

A History of the Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple Period

Volume 3

The Maccabaeen Revolt, Hasmonaean Rule, and Herod the Great (175–4 BCE)



Lester L. Grabbe

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for our newsletters.

To my sisters

Ina Lou

Birdie Susan

Ronda Glen

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JUDAISM FROM ONIAS III TO HEROD THE GREAT: A HOLISTIC PERSPECTIVE

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PREFACE

The present volume has been too long in coming, for which I apologize. Having done two volumes of this work (2004, 2008), I expected to finish the next two volumes promptly after retiring. Unfortunately, after being free from day-to-day teaching and administration, I accepted a number of invitations, mostly for short pieces, all worthwhile and interesting but time consuming. Then it dawned on me that I was letting these many articles distract me from my main projects. But there was also a lot of necessary editing, as well as a long-planned monograph on evolution and creation. So, a decade after volume 2, here is volume 3, though I hope that the 4th and final volume will not be long delayed.

One of the obstacles to completing this volume was the many recent studies on the Maccabean period, a good number of which have appeared since the year 2000. They have taken time to digest but have also paid rich dividends in new ideas and interpretations, for which I am immensely grateful. Those of us who do not live near major research libraries often find access to necessary publications, especially secondary studies, a difficulty. For this and other reasons, I am particularly grateful to individuals who have kindly made their studies available to me or otherwise been helpful in researching this volume. Andrea Berlin very kindly invited me to a conference on the Middle Maccabean Period in June 2018 and also supplied one of her articles at short notice. Sylvia Honigman gave me a copy of her ground-breaking, *Tales of High Priests and Taxes: The Books of the Maccabees and the Judean Rebellion against Antiochos IV*, which has been a major stimulus. Edward Dąbrowa generously passed on a copy of *The Hasmoneans and their State: A Study in History, Ideology, and the Institutions*, which is otherwise not easy to access. Menahem Mor sent me a copy of the volume, *Jews and Gentiles in the Holy Land in the Days of the Second Temple, the Mishnah and the Talmud: A Collection of Articles*, that he co-edited. Reinhard Pummer, whose work is so important for Samaritan studies, very kindly made a gift of his *Samaritans in Flavius Josephus*. There are no doubt others whom I have overlooked, for which I profusely apologize. But I am

grateful for these generous gifts and thank the givers for the fruit of their scholarly labours. I am also profoundly grateful to those predecessors and colleagues who have done so much work in elucidating this period in history. I just hope my own work building on and interacting with their studies does justice to their efforts.

Lester L. Grabbe
Kingston-upon-Hull
1 May 2019

ABBREVIATIONS

AASOR	Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research
AAWG	Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen
AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	David Noel Freedman (ed.) (1992) <i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> (vols 1-6)
AfO	<i>Archiv für Orientforschung</i>
AGAJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
AIEJL	T. C. Vriezen, and A. S. van der Woude (2005) <i>Ancient Israelite and Early Jewish Literature</i>
AJA	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
AJAH	<i>American Journal of Ancient History</i>
AJBA	<i>Australian Journal of Biblical Archaeology</i>
AJP	<i>American Journal of Philology</i>
AJS Review	<i>American Jewish Studies Review</i>
AJSL	<i>American Journal of Semitic Languages</i>
ALD	<i>Aramaic Levi Document</i>
ALGHJ	<i>Arbeiten zur Literatur und Geschichte des hellenistischen Judentums</i>
A.M.	<i>anno mundi</i> , a dating system which begins with the supposed date of the world's creation
AnBib	Analecta biblica
AncSoc	<i>Ancient Society</i>
ANET	J. B. Pritchard (ed.) (1969) <i>Ancient Near Eastern Texts relating to the Old Testament</i>
AnOr	Analecta orientalia
ANRW	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i>
Ant.	Josephus, <i>Antiquities of the Jews</i>
Arav	R. Arav (1989) <i>Hellenistic Palestine: Settlement Patterns and City Planning, 337–31 B.C.E.</i>
ASORAR	American Schools of Oriental Research Archaeological Reports
ASTI	<i>Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute</i>
ATR	<i>Anglican Theological Review</i>
AUSS	<i>Andrews University Seminary Studies</i>
AUSTIN	M. M. Austin (2006) <i>The Hellenistic World from Alexander to the Roman Conquest: A Selection of Ancient Sources in Translation</i>

<i>BA</i>	<i>Biblical Archeologist</i>
BAGNALL AND DEROW	R. S. Bagnall and P. Derow (eds.) (2004) <i>The Hellenistic Period: Historical Sources in Translation</i>
<i>BAR</i>	<i>Biblical Archaeology Review</i>
<i>BASOR</i>	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
BCE	Before the Common Era (= BC)
<i>BCH</i>	<i>Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique</i>
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
<i>BHS</i>	<i>Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensis</i>
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
BibOr	Biblica et orientalia
BiOr	Biblica et orientalia
<i>BJRL</i>	<i>Bulletin of the John Rylands Library</i>
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
<i>BO</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Orientalis</i>
<i>BSOAS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Study</i>
<i>BTB</i>	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
BURSTEIN	S. M. Burstein (1985) <i>The Hellenistic Age from the Battle of Ipsus to the Death of Kleopatra VII.</i>
<i>BZ</i>	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>
BZAW	Beihefte zur <i>ZAW</i>
BZNW	Beihefte zur <i>ZNW</i>
<i>CAH</i>	<i>Cambridge Ancient History</i> (1st edition)
<i>CAH²</i>	<i>Cambridge Ancient History</i> (2nd edition)
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CBQMS	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i> Monograph Series
<i>CBR</i>	<i>Currents in Biblical Research</i>
CC	Corpus Christianorum
CCTC	Cambridge Classical Texts and Commentaries
CE	Common Era (= AD)
CEJL	Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature
<i>CHCL</i>	P. E. Easterling et al. (eds) (1982–85) <i>Cambridge History of Classical Literature</i>
<i>CHI</i>	<i>Cambridge History of Iran</i>
<i>CHJ</i>	W. D. Davies and L. Finkelstein (eds) (1984–2017) <i>Cambridge History of Judaism</i> (vols 1-8)
<i>CIJ</i>	Corpus Inscriptionum Judaicarum
ConBNT	Conjectanea biblica, New Testament
ConBOT	Conjectanea biblica, Old Testament
<i>CP</i>	<i>Classical Philology</i>
<i>CPJ</i>	V. A. Tcherikover et al. (1957–64) <i>Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum</i>
<i>CQ</i>	<i>Classical Quarterly</i>
<i>CR: BS</i>	<i>Currents in Research: Biblical Studies</i>
<i>CRAIBL</i>	<i>Comptes rendus de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres</i>
CRINT	Compendia rerum iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum

CSCT	Columbia Studies in Classical Texts
DDD ²	K. van der Toorn, B. Becking, and P. W. van der Horst (eds) <i>Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible</i> : 1st edition 1995 (= DDD); 2nd edition 1999 (= DDD ²)
DJD	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert
DSD	<i>Dead Sea Discoveries</i>
EI	<i>Eretz-Israel</i>
ESHM	European Seminar in Historical Methodology
ET	English translation
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
FoSub	Fontes et Subsidia ad Bibliam pertinentes
FOTL	Forms of Old Testament Literature
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literature des Alten und Neuen Testaments
FS	Festschrift
GCS	Griechische christliche Schriftsteller
GLAJJ	Menahem Stern (1974–84) <i>Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism</i> (vols 1-3)
GRBS	<i>Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies</i>
HAT	Handbuch zum Alten Testament
HdA	Handbuch der Archäologie
HdO	Handbuch der Orientalistik
HJJSTP 1	Lester L. Grabbe (2004) <i>A History of the Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple Period 1: Yehud: A History of the Persian Province of Judah</i>
HJJSTP 2	Lester L. Grabbe (2008) <i>A History of the Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple Period 2: The Coming of the Greeks: The Early Hellenistic Period (335–175 BCE)</i>
HJJSTP 3	The current volume.
HJJSTP 4	Forthcoming volume on the Roman period.
HR	<i>History of Religions</i>
HSCP	<i>Harvard Studies in Classical Philology</i>
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HSS	Harvard Semitic Studies
HTR	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
HUCA	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
IAA	Israel Antiquities Authority
ICC	International Critical Commentary
IDB	G. A. Buttrick (ed.) (1962) <i>Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i> (vols 1-4)
IDBSup	Supplementary volume to IDB (1976)
IEJ	<i>Israel Exploration Journal</i>
INJ	<i>Israel Numismatic Journal</i>
INR	<i>Israel Numismatic Research</i>
Int	<i>Interpretation</i>
IOS	<i>Israel Oriental Studies</i>

