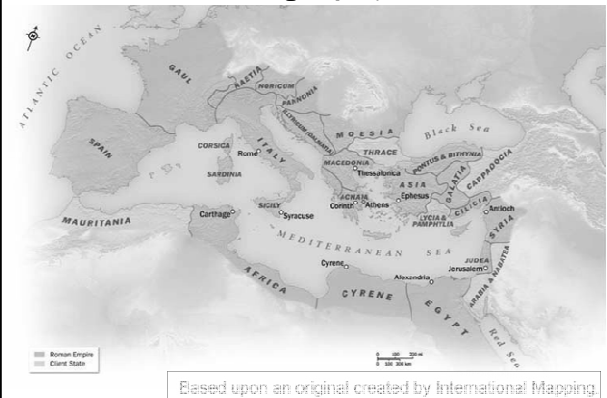


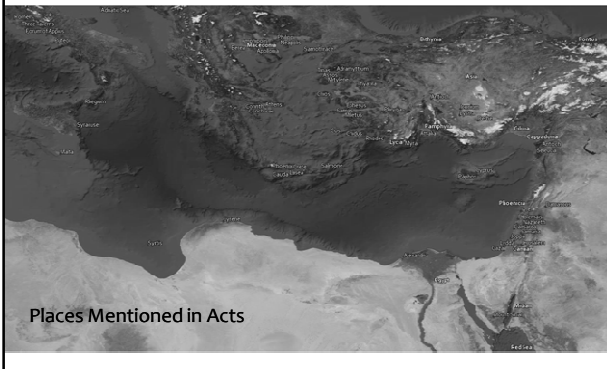
1.205 The Witness of the Gospels

Spring 2012
Mark Vitalis Hoffman

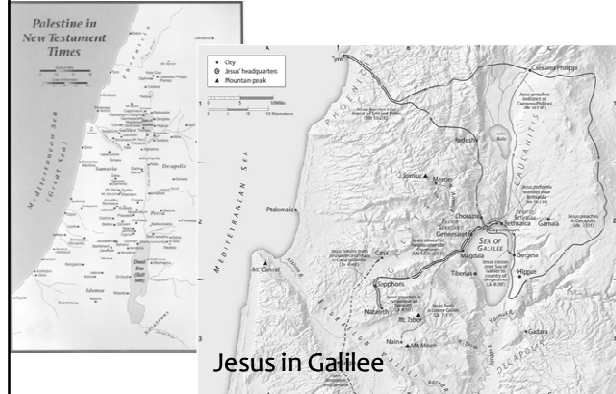
Geography



Geography



Geography



Timeline

- Cf. BibleWorks Timeline (but use with some caution on dating of biblical books)

- 63 BCE Pompey conquers Jerusalem for Rome
- ca. 6–4 BCE birth of Jesus
- ca. 30–33 CE crucifixion of Jesus
- ca. 32–36 CE conversion of Paul
- ca. 46–65 CE Paul's missionary journeys and imprisonment (as recorded in Acts)
Paul's letters written during this period
- ca. 62–65 CE martyrdom of Peter and Paul in Rome
- ca. 65–73 CE Gospel of Mark written
- 66 CE outbreak of Jewish war with Rome
- 70 CE destruction of the Jerusalem temple
- 73 CE fall of Masada—definitive end of the Jewish war
other New Testament books written: Matthew, Luke,
- ca. 80–100 CE John, Acts, and “second generation” letters by followers of the original apostles

Roman Philosophies and Religion

- Epicureans
 - Free will
 - Tranquility
- Stoicism
 - Virtue is highest calling
 - Logic and reason control emotion
- Cynicism
 - Radical authenticity
 - Extreme independence
- Mystery religions
 - Secret societies
- Honor of the emperor
 - Worship or patriotism?
- Animism
 - Belief in spirit world
- Augury
 - Oracles
 - Fortune/future tellers
- Supernaturalism
 - Miracles
 - Divine men

Political Situation under Rome

Emperor's *Pax Romana*

- Public building programs
 - Aqueducts
 - Roads (facilitate trade and movement of armies)
 - Gymnasiums and Spas
- Crime reduction on roads and seas
 - Protects trade routes and pleases merchant class
- High taxes
 - Peasant farmers pay for public works program
- Impoverished people become slaves

Hellenism: Greek Culture under Roman Rule

Hellenism in Palestine

- "Reclining" at tables (rather than sitting up)
- Surgical operations to reverse male circumcision
- Aramaic spoken (Hebrew for ceremony)

And Roman syncretism in Judaism

- Wisdom theology
- Dualism
 - Good vs. evil
- Apocalypticism
 - Deterministic view of history
 - God is in charge

People in 1st Century Palestine under Roman Rule

- Pharisees
 - Torah teachers, (scribes and lawyers), holiness for all
- Sadducees
 - Temple priests, elites, Jerusalem
- Essenes
 - Flee city for desert, purity, eschatological readiness
- Zealots
 - Seek political freedom through violent means
- Herodians
 - Have political power connected with Herodian family
- Samaritans
 - "Mixed" (not pure Jews); inhabitants of Samaria
- Gentiles: Romans, Syrians, many others

What would you say if...

1. Caesar outlawed circumcision as an uncivilized practice
2. Caesar provided scholarships for those upper class Jewish families willing to send their sons to Rome for schooling
3. The Sanhedrin decided to renew the practice of a mandatory temple tax on all Jews
4. You were invited to the wedding of a (Jewish) tax collector
5. You were told that the dominion of God was at hand
6. The Roman Procurator Pilate decided to tax all Jerusalem Temple sacrifices in the name of Caesar