

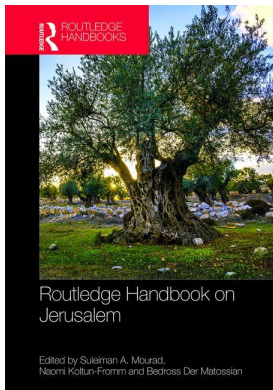
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3

FROM THE BABYLONIAN EXILE THROUGH THE HASMONEAN PERIOD

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Introduction: the scope of the available sources

There are extensive literary sources and archaeological finds dating from the Second Temple period in Jerusalem. Unfortunately, the best and the most extensive of these relate to the Herodian period, from 37 BCE until the destruction of Jerusalem and its Temple in 70 CE. The earlier parts of the Second Temple period in Jerusalem, those periods under discussion here, enjoy less documentation and have benefitted to a lesser extent from new archaeological excavations and finds.

There are a few sources describing Jerusalem in the Persian period (539–332 BCE); most of them are biblical books such as Ezra, Nehemiah, Chronicles, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi. The archaeological material from that time is negligible. The early Hellenistic period up until the time right before the appearance of the Hasmoneans (332–175 BCE) likewise suffers from a dearth of material. More primary sources relate to the second part of the Hellenistic period (175–37 BCE). These include the second half of Daniel, 1–2 Maccabees and a number of books from the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha such as Jubilees, parts of Enoch and perhaps Judith. The Jewish historian Josephus (1987), the Dead Sea scrolls and some Hellenistic writings also provide information. The archaeology of this time in Jerusalem begins to provide significant finds (Levine 2002: xiv–xv). It is important to remember though that a descriptive study such as the one provided in this chapter, due to constraints of space, sometimes presents facts based on these sources as if they were clear-cut or non-contested. None of these sources, including those that purport to be history such as Josephus, would pass muster today as objective historical sources and sometimes entire studies could be devoted to the interpretation of this or that source that is cited here.

Destruction

Jerusalem suffered extensive damage at the hands of the Babylonians around 586 BCE, after a siege of about a year and a half. According to the biblical account, the Temple and the palace were burnt (2 Kings 25:9), evidence of Nebuchadrezzar's desire to eliminate Jerusalem as a religious and political center (Lipshits 2005: 80–81). The houses of the city were destroyed, the

walls of Jerusalem were pulled down (2 Kings 25:10) and most inhabitants of Jerusalem were exiled (2 Kings 25:11; cf. Jeremiah 39:9, 52:15). Those who remained struggled to make sense of the new Temple-less reality. Thus, a few brief months after the destruction, eighty pilgrims from Schechem, Shiloh and Samaria came to mourn the destruction and offer sacrifice at the remains of the Temple (Jeremiah 41:5; Japhet 2000: 369–370). This practice, though, would not continue.

The available archaeological information is consistent with the biblical account of devastation. Evidence was found for the destruction of houses and the wall on the eastern slope of the City of David at the end of the Iron Age. Evidence of destruction and fire was also discovered in the City of David itself, in the citadel and the Ophel. While there is some discussion among archaeologists as to whether the city was entirely destroyed, there is certainly agreement on a massive destruction and depletion of population. The archaeological evidence seems to suggest a gap in settlement from the Babylonian destruction until the middle of the Persian period (Lipshits 2005: 210–218).

The Persian period

The biblical account picks up again with its description of the Restoration of Zion with king Cyrus allowing the exiles to return to Jerusalem. According to Ezra 1, in 539 BCE, the first year after Cyrus, king of Persia, had conquered Babylonia, he proclaimed that God had charged the king to build Him a house in Jerusalem, i.e. to rebuild the Temple (Ezra 1:2). In addition, those Jews who wished to return to the Land of Israel to participate in the building could do so, and those who wished to remain in Babylonia could contribute money or materials (Ezra 1:3–4). Another version of the proclamation appears in Ezra 6:1–5. This version, more likely the official one, provides details on the measurements of the Temple and the materials to be used in its construction, orders that the Temple utensils be returned and, most importantly, states that the king would cover the expenses. The returnees were led by Sheshbazzar (Ezra 1:8), a scion of the royal Davidic family, and later by Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, and the high priest Joshua, son of Jehozadak (Ezra 3:2).

