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**The Jews Under Rome**

Question: What's the difference between the Maccabees and the Hasmoneans?

Answer: Good question. They both refer to the same family. The actual name of the family is the Hasmoneans. The title Maccabees was added, some claim, because Judas' head looked like a mallet. But there is no difference between the Maccabees and the Hasmoneans.

Question: What's the relationship of the modern Hasidic Judaism to the ancient Hasidim?

Answer: I see no relationship other than the shared principle of piety. Modern Hasidic Judaism was not founded until the 18<sup>th</sup> century AD and its doctrinal heritage really stretches back to kabbalistic interpretations of the 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> century AD. Kabbalism is a mystical form of Judaism and Hasidic Judaism is mystical Judaism. When it developed it did so because many were unsatisfied with scholarly Judaism. However, it did not do away with scholasticism but it merely elevated emotion above reason and spirituality above knowledge. Through this those who followed this path felt they were able to get closer to God.

Question: What's the origin of the term "Rabbi?"

Answer: This term comes from the prior term "Chaber" which referred to a member of the Pharisaic fraternity who was a scholar of the Torah and traditions. Sometime before the time of Christ the Chaber merged into the Rabbi who was well-known as "a sage." To be called "Rabbi" was to be honored with great respect. In Matt 23:6-7 our Lord condemned those scribes and Pharisees who loved to be called "Rabbi."

Alright, last time we saw that the Jews under Greece faced the pressure to Hellenize and that this caused division among the Jews. There was already a group of Jews from the time of Ezra's reforms who had taken a vow to resist heathenism. They were known as the Hasidim (i.e. the pious). They had been around since the time of Ezra. They had vowed to resist heathenism. So when the pressures to Hellenize under Antiochus IV Epiphanes arose they resisted. When Mattathias, a priest in Modin was challenged by an emissary of Antiochus to offer sacrifice to Zeus he rejected. When another stepped forward to offer sacrifice he struck both him and the king's emissary down. The Hasidim realized in Mattathias a leader and they joined him in forming a band of rebels. Providentially they won astounding victories against impossible odds. Ultimately Antiochus was defeated, religious freedom was restored and the temple was cleansed. The Hasidim then saw no reason to continue fighting. However, the Maccabees fell to the temptation of power lust and illegitimately took the high-priesthood which rightfully belonged to those of the house of Zadok. Consequently the Hasidim now resisted the Maccabees even to the point of martyrdom. When at last John Hyrcanus insulted the Hasidim and sided with the Sadducees the Hasidim disappear as a class and give way to the Pharisaic fraternity. This fraternity was a loyal band of brothers. Their name means "the separated" and was given to them by their opponents but they understood it according to the meaning "the exponents" of the Law. They believed themselves to be the true expositors of the Scripture. In order to protect people from breaking the Scripture they developed oral tradition which they said formed "a hedge" about the written law. In order to support these traditions they claimed they were originally secretly given to Moses on Mt Sinai and they frequently glossed the text, meaning they were very liberal in their interpretations of the Law.

Tonight we meet their lesser-known opponents, the Sadducees and we'll actually finish up with the Jews under Rome and be prepared for the NT. The Sadducees were a sect that developed during the same time as the Pharisees (ca 135BC). As Edersheim notes, "There can be no question that the "sect" of the Sadducees originated in a reaction against the Pharisees." (Edersheim, p 222). The origin of the name Sadducees, however, is just as ambiguous as that of the Pharisees. One view is that Sadducee is derivative of Zadok, the high-priest. A second similar view is that it derives from Zadok, the name of a famous Rabbi, and a third view is that it derives from the Hebrew word zaddikim which means "the righteous" but was modified to zaddukim by the

Pharisees, a word which means “the destroyers” and depicts their opposition. So the two names Pharisees and Sadducees may have been names given to each other by the other group and meant to be pejorative. The Sadducees considered the Pharisees to be “the separators,” the Pharisees considered the Sadducees to be “the destroyers.” But the Pharisees considered themselves “the exponents” of the law and oral tradition while the Sadducees considered themselves “the righteous.”

