

[The Origin and History of the Bible]

Lecture VIII

[The Historical Setting to the Early Origins of the
Christian Bible]

Earl C. Davis

1. A: [Review]

The period to be considered, i.e., the Palestine under the Roman Emperor just before the time of Christ and during the early years of Christianity, is not only very difficult to understand because of its own complicated forces, but also it is difficult because there are so many prejudices and presuppositions read into it by Christian dogma that it is almost impossible to get a clear picture.

In attempting to do what I am going to attempt to do tonight I am attempting to do an almost impossible task, namely, to give an impressionistic picture of more than two hundred years of very intense and rapid history. In doing this I have to make many statements that may seem jumps in the dark, and unwarranted, but they are all well-founded results of most careful research by the greatest scholars of the world.

We have been treating the history of the development of the Bible from its earliest beginnings to the close of the Old Testament canon at about the year 100 A.D. We have seen that the Old Testament was the product of [a] perfectly natural historical evolution. We saw how the Pentateuch was formed as a reaction of the Judaism of the exile against the foreign influences of Babylonia. Then we saw how the prophets were included in the canon as a result of the reaction of [the] early Greek period upon the Palestinian Jews. Finally, we saw how the Other Writings, including the wisdom literature, the Psalms, Song of Songs, and other poetry, was included in the canon in the attempt to shut out from the Jewish life the influences of the Hellenistic movement, as illustrated by Antiochus Epiphanes¹, and the Christian movement.

¹ Antiochus IV Epiphanes (c.215-164 B.C.E.) Greek Hellenistic king who rule the Seleucid Empire from 175 B.C.E. until his death. He issued decrees forbidding many traditional Jewish

We noted also that the Hebrew Bible excluded from the canon several books, known as the Apocrypha, which we included in the Septuagint, the Bible of the Christians, and were regarded by the fathers of the Early Christian Church as scripture, and, if apostolic usage determines the canon of Christian Scripture, these books belong to the Early Christian Bible.

Our concern now is to see how the canon of Scripture once closed by the Hebrews, was again forced to broaden out and to include the writings of the New Covenant, or New Testament. It is our task tonight to get a glimpse of the events that led up to the beginnings of this New Covenant which developed into the Christian Religion.

2. B: Absorbed Ideas

We have traced the history of Judaism through the various stages of its evolution. As yet we have not stated clearly the reason for its importance in the history of human evolution. We have seen glimpses of it here and there. At this point it should be stated why, for the western world at least, its social, political, and intellectual history is of importance.

The reason is two-fold. Partly its importance comes of its own harrowing experience through which there developed the idea of the suffering servant, and secondly, its history is of importance because of the function that it performed in absorbing religious and ethical ideas from various peoples of the East and passing them on through the Roman period to the Western world. On this latter point it is necessary to point out two or three facts. One. Babylonia was the teacher of Judaism for long centuries. From them Judaism absorbed the institution of the sabbath, and the new moon. Also, the foundation of the Laws, and the myths are so intimately connected with ancient Babylonia that it is commonly said that no ancient people rose to so great a height in religion, law, and literature as the Babylonians. From them the Hebrews garnered many institutions and ideas.

Two. From the Persian religion into the train of Judaistic thought comes [the] idea of the resurrection and the future rewards and punishments, i.e., after death.

practices and began a campaign of persecution against devout Jews.

Three. There comes into the Judaistic development also the idea of the incarnation. This is derived from Platonic philosophy and represents the big contribution of Greek thought [to] Christianity.