<i>ITQ</i>	<i>Irish Theological Quarterly</i>
<i>JAAR</i>	<i>Journal of the American Academy of Religion</i>
<i>JAJ</i>	<i>Journal of Ancient Judaism</i>
<i>JAJSup</i>	Supplements to <i>Journal of Ancient Judaism</i>
<i>JANES</i>	<i>Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society of Columbia University</i>
<i>JAOS</i>	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JCH</i>	Lester L. Grabbe (1992) <i>Judaism from Cyrus to Hadrian</i> (2 vols with continuous pagination)
<i>JCS</i>	<i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</i>
<i>JEA</i>	<i>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology</i>
<i>JES</i>	<i>Journal of Ecumenical Studies</i>
<i>JHS</i>	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
<i>JJS</i>	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
<i>JLBM</i>	George W. E. Nickelsburg (2005 ²) <i>Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah</i>
<i>JNES</i>	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
<i>JQR</i>	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
<i>JR</i>	<i>Journal of Religion</i>
<i>JRS</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
<i>JSHRZ</i>	Jüdische Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit
<i>JSJ</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism</i>
<i>JSJSup</i>	Supplements to <i>Journal for the Study of Judaism</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
<i>JSOTSup</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament—Supplementary Series</i>
<i>JSP</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha</i>
<i>JSPSup</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha—Supplementary Series</i>
<i>JSS</i>	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
<i>JWSTP</i>	Michael E. Stone (ed.) (1984) <i>Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period</i>
<i>KAT</i>	Kommentar zum Alten Testament
<i>LCL</i>	Loeb Classical Library
<i>LSTS</i>	Library of Second Temple Studies
<i>LXX</i>	Septuagint translation of the Old Testament
<i>MGWJ</i>	<i>Monatschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums</i>
<i>ms(s)</i>	manuscript(s)
<i>MT</i>	Masoretic textual tradition (only the consonantal text is in mind when reference is made to pre-medieval mss)
<i>NEAEHL</i>	Ephraim Stern (ed.) (1992) <i>The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land</i> (4 vols); (2008) <i>5 Supplementary Volume</i>

NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovTSup	Novum Testamentum, Supplements
NTOA	Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OBO	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis
<i>OCD</i>	Simon Hornblower, A. Spawforth, and E. Eidinow (eds) (2012) <i>The Oxford Classical Dictionary</i> (4th edn)
<i>OEANE</i>	Eric M. Meyers (editor-in-chief) (1997) <i>The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East</i> (5 vols)
<i>OEBA</i>	D. M. Master (ed.) (2013) <i>The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Bible and Archaeology</i> (2 vols)
<i>OGIS</i>	W. Dittenberger (1903–5) <i>Orientis graeci inscriptiones selectae</i>
<i>OLA</i>	<i>Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta</i>
OTG	Old Testament Guides
OTL	Old Testament Library
<i>OTP</i> 1-2	James H. Charlesworth (ed.) (1983–85) <i>Old Testament Pseudepigrapha</i>
<i>OTS</i>	<i>Oudtestamentische Studiën</i>
<i>PAAJR</i>	<i>Proceedings of the American Academy of Jewish Research</i>
PVTG	Pseudepigrapha Veteris Testamenti graece
<i>PW</i>	Georg Wissowa and Wilhelm Kroll (eds) (1894–1972) <i>Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i>
<i>PWSup</i>	Supplement to <i>PW</i>
<i>RC</i>	C. B. Welles (1934) <i>Royal Correspondence in the Hellenistic Period: A Study in Greek Epigraphy</i>
<i>REB</i>	<i>Revised English Bible</i>
<i>REG</i>	<i>Revue des études grecs</i>
<i>REJ</i>	<i>Revue des études juives</i>
<i>RevB</i>	<i>Revue biblique</i>
<i>RevQ</i>	<i>Revue de Qumran</i>
<i>RSR</i>	<i>Religious Studies Review</i>
RSV	Revised Standard Version
SANE	Studies on the Ancient Near East
<i>SAWH</i>	<i>Sitzungsbericht der Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Heidelberg</i>
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLASP	SBL Abstracts and Seminar Papers
SBLBMI	SBL Bible and its Modern Interpreters
SBLDS	SBL Dissertation Series
SBLEJL	SBL Early Judaism and its Literature
SBLMS	SBL Monograph Series
SBLRBS	SBL Resources for Biblical Study
SBL SBS	SBL Sources for Biblical Study
SBLSCS	SBL Septuagint and Cognate Studies
SBLSPS	Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers Series
SBLTT	SBL Texts and Translations

SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SC	Sources chrétiennes
SCHÜRER	Emil Schürer (1973–87) <i>The Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ</i> (rev. G. Vermes, et al)
SCI	<i>Scripta Classica Israelica</i>
ScrHier	<i>Scripta Hierosolymitana</i>
SE	Seleucid era year
SEG	Supplementum epigraphicum graecum
SFSHJ	South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism
SFSJH	South Florida Studies in Jewish History
SHERK	Robert K. Sherk (1984) <i>Rome and the Greek East to the Death of Augustus</i>
SJLA	Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity
SJOT	<i>Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament</i>
SJLA	Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity
SHAJ	<i>Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan</i>
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SP	Samaritan Pentateuch
SPA	<i>Studia Philonica Annual</i>
SPB	Studia postbiblica
SR	<i>Studies in Religion/Sciences religieuses</i>
SSAW	Sitzungsbericht der sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
SUNT	Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments
SVTP	Studia in Veteris Testamenti pseudepigrapha
TAD 1-4	Bezalel Porten and Ada Yardeni (1986–99) <i>Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt. Volumes 1-4</i>
TAPA	<i>Transactions of the American Philological Association</i>
TDNT	G. Kittel and G. Friedrich (eds) (1964–76) <i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i>
TLZ	<i>Theologische Literaturzeitung</i>
Trans	<i>Transeuphratène</i>
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
VC	<i>Vigiliae Christianae</i>
VT	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VTSup	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i> , Supplements
War	Josephus, <i>War of the Jews</i>
WBC	Word Bible Commentary
WHJP	<i>World History of the Jewish People</i>
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
YCS	<i>Yale Classical Studies</i>
ZA	<i>Zeitschrift für Assyriologie</i>
ZAW	<i>Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
ZDMG	<i>Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft</i>

<i>ZDPV</i>	<i>Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins</i>
<i>ZNW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
<i>ZPE</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>

§	Cross reference to numbered section or sub-section elsewhere in the book; in a citation from Josephus, it refers to paragraph numbers in the text
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Part I

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The previous volume (*HJJSTP 2*) began with a history of the Jews during and after the Greek conquest and went down to the beginning of Seleucid rule. The present volume continues with Jewish history under Hellenistic rule, taking it to the coming of the Romans. This Introduction covers several areas of importance for the book, specifically the questions of reconstructing Jewish history, Jewish identity and the appropriate terminology, and chronology.

1.1. *The Reconstruction of Jewish History*

L. L. Grabbe (2017) *Ancient Israel: What Do We Know and How Do We Know It?*

As always, the emphasis will be given to the primary sources (archaeology and inscriptions, and Jewish, Greek and Roman historians), but these sources have to be interpreted. Putting the data of the sources together from a critical perspective is the principal aim. But a simply narrative description is not always possible: a critical discussion of the sources, especially when they contradict each other, will often be required. The amount of data is basically the same for all historians of this period, but reconstructions of the history differ because of different ways of reading these data. This is why we begin, in Part II, with a survey of the available sources. If a ‘fact’ (more correctly a ‘datum’) is cited, where does it come from? It is always important to keep in mind the question, how do we know what we know?

General principles of historical methodology and trying to write a history of events in antiquity were outlined in *HJJSTP 1* (2–19) and *HJJSTP 2* (8–24; cf. also Grabbe 2017: 4–38). Some points that supplement the comments there are the following:

- The principles of historical methodology established in Classical Studies are very important. The sources for the present study of a section of Jewish history are a part of the sources for the history of the Graeco-Roman world. They have the same value and problems that have been faced by classical historians for centuries. The fact that they are written by Jews or are about Jews does not change this.
- Primary sources – meaning mainly archaeology, including coins, and inscriptions – should provide the backbone of any historical research for this period. Unfortunately, archaeology of Palestine for the Hellenistic and Roman periods has not had the same priority as that of the Iron Age in recent years. Thus, while many syntheses exist for aspects of Iron Age archaeology and for ancient Israel in general, the studies of the Hellenistic period (which are indeed multiplying at present) are still mostly available in scattered studies, without a good, up-to-date synthesis (on this problem, see further §2.1). It is expected that this will change in the next few years, but at the present time we have to deal with what we have. In some ways, we are much better supplied with numismatic studies, with collections not only of Hellenistic and Roman coins but also Jewish coins from the Greek and Roman periods (see further §2.3). As for inscriptions, classical scholars have been diligent in collecting these, and much work has gone into editing collections and also into translating and commenting on them. For Palestine and for the Jewish community in the diaspora, the amount of inscriptional material until recently was small, but the past few years have seen the launch of several collections that should give us a veritable *embarras de richesses* (on all inscriptions, see §2.2).
- In spite of the desire to depend on primary sources, for most of the details of ancient history we are still dependent on narrative sources, usually written long after the events and often written for a specific ideological purpose. This applies to Josephus who remains the main source for narrative history of the Jews in the Greek and early Roman periods (see §3.4). The books of Maccabees were written much closer to the time of the events they allegedly describe, with 1 Maccabees perhaps as early as the 120s or even 130s, and 2 Maccabees about the same time. Both are still followed closely, even more or less paraphrased, by many histories of the period. Yet both 1 and 2 Maccabees have specific purposes, and

the credibility of their data is evaluated quite diversely by different specialists of this period. Their aims and biases need careful consideration and critical scrutiny: it is not sufficient simply to paraphrase them, as if they were eye-witness accounts by neutral observers (see further at §3.1).