As for the Sadducees they were composed mainly of an aristocratic class of priests who felt they could adopt Hellenism without being disloyal to the Torah. They were therefore closely associated with the temple and its services. Josephus notes as far as influence, “the Sadducees are able to persuade none but the rich, and have not the populace obsequious [i.e. obedient] to them, but the Pharisees have the multitude of their side.” So the Sadducees are a smaller, but wealthy group. As far as their belief system and how it derived, they opposed the Pharisees at almost every point. Since the Pharisees were opposed to Hellenism and built a hedge of tradition around the law, the Sadducees adopted Hellenism and went to the opposite extreme and held onto to the inspiration of the Torah. This smaller canon allowed them to make more concessions to Hellenism. Further, they took a very strict literal interpretation of the Torah thus further restricting their beliefs and providing more room for Hellenism. As Edersheim notes, “The essential principle of them lay in this, that the Sadducees would hold by the simple letter of the law—do neither more nor less, whether the consequences were to make decisions more severe or more easy. The same principle they applied in their juridical and also in their doctrinal views. ...the reader will understand how this literality would...make their judicial decisions...far more strict than those of the Pharisees, by a rigidly literal application of the principle, “an eye for an eye; a tooth for a tooth.” In confirmation, Josephus says, “the sect of the Sadducees, who are very rigid in judging offenders, above all the rest of the Jews.”<sup>i</sup> This point is most unexpected by those who think the Pharisees were more strict than the Sadducees, but to miss this point would lead to a misrepresentation of the groups. The Pharisees were much more liberal in their interpretations, thus accounting for the body of tradition that grew up alongside the law. The Sadducees were much more conservative in their interpretations, thus accounting for their accommodations to Hellenism. Needless to say the views of the two groups collided, and the groups often clashed violently.

Their Sadducees doctrinal views are commonly known from the NT; they rejected the existence of angels, they rejected a world to come and the resurrection. However, the Talmud expressly states their official position saying, “the real principle of the Sadducees was not, that there was no resurrection, but only that it could not be proved from the Torah, or Law.” (Edersheim, pp 220-221). However, one can see that it is a short step from saying it cannot be proven to saying that there is no resurrection from the dead. As a result the common view of the majority of the Sadducees was that there was no resurrection of the dead. This view is clearly seen when Paul was on trial before the Sadducees and Pharisees and was able to divert attention away from himself by claiming to be “a Pharisee, a son of the Pharisees and on trial for the hope and resurrection of the dead” (Acts 23:7). At those words the Pharisees and Sadducees rushed headlong into a heated argument, the Pharisees for Paul and the Sadducees against him.

But at the root of the Sadducees rejection of the resurrection was the strict hyper-literalism which narrowed their beliefs down so far you could almost count them on one hand. They refused to even allow belief in the logical implications of the literal text. This is seen when the Sadducees questioned Jesus in Matt 22, asking him on the basis of the law that if a man die with no children then his brother should marry her in order to raise up children for his brother, whose wife she would be in the resurrection if she married seven brothers in order to have children. Jesus’ answer exposes their strict literalism. Citing Exodus 3 He says, “But regarding the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, “I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob”? He is not the God of the dead but of the living.” In other words, logically if God is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and they had died then they must be raised for Him to be their God. So the result of being hyper-literal was that the Sadducees religious views were a very small set of beliefs. The purpose of this was to enable them to justify accommodating to Hellenistic culture.

So in my understanding, on one hand, the Pharisees had a very large body of beliefs including the entire OT and with their liberal method of interpreting it resulted in the addition of oral tradition alongside the OT. On the other hand, the Sadducees had a very narrow body of beliefs including only the

Torah and with their hyper literal method of interpreting it resulted in the ability to adapt to pagan culture.