Four. Finally, as we shall see later, from Roman religions came many customs, and legends that were embodied into the Christian tradition. For example, the myth of the virgin birth, and the immaculate conception, as applied to the personality of Jesus, is an old and very widely spread myth, and doubtless came into the Christian current of affairs by way of some of the Roman cults, perhaps the Mythra Cult.²

It is necessary to bear in mind these facts. The movement, which had been gathering material and headway for centuries, and which was destined to capture the machinery of the decaying Roman Empire, had a tremendous background, a tremendous electro-motive force, to us a mechanical term. The attempts of the past to explain this development of Christianity as some peculiar, supernatural event which broke in upon the natural order, have no foundations to rest upon. There is not a single new idea in the teaching of Jesus. Some people seem to think that the idea of immortality had never entered the mind of man until the time of Christ, and that the idea of the resurrection was new with him. Both are old ideas. The foundations of the Christian movement were laid in the natural course of events in the natural evolution of races, nations, and society, just as the foundation of the reformation were laid in the interplay of forces of the crusades and the renaissance. Christianity, as an epoch in society, is that epoch in society, when the fusion of the oriental influences through the agency of the Hebrew people, began to express themselves in a new order in society. Its culmination was the Holy Roman Empire, and its religion was the religion of the creeds. In this process of development there is precisely the same play of forces that are at play always in history. Here and there a great hero and martyr or prophet rises above the average and marks the high points in the process, but on the whole, the process is like unto the process of today, the achievement of men in the trenches.

² Alternatively, the "Mithra Cult." This was a Roman mystery religion centered on the god Mithras, inspired by Iranian worship of the Zoroastrian divinity Mithra.

Into the movement of these times there enters three great factors. Two of them will come up for consideration now, and one at a later date.

Maps!

3. C: Hellenism

It is hardly possible for us to estimate the close and intimate relationship that existed between the Greeks and the Jews, and at the same time, the aloofness of the Jews to all Greek influences. It is not entirely unlike the relationship of the Old New England Puritan and the vast numbers of people from other lands who have settled in his midst. The three central countries, Judea, Galilee and Pereia were still predominantly Jewish, but from the beginning of the Greek period up to the time of the Maccabees, the proportion was constantly changing in favor of the Greek. The Greek, too, was the ruler. Around these three centuries, the Greek was the predominating influence.

Hellenic culture was everywhere spreading its influence just as the ideas and principles of science are today finding their way into every nook and corner of modern life. Greek religious rites were observed, and in the case of Antiochus Epiphanes we have an illustration not only of a ruler who was interested in the spread of Hellenistic culture, but the narrow and bigoted spirit of a forceful missionary made him carry the propaganda of Hellenistic culture so far as to bring about a reaction, and an uprising of the Jews. In the athletic games, and the gymnasia the atmosphere of Hellenic culture was maintained. Hellenism was a civilizing power and extended itself to every department of life.

It fashioned in a peculiar manner the organization of the state, legislation, the administration of justice, public arrangements, art and science, trade and industry, and the customs of daily life down to fashion and ornaments, and thus impressed upon every department of life, wherever its influence reached, the stamp of the Greek mind. ... Into the stream of this Hellenic culture the Jewish people was also drawn; slowly indeed and with reluctance, but yet irresistibly, for though religious zeal was able to banish heathen worship and all connected therewith from Israel, it could not for any length of time restrain the tide of Hellenistic culture in other departments of life. Its several stages cannot indeed be

any longer traced. But when we reflect that the small Jewish country was enclosed on almost every side by Hellenistic regions, with which it was compelled, even for the sake of trade, to hold continual intercourse, and when we remember, that even the rising of the Maccabees was in the main directed not against Hellenism in general, but only against heathen religion, that the later Asmoneans bore in every respect a Hellenistic stamp-- ... --when all this is considered, it may be safely assumed that Hellenism had, notwithstanding the rising of the Maccabees, gained access in no inconsiderable measure into Palestine even before the commencement of the Roman period.

Schurrer. II Vol 1, P 30.³

What was the nature of this Greek culture which was spreading over the entire ancient world, and what was the relation of this to the developing movement called Christianity?

The old apologists and Church Fathers were aware of the fact that this preparation [in the ante-Christian world] was to be found not only in the Jewish religion, but to an equal extent in the Greek philosophy. For example, Justin Martyr says of Heraclitus and Socrates the philosophers, that they were Christians even though they were commonly considered Atheists; according to Clemens of Alexandria, the philosophy of the Greeks was for them an education to Christ, just as the Mosaic law was for the Hebrews. ...