As the mandate of the returnees had been to rebuild the Temple, this was the first order of business. Shortly after their return, there was a gathering in Jerusalem in the seventh month, Tishri. The sacrificial altar was set up, daily sacrifice was restored and monies were sent to Phoenicia for building supplies (Ezra 3: 1–7). Six months later, the work began (Ezra 3: 10–13). After the foundations had been laid, the “adversaries of Judah and Benjamin” asked Zerubbabel to join in the construction (Ezra 4:1–2). Their advances were rejected, and these adversaries then undertook political steps to have the building cease (Ezra 4:3–5). They were ultimately successful (Ezra 4:24). The construction was not resumed until 521 BCE, the second year of the reign of Darius.

At that time, the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, apparently sensing that the reign of the new king Darius who had succeeded Cambyses, son of Cyrus, might prove propitious (Ezra 5:1), called for the construction to begin anew (Ezra 5:2). The Book of Haggai, which makes no mention of the returnees from Babylonia, provides details on the exhortations of Haggai to the residents of Jerusalem to get them to return to the building project (Haggai 1–2). As work on the Temple had been contested before, the Persian governor Tatnai ordered the work to cease again until the issue of Cyrus’s permission could be checked (Ezra 5:17) and until Darius could give instructions as to whether to proceed. The king ordered that the archives be searched. The original decree was found, and Tatnai allowed the work to resume in accordance with that decree (Ezra 6:1–7). The building was completed on the third of Adar 516 BCE, followed by a joyous dedication ceremony and the celebration of Passover (Ezra 6:14–22). There are no

contemporary sources which provide even the slightest indication as to how this Temple looked, except for its modest proportions (Haggai 2:3; Ezra 3:12; Zechariah 4:10).

There is very little information as to what happened in Jerusalem for the next 65 years or so; neither do we know much about what it looked like at this time. It is possible that Jerusalem was not even the capital of the region, but rather Mitzpeh, north of the city which served in that capacity. Some scholars feel that the extensive archaeological remains from Ramat Rahel to the south, possibly the biblical Beth ha-Kerem, indicate that this was the administrative center of the province of *Yehud*.¹ Since the lack of a city wall probably prevented Jerusalem from a full recovery, at some time during the mid-fifth century BCE, during the reign of Artaxerxes I (464–423 BCE), the residents of Jerusalem attempted to rebuild the city walls, although they had not received permission to do so. Local officials wrote to the king stating the dangers in allowing the Jews to continue the building, and the work ceased (Ezra 4:8–23).

The two figures who had profound influence on Jerusalem throughout the rest of the Persian period were Ezra and Nehemiah, the former from a religious standpoint and the latter in terms of the physical development of the city. Ezra was a priest and a scribe. Nehemiah became the local governor (*pehah*). In spite of their importance, however, it is not certain when they arrived individually in Jerusalem, who came first, and how many times they came and went (Demskey 1994). We shall briefly describe their activities in Jerusalem.

The failed attempt to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem probably had a profound effect on the residents of the city. One of them reported to a cupbearer of the king, Nehemiah, son of Hachaliah, as to the dire state of Jerusalem and its residents. The king, who was fond of Nehemiah, authorized him to go to Jerusalem and rebuild the city. Nehemiah arrived in Jerusalem in 445 BCE (Nehemiah 1–2:8) and was appointed *pehah* or governor of the province for twelve years (Nehemiah 5:14). Nehemiah knew that his first order of business was the rebuilding of the city walls, the project that Artaxerxes had already stopped once but now was apparently willing to approve (Nehemiah 2:8).

Three days after arriving, Nehemiah, with a minimum of fanfare, took a nighttime tour of what was left of the earlier walls. He departed from the Valley Gate moving south, passed by the Dung Gate, turned north, passed the Fountain Gate and could no longer continue because of the destruction and devastation. He turned around and retraced his steps (Nehemiah 2:13–15).