1.2. *The Question of Jewish Identity and Appropriate Terminology*

F. Barth (ed.) (1969) *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference*; **G. Bohak** (1997) 'Good Jews, Bad Jews, and Non-Jews in Greek Papyri and Inscriptions', in B. Kramer et al. (eds), *Akten des 21. Internationalen Papyrologenkongresses*, 105–12; **M. G. Brett** (ed.) (1996) *Ethnicity and the Bible*; **W. Clarysse** (1994) 'Jews in Trikomia', in A. Bülow-Jacobsen (ed.), *Proceedings of the 20th International Congress of Papyrologists*, 193–203; **S. J. D. Cohen** (1983) 'Conversion to Judaism in Historical Perspective: From Biblical Israel to Postbiblical Judaism', *Conservative Judaism* 36: 31–45; **idem** (1985) 'The Origins of the Matrilineal Principle in Rabbinic Law', *AJS Review* 10:19–53; **idem** (1986) 'Was Timothy Jewish (Acts 16:1-3)? Patristic Exegesis, Rabbinic Law, and Matrilineal Descent', *JBL* 105: 251–68; **idem** (1999) *The Beginnings of Jewishness*; **B. Eckhardt** (2013) *Ethnos und Herrschaft*; **B. Eckhardt** (ed.) (2012) *Jewish Identity and Politics between the Maccabees and Bar Kokhba*; **C. Geertz** (1973) *The Interpretation of Cultures*; **D. Goodblatt** (2006) *Elements of Ancient Jewish Nationalism*; **idem** (2012) 'Varieties of Identity in Late Second Temple Judah (200 BCE–135 CE)', in B. Eckhardt (ed.), *Jewish Identity and Politics between the Maccabees and Bar Kokhba*, 11–27; **J. M. Hall** (1997) *Ethnic Identity in Greek Antiquity*; **J. Hutchinson and A. D. Smith** (eds) (1996) *Ethnicity*; **S. Jones** (1997) *The Archaeology of Ethnicity*; **K. A. Kamp and N. Yoffee** (1980) 'Ethnicity in Ancient Western Asia during the Early Second Millennium B.C.: Archaeological Assessments and Ethnoarchaeological Prospectives', *BASOR* 237: 85–104; **C. F. Keyes** (1997) 'Ethnic Groups, Ethnicity', in T. Barfield (ed.), *The Dictionary of Anthropology*, 152–54; **A. E. Killebrew** (2005) *Biblical Peoples and Ethnicity*; **R. Kletter** (2006) 'Can a Proto-Israelite Please Stand Up? Notes on the Ethnicity of Iron Age Israel and Judah', in A. M. Maeir and P. de Miroschedji (eds), *I Will Speak the Riddles of Ancient Times*, 573–86; **S. Mason** (2007) 'Jews, Judaea, Judaizing, Judaism: Problems of Categorization in Ancient History', *JSJ* 38: 457–512; **D. Mendels** (1992) *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Nationalism*; **S. Moore** (2015) *Jewish Ethnic Identity and Relations in Hellenistic Egypt: with Walls of Iron?*; **E. Regev** (2013) *The Hasmoneans: Ideology, Archaeology, Identity*; **D. R. Schwartz** (2007)

“‘Judaean’ or ‘Jew’? How Should We Translate *ioudaios* in Josephus?”, in J. Frey, D. R. Schwartz and S. Gripentrog (eds), *Jewish Identity in the Greco-Roman World*, 3–27; **S. Schwartz** (2010) *Were the Jews a Mediterranean Society?*; **S. J. Shennan** (ed.) (1989) *Archaeological Approaches to Cultural Identity*; **S. Sokolovskii and V. Tishkov** (1996) ‘Ethnicity’, in A. Barnard and J. Spencer (eds), *Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology*, 190–93; **K. L. Sparks** (1998) *Ethnicity and Identity in Ancient Israel*; **S. Weitzman** (2008) ‘On the Political Relevance of Antiquity: A Response to David Goodblatt’s *Elements of Ancient Jewish Nationalism*’, *Jewish Social Studies* 14: 165–72; **M. H. Williams** (1995) ‘Palestinian Jewish Personal Names in Acts’, in R. Bauckham (ed.), *The Book of Acts in its First Century Setting, Volume 4*, 79–113; **idem** (1997) ‘The Meaning and Function of *ioudaios* in Graeco-Roman Inscriptions’, *ZPE* 116: 249–62.

1.2.1 Terminology

The word ‘Jew’ has been used in English for many centuries and has also been the standard term in Jewish studies, but it has recently become customary in some circles (primarily among some New Testament scholars but also some scholars of Judaica) to use the term ‘Judaean’ and avoid the term ‘Jew’ (e.g., Mason 2007). There are two problems that we face immediately:

- In English ‘Judaean’ means someone associated with the territory (province, kingdom, nation etc.) of Judaea (cf. the survey in D. R. Schwartz 2007). It is of course possible to change usage, as has been done in recent biblical scholarship (e.g., with regard to gender matters), but there is the potential for confusion, since many readers would still see ‘Judaean’ as being a geographical designation.
- Ancient Hebrew/Aramaic, Greek and Latin have only the one word יהודי/יהודי/*ioudaios*/*Iudaeus* for both ‘Jew’ (referring to religion and/or ethnicity) and ‘Judaean’ (referring to someone who lives in or is from Judaea).

A survey of the use of the Greek word *ioudaios* comes to the conclusion that, in a non-Jewish context, ‘the basic function of *ioudaios* is always the same – to draw an explicit distinction between Jews and non-Jews. But what exactly was the epithet meant to convey?... [It] is hard to believe that the epithet...is doing any more than reflecting an awareness of ethnic difference’ (Williams 1997: 254–55). Williams goes on to note that the matter of religious orientation does not usually seem to be a concern in the various contexts where the usage occurs.

In previous volumes of the present history, I have generally used the term ‘Jew’ and reserved ‘Judaean’ for those who lived in Judaea. I propose to continue this practice in this and the final volume. The reasons for doing so are justified by the discussion above, in my opinion. Therefore, I shall, as usual, use

- ‘Jew/Jews’ for those belonging to the Jewish community or the Jewish ethnic group;
- ‘Judaean’ will be reserved for people living or at least originating in Judaea.

The important matter of the place of religion will be discussed in the next section.

1.2.2. *The Question of Jewish Identity*

E. Bloch-Smith (2003) ‘Israelite Ethnicity in Iron I: Archaeology Preserves What Is Remembered and What Is Forgotten In Israel’s History’, *JBL* 122: 401–25; **L. L. Grabbe** (2000a) ‘Hat die Bibel doch recht? A Review of T. L. Thompson’s *The Bible in History*’, *SJOT* 14: 117–39; **I. Finkelstein** (1997) ‘Pots and People Revised: Ethnic Boundaries in the Iron Age I’, in N. A. Silberman and D. B. Small (eds), *The Archaeology of Israel: Constructing the Past, Interpreting the Present*, 216–37; **E. S. Gruen** (2018b) ‘Kinship Relations and Jewish Identity’, in *The Construct of Identity in Hellenistic Judaism: Essays on Early Jewish Literature and History*, 95–111; **T. L. Thompson** (1999) *The Bible in History: How Writers Create a Past*.

The question of Jewish identity has been much discussed in recent scholarship, with the above bibliography being only a sample of some of the more important recent works. This view has been challenged. For example, it has been suggested that what began as an ethnic and/or geographical designation changed to a religious one in the early centuries BCE or CE (e.g., Thompson 1999: 254–66; cf. Cohen 1999, but see Grabbe 2000a). We can begin by noting that the question of identity was not normally a problem for most people. You were a Jew because you were born a Jew, and part of your identity was living by Jewish customs, including Jewish religious law. Jewish identity was being part of the Jewish community or Jewish people. Like most religions at this time, Judaism was primarily an ethnic religion.

How was Jewishness defined in antiquity? It seems clear that both the people themselves and outsiders saw a group identity that we would call ethnic. To be a Jew was (and indeed remains) an ethnic identity but one

in which religion is a major ethnic identifying feature. Even today many Jews are identified not only by religion but also by descent (one born of a Jewish mother), which can only be ethnic. The question of ethnicity has been a much-debated area of modern social anthropology, and so a brief survey of the discussion might be helpful.