As early as five hundred years before Christ, the Ionian philosophers Heraclitus and Xenophanes had subjected the mythical folk-faith of the Greeks to destructive criticism. Foolish it is, so they said, to conceive the deity after the image of man; blasphemous to ascribe human shortcomings and wickedness to it; useless to worship it with bloody animal-sacrifice. Over against a multiplicity of gods they set up one god; neither in figure nor in thought like the mortal, he is the vitalizing spirit and the governing reason which

³ Emil Schürer (1844-1910) German Protestant theologian and historian. This quote is from his book, *A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ, Being a Second and Revised Edition of a "Manual of the History of New Testament Times,"* Sophia Taylor and Rev. Peter Christie, translators, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1896, Vol 1, p. 30.

underlies all the change of phenomena. Pfleiderer, Page 32.⁴

Socrates for the first time in history advanced the idea of man as a moral being in whose personality there was the quality [of] self-law-giving power of inner reason and conscience. It was because of the assertion of this principle in man that was higher than the traditional authorities that the Athenian Judges condemned him to death.

Plato makes this divine spirit, which the philosophers called God, one with goodness. God was the divine spirit of goodness and justice in the world.

These ideas are sufficient to suggest something of the intellectual background of the Greek culture that was spreading all over the ancient world. In it is more than the half of Christian thought and teaching.

4. D: Graeco-Jewish

Having considered the influence of this Greek spirit, another aspect of the development must be considered. After Alexander the Great (356 B.C.- 323) had transformed the allegiance of Palestine and Egypt from Persia to Greece, he set about the task of establishing colonies in these territories. In many of the Palestinian towns, Greek colonies were established. But perhaps the most influential, and certainly the city that throws the most light on what was taking place, is the city of Alexandria, which he founded in Egypt. This became the great commercial center of the period. Located on the Mediterranean with Lake Mareotis in its rear, it was easily defended.

Provided with a superb harbor, connected with the Nile by a canal, and without a formidable rival, it enjoyed a practical monopoly of the trade of the East. It was laid out by the architect of the temple of Diana. Built at royal expense, it was one of the most beautiful cities of antiquity. Its population consisted of Egyptians, Greeks and Jews. Each occupied separate quarters.⁵

⁴ Otto Pfleiderer (1839-1908) German Protestant theologian. This quote is from his book, *Christian Origins*, Daniel Huebsch, translator, New York: B.W. Huebsch, 1906, pp. 31-32.

⁵ Charles Foster Kent (1867-1925) American Old Testament scholar. This quote is from his book, *A History of the Jewish*

Alexandria soon became one of the great Jewish centers of the world. Here was the real center of early Christian influence. Here the greatest library of all antiquity was collected. Here the Hebrew Bible was translated into Greek—for the purpose to be sure of enabling those Greek speaking Jews to read the history of their race, but with the result of opening up the Hebrew tradition to the study of the Greeks and of stimulating the interest of the Jews in Greek philosophy. So here the Greek Christian Bible was born. In the second and third centuries of the Christian Era Alexandria was the intellectual capital of Christendom.

But of special interest to us, as illustrating the whole tendency of the times, is the person of Philo of Alexandria who was born 20 B.C. and died 54 A.D. Notice that he died before any one of the documents that are included in the New Testament was written. He was a great scholar, born a Jew, and educated in Alexandrian circles where the Greek philosophy was the predominating influence. In his writings he is deliberately trying to show that the Greek and the Hebrew ideas are one and the same. To do this he employs the method of allegorical interpretation.

From Plato, Philo take the Idea of God—that God is elevated beyond the world entirely. In him there can be no imperfection. He is pure goodness and beauty. Also, the further idea of the all-producing power of God, which resulted in his creation.

With these two ideas, Plato tried to solve the problem of the relation of such a perfect God to such an evil universe, for at this time the old Persian dualistic idea of the Universe was practically unquestioned. Matter was evil. Spirit was good. The flesh was strong but the spirit weak. Philo believed that he had found a solution of how this chasm between a perfectly good God and a perfectly bad world could be bridged without destroying a perfectly good God. (See Fleiderer p. 51.)⁶ By means of mediating beings, who were supersensual, Philo believed that God reached down into the world, and thus introduced divine activity.