The geographical information related in these verses, as well as that pertaining to the construction and re-construction of the walls, highlights the problems regarding the understanding of the physical makeup of the city. So far, we have been discussing Persian period Jerusalem but have not defined the boundaries of that city, and that is not an easy task. What were the boundaries of Persian period Jerusalem? Were they the same as those of the city destroyed in 586 BCE, which included the Southeastern Hill (Temple Mount, Ophel and City of David), the Southwestern Hill, and the Central (Tyropoeon) Valley between them? Or was the city comprised basically of just the Southeastern Hill (Ussishkin 2012: 122–124)? The biblical texts provide little help, although they do indicate that Nehemiah had to deal with fewer people in Jerusalem than there were in the late Iron Age city (e.g. Nehemiah 11:1–2). It would have made more sense, perhaps, to concentrate them in a smaller area, but scattering them around a larger city might have been of symbolic importance (cf. Nehemiah 7:4), and some have seen this verse as proof for a larger city (Ben-Dov 2002: 84–88).

The lack of archaeological remains, however, actually provides some help. No Persian period settlement at all was discovered in any of the areas excavated in relation to the Southwestern Hill (e.g. the Jewish Quarter, the Armenian Quarter, Mount Zion) (Ussishkin 2012: 116). It indicates that the minimalist school is probably correct: settlement at the time was limited to the City of David and the Temple Mount (Tsafirir 1977; Eshel 2000). According to this view,

the Valley Gate led to the Central Valley and not to the Ben Hinon Valley. This view, though, does have difficulties, such as the large number of city gates (ten to twelve) in a relatively small wall, as gates weakened the wall's defensive capacities (Ben-Dov 2002: 84–88). This and other considerations have led some to return to the old maximalist theory, in spite of the low population, and, thus, Nehemiah undertook some repairs of the old Judahide wall, even if the area was basically abandoned (Ussishkin 2012: 124–125).

Needless to say, all of this makes it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to pinpoint the location of the gates mentioned by Nehemiah or the various houses (e.g. Azariah, Benjamin et al.) or other sites (e.g. artificial pool, stairs descending from the City of David, the “Angle”) found in the description of the building and the subsequent dedication ceremony (Nehemiah 3:1–32, 12:31–40). However, most scholars who study the size of the city also ventured hypotheses regarding the components of both wall and city. It is not clear how long the construction took. According to the Bible, it took 52 days (Nehemiah 6:15), but two years and four months according to Josephus (1987, *Antiquities* 11.179).

Both Ezra and Nehemiah also dealt with social and religious problems in Jerusalem (Weinberg 2000). Ezra was particularly concerned with intermarriage and assembled the people in the plaza in front of the Temple for three days during a winter and convinced them to send away their non-Jewish wives. Their agreement was rather short-lived (Ezra 10:9–44). Nehemiah was also upset by intermarriage (Nehemiah 13:23–24) and undertook various steps to prevent it or to break up existing mixed families (Nehemiah 9:2, 10:31), and sometimes things got violent (Nehemiah 13:25). He too met with little success.

Nehemiah tried to increase the population of Jerusalem by forcing some of the rural population, through the casting of lots, to move to Jerusalem (Nehemiah 11:1). While he could not turn Jerusalem into a metropolis or economic center, he did improve its status, and the city was frequented by foreign merchants plying their wares. Unfortunately, some of them came to Jerusalem on the Sabbath, and Nehemiah also dealt successfully with this issue, preventing desecration of the Sabbath (Nehemiah 13:16–22). The improvement in economic conditions apparently did not affect the entire population of Jerusalem. The rich got richer, but many of the poor lost their holdings and were enslaved by the well-to-do. Nehemiah intervened and forced the return of the lands and the redemption of those who had been enslaved due to debt (Nehemiah 5:1–13). This was part of Nehemiah's attempt to limit the power of the upper classes – which also strengthened him – and to introduce egalitarian elements into Jerusalem society.