There have been different approaches to ethnicity, extensively in anthropological study (Shennan [ed.] 1989; Hutchinson and Smith [eds] 1996; Sokolovskii and Tishkov 1996; Keyes 1997), but also in biblical scholarship (Brett 1996; Sparks 1998; Killebrew 2005: 8–16). A view that ethnicity should be seen mainly in biological terms (ethnic groups have a common ancestry or kinship or genetic pool) is widely rejected in modern study. Yet it has contributed the important insight that ethnic groups generally define themselves in kinship or quasi-kinship terms. This was also true in antiquity, including in the Hellenistic period (cf. Gruen 2018b; Eckhardt 2013). Others have seen the question in terms of distinct cultures, but this was problematic in that cultural groups do not always develop an ethnic identity or group consciousness, nor do some ethnic groups have specific cultural features (especially those that show up in archaeology). There is also the fact that there is a ‘primordial’ quality to ethnic identity in which the group’s distinctiveness – ‘we/they’ – is essential (Geertz 1973: 255–310; Keyes 1997).

For anthropologists and others, the classic study is that of F. Barth (1969), who pointed to the importance of inter-group boundary mechanisms: ethnic groups define themselves in contrast with other groups (‘self-ascription’), often by a minimum of explicit (even trivial, at least to an outsider) differences. He explicitly rejected the use of an inventory of cultural traits, but there has been a good deal of discussion since Barth (Kamp and Yoffee 1980; Shennan [ed.] 1989; Hutchinson and Smith [eds] 1996; Finkelstein 1997; Jones 1997; Bloch-Smith 2003; Kletter 2006). Because our knowledge of groups in antiquity is based on texts rather than a direct study of living peoples, we are limited by what the texts tell us. This means that the task of penetrating to identity and ethnicity is often very complicated.

Trying to find a definition of an ethnic group is still not easy. Recent treatments tend to recognize the fluidity of ethnic identity (an insight from Barth), and any definition must recognize that. Kamp and Yoffee have stated that most sociologists and anthropologists see an ethnic group as ‘a number of individuals who see themselves as being alike by virtue of a common ancestry, real or fictitious, and who are so regarded by others’ (1980: 88). Kletter follows A. D. Smith in identifying an ethnic group as:

...a group of people who share most – but not necessarily all – of the following: (1) a collective proper name; (2) a myth of common ancestry; (3) historical memories; (4) one or more differentiating elements of common culture; (5) an association with a specific homeland (which may be symbolic, without physical control of the homeland); and (6) a sense of solidarity among at least parts of the group. (Kletter 2006: 574)

Sokolovskii and Tishkov give a similar definition, and suggest that it ‘opens further avenues for integration of anthropological, political and psychological knowledge in understanding of ethnic phenomena’ (1996: 192). Of particular interest is that self-identity may be strongly based on religion, myth and law, areas which have traditionally been studied with regard to early Judaism.

Coming back to the Jews in the Second Temple period it seems clear that both the people themselves and outsiders saw a group identity that we would call ethnic. Benedikt Eckhardt (2013) has recently pointed out that Greek sources often refer to the Jews as an *ethnos*, which can be variously translated as ‘nation’, ‘people’, ‘ethnic group’, or the like. He emphasizes that this is the term in the ancient texts, which varies in meaning according to the context (see further in the next section).

1.2.3. *Ethnic Group or Religion?*

What was involved in being or becoming a Jew? Personal Jewish identity was usually bound up with certain specific elements, and these elements would often be part of what we today would call ‘religion’. In antiquity the matter was not so clear-cut because religion was a part of daily life and not a separate sphere as it often is today. (This does not mean that Graeco-Romans could not easily distinguish matters relating to God/the gods, the sacred and temples.) Similarly, characteristics seen as peculiar to an ethnic group in antiquity might be those that we today would call religion. This applies especially to the Jews: the customs, views and practices that set them apart as a distinctive people or *ethnos* were heavily on the religious side (as seen from the perspective of a modern observer). When Greek and Roman writers refer to Jews, they often mention characteristics that we today associate with religion. Yet it is also true that their descriptions of other ‘barbarians’ also often listed customs and practices that we would call religious.

Two points will be made here. First, the definition can be in part clarified by considering those Jews who are reported to have abandoned their Judaism in antiquity. Only a few are known, but we shall examine the two most prominent ones. One is Dositheus son of Drimylus in the

third century BCE, ‘a Jew by birth [τὸ γένος Ἰουδαῖος] who later changed his religion [νόμιμα] and apostatized from the ancestral traditions [τῶν πατρίων δογμάτων]’ (3 *Macc.* 1.3). We now know from papyrological information that there was indeed an individual named Dositheus son of Drimylus (Δοσίθεος τοῦ Δριμύλου [*CPJ* 1.127a-e]). He was one of the two heads of the royal scribal system (ὁ ὑπομνηματογράφος [*CPJ* 1.127a line 24]) and also priest of ‘Alexander and the gods Adelphoi and the gods Euergetai’, i.e., the deified Alexander and the current Ptolemy and his wife (*CPJ* 1.127d-e). He is nowhere identified as Jewish in the surviving documentation, but his name makes it highly probable, since few non-Jews bore the name ‘Dositheus’ (*CPJ* 1, p. 231).

It is interesting that the author of 3 Maccabees, in spite of his venomous antipathy to Dositheus, does not deny that he is a Jew. He seems to toy with the idea that Dositheus and those like him who had transgressed against God and the law were not really members of the Jewish people, but in the end he still calls them ‘Jews’ (3 *Macc.* 7.10: τοὺς ἐκ τοῦ γένους τῶν Ἰουδαίων). The same applies to the other main example, Tiberius Julius Alexander, the son of the Alexandrian alabarch Alexander and nephew of Philo of Alexandria in the first century CE (*JCH* 438–39; to be discussed in *HJJSTP* 4). Josephus states that the father was superior to his son in the matter of piety toward God (πρὸς τὸν θεὸν εὐσεβείᾳ), for the son was ‘not faithful to the ancestral customs’ (*Ant.* 20.5.2 §100: τοῖς πατρίοις οὐκ ἐνέμεινεν ἔθελον). We have a number of contemporary documents mentioning Tiberius Alexander (*CPJ* 2, pp. 188–98). None of them refers to Alexander as a Jew, but upper-class individuals seldom have their ethnic identity remarked on. Josephus does not deny Alexander’s identity as a Jew, but he does not use the term to refer to him. These two examples are not definitive, but they suggest that abandoning the Jewish religion did not make them cease to be Jews. While religion was a part of ethnic identity, it was not the sole criterion, apparently, even among the Jews.

The second point relates to conversion. At this time we have a most unusual situation: as well as perhaps a few wanting to join the Jewish community, we have the forceable conversion of large groups of people by Hasmonaean rulers. The question of conversion in general will be discussed in *HJJSTP* 4; however, a few words will be said here (see also §9.1 and §12.3.1 on the conversion of the Idumaeans and Ituraeans and on the issue of circumcision).

Two recent studies, both appearing about the same time and evidently making their points independently of each other, discuss Jewish identity during the last two centuries BCE. Both emphasize the importance of ideology, legitimation and power in the rule of Judaea in this period.

First, as already noted, B. Eckhardt (2013) had examined the relationship between ethnicity and the type of government in power, looking at both Hasmonaean and Herodian rule. The resistance to the measures of Antiochus IV began a new *ethnos* or identity figuration. For Hasmonaean rule he notes the emphasis on several entities relating to the Jewish population (Eckhardt 2013: 60–127): Hebrew language as their own language; freedom as sovereignty over their own land; centralization; religious rituals; history; festivals; and alternative belief systems. With Hasmonaean rule new festivals and religious rituals were introduced or given new emphasis, as was the Hebrew language. They also began to take responsibility for the Jews in the diaspora. This in turn provoked the rise or growth of variant groups ('sects') within the Jewish community. With regard to the traditional dual legitimation of the ruler – merit and genealogy – both the Hasmonaeans and Herod emphasized the matter from the 'merit' perspective; that is, they ruled because of their deeds, not necessarily their descent. One emphasis that arose under the Hasmonaeans but continued under Herod was that of circumcision (see further §12.3.1). On the analogy of ruler legitimation, circumcision was a means of becoming Jewish by 'merit' rather than descent.

E. Regev (2013) has argued that under the Maccabees/Hasmonaeans a new political system was introduced but also Jewish identity changed: 'identity was based on commitment to the Torah and hatred toward the idolatrous Gentiles. A new, "nationalistic" sense of Jewish collective identity was created' (2013: 16). To support his view, he points to a number of innovations under Hasmonaean rule. These innovations were not necessarily completely new, but a new emphasis was given to them. They included the celebration of Hanukkah as a religious and 'political' festival, the centrality of the temple, the Hasmonaean 'national' monarchy, the political discourse on Hasmonaean coinage, the architecture of Hasmonaean palaces and the introduction of ritual baths. They embraced Hellenistic culture but primarily as a means of furthering their ideological and political aims. For example, the domestic layout and life within their palaces were mainly simple and conformed to Jewish law, yet they also provided gardens and swimming pools that sent conforming cultural messages to the wider Hellenistic world. The *mikva'ot* or ritual baths seem to be a new creation at this time, at least judging from the archaeological finds thus far known (see further §12.3.2).