... these [supersensual beings] he designated partly as incorporeal powers (Stoics), partly as ideas (Plato) and partly as angels (Old Testament). At times he selects two

People during the Babylonian, Persian, and Greek Periods, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1904, p. 287.

⁶ Which Davis quotes below.

from among them, Power and Goodness, as the highest; then again, he says there are six highest, ... and among them the Logos is first.

This Logos conception, the pivotal point of Philo's system, combines the Jewish idea of the creative *word* of revelation and the Stoic thought of the active, divine *reason*. ... But the Philonic Logos differs from the Stoic, in that he does not identify it with God or the word substance, but makes it something intermediate between them; his name is the first-born son of God, oldest Angel, ... the mediator of all divine revelation, the high priest and advocate ... of man before God.⁷

Philo represented a school of thought. This, in a broad sense, is the point of view of that vast and very influential people, the Jews of the Diaspora, who were consciously and unconsciously combining these two great lines of development, the Hebrew and the Grecian. These Graeco-Jewish Jews of the Diaspora constituted the first fruits of Christianity. Only by an understanding of this background can the development of the Christian New Testament be understood. In the days before Christianity, they left a literary monument, a portion of which survives in the Old Testament Apocrypha.

5. E: The Palestinian Jews

I have pointed out how the nucleus of Jews around Palestine had been resisting for centuries the inroads of the outside world upon their political and religious integrity. I have pointed out how, in the period of Greek influence, the pressure of interchange had developed that vast number of people all over the world who, like Philo of Alexandria, were saturated with both Greek and Jewish traditions. In Palestine, especially in Judea, Perea, and Galilee, there was centered the most race conscious element of the Jews. Like a stag at bay, they were fighting for their life as a nation and a religious sect. Antiochus Epiphanes' reign brought matters to a close. By a questionable intrigue, the Hellenistic Party in Jerusalem gained control of the tax-collecting office of the Temple. That really gave them control of the Temple. This party, then, counting upon the support of Antiochus Epiphanes, and to win his favor, built

⁷ Otto Pfleiderer (1839-1908) German Protestant theologian. This quote is from his book, *Christian Origins*, translated by Daniel A. Huebsch, New York: B.W. Huebsch, 1906, pp. 51-52.

a gymnasium and introduced Greek Games. Young Jews flocked to the places of amusement. Even the priests did the same.

A passion for Greek costumes, Greek customs, and Greek names seized the people. Large numbers were enrolled as citizens of Antioch. Many even endeavored to conceal the fact that they had been circumcised. To the horror of the faithful, Hellenism seemed to be carrying all before it. Kent, 324.⁸

This brought about strained relations, resulting in 170 B.C. in a punitive attack upon Jerusalem when Antiochus turned the city over to his army with instructions to spare no one. Many were slain in the streets and their homes. Many more were carried off to slave markets. The Temple was desecrated, and its valuables carried off. The worship of Zeus was established. This reached its limit in 168 [B.C.E.]. Then came the rising of the Maccabees,⁹ and there was introduced that era of Judaism, which continued down to the coming of Pompey in 63 B.C. and then on under Roman dominion until the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

While it is not possible to enter into all the changes that this period covers, its development, so far as our interests are concerned, centers about this question of the resistance of Judaism to foreign influences, both Greek, and later, Roman.

[a.] Scribes. As the Jews resisted the inroads of the foreign forces they were compelled to fall back more and more upon their traditional law and scripture. On the other hand, they had to face the facts of life. The question of interpreting the Law became a great necessity. There grew up then the Scribes whose business, somewhat akin to modern constitutional law, of stretching the law so that it would fit as near as possible the facts of life, gradually became a more important work than the work of the priests whose duty it had once been to teach the people how to conform to the law. In many cases the priests became Scribes.