Nebuchadnezzar may have desired to eliminate Jerusalem as a religious and a political center (see earlier), and for a time he may have succeeded. Jerusalem certainly got off to a shaky start during the Persian period, and there were other important cities in the area of the Persian province of Yehud, but Jerusalem is the only city there referred to at this time as *ʿir ha-Kodesh*, meaning city of holiness (Nehemiah 11:1). With a functioning temple, it certainly was the religious center of the province, and for Ezra-Nehemiah, it was also clearly the administrative center of the province. In reality, though, there were other possibilities, such as Ramat Rahel, which may still have functioned as such. What happened in Jerusalem for the next few decades, those decades not within the purview of the biblical narrative? For the moment, we do not know and have no way of knowing. At best, we can only venture a guess that Jerusalem remained a backwater, small city whose inhabitants continued to face the challenges described here.

Alexander the Great

The conquest of the Land of Israel by Alexander the Great in 332 BCE was an important watershed in the history both of Jerusalem and of the entire country. This was the first time

that a conqueror came from the West and not the East, bringing with him a new culture that would change the face of a good part of the East, including the Land of Israel. This, though, would take a good deal of time. For the moment, while it is clear that Alexander at least passed through the Land of Israel, it is far from certain that he actually visited Jerusalem. In spite of the elaborate depiction in Josephus (1987, *Antiquities* 11.302–347) of the dramatic meeting between Alexander and the High Priest Yadaia, many scholars have found the tradition unreliable, since there is no corroborating evidence in any other source, Jewish or non-Jewish. Did Alexander prostrate himself before Yadaia at their meeting on Mount Scopus? We shall probably never know (Rainey and Notley 2006: 298–299).

Alexander died in 323 BCE, and his empire was divided among three of his generals after a number of years of wars and struggle (The Wars of Succession or the Wars of the Diadochi). Antigonus I Monophthalmus (382–301 BCE) gained Macedonia, Seleucus I Nicator (358–281 BCE) ruled in Syria and Asia, and Ptolemy I Soter (366–282 BCE) controlled Egypt.

Ptolemaic rule

The Land of Israel was an important land bridge between the empires of Ptolemy and Seleucus and control of the Land of Israel would be a point of contention between the two empires. The Ptolemies gained control first. Josephus (1987, *Antiquities* 12.1–7) tells us how Ptolemy I Soter (r. 323–283) conquered Jerusalem on the Sabbath, after convincing the Jews that he came in peace. The Ptolemies ruled until 198 BCE. While relations between the Jews and the Ptolemies may have gotten off to a rocky start, things apparently improved quickly, with the Jewish authorities in Jerusalem minting Ptolemaic coins and taking part in international Hellenistic trade. Both I Maccabees and Josephus cite a treaty document between the citizens of Jerusalem and Sparta (I Maccabees 12: 20–23; Josephus 1987, *Antiquities* 12. 225–227). Scholarship is divided as to the authenticity of the document, but even if it is only a literary creation, it still provides background as to the possible status of Jerusalem (Rappaport 2004: 288). In spite of all this though, it should be remembered that, by international standards, Jerusalem was still very much a backwater city.

What did Jerusalem look like at this time? Most scholars see early Hellenistic period Jerusalem as a small city, the city that included only the Southeastern Hill. There are few archaeological remains from this time because of the extensive building projects of Herod much later on, so archaeology is of little help here. There are, however, two literary accounts which purport to describe the Jerusalem of the Ptolemaic period, although it is highly doubtful that they really date from that time or describe the reality of the time. They are, however, what is available, so I will briefly discuss them.