Yet a note of caution should be injected here. There is a tendency to assume that Jews of that time saw their life and identity primarily in religious terms. In most cases, though, we do not know one way or the other. The writings preserved are mainly religious literature and show us

what was important to the writer, but we cannot assume that Philo was the model for Alexandrian Jews or that the apocalypses show us where most Jews of Palestine concentrated their energies. If we look at a writer such as Josephus, we see an interesting mixture. His writings contain a large religious element, but they are not just religious. He certainly saw his identity in the broad context of Judaism but also in Jewish history and ethnicity. It would be wrong to define Josephus's view of himself in purely religious terms. Indeed, his outlook is very much parallel to that which we find in many Graeco-Roman writers of the time, such as Cicero or Plutarch. Religion and personal piety were very important, but they evidently did not dominate the lives of most Jews. As noted above, Jews then did not make a sharp distinction between religion and other aspects of life such as politics and profession. However, that outlook was not unique to the Jews – no self-respecting Roman or Greek gentleman would have regarded himself as 'secular' in the modern sense. To be thought of as an 'atheist' was a serious stigma. This was why the charge of 'atheism' against Socrates, for example, was so serious.

Indeed, religion meant different things to different Jews, and to assume that all took the same view is to misapprehend. For the average Jew – farmer, day labourer, craftsman, beggar – making a living was not easy. Getting enough for food, as well for clothing and housing, was sufficient concern for many. This would not make them irreligious, for most were probably quite pious by their own lights; it is simply a matter of emphasis. The piety of the sectarian was not that of most Israelites, and what was slackness or impiety in the eyes of the sect member might be normal accepted behaviour for other Jews. Some individuals had the means and the leisure to practise a strenuous form of religion; most did not. Of course, poverty was no barrier to intense devotion, so that even those living on the edge of subsistence might well turn to religion for solace and hope.

In sum, Jewish identity at this time was usually ethnic. Although many of the characteristics of Jews – as seen both within the Jewish community and by outsiders – would be labelled religious from a modern point of view, various ethnic groups were identified by outsiders by traits that we would call religious. The distinction between religious and other customs was not necessarily made at that time. The question of religious conversion, especially individual conversion, does become an issue especially in the 1st century CE and will be discussed in *HJJSTP* 4. However, for our period conversion comes up primarily with regard to the supposed forced conversion of Idumaeans and Ituraeans under John Hyrcanus and Aristobulus I (see §9.1; §9.3).

1.3. Chronology

B. Bar-Kochva (1976) *The Seleucid Army: Organization and Tactics in the Great Campaigns*; **idem** (1989) *Judas Maccabaeus: The Jewish Struggle against the Seleucids*; **J. C. Bernhardt** (2017) *Die jüdische Revolution: Untersuchungen zu Ursachen, Verlauf und Folgen der hasmonäischen Erhebung*; **E. J. Bickerman** (1937a) *Der Gott der Makkabäer: Untersuchungen über Sinn und Ursprung der makkabäischen Erhebung*; **idem** (1979) *The God of the Maccabees: Studies on the Meaning and Origin of the Maccabean Revolt*; **idem** (1980) *Chronology of the Ancient World*; **K. Bringmann** (1983) *Hellenistische Reform und Religionsverfolgung in Judäa: Eine Untersuchung zur jüdisch-hellenistischen Geschichte (175–163 v. Chr.)*; **W. H. Brownlee** (1962) ‘Maccabees, Books of’, *IDB* 3:204; **M. B. Dagut** (1953) ‘II Maccabees and the Death of Antiochus IV Epiphanes’, *JBL* 77: 149–57; **K. Ehling** (2008) *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der späten Seleukiden (164–63 v. Chr.): Vom Tode des Antiochos IV. bis zur Einrichtung der Provinz Syria unter Pompeius*; **J. A. Fitzmyer and D. J. Harrington** (1978) *A Manual of Palestinian Aramaic*; **D. Gera and W. Horowitz** (1997) ‘Antiochus IV in Life and Death: Evidence from the Babylonian Astronomical Diaries’, *JAOS* 117: 240–52; **J. A. Goldstein** (1976) *I Maccabees: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*; **L. L. Grabbe** (1991) ‘Maccabean Chronology: 167–164 or 168–165 BCE?’ *JBL* 110: 59–74; **E. S. Gruen** (1984) *The Hellenistic World and the Coming of Rome*; **R. Hanhardt** (1964) ‘Zur Zeitrechnung des I und II Makkabäerbuches’, in A. Jepsen and R. Hanhardt (eds), *Untersuchungen zur israelitisch-jüdischen Chronologie*, 53–96; **A. Houghton, C. Lorber and O. Hoover (eds)** (2008) *Seleucid Coins: A Comprehensive Catalogue, Part II: Seleucus IV through Antiochus XIII, Volumes I and II*; **W. Huß** (2001) *Ägypten in hellenistischer Zeit: 332–30 v. Chr.*; **F. X. Kugler** (1922) *Von Moses bis Paulus*; **H. Lichtenstein** (1931–32) ‘Die Fastenrolle, eine Untersuchung zur jüdisch-hellenistischen Geschichte’, *HUCA* 8–9: 257–351; **P. F. Mittag** (2006) *Antiochos IV. Epiphanes: Eine politische Biographie*; **O. Mørkholm** (1966) *Antiochus IV of Syria*; **A. T. Olmstead** (1937) ‘Cuneiform Texts and Hellenistic Chronology’, *Classical Philology* 32: 1–14; **R. A. Parker and W. H. Dubberstein** (1956) *Babylonian Chronology 626 B.C.–A.D. 75*; **P. W. Pestman** (1967) *Chronologie égyptienne d’après les textes démotiques (332 av. J.-C.–453 ap. J.-C.)*; **J. D. Ray** (1976) *The Archive of Hor*; **A. J. Sachs** (1952) ‘Babylonian Horoscopes’, *JCS* 6: 49–75; **A. J. Sachs and D. J. Wiseman** (1954) ‘A Babylonian King List of the Hellenistic Period’, *Iraq* 16: 202–11; **A. E. Samuel** (1962) *Ptolemaic Chronology*; **K.-D. Schunck** (1954) *Die Quellen des I. und II. Makkabäerbuches*; **T. C. Skeat** (1961) ‘Notes on Ptolemaic Chronology: II. “The Twelfth Year which is also the First”: The Invasion of Egypt by Antiochus Epiphanes’, *JEA* 47: 107–12; **A. E. Steinmann** (2009) ‘When Did Herod the Great Reign?’

NT 51: 1–29; **H. Volkmann** (1924–25) ‘Demetrios I. und Alexander I. von Syrien’, *Klio* 1: 373–412; **B. Z. Wacholder** (1984) ‘The Beginning of the Seleucid Era and the Chronology of the Diadochoi’, in F. E. Greenspahn, E. Hilgert and B. L. Mack (eds), *Nourished with Peace: Studies in Hellenistic Judaism in Memory of Samuel Sandmel*, 183–211; **F. W. Walbank** (1957–79) *A Historical Commentary on Polybius*.

1.3.1. *Introductory Comments*

One might think that with the abundance of Greek, Roman, Babylonian and Egyptian sources, the chronology for this period would be straightforward. Sadly, often not, especially in the realm of Jewish history. For example, books around the turn of the century, when giving the time for the ‘abomination of desolation’ during the Maccabean revolt, would usually specify the dates as 168–165 BCE. However, E. J. Bickerman, after accepting this, then changed his mind in his study, *Der Gott der Makkabäer*, arguing for a revision to 167–164 BCE (1937a: 155–68//1979: 101–11). This position has been widely accepted and is found in many standard references (e.g., Schürer 1973–87: 1:155). However, several recent researchers have still argued for 168–165 (Schunck 1954: 16–31. Brownlee 1962: 3:204; Bringmann 1983: 15–28; cf. also Bernhardt 2017: 222, 540 [168–164 BCE]). Similarly, the standard date for the death of Herod as 4 BCE has been questioned in recent years (see below). Thus, it is important to discuss general questions of chronology but also to make clear which system or systems are used in the present book.

The main sources will be discussed below, but a comment should be made at this point about the Jewish writing, the ‘Scroll of Fasting’ (*Megillat Ta’anit*), which is often cited as a source in discussions on chronology; however, there is a tendency to quote it when it seems to match their reconstruction and dismiss it when it does not. The original Aramaic text, dating from perhaps the first century CE, is only a bare list of dates on which fasting is forbidden, with a brief explanation (Fitzmyer and Harrington 1978: text 150 [pp. 184–87, 248–50]). The information given could often fit a variety of historical situations. The accompanying Hebrew commentary is from a much later time and generally recognized to be of little historical value (Lichtenstein 1931–32 has both the Aramaic text and the Hebrew commentary). Some of the dates probably do reflect genuine events in Hasmonaean times. The problem is that only month and day dates are given, but not year. This means that for many questions of Hasmonaean chronology, the writing gives little help, but there are too many uncertainties to use it as anything but minor evidence.