⁸ Charles Foster Kent, *A History of the Jewish People during the Babylonian, Persian, and Greek Periods*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1904, p. 324.

⁹ The Maccabees were a group of Jewish warriors. They took control of Judea in 167 B.C.E. and ruled there until 37 B.C.E., and as a fully independent kingdom from 104 to 63 B.C.E.

[b.] Pharisees. The Pharisees had become a religio-political party. They proceeded from the Scribes at about the time of the Maccabean struggles of which we have just been speaking. The Pharisees were by nature the rigidly legal portion of the population. They strove seriously and consistently to carry out in practice the ideal of the legal life set up by the Scribes. They held not only to the written law but to the Oral law which the Scribes had developed. To such an extreme was this observance of the tradition carried that it became "more culpable to teach contrary to the precepts of the Scribes, than contrary to the Torah itself."¹⁰

Their doctrines were the conventional doctrines of the mass of Orthodox Jews of the times.

First. "Every soul is imperishable." This is the Jewish doctrine of retribution and resurrection, which came from the Jewish thought during the Persian period, and first appears in Jewish literature in the book of Daniel, 165 B.C.

Second. The Pharisees taught the existence of angels and spirits. This also, in part at least, came from Persia.

Third. The Pharisees make everything depend upon fate and on God, and that fate cooperates in every transaction.

They were the Separatist Party of Israel. Just as the Jew as far as possible refrained from having anything to do with the non-Jew, so the Pharisee had just as little as possible to do with the non-Pharisee. But just because this small Pharisaic Party clung so tenaciously to the law, they exercised a very far-reaching influence in Judaism. Even the Sadducees in their official acts adhered to the demands of the Pharisees, because otherwise the multitude would not have tolerated them.

[c.] Sadducees. The Sadducees were the aristocrats, so Josephus repeatedly speaks of them as being. They were wealthy, persons of rank, and belonged chiefly to the Priestly Party. They were related to the Priestly Party as the Pharisees were related to the Scribes. From back in the Persian period the Priestly Party governed the Jewish state, but of course subject to the

¹⁰ Frederick James Gould (1855-1938) English teacher, writer, and pioneer secular humanist. This quote is from his book, *A Concise History of Religion: History of Judaism and Jewish Sacred Literature*, London: Watts & Company, 1893, p. 123.

controlling foreign state. The high priestly families belong to the Sadducean Party.

They did not believe in the doctrine of the resurrection, nor did they believe in the doctrine of angels and supersensual spirits. They were strong advocates of the idea of personal moral responsibility, or freedom of the will.

They acknowledged only the written Law of the Pentateuch and disregarded the tradition of the people. Probably they rejected the inclusion of the Prophets among the books of the Sacred Hebrew Scriptures. In penal legislation the Sadducees were more severe than the Pharisees.

While the Sadducees were more conservative than the Pharisees, yet they were less strict as to conduct. They held firmly to the ritual, but after the ritual had been observed, they were comparatively free to do as pleased them.

So far as Greek culture was concerned, they were inclined to be open to its influence, provided only that the Greek culture did not interfere with the ritual. With the fall of the Jewish state the Sadducees altogether disappeared from history.

[d.] The Essenes. This is a sect. Philo and Josephus agree in putting their number at about 4,000. They lived only in Palestine. They were very strictly organized. At the heads of the various groups were presidents whom the members were bound to obey unconditionally. Their admissions to this order were secret ceremonies. It required three years to pass through the process. The Essene was bound by a terrible oath.

The Essenes were bound together by the tie of an absolute community of Goods. No member held any personal property. Not even such clothing as they wore was regarded as personal property.

Their daily labors were under strict regulation. There was no slave among them. Their word was more binding than an oath. They forbid swearing. They forbid anointing with oil. They entirely condemned marriage. They offered no animal sacrifice, and possibly ate no meat. They held common meals which were sacramental in character. They were very strict in their adherence to the Law, and in obeying the Sabbath.

In its main features it is probably Judaistic in origin, but it has some very pronounced likenesses to the Pythagoreans of the Greeks which was very much like it.