The first source is the description of Pseudo Hecataeus of Abdera who lived during the time of Alexander and Ptolemy Soter (Josephus 1987, *Against Apion* 1.183). Josephus quotes him as stating that Jerusalem was a large, populous and fortified city with a temple at its center. Hecataeus describes the altars, the menorah and the silent, efficient work of the priests who refrain from drinking wine (Josephus 1987, *Against Apion* 1.198–199). The second is Pseudo Aristea and purports to describe events during the time of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (283–246 BCE) and especially the translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek. The dating options run from 250–200 BCE to 150–100 BCE to as late as the first century CE, and the author might possibly have been an Egyptian Jew. Some say that both Pseudo Hecataeus and Pseudo Aristeas date to the end of the second century BCE (Bar-Kochva 1996). Aristeas places Jerusalem in the center of the Land of Israel, built on a mountain. He describes the walls of the Temple Mount, the gates to the Mount, altars and an underground drainage system. He spends a good deal of time on the

silent work of the priests and the splendor of the High Priest, and he ends with a description of the Birah, the fortress of Jerusalem north of the Temple Mount, perhaps the Hasmonean Baris (see later) (Aristeas 83–107).

Another description, which might relate to perceptions of Jerusalem in the Ptolemaic period (or perhaps afterwards), is found in Ben Sira 50:1–24. This book is the work of Shim'on ben Yeshua' ben Eleazar ben Sira, a Jerusalem scribe and sage from the early second century BCE, which describes the splendor of the High Priest Simeon, son of Johanan (Onias) officiating in the Temple, as well as construction and repairs to the Temple and adjacent areas during his time.

Seleucid rule

As mentioned earlier, the Land of Israel was important from a geo-political standpoint, and a number of wars were fought between the Ptolemaic and Seleucid empires over control of this land bridge. Between 201 and 198 BCE, Antiochus III, ruler of the Syrian Seleucid dynasty, managed to conquer the Land of Israel, including Jerusalem, from the Ptolemies, apparently with the help of the Jews. Jerusalem suffered damage during the course of the fighting. To show his appreciation, Antiochus granted the Jews religious autonomy and other privileges. He also provided supplies for the Temple and its cult (Josephus 1987, *Antiquities* 12.133–146).

II Maccabees provides most of the information regarding the next few years in Jerusalem, and it is often difficult to separate the chaff of historical legend from historical reality. Relations of the Seleucid rulers with the Jews and Jerusalem remained good, although not at the level of absolute harmony, even after Antiochus died in 187 BCE and his son Seleucus IV succeeded him. The situation changed, foretelling what was to become the norm later, when internal Jewish strife between the High Priest Onias and Simeon, who was in charge of the Temple administration, prompted the Seleucids to intervene, sending a Seleucid official named Heliodorus to Jerusalem to confiscate Temple funds. He did so and, according to tradition, was struck down by a heavenly rider. Heliodorus quickly realized his mistake, returned the money and repaired the Seleucid's relationship with the population in Jerusalem (II Maccabees 3:1–40). While the depiction of Heliodorus' incursion into the Temple is tainted with legend, it does seem to reflect a changing Seleucid policy of increased financial oversight over local sanctuaries, and this would sour the relationship between Jerusalem Jews and Seleucids.

Seleucus IV died in 175 BCE and was succeeded by his brother Antiochus IV Epiphanes. During his reign, tension between Hellenists and non-Hellenists increased in Jerusalem and consequently between Jerusalem and Antioch. In 175, Jason, a “moderate” Hellenist, was appointed High Priest by the Seleucids after he managed to depose his brother Onias. Jason received permission from the king to turn Jerusalem into a *polis* called Antioch and constructed a gymnasium and *epehebea* in the city. Unfortunately, lacking any archaeological evidence, we have no way of knowing for sure where these Hellenistic buildings were, although it is important to remember that Jerusalem at this time was still limited to the Southeastern Hill. Some scholars seek them near the Temple Mount, which would undoubtedly have increased friction between Hellenists and non-Hellenists, the latter representing most of the residents of Jerusalem. Jason served as High Priest until 172 BCE, when he was deposed by Menelaus, a “radical” Hellenist, who, according to accounts in II Maccabees, invited Antiochus to come up to Jerusalem and help himself to Temple utensils and funds (II Maccabees 5:15–16).