1.3.2. *Babylonian, Egyptian and Seleucid Dates*

Recent studies in Babylonian cuneiform records and Egyptian papyri have clarified a good deal about chronology in the Hellenistic Near East through astronomy and other exact methods, though this has not eliminated all problems by any means: many dates cannot be related to the astronomical data and must be worked out from literary sources. This is especially true of dates in Jewish history.

In the past few decades, a number of new finds have allowed a refinement of certain aspects of the chronology of the second century BCE. These new sources include dated cuneiform documents (Parker and Dubberstein 1956), a cuneiform king list of the first Seleucid kings (Sachs and Wiseman 1954), astronomically dated Egyptian records (Samuel 1962; Pestman 1967) and Seleucid coins (Houghton, Lorber and Hoover [eds] 2008). For example, some of the dates for Antiochus IV are from the cuneiform Seleucid king list (Sachs and Wiseman 1954) and are extremely valuable (note that the Seleucid era reckoning is Babylonian, from spring 311 BCE).

- Seleucus IV takes throne: 125 SE (187 BCE) and rules 12 years.
- Seleucus IV dies: year 137 SE, month 6, day 10 (175 BCE, 2 or 3 Sept.).
- Antiochus IV takes throne: year 137 SE, month 6 (175 BCE, Aug.–Sept.).
- Antiochus IV rules jointly with Antiochus, son of Seleucus IV: year 137 SE, month 8 (175 BCE, Oct.–Nov.).
- Antiochus IV executes Antiochus, son of Seleucus IV: year 142 SE, month 5 (170 BCE, 30 July to 30 Aug.).
- Antiochus IV's death reported in Babylon: [year 148 SE], month 9 (164 BCE, 19 Nov.–19 Dec.).

Yet there are still questions. For example, the beginning of the Sixth Syrian War is still debated and placed anywhere from late 170 to early 169 BCE – only two or three months different but not exact. The date for Daphne has conventionally been given as summer or autumn of 166 BCE. B. Bar-Kochva (1989: 466–73) has gone against the generally agreed date by arguing for 165 BCE, but there are good reasons for favouring the consensus (Mørkholm 1966: 166–67; Mittag 2006: 296–97; Bernhardt 2017: 239 n. 102). Demetrius took the throne late in the year 162 BCE, probably in the autumn since the latest date known for Antiochus V is 18 VII 150 SE Babylonian (= 16 October 162 BCE) and the earliest for

Demetrius I is 22 II 151 SE (= 14 May 161 BCE). (For these dates, see Kugler 1922: 330, 334; cf. Parker and Dubberstein 1956: 23.) These are just a few examples to illustrate the remaining uncertainty.

Some of the problems revolve around the use of the Seleucid era in dates in many documents from the Seleucid period, including 1 and 2 Maccabees (*HJJSTP* 2: 272–73). During the wars of the Diadochi, Seleucus I (with the help of Ptolemy I) defeated Antigonus at Gaza in the summer of 312 BCE. This opened the way for Seleucus to retake Babylon. At some point, Seleucus introduced the Seleucid era (commonly abbreviated SE) which was calculated to begin with his retaking of Babylon (Wacholder 1984). This was an important innovation because it imposed a common dating system over a wide area, one which continued in use in some areas until well into the Common Era. The problem is that since different calendars were used in different areas of the Seleucid empire, the Seleucid era was calculated differently from one place to another. Two major systems were in use: the *Babylonian*, which counted year 1 SE as beginning with Nisan (spring) 311 BCE, and the *Syro-Macedonian*, which began year 1 SE with Tishri (autumn) 312 BCE. A major question is which system was used in 1 and 2 Maccabees. J. C. Bernhardt (2017: 525–45) has recently argued that the main dating system used in 1 and 2 Maccabees is the latter: from autumn 312 BCE. This seems to be correct for the most part, though a complication will be discussed below (§1.3.3).

For the purposes of the present book, most of the available evidence is nicely summarized in Ehling 2008 and Huß 2001. They will generally be followed for Seleucid and Ptolemaic dates, unless other sources are cited. Dates in Jewish sources will usually be discussed where they are crucial. Some of the principles for reconstructing Jewish chronology are given in the following sections.

1.3.3. *The Dating System in 1 Maccabees*

It was already argued by Bickerman (1937a: 155–58//1979: 101–3) that two systems of dating are used in 1 Maccabees, one according to the normal Syro-Macedonian year which began in the autumn (Tishri); the other beginning with spring (Nisan). K.-D. Schunck (1954: 16–31) makes the important point that ‘Jewish’ dates in 1 Maccabees (i.e., those that include not only the year but also the month and sometimes even the day) begin with spring 312, whereas dates with only the year may well be Syro-Macedonian, using the autumn of 312 BCE as the starting date. This needs to be kept in mind when reading a date in 1 Maccabees. Indications for a Nisan reckoning are the following:

- 1 Maccabees 7.1 is dated to 151 SE. The defeat of Nicanor took place on 13 Adar (v. 43), presumably in the same year. After Demetrius heard of the defeat, he dispatched a new army to oppose Judas (1 Macc. 9.1-3). Since the army reached Jerusalem in the ‘first month’ (Nisan), this is almost certainly only a month or so after the original defeat (if there was an intercalary Adar II, up to two and half months could have intervened between Nicanor’s defeat and the arrival of the new army). Yet the time is stated to be 152 SE (1 Macc. 9.3), showing a year change with 1 Nisan.
- 1 Maccabees 10.1-21 describes the initial activities of Alexander I Balas in the late summer or early autumn of 160 SE (1 Macc. 10.1). These included conferring the office of high priest on Jonathan Maccabee. At the Feast of Tabernacles (beginning 15 Tishri), Jonathan donned the high priestly robes, but this was still the year 160 SE (v. 21), showing that the year had not changed at 1 Tishri and indicating a Nisan-to-Nisan reckoning. Some (e.g., Bernhardt [2017: 544] want to put Jonathan’s donning of the robes a full year later, in autumn 159 SE, but there is no reason to do so).

Yet the normal reckoning in documents and coins from Syria is an autumn-to-autumn one (beginning Tishri 312 BCE), and one would expect this to be the usual dating. These data confirm a widespread opinion among scholars that more than one form of the Seleucid era is found in 1 Maccabees (Bickerman 1937a: 155–58//1979: 101–3; Schunck 1954: 16–31; Goldstein 1976: 22–25; Bar-Kochva 1989: 562–65). It is generally thought that the reckoning from Tishri was used for the dating of external events (often those with only a year dating) and the version from Nisan for internal events (usually including month and day as well as year). But this has been challenged by Bringmann (1983: 15–28) who thinks that all dates in both 1 and 2 Maccabees fit an era beginning with Tishri 312 BCE. In order to do this, he must dispose of the two arguments mentioned above. However, he gets rid of the first one by postulating – without argument – that a full year intervened between 1 Macc. 7.1-43 and 9.1-3 (Bringmann 1983: 28). He simply refers to B. Bar-Kochva (1976: 14, 210–11 n. 29), but Bar-Kochva does not actually discuss the point there, though he does assume Jewish dating from Nisan 311 BCE. Bar-Kochva does take up the subject in his more recent book (1989: 373–75, 385) but is trying to get rid of a difficulty by the hypothesis of a year’s intervention. On Bringmann’s own terms, Bar-Kochva gives little support. The second problem he tries to dispose of is by an ingenious if unconvincing argument (Bringmann 1983: 24–25). He notes that an

intercalary month in the Syro-Macedonian year might cause the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles (in the month of Tishri) to fall before the beginning of Tishri (i.e., a new Seleucid year) according to the Syro-Macedonian calendar. But this is more ingenious than convincing. It seems unlikely that 1 Macc. 10.1 was given according to the Syro-Macedonian system while 10.21 was according to a Jewish system, which differed from it by only a month. Also, we do not know how the Jewish calendar correlated with the Syro-Macedonian calendar at this time. It may well have been kept parallel with it by the priests, so that intercalary months were inserted in the Jewish liturgical calendar to correspond with those in the Macedonian calendar. Thus, while the Jewish calendar may have been out of phase with that used in Syria, we cannot assume so in the absence of relevant data. The simplest explanation is a calendar beginning with Nisan. It seems to me that the arguments for a dual system in 1 Maccabees still stand.