John the Baptist was an Essene. Many have held that Jesus was also.

The Zealots. ???

6. F: The Messianic Hope of Judaism

This had developed first in the days of distress and misfortune as a hope for a better day for the Jewish Nation. But it tended to expand to a hope for better conditions, not only for the Jewish Nation, but for the world.

But accompanying this development also was the appearance of the idea [of] hope to the individual. Those who had been faithful to the Law, would, and who died before the Messianic Kingdom came in, would be resurrected from the dead to share in the glory of the Messianic Kingdom. This idea does not appear until Daniel, 165 [B.C.E.] and after.

As the idea developed it tended to become more and more supernatural, and other worldly, and the Messiah came to be the perfect king of Israel, chosen by God from Eternity to rule over the restored Israel.

Under the influence of the Scribes the ancient hope, largely poetic in character, came to be interpreted in terms of Pharisaic dogma, and was very active among the mass of Palestinian Jews at the time of Christ and just before. The turbulent events between 44 and 66 A.D. are explainable on the assumption of very active faith in the Messiah, and this period.

The Book of Daniel, which we have seen was written 165 B.C., just after the desecration of the Temple and the sacking of Jerusalem by Antiochus Epiphanes, is the first Jewish document that introduces the Messianic idea as later known. Here the Messiah is to break in pieces and destroy the world kingdoms by the help of God. Then the Kingdom of Israel will become the Universal Kingdom, and all the saints who have died will be raised from the dead and share in the glory of the new Israel. The Book of Enoch, and in the assumption of Moses, Old Testament Apocrypha, are full of the expectations and the language that we find in the Gospels and in Paul.

Whether pre-Christian Judaism regarded the Messiah as simply human, or as a being of a higher order, and especially whether it attributed to him pre-existence, cannot, with the uncertainty about the dates of authorities, be positively decided. *The original Messianic hope did not expect an individual Messiah at all, but theocratic kings of the house of David. Subsequently, the hope was consolidated and raised more and more into the expectation of a personal Messiah as a ruler endowed by God with special gifts and powers.* Schurer.¹¹

Post-Christian Judaism strongly emphasized the human side of their expected Messiah, as contrasted with the Christian emphasis on the supernatural or ever-supersensual aspects of the Gnostics. Here again is a conflict between Judaism and Grecian thought.

7. G: [Judaism and the Reign of Herod]

Up to this point we have been dealing with the background, and the parties and the characteristics of Judaism, Greek culture and their allied forces. It is now necessary to bring forward another fact for consideration.

Greece had already been declared a Roman province in 146 B.C. It was, in the interval between the decay of Greek political power and the appearance of Pompey in 63 B.C., that Judaism enjoyed its last period of independence. Pompey captured the city of Jerusalem and the Temple in 63. A revolt against the government set up by Pompey caused a reorganization of the Government of Judea in 57 B.C. This reorganization brought a new master to the Jews and ended the dynasty. This development in their history had a profound influence upon their life. It wiped out of their life the idea of a Messiah as it had been fostered since Daniel in 165 B.C. Also, this death to a political development turned the power of the people into the development and expansion of the Torah, and produced the Scribism and Phariseeism that we

¹¹ Emil Schürer, *A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ, Being a Second and Revised Edition of a "Manual of the History of New Testament Times,"* Sophia Taylor and Rev. Peter Christie, translators, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1896, Vol 1, pp. 159-160. Emphasis in the original (but not in Davis' transcription of the original).

find in the New Testament. "Love work, hate authority, and do not press thyself up the great." Was the advice of a great Scribe.¹²

Yet we are approaching the reign of Augustus, the Golden Age of Rome, 21 B.C. to 14 A.D. I want to quote a few passages from Ferrero's *Greatness and Decline of Rome* for the purpose of suggesting the setting of the events upon which we are coming in the next lecture, and the relation of them to the big movements of the world.