During the time of relative independence, particularly during the reign of John Hyrcanus (135-105BC) these two parties clashed bitterly. Hester says, “The antagonism between these two strong parties became so bitter that it ultimately wrecked the Maccabean kingdom and forfeited the political freedom of the Jews. John Hyrcanus died in 105BC. And was succeeded by Aristobulus I who ruled for only a year. He was succeeded by Alexander Jannaeus, who lived until 78BC. Both these were Sadducees. Jannaeus was vicious in his actions and was very severe in his treatment of the Pharisees. Jannaeus was succeeded by his wife, Alexandra, who was strongly pro-Pharisee. Under her rule the Pharisees were merciless in their treatment of the Sadducees. When Alexandra died in 69BC, an era of civil war broke out between her two sons, Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II. This bitter struggle for supremacy dragged on for six years neither one being able to gain a decisive victory. In 63BC Pompey the Roman general came upon the scene, and with his advent the period of Hebrew independence came to an end.” (Hester, p 326). Rand adds, “When Herod the Great assumed power in 37 BC, the Sadducees were again degraded, losing their majority in the Sanhedrin, though the high priest would still be a Sadducee (as in the case of Caiaphas).”<sup>1</sup> By the time of the NT they were thoroughly under the charge of the Pharisees. As Edersheim notes, “A Sadducee in the Temple or on the seat of judgment would be obliged to act and decide precisely like a Pharisee. Not that the party had not attempted to give dominance to their peculiar views. But they were fairly vanquished, and it is said that they themselves destroyed the book of Sadducean ordinances, which they had at one time drawn up...Whatever, therefore, the dogmatic views of the Sadducees were...in office both parties acted as Pharisees.” (p 219) In AD70, when the Romans under Titus destroyed Jerusalem and defeated the Jews sending them into Exile, the Sadducees disappeared as a class leaving only the Pharisees.

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<sup>1</sup> Du Rand, J. A. (1998). Groups in Jewish national life in the New Testament period. In A. B. du Toit (Ed.), *The New Testament Milieu* (Vol. 2). Halfway House: Orion Publishers.

I've taken you all the way into the NT but we've obviously breached the kingdom of Rome and so with this we want to review what was predicted through Daniel of this kingdom and then bring the Jews into contact with Rome so we are ready for the exposition of the NT. We've already seen Babylon, Medo-Persia and Greece predicted through the dreams and visions of Daniel 2, 7, 8 and 11. Now we come to the fourth kingdom predicted through the dreams and visions; Rome. Rome is first depicted in the dream of the four metal statue in Daniel 2 by the legs of iron and the feet and toes of iron mixed with clay (Dan 2:40-43). Since it's a divided kingdom the iron represents the first phase of Rome which would be entirely strong, having the ability to crush and shatter all its foes. The feet and toes of iron mixed with clay depicts the second phase of Rome which would be partly strong and partly brittle. When the strong and brittle elements of the kingdom try to come together in a one world kingdom they can't combine because of the diversity within the kingdom. After this the stone cut out without hands struck the statue at the base and turned the entire thing into chaff. The picture is that at that time the kingdom of God will come and crush the Roman kingdom, be established and endure forever. So the picture of Rome is more complex and we live after the fact, hindsight is always 20-20. But in the 1<sup>st</sup> century Gospels this is not clearly seen. I doubt very seriously anyone imagined Rome would come in two phases drawn up over 2,000 years. They're seeing this as one picture.

Then in Dan 7 Daniel has a dream of four great beasts coming up from the sea and these represent the same four kingdoms. Rome again is fourth in the order. This beast is dreadful, terrifying and extremely strong with large iron teeth and it tramples down the other beasts with its feet and huge bronze claws and it has ten horns. Then an eleventh horn, a little one, comes up among them and pulls out three of the horns by the roots and this little horn has eyes like a man and a mouth uttering great boasts. Then the beast was destroyed. The angel tells Daniel that the fourth beast would be a global kingdom that would devour the whole earth and that it would have ten contemporaneous kings and then an eleventh king who would arise and defeat three kings. He would speak out against the Most High God and persecute the Jewish believers and try to implement a one world religion but his rule would be destroyed forever. In its place the kingdom of God would come and fill the earth and endure forever. So that's the second picture of Rome and again, it's more complex, and we can see 20-20 since we live after