The question is the starting point for each system. The Syro-Macedonian system is almost universally agreed on as beginning with Tishri 312. The problem is when the Nisan era begins. Most handbooks now list year 1 SE as beginning with Nisan 311 BCE, just as in Babylon. Yet older writers, including Bickerman at one point, argued for Nisan 312 BCE (1930: 14:781–84; Schunck 1956: 16–31; Kugler 1922: 344, 352–53). Are there internal reasons for seeing Nisan 312 BCE as a starting point for some of the dates in 1 Maccabees? In fact, many of the dates proposed as fitting the Syro-Macedonian reckoning would also fit a system beginning with Nisan 312 BCE. Similarly, the spring-to-spring reckoning could fit either with 311 or 312 BCE in most cases because of the sparseness of data. However, several dates in 1 Maccabees do not seem to fit with the normal calculation from either Tishri 312 or Nisan 311 BCE:

- According to 1 Macc. 6.20, Judas besieged Jerusalem shortly after the death of Antiochus. This would seem to be sometime in the spring or early summer of 163 BCE, since Antiochus died about November 164. This event is dated to 150 SE. Neither the dating from Tishri 312 nor Nisan 311 BCE fits; dating from Nisan 312 BCE does, however. This dating is also confirmed by the autumn 163–162 sabbatical year (cf. §1.3.6 below) mentioned in 1 Macc. 6.49. Bickerman (1937a: 156–58//1979: 102–3) admitted that this fits only a calculation from Nisan 312 BCE; therefore, he had to assume an error on the part of the author to get rid of the problem. Similarly, Bringmann (1983: 27 n. 50).

- Demetrius I began his reign in 151 SE (1 Macc. 7.1) or 162–161 BCE, usually dated to the autumn of 162 BCE. The battle instigated by him in Adar (1 Macc. 7.43) would appear to be shortly after his taking the throne, i.e., spring 161 BCE, since no new date is given. However, a new date occurs for the very next month (first month of 152 SE or 161–160 BCE: 1 Macc. 9.3). Only reckoning from Nisan 312 BCE fits these data. This simplest understanding of the passage represents a problem for many scholars who attempt to explain it away by rather dubious means. Goldstein (1976: 341–43) accepts that the battle in Adar was in the spring 161 BCE but then attempts to place the reengagement a full year later. Bringmann (1983: 28) does likewise. Why? The real reason appears to be that it does not fit their thesis about the Seleucid era in 1 Maccabees. Some use the mission sent to Rome (1 Macc. 8) as an excuse to insert an entire year (Bringmann 1983: 28; Bar-Kochva 1989: 374), but this is a red herring. A mission to Rome could have set out in early 161 but need not have returned and reported before the battle with Bacchides. (Nothing in the report of 1 Macc. 8.22–32 requires the mission to have reported to Judas before the battle.) But most importantly, this thesis ignores the chronological data given by 1 Maccabees itself. The events leading up to the battle on 13 Adar could have taken place in the three or four months to spring.
- When 1 Maccabees is compared with the few dates in 2 Maccabees, it is clear that there are differences, but these are instructive. 1 Maccabees 6.20 puts the siege of the Acra and its relief by Lysias in 150 SE, whereas 2 Macc. 13.1 makes it 149 SE. It is often thought that one gives a reckoning from Tishri and the other from Nisan, a reasonable explanation, but which is which? The answer seems to be found in a comparison of 1 Macc. 7.1–25 (in which Alcimus is made high priest in 151 SE) with 2 Macc. 14.3–4 (also 151 SE). Since Alcimus became high priest after Demetrius took the throne in the autumn of 162 BCE and before Nisan 161 BCE, the only reckoning which fits is for 1 Macc. 7.1 to be reckoned from Nisan 312 and 2 Macc. 14.4 from Tishri 312. The siege of the Acra (which I have put in spring/summer 163) would be dated 150 SE if counting from Nisan 312 (= Nisan 163–162 BCE) but 149 from Tishri 312 (= Tishri 164–163 BCE). Thus, in both cases 1 Maccabees is using an era reckoned from Nisan 312, while 2 Maccabees has the standard Syro-Macedonian system from Tishri 312.

- 1 Maccabees 14.1-3 refers to the campaign of Demetrius II against the Parthians in which he was taken captive. If the interpretation of a fragmentary cuneiform text is correct, there is reason to think that Demetrius was himself taken captive in the summer of 141 BCE. Since 1 Macc. 14.1 puts this in the year 172 SE, only an era counted from Nisan 312 would agree with the actual date. Demetrius II was on the Babylonian throne in March 142 (= XII 169 SE Babylonian) according to a horoscope published by A. B. Sachs (1952: especially 62–63). Another text (Text SH 108, discussed but only partially published in Kugler 1922: 339–43), indicates that Arsaces (Mithradates I) defeated Demetrius and took the throne of Babylon in July 141 BCE (cf. also Olmstead 1937: 12–13). A little further on in a passage difficult to read but dated to September 141 BCE, it appears that the capture of (Demetrius) Nicator is referred to.

But the next question is whether there are passages which oppose using Nisan 312 BCE? There seems to be only one problematic passage: 1 Maccabees 10, in which Jonathan is granted the high priesthood by Alexander I Balas. If this is the year 152 BCE as is often assumed, there is no way that a Syro-Macedonian date in 1 Macc. 10.1 (= autumn 160 SE) would fit with a spring 312 reckoning in 1 Macc. 10.21. Several modern scholars take this point as decisive against a Nisan 312 era (Bringmann 1983: 20; Hanhart 1964: 60–61). However, modern discussions often vacillate between 153 and 152 BCE (cf. Volkmann 1924–25: 403–4, who puts the arrival of Alexander in Ptolemais in the summer of 153).

F. W. Walbank (1957–79: 3:42, 557, 560) puts the date as 152 for the following reasons: (1) Based on the collection of excerpts of Polybius in the Constantinian *De legat. gent.* he assumes that 33.15.1-2 should be dated to Olympiad 156,3 = 154–153 BCE. (2) He then dates to 153 the embassy of Heracleides, bringing the alleged children of Antiochus IV (Alexander Balas and Laodice), which seems to have arrived near the summer solstice. (3) The embassy itself was not likely to have been heard until the beginning of 152 BCE according to the normal practice of the Senate (33.18.1-14). All this is solid work by a major scholar, but the state of our information is too uncertain to be dogmatic. Bar-Kochva (1989: 470–71, 548) has already questioned how reliable the position of fragments in the Constantinian collection can be considered. If Alexander arrived in Ptolemais in late summer of 153 BCE, the two dates in 1 Maccabees 10 (10.1 and 10.21) would fit a reckoning from Nisan 312 (i.e., 160 SE would equal spring 153–52). The date in 1 Macc. 10.1 is often assumed to be given according

to the Syro-Macedonian system (= autumn 153–152), but it is a date important for events within Judah itself. Thus, there is nothing against its being calculated by the spring-to-spring system, which would fit Nisan 312 but not Nisan 311. If future study shows that Alexander definitely arrived in Ptolemais in the summer of 152, this would be a serious problem to any thesis about a system beginning in Nisan 312. But from the data presently known, the summer of 153 seems equally possible and the proposal for a dating from Nisan 312 a viable one.

Finally, counting from Nisan 312 has often been dismissed with the statement that no such era is known (e.g., Bickerman 1937a: 157//1979: 103). But since most of what we know about the use of the Seleucid era among the Jews comes from 1 Maccabees and Josephus, it seems that we have too little information to make such a negative judgment at this point. There is no discussion about the Seleucid era in any ancient Jewish source. Most of what we know has been determined by simply working with the data. The data have demonstrated that an era reckoned from Nisan 312 is sometimes used in 1 Maccabees.

1.3.4. *Dates of Major Events in 1 Maccabees*

Having established some preliminary positions and problems, we can now look at the major dates in 1 Maccabees itself, some of which can be established precisely (for further detail on some of these points, see Grabbe 1991). Antiochus came to the throne in 137 SE (1 Macc. 1.10). According to the cuneiform Seleucid king list, Seleucus IV died 10 VI 137 SE (= 3 Sept. 175 BCE), and Antiochus IV came to the throne in VI 137 SE (= Sept. 175 BCE) (Sachs and Wiseman 1954: 208). 1 Maccabees 1.16–28 describes Antiochus's attack on Egypt and associates it with the plundering of the Jerusalem temple. There are some problems here because Antiochus twice invaded Egypt; however, the date is given as 143 SE (170–169 BCE), which fits only the first invasion. It is now established that this invasion almost certainly occurred in late 170 BCE or early 169 BCE (Nov. 170 BCE seems a strong possibility: Skeat 1961). The problem is that 1 Macc. 1.20–28 seems to associate the taking of Jerusalem by force with the first invasion of Egypt, whereas 2 Maccabees 5 appears to make the use of force against the city and the despoiling of the temple a product of the second invasion. Although some doubt whether Daniel is sufficiently clear, others argue that Dan. 11.25–31 refers to both invasions of Egypt but associates a peaceful despoiling of the temple with the first, and the violent taking of the city with the second (Bringmann 1983: 36–40; Bickerman 1937a: 160–68//1979: 104–11; Mørkholm 1966: 142–45).