When Augustus ruled Asia, he was confronted with a strange situation which no intelligent man would have thought conceivable a century earlier. He perceived that as Amyntas was dead the only eastern sovereign who could command respect, if not perhaps admiration, was Herod the king of the Jews. Herod was a barbarian by birth, an Idumean, whose family had been converted to Judaism a short time previously. During the confusion of the last civil wars a series of intrigues had enabled him to usurp the sovereign dignity of the old Hasmonean family of Judea. Thus, he had become King of an obscure and uncivilized people which for centuries had lived amid the desolating eastern wars, with no apparent destiny but to swell the plunder of the conquerors. Yet Herod now aspired to become the foremost of the Roman vassals in the East; he neglected no opportunity of attracting attention to himself and to his Judean kingdom. He had provided a contingent of soldiers for Aelius Gallus to the Yemen. He had given Samaria the same of Sabaste, the Greek translation of Augustus; he had begun the construction of the town which he proposed to call Caesarea; he wished to establish in Judea among his barbarian subjects a magnificent and luxurious monarchy of the Greek style, and for that purpose was beginning great public works in every part of the realm; at Jerusalem he had established games in honor of Augustus, to be held every five years. He was building a great theatre and amphitheater, introducing Greek artists and

¹² Shemaiah (lived c.930 B.C.E.) a prophet during the reign of Rehoboam (c.931 B.C.E.-913) (see 1 Kings 12:22-24). This quote is taken from Schürer, *A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ, Being a Second and Revised Edition of a "Manual of the History of New Testament Times,"* Sophia Taylor and Rev. Peter Christie, translators, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1896, Vol 1, p. 353.

striking coinage with Greek inscriptions. Herod aspired not only to become the vassal of Rome in the East but also the patron of Greek civilization, though he was but an Idumean Arab, and king of the half-civilized Jews.

At the same time, his aspirations were by no means foolish, for the condition of the Jews had undergone a great change throughout the east during the last century. They had already possessed some of the qualities which make them a force today; they were hardworking and thrifty; amid numberless sensual religions, they lived beneath an austere God, who was a stern moral guardian, and not an obliging procurer of vice; finally, they were extremely prolific, a most valuable quality in an age when civilization had exhausted many another race. For a long time, they had been obliged to emigrate in large numbers, and had found admirable opportunities for expanding and making their fortunes as Hellenic civilization broke up. They had formed considerable colonies, had acquired wealth and prosperity in all eastern towns—in the towns of Egypt and in Alexandria especially, in the towns of Asia Minor, and those of Persia and Babylonia, beyond the frontier. ... Numerous, united and hard-working, hated for their eccentricities and feared for their wealth, their inclination and their yearning were ever turned towards Jerusalem and its Temple. They never forgot the Holy Land where Jehovah had his sanctuary; and they often returned to their country or sent sums of money to the support of the national existence. Thus, the Jews, with their colonies, their commerce, and their wealth, had acquired great power over the decaying Hellenism throughout the east. Herod's policy was merely the inevitable consequence of this spontaneous Jewish expansion, and Herod realized that the Jewish state could no longer be confined to the frontiers of Palestine, as the nationality spread over the world; his duty was to his fellow people, to make himself known, loved or feared beyond his own frontiers, in order to support Jewish emigration, or to overcome the hatreds or the difficulties which surrounded their colonies. His policy was based upon two principles: he was to be the client and vassal of Rome, in full honesty and loyalty, and to secure the protection of the great republic for his Jewish colonies wherever they might be. He was also attempting a reconciliation as far as possible between Judaism, which, in spite of its strength, was unable to dominate the east by its own power, and Hellenism, which,

if weakened, was not dead, but was eager for wealth and power and was capable of revival.¹³

Thus, while this great work of Herod, which gave some dignity to his reign, this work of amalgamating the Jewish and Hellenic tendencies in the East was going on, Augustus in the West was extending the power of Rome up into the Gallic provinces and Germania.

¹³ Guglielmo Ferrero (1871-1942) Italian historian and journalist. This long-quoted passage is from his *The Greatness and Decline of Rome*, in five volumes, New York: G.P. Putnam's sons, volume 5, pp. 24-26.