the ancient phase of Rome. But I doubt very seriously that anyone imagined Rome in two phases. They probably saw Rome as one phase or if they did see them as two phases then they likely saw them as progressing during the same time period and not spread out over 2,000 years. This is highly significant for the opening of the NT because for all intents and purposes, when the fourth kingdom, Rome, comes to power in 63BC with Pompey, then this is the final Gentile kingdom before the kingdom of God is restored. And so what you have to realize going into the NT is that the stage is set for the kingdom of God to come on the earth when the Messiah is born. The king was present and the king offered the kingdom but did the kingdom come? For the kingdom to come Rome has to run its entire course as outlined by Daniel. All Messianic prophecy has to be fulfilled. Did Rome run its entire course in the 1<sup>st</sup> century? Have all the prophecies concerning the Messiah been fulfilled? One of the major problems for every view that tries to say yes, is showing historical fulfillment. Who were the ten kings? Who was the anti-Christ? When did the Messiah return at His Second Advent? People have made sequential king lists of the Romans to try to make it fit, they've projected a 1<sup>st</sup> century identification of the anti-Christ as Nero and they've identified AD70 as Christ's Second Coming through Titus and the Roman Armies. But all these identifications have serious problems, not the least of which are the requirement that the Book of Revelation be written pre-AD70 and identifying Christ's Second Coming as a spiritual coming through the Roman armies and not physical. So how you interpret the Bible, your eschatology, your ecclesiology, and even aspects of your soteriology hinge on how you view Daniel's kingdom of Rome and whether it has run its course and whether or not the kingdom of God has been inaugurated. But interestingly, everything was in place for it to come in the 1<sup>st</sup> century.

So let's look at how Rome came to power. We mentioned that the Jews won their religious independence from the Seleucid king's through the Maccabean wars and how they subsequently won their political independence through negotiation. When the Maccabee John Hyrcanus came to the high-priesthood unlawfully, since he was not a priest according to the house of Zadok, the Pharisees "separated." It should be noted that he extended the kingdom into the region known as Edom on the other side of the Jordan and that all the inhabitants there were forced to convert to Judaism. Hyrcanus sided with the Sadducees as did his successors and took it out on the Pharisees. Alexander Jannaeus, for example, who lived until 78BC "was vicious in his actions and

was very severe in his treatment of the Pharisees.” However, the tables were turned when “Jannaeus was succeeded by his wife, Alexandra, who was strongly pro-Pharisee. Under her rule the Pharisees were merciless in their treatment of the Sadducees. When” she “died in 69BC, an era of civil war broke out between her two sons, Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II.” Their bitter struggle for supremacy dragged on for six years; neither one being able to gain a decisive victory. In 63BC Pompey the Roman general came upon the scene, and with his advent the period of Hebrew independence came to an end.” It unfolded as follows. Pompey initially came and conquered Syria. He then waited in Syria to evaluate the situation in Judea. He realized that Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II were engaged in a bitter civil war. Both realizing a possible ally that might give them the advantage went to him and put forth their best offer in order to gain his assistance in ousting the other. Pompey side with Hyrcanus II and in response Aristobulus took over Jerusalem. Pompey attacked Jerusalem and after three months Jerusalem fell. He sent Aristobulus to Rome as prisoner and entered the Holy of Holies which horrified the Jews. He then permitted Hyrcanus to rule but without a crown. Aristobulus escaped prison in Rome and returned only to continue the civil war. Pompey had appointed Antipater as an advisor to Hyrcanus and he was loyal to Pompey.

Meanwhile in Rome, Pompey was engaged in a power struggle with Julius Caesar. In 48BC Julius Caesar defeated Pompey and became sole ruler of Rome. Antipater realigned his loyalties to Caesar and was promoted to procurator over the Jews. He was an Idumean, a descendant of Edom/Esau, and after one year as procurator he was poisoned. Julius Caesar was assassinated in Rome and the triumvirate of Octavius and Antony vied for control. Antony was in charge of Syria, and the east, including Judea. He appointed Antipater’s son, Herod, later known as “the Great, as governor over the Galilee, and Antipater’s son, Phasaël, as governor over Jerusalem. Both of them practiced a form of Judaism since they were from Edom (descendants of Esau) known as Idumeans and their people had been forced to convert to Judaism by John Hyrcanus several decades before. Herod, however, was ousted by Antigonus and went to Rome pleading to be restored to power. In 39BC the Roman Senate appointed him “king of the Jews” and he returned to take control. He launched a campaign against Jerusalem and after three years was victorious and exercised his office of “king over the Jews”. To try and appease some of the Jews he married into the Maccabee