In 168 BCE, the Seleucids built a fortress, the Akra, in Jerusalem (I Maccabees 1:36). The location of the Akra has bedeviled scholars. Some saw it to the north of the Temple Mount, where the Ptolemaic fortress had probably been constructed. Others placed it southeast or south of the Temple. Some even located it in the City of David or on the Southwestern Hill

of Jerusalem. The literary evidence is not conclusive; the archaeological evidence is sparse. Recently, however, the excavations in the northwestern area of the City of David have uncovered a large public building which has been tentatively identified by some as the Seleucid Akra (Ben-Ami and Tchekhanovets 2015).

The Hasmonean revolt

On the 25th of Kislev 167 BCE, the Seleucids desecrated the altar of the Temple and initiated a series of decrees against the Jews and Judaism. The Hasmonean Revolt broke out soon afterwards (I Maccabees 1: 54–59). After three years of fighting, Jerusalem was captured by Judah Maccabee, and the Temple was purified and re-dedicated (Hanukah) (I Maccabees 4:36–60). Judah was to rule in Jerusalem for only a year or so, and he never was able to conquer the Akra. When Judah left after his forces were defeated in 162 BCE at Beth Zechariah, south of the city, Menelaus returned and served briefly as High Priest and, in 159 BCE, was succeeded by Alcimus for a while (Bar-Kochva 1989). After Judah's death in battle in 161, his brothers retreated to the Wilderness of Tekoa, south of Jerusalem (I Maccabees 9: 1–23). According to Josephus, the Temple functioned for a number of years without a High Priest at all (1987, *Antiquities* 20.237).

Hasmonean Jerusalem

In 152 BCE, the Seleucid king Alexander Balas appointed Jonathan, Judah's brother, as High Priest, who then returned to Jerusalem under Seleucid auspices (I Maccabees 10:15–21). One of Jonathan's first acts was to strengthen and raise the height of the city walls, to repair sections which had collapsed, as well as to build a new wall to isolate the Akra (I Maccabees 12:36–37; Geva 2015).

Simeon, Jonathan's brother, took over in 143 BCE and, in 141 BCE, finally managed to conquer and raze the Seleucid Akra (I Maccabees 13:52). A year later, at a large assembly in Jerusalem, Simeon and his family were ratified by the people as High Priests and army commanders until a prophet might appear. The decisions were inscribed on copper tablets and placed in a prominent spot on the Temple Mount (I Maccabees 14:4–49). All of this made Jerusalem the capital of the Hasmonean state, and Jerusalem now replaced Ramat Rahel (see earlier) in all aspects of rule and administration. It was at this time that the Southwestern Hill most likely began to be settled, reflecting the growth in status and the undoubtedly increased population of Jerusalem. It is also likely that, at this time, the First Wall was built (or expanded) to include these new neighborhoods of the city.

Simon's son, John Hyrcanus, ascended to the throne in 134 BCE. Two years later, the Seleucid king, Antiochus VII Sidetes, laid siege to Jerusalem in order to restore Seleucid rule and hegemony. Ultimately, John Hyrcanus submitted and recognized Seleucid authority over the city. Excavations at the Citadel, near the First Wall and the present-day Jaffa Gate, have revealed numerous weapons left behind by the Seleucid army. This would seem to serve as proof that that wall existed by this time. It also apparently withstood the Seleucid onslaught (Josephus 1987, *Antiquities* 13.236–253). John Hyrcanus went on to rule successfully, being the first Hasmonean ruler to mint coins. He was succeeded by his son Judah Aristobolos in 105 BCE, who ruled for only one year and who was the first Hasmonean to take the title king (Josephus 1987, *Antiquities* 13.301; *War* 1.70). He was succeeded by his brother Alexander Jannaeus, who ruled until 76 BCE.

