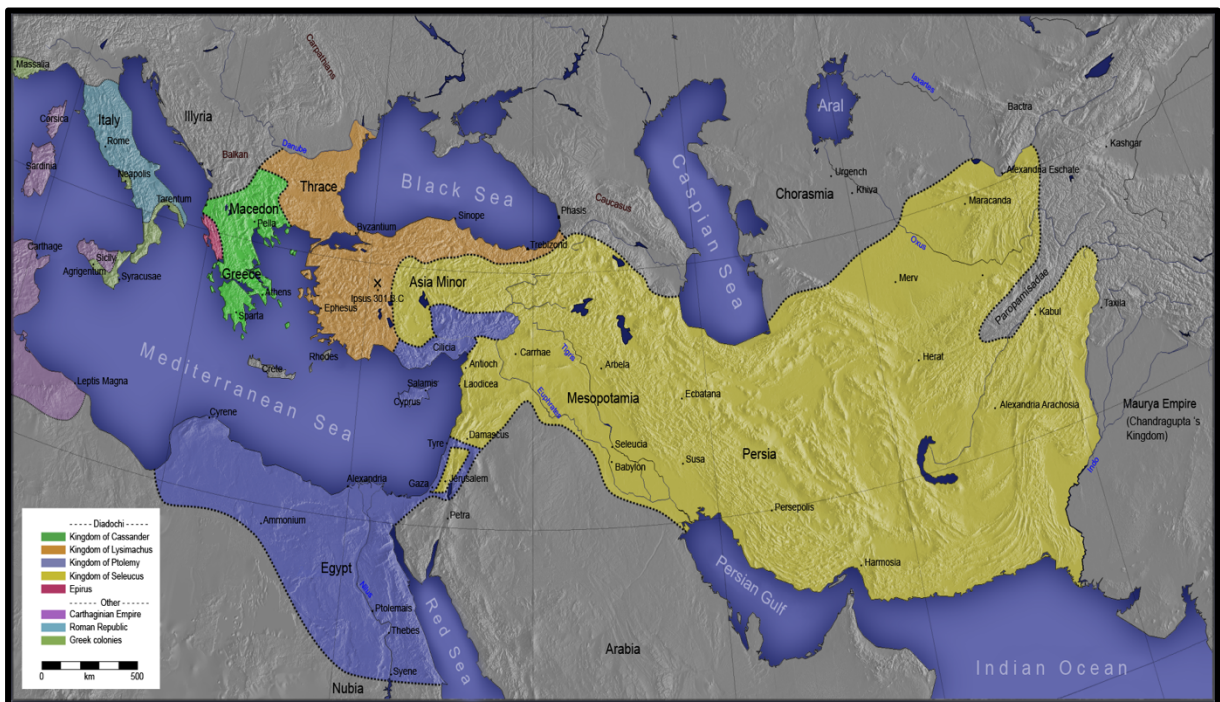


FIGURE 2: THE GREEK KINGDOMS OF THE DIADOCHI (c. 301 B.C.)

- The Roman Republic first came into contact with Jews in 161 B.C. during Maccabean Revolt (167-140 B.C.)
- Rome and Judea entered into military alliance against the Seleucid Empire, which is ultimately successful.
- The mostly independent Hasmonean Kingdom stands from 140-37 B.C. (becomes vassal of Roman Republic in 63 B.C. after conquest by Pompey the Great).
- Succeeded by Herodian Kingdom of Judea (37-4 B.C.)
- Founded when Herod the Great (72-4/1 B.C.) was appointed 'King of the Jews' by the Roman Senate.
- After Herod the Great's death, the kingdom is split up into the Herodian Tetrarchy:
 - Herod Archelaus (Samaria, Judea, and Idumea)
 - Herod Antipas 'King Herod' (Galilee and Perea)
 - Herod Phillip the Tetrarch (Batanea)
 - Salome I (Iamnia, Phasaelis, and Azotus)