family, taking Mariamne I, the most beautiful woman in the land and daughter of Hyrcanus II, as his wife. As we mentioned he also practiced Judaism but it was not a form recognized by the Pharisees. They considered his Judaism overly decadent. However, it was accepted by some in Jewish society who became known as the Herodians and supported Herod's right to rule. They joined the Pharisees in trying to trap Jesus by asking Him whether it was lawful to pay a poll-tax to Caesar, or not (Matt 22:16-17). So there are all these groups in the NT but Herod is the key political figure. He came to power in 37BC and the picture is that this guy is an Idumean, he practices a form of Judaism and he married into the Maccabee family. So he's obviously trying to play to the Jews. But he's a very paranoid ruler. The guy thought he had an enemy behind every rock. And consequently if he suspected you were up to anything he'd have you knocked off. The guy was ruthless; he even had his wife Mariamne killed off and several of his children. People have suggested that he had secret police that went around reporting everyone's opinion of him and a bodyguard of 2,000 soldiers. Of course he was very extravagant and spent tons of money on huge building projects, thus called "the Great". He built the city of Caesarea by the Sea where the Roman garrison was stationed replete with a theatre, hippodrome and other forms of Roman entertainment inherited from the Greeks. He built a fortress at Masada overlooking the Dead Sea in order to escape assassins. And most importantly he extended and beautified the Temple Mount, laying the great stones that today you see make up the foundation of the Western Wall.

Just months before the death of Herod in 4BC God's 400 years of silence was broken when an angel of the Lord revealed to Zacharias the birth of a son who would go before the Lord and prepare the way for Him. Shortly thereafter the angel Gabriel announced to a young virgin in Nazareth the birth of the real king of the Jews. Unknown to Herod at the time a group of astronomers was traveling from Babylon looking for the king of the Jews who they knew of because of a star they had seen that would signal his birth. When they came to Jerusalem looking for his birthplace Herod called in the scribes to identify the location. Out of his paranoia for maintaining his kingship against all opposition, he plotted to assassinate the child. His satanically-inspired attempt was thwarted as the child escaped with his parents to Egypt until Herod died an excruciating death. Josephus reports that Herod was so concerned that no one would come to his funeral that he paid a distinguished group of Jewish men to mourn. When the distinguished

men arrived his servants were instructed to kill them so that the displays of grief over their deaths would take place at his death. However, this order was never carried out. In the wake his three sons took charge of his realm and so the dynasty continues into the NT. Thus we step into the NT with a very complex picture.

In summary, the eternal kingdom of God promised to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the twelve tribes to be ruled by a King from the line of David had disappeared in 586BC when the last Davidic king was ousted from the throne and the Jews came under captivity to the Babylonians. As revealed to Daniel the kingdom would not be restored until four Gentile kingdoms had run their course; Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. Under Babylon life was fairly good because the Most High God raised up Daniel and his friends into official governmental positions where they could work on behalf of their people. Extensive revelation was given outlining in detail the times of the Gentile kingdoms. It was during their stay in Babylon that the synagogue form of worship likely developed since the Temple lay in ruins in Jerusalem. Under Medo-Persia life was also good. Daniel served in the early years of Cyrus' administration and may have encouraged him to allow the Jews to return and rebuild the Temple. Many Jews remained in Babylon and formed one of the most important Jewish communities that still remained in the time of Christ, eventually producing the Babylonian Talmud which even takes precedent over the Jerusalem Talmud in modern Judaism. Only during the time of Ahasuerus did the evil Haman try to commit genocide against the Jews. But providentially God watched over them, turned the tables against Haman and exalted Mordecai. Later Artaxerxes authorized the return of Ezra to adorn the Temple and restore proper worship. His reforms led to the establishment of the Hasidim, a group of Jewish men who vowed to keep separate from paganism. Artaxerxes also authorized the return of his cupbearer Nehemiah and the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, a project completed in just fifty-two days. Malachi was the seal of the prophets, exhorting them to follow the Law of Moses and to watch for Elijah who would come to restore the kingdom. Sometime following this period the Jew/Samaritan split took place and the Samaritans built the alternate temple at Mt Gerizim in Samaria. Toward the end of the Persian period the Greek king Philip of Macedon was rising in power with globalist dreams and the autonomous spirit of rationalism. He developed the military formation known as the *phalanx* and the long spear known as the *sarissa*. When his