During the reign of Alexander Jannaeus, an aqueduct bringing water to the Temple was constructed between the pools south of Bethlehem and the Temple Mount. By the time of

Alexander, the Hasmonean royal palace, from which one could see the Temple Mount, was probably already in existence (Josephus 1987, *Antiquities* 20:189–195; *War* 1.143). Unfortunately, there are no clear-cut archaeological remains of this palace, and it is impossible to locate it with any certainty. The classic suggested location was in the Upper City, or Southwestern Hill, right near its decline into the Tyropoeon Valley. Lately, it has been suggested that some of the impressive Hasmonean period remains discovered in the Citadel might be remains of the palace (Geva 2015). This was the general area in which Herod would later build his palace.

After her husband Alexander's death in 76 BCE, Salome Alexandra ruled until 67 BCE. Her rule apparently did not result in any changes in the physical appearance or history of Jerusalem, at least to the extent that we can determine this. Her two sons, however, would ultimately bring about the fall of the Hasmoneans and the rise of the Herodians, and that would greatly affect Jerusalem. The older, Hyrcanus, was weak and was appointed High Priest, and his brother Aristobolos was commander of the army. Upon his mother's death, Aristobolos seized the throne. Hyrcanus did not fight but fled to Petra, capital of the Nabateans. His advisor, Antipatros, the father of Herod, convinced Hyrcanus to persuade the Nabatean king, Aretas, to support him and to place him on the throne, and Aretas attacked Jerusalem in 65 BCE. During the course of the fighting, Aristobolos's forces held the Temple Mount while those of Hyrcanus were below. Josephus (and later rabbinic tradition) relate how Hyrcanus's men took payment for livestock to be sent up to the Temple Mount but did not send the animals (Josephus 1987, *Antiquities* 14.19–28; cf. Tractate B. Sotah 48b and parallels).

The two brothers jockeyed for Roman recognition. Finally, Pompey, the Roman legate in the area, granted rule to Hyrcanus. Aristobolos, who had promised to hand over Jerusalem, reneged on his promise. Pompey began to move his forces in the direction of Jerusalem (Josephus 1987, *Antiquities* 14.48–55; *War* 1.133–139). Aristobolos promised a second time, but his forces still refused to hand over the city. Hyrcanus opened the gates of Jerusalem for Pompey. The forces of Aristobolos retreated to the Temple Mount, burning the bridge which connected the Temple Mount to the city (Josephus 1987, *War* 1.143). The Romans built their siege works on the Sabbath when the Jewish forces did not fight back, and after three months, in the summer of 63 BCE, the Roman forces broke through to the Temple Mount, killing thousands. Pompey entered the Temple and Holy of Holies but refrained from pillaging from the Temple (Josephus 1987, *Antiquities* 14.57–71; *War* 1.141–151).

Hyrcanus was appointed ethnarch, the “leader” or “ruler” of the people, a lesser rank than king. The real power, however, was in the hands of his advisor, Antipatros, who quickly placed his sons, including Herod, in positions of power.

After Antipatros was murdered in 43 BCE, his two sons, Herod and Phasael, were appointed rulers by Rome, but two years later, the Parthians invaded and Aristobolos's son, Mattathias Antigonus, joined them. Mattathias, with Parthian support, was crowned king. Herod then travelled to Rome to seek their support, and three years later, in 37 BCE, conquered Jerusalem and effectively became ruler with the aid of Roman forces.

All of these events are described in Josephus (1987) and are understood fairly well. Unfortunately, the archaeology of the city at this time is very problematic. It is still not possible to determine the size of Jerusalem when Herod conquered the city, i.e. when Hasmonean rule came to an end. Did it include the Second Wall of Jerusalem that extended to include some northern neighborhoods, or was that wall built only by Herod? Recently, scholars have claimed that because there was a Hasmonean aqueduct bringing water running north to south in the direction of the Temple Mount, and because there are some signs of Jewish settlement at that time to the north of the Temple Mount and First Wall, it is likely that the Second Wall had been built by the Hasmoneans (Geva 2015).

Note

- 1 See in detail in The Ramat Raḥel Archaeological Project, www.tau.ac.il/~rnmtrachl/archaeology%20of%20site.htm, accessed on March 17, 2017.

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