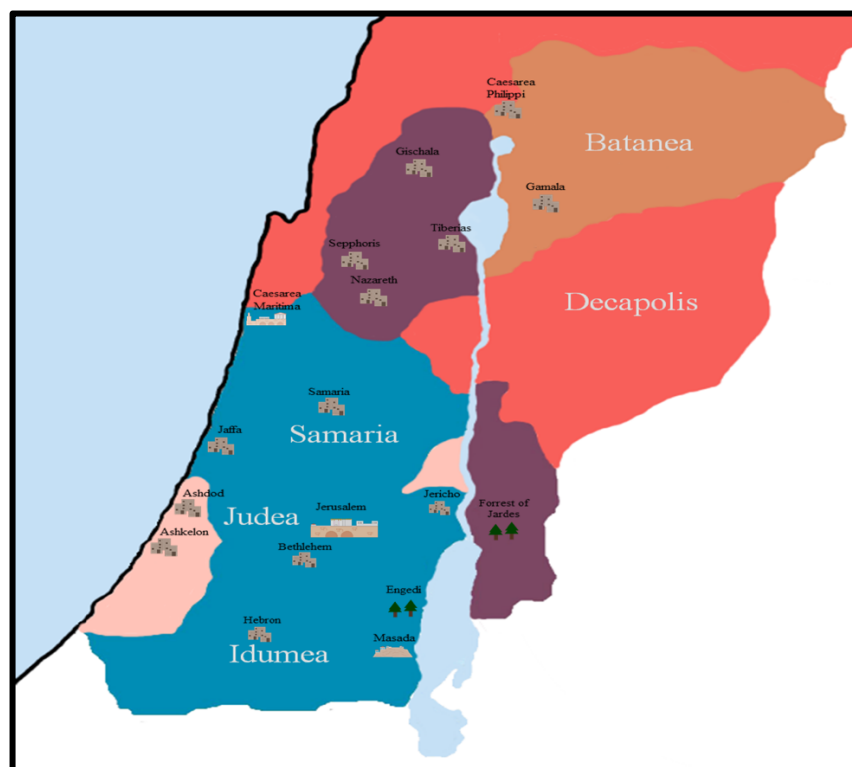


FIGURE 3: THE HERODIAN TETRARCHY (c. 1st CENTURY A.D.)

THE ROMAN BACKGROUND

- ROMAN KINGDOM: 753-509 B.C.
- ROMAN REPUBLIC: 509-27 B.C.
- ROMAN EMPIRE: 27 B.C. - A.D. 395
 - WESTERN ROMAN EMPIRE: A.D. 395-476
 - EASTERN ROMAN EMPIRE: A.D. 395-1453
- Rome had progressively been conquering large portions of territory around the world since the First Punic War (264 B.C.).
- By the end of the reign of Caesar Augustus (A.D. 14), Rome had now conquered almost every kilometre of the Mediterranean coastline, and had now come to dominate and rule the *oikouménē* ('inhabited world').
- Rome built the *Pax Romana* ('Roman peace'), which would last from the reign of Augustus (27 B.C.) to the death of Marcus Aurelius (A.D. 180).
- Common political system, economy, language, philosophical culture, social values/mores, religion (traditional paganism + Eastern mystery cults + Emperor-worship).

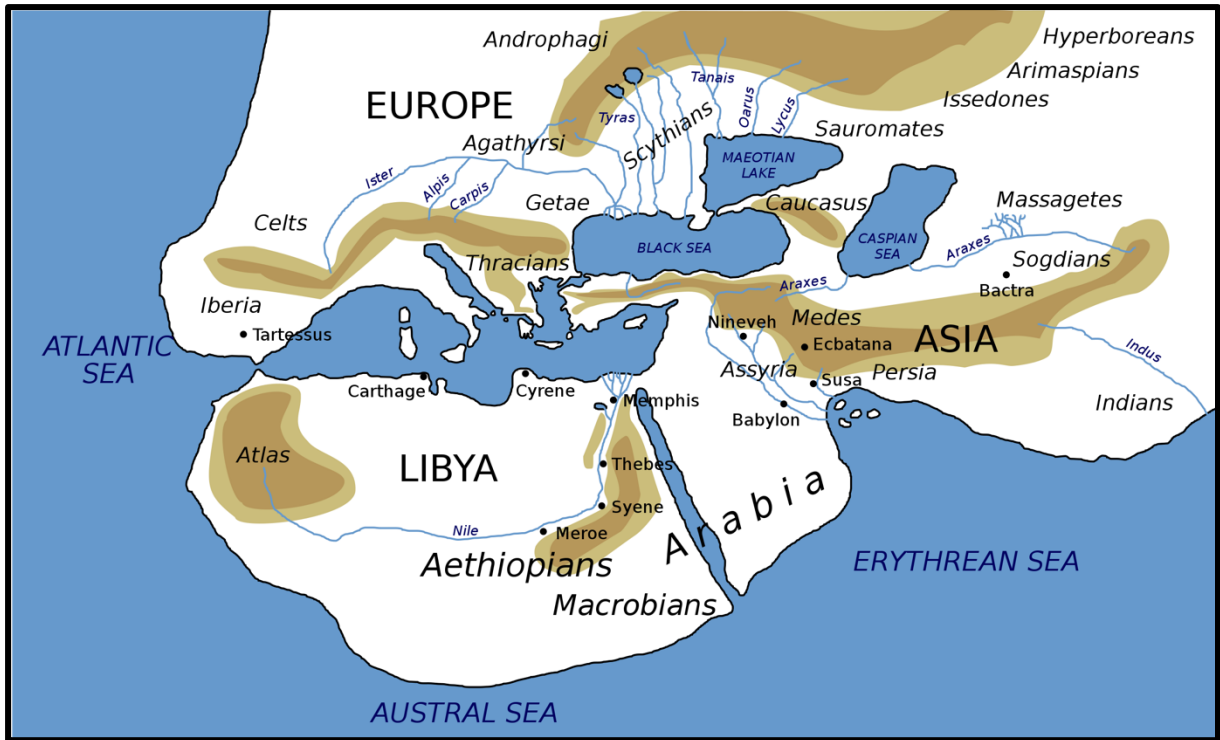


FIGURE 4: HERODOTUS' MAP OF THE WORLD (c. 5TH CENTURY B.C.)



FIGURE 5: MAP OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE (A.D. 117)