dreams of expanding into Persia were dashed his son Alexander the Great took control. Having inherited his father's military developments and dreams he set off to conquer Persia and Hellenize the world. Upon reaching Jerusalem he responded favorably to the Jews because of the vision he had seen of the priestly procession which greeted him there. Thus the Jews enjoyed religious freedom and freedom from taxation every seventh year throughout Alexander's kingdom. His conquests continued into Egypt where he built the famous city of Alexandria along with twenty other cities named after himself. This city too became a major population center for Jews who enjoyed citizenship equal to the Macedonians. It became a learning center oriented around the great library. It was the new center of Greek philosophy as Athens faded. Jews were forced to speak *koine* Greek as Alexander's Hellenistic policies were more rigorously implemented by later Greek kings. Eventually they sought to translate the Hebrew OT into Greek, a version known as the Septuagint or the LXX, which is the most commonly cited version of the OT by Christ and the apostles. Over time Greek rationalism gave rise to Greek philosophers interpreting their ancient literature allegorically to avoid the more embarrassing parts and yet maintain their heritage. Jews who studied Greek philosophy borrowed the allegorical method and applied to embarrassing parts of the OT. The Hasidim were obviously under pressure to Hellenize during the times of the Greeks and by the time of Antiochus IV Epiphanes this pressure came to a head. When Mattathias was put to the test to offer sacrifice to Zeus at Modein he refused, struck down a Jew who tried to sacrifice as well as the emissary of Antiochus. The Maccabean revolt had begun and in remarkable displays of strategy and bravery the rebel group defeated Antiochus' armies with crushing blows. Having won their religious freedom the Hasidim were content to stop fighting. However, the Maccabees soon went apostate in their desire for power. They brokered a political deal and took the high priesthood, contrary to Levitical law, but gained political independence. The Hasidim rejected their high priesthood and many suffered martyrdom. Two groups developed out of this schism, the Pharisees who separated and the Sadducees who capitulated. Whichever side the high priest was on exercised vicious treatment of the other. At first the Sadducees held the upper hand but then the Pharisees took command. When the two sects erupted into a full scale civil war for six years, with neither side able to convincingly defeat the other, the Roman general Pompey came on the scene. He sided with the Pharisees but installed his own advisors. Jewish political freedom had come to an end.

Now Rome was in charge. Eventually Herod the great would be proclaimed “king of the Jews” by the Roman Senate. He was an Idumean who married into the Maccabean family and being paranoid executed anyone who might threaten his reign. It was just before his excruciating death that an angel of the Lord revealed the birth of John, the forerunner of the king, and the angel Gabriel revealed the birth of the king himself. God’s silence was broken, the kingdom of God was on the verge of being restored. A very large and disturbing caravan of astronomers had arrived from the east searching for the one called “King of the Jews.” On the forefront of their minds should have been Malachi’s concluding words, obey the Law of Moses and watch for Elijah the prophet. But the picture was much more complex and the average Jews concerns were upon different matters. The Pharisees, for the most part associated with the scribes, and the leaders of the people, had developed oral tradition which took precedence over the written word of God. Their external righteousness, such as emphasis on ritual purity and tithing, led Christ to condemn them as blind leaders of the blind and whitewashed tombs. The Sadducees were wealthy and powerful in their own respect and in control of the high priesthood and the Temple, but were held in check by the Pharisees who dominated the field. The average Jew attended synagogue and was taught by scribes or Pharisees. They quoted rabbi after rabbi to support their traditions which nullified the word of God. The Samaritans kept their distance in the north where they worshipped what they did not know at Mt Gerizim. The Herodians sided with and supported the Herod’s. The Zealots, another small group, were radically anti-Rome and secretly waged war against Roman officials, even slaying them in the open air markets. Many Hellenized Jews lived at large in the Diaspora, never having returned to the land and thus spurned by the natives of the land.

In this complex picture, who was this John the Baptist who wore a garment of camel’s hair and a leather belt around his waist and whose food was locusts and wild honey? He sounds like a prophet of old. What was his message? Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Had the forerunner predicted by Malachi come? Would the king arrive soon at His temple and cleanse it? Did the one coming after him whose sandals he was unworthy to untie have the Messianic credentials of David? Was the time of the Gentiles coming to an end and the kingdom of God being restored? These are the questions of profound importance.



<sup>i</sup> Josephus, F., & Whiston,. (1987). *The works of Josephus: complete and unabridged*. Peabody: Hendrickson.

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