‘Two years later’ (μετὰ δύο ἔτη ἡμερῶν) Antiochus sent a force to take Jerusalem, enslave many of the people, establish a garrison, and defile the temple (1 Macc. 1.29-40). From when are these two years counted? If dating from the beginning of the first invasion, they take us to the autumn of 168 BCE. It is not completely clear whether the ‘abomination of desolation’ took place at this time or slightly later (1 Macc. 1.54-64), but the actual defiling of the temple is dated to 15 Kislev 145 SE. Although the ‘two years later’ may be intended only as an approximate figure, it could also be understood as pointing to November–December 168 BCE for the institution of pagan sacrifice in the temple. This indeed fits with 2 Maccabees 5, which has Antiochus attack Jerusalem on his way back from his second invasion of Egypt, followed shortly afterward by the suppression of the temple cult. The precise date of Antiochus’s retreat from Egypt is now known to be 30 July 168 BCE (Ray 1976: 14–20, 124–30). Again, the natural sequence of events suggests that the Jerusalem cult was stopped toward the end of 168 BCE.

The next event is the death of Mattathias, the father of the Maccabean brothers, in 146 SE (1 Macc. 2.70). By this time the Maccabean resistance had begun. Antiochus is said to be angry on hearing about this opposition to his measures and to set about gathering an army, only to find that he has no money to pay for it. So he had to launch a campaign to the East to gain funds. This naive picture must be rejected. The Jewish resistance was a minor problem at this time, and Antiochus had probably long planned an eastern campaign (Gruen 1984: 660–63; cf. also Mørkholm 1966: 95–101). But the significant datum in 1 Maccabees is that this march east took place in 147 SE (1 Macc. 3.37). The beginning of this campaign is usually dated to the spring or summer of 165 BCE, but in the light of present knowledge it could have begun in late 166 BCE (cf. Mørkholm 1966: 98 n. 37). Although Bar-Kochva (1989: 466–73) has tried to redate the celebrations at Daphne to the summer of 165 (rather than 166 as is usually done), he also makes them the immediate prelude to marching east, one reason being that this would have saved paying the mercenaries for a year of idleness. His arguments could be used just as well to put Daphne in the summer of 166 and make the actual expedition begin straight afterward in the autumn of 166. Antiochus had left the subduing of the Jewish rebels to his lieutenants, and a number of battles are described (1 Macc. 3.38–4.35). This culminates with Judas and his group retaking the temple and purifying it on 25 Kislev 148 SE (1 Macc. 4.36-59). If the date of 168 BCE given above for the start of the desolation is correct, this would make the restoration in November–December 165 BCE.

The fighting was not yet over, and Judas' battles against the surrounding nations are described in 1 Maccabees 5. Meanwhile, after suffering a major reversal Antiochus heard about the retaking of Jerusalem and died shortly afterward in 149 SE (1 Macc. 6.1-16). This sequence of events is often ignored or explained away: Antiochus died *after* the temple was retaken and cleansed. We know that his death was reported in Babylon sometime between 20 November and 18 December 164 BCE, so he most likely died in November or possibly early December 164 (Sachs and Wiseman 1954: 208–9).

In the year 150 SE, Judas besieged the Acra at Jerusalem, which was in the hands of the Seleucid troops (1 Macc. 6.17-47). The new king Antiochus V, who was still a minor and had Lysias as his guardian, dispatched an army to relieve the garrison in the Acra. Judas met them and a series of pitched battles took place. At one point the Syrians 'showed the juice of grapes and mulberries' to the war elephants to excite them to fight (1 Macc. 6.34). The precise meaning of this passage is uncertain, but it does suggest a time of the year when grapes and mulberries would have been in season, viz., summer or early autumn. Bar-Kochva (1989: 312) denies that this indicates the time of year of the battle since wine could be given to the elephants at any time. But his objection fails to explain why the phrase, 'the blood of grapes and mulberries' (suggesting fresh juice) is mentioned rather than just 'wine'. To make the elephants drunk could be as dangerous to themselves as to the enemy (cf. J. Goldstein 1976: 320).

When Judas' army was temporarily routed, the Seleucid army was able to gain Beth-zur. This city surrendered because the inhabitants had no food to withstand a long siege, since it was a sabbatical year (1 Macc. 6.49-50). According to the pattern established (see §1.3.6 below), this sabbatical year would have been 164–163 BCE. Because the shortage of food would be felt toward the latter part of the sabbatical year, the city probably capitulated sometime in the summer or early autumn of 163, a point confirmed by the statement about the juice of grapes and mulberries. Bar-Kochva (1989: 339–42, 544–46) states that the siege was in the spring of 162, at a time when the effects of the sabbatical year would still have been felt. It is true that the Jews would have been relying on stores even after the end of the sabbatical year until the spring harvest. But the harvest could have begun as early as Nisan in some areas, whereas Nisan is the earliest time that the siege would have begun according to Bar-Kochva's reckoning (since it could only have begun with the new year). As noted, he also rejects any significance in the mention of the 'blood of grapes and mulberries'. But the most important objection to his thesis is that 1 Macc. 6.49, 53 plainly states that the siege

was *during* the sabbatical year, not after it as Bar-Kochva thinks (cf. Bringmann 1983: 20 n. 18; Schunck 1956: 28).

This dating is also supported by the event which ended the siege (1 Macc. 6.55-63). When Lysias heard that Philip had returned from the East to Antioch and was attempting to take over, he made a hasty peace with the Jews and hurried north to regain control. It is likely that Philip would have returned to Antioch at the earliest opportune moment after Antiochus's death if he wanted to make a play for power. The summer of 163 is a reasonable time for him to do so (Gera and Horowitz 1997: 249-52). The later dating, to the spring/summer of 162, well over a year after Antiochus's death, advocated by some scholars is not (Goldstein 1976: 167; Hanhart 1964: 94; Bar-Kochva 1989: 339-42, 544-46, 551). As Bickerman (1937a: 156-57//1979: 102) already noted, 'the general [Philip] certainly did not wait a whole year before he started the struggle for the regency'.

It becomes very clear that the aforementioned year 150 SE could not be given according to the Babylonian reckoning (= Nisan 162-161 BCE) nor according to the normal Syro-Macedonian Seleucid year (= Tishri 163-162 BCE). The only reckoning for this date which fits is a Seleucid era which counts year 1 from Nisan 312 BCE, i.e., Nisan 163-162 BCE. This conforms with the Seleucid dates of the defilement and purification of the temple suggested by the sequence of events noted above: Kislev 145 SE (equivalent to Nov.-Dec. 168) and Kislev 148 SE (Nov.-Dec. 165 BCE). This dating also fits the actual narrative of 1 Maccabees which puts the restoration of the temple before the death of Antiochus (cf. 1 Macc. 4.36-59 with 6.5-7).

The normal dating of 'the abomination of desolation' to Kislev 167-164 BCE has actually caused a good deal of trouble to scholars because they have had to explain away the most straightforward reading of 1 Maccabees. Some do this by following 2 Maccabees, which gives a slightly different order of events, even though there is general agreement that 1 Maccabees is more trustworthy. For example Bar-Kochva (1989: 165, 276-82) seems to feel it necessary to explain at length how the author of 1 Maccabees made an error in the sequence of events. This is clearly an embarrassment because elsewhere Bar-Kochva frequently shows how 1 Maccabees is the more trustworthy, often representing an eyewitness account of the actual events (cf. 1989: 153-55, 160-62). However, the reason he has this difficulty is that he assumes the temple must have been restored in 164 BCE.

On the other hand, it has been argued that 2 Maccabees *originally* had the same sequence of events as 1 Maccabees but that this was altered by

the epitomizer (Dagut 1953: 152–54; Hanhart 1964: 73–76). Other explanations are even more fanciful (Goldstein [1976: 165] has to postulate that the calendar was two months out of phase with the solar year because of lack of two required intercalations of a month each; see especially the table in 1976: 165). This is purely hypothetical since the sources say nothing about any calendrical problems, and becomes completely absurd when one realizes that he dates the purification of the temple as early as mid-October 164. Bar-Kochva (1989: 279 n. 7) takes him to task on this but then himself suggests a calendar difference as well.

All the data seem to fit this explanation, with one possible exception. The difficulty is 1 Macc. 4.28. According to the narrative, Antiochus crossed the Euphrates in 147 SE, leaving Lysias in charge of Antioch (1 Macc. 3.32–37). Lysias sent an army against Judas, which was defeated at Emmaus (1 Macc. 3.38–4.27). Then, ‘the next year’ (ἐν τῷ ἐχόμενῳ ἐνιαυτῷ) Lysias sent another army, after the defeat of which Judas cleansed the temple (1 Macc. 4.28–59). If Antiochus’s march occurred in the summer of 165, as often dated, my explanation would require the two defeats to have taken place between the spring or summer of 165 and December 165, which does not easily allow for ‘the next year’ of 4.28. But the difficulty is not a great one since at least two considerations are relevant: (1) As already noted above, it is very possible that Antiochus left on his eastern campaign in 166, making the first defeat at Emmaus possibly as early as the autumn of 166. (2) Alternatively, the ‘next year’ might be a loose expression meaning that a new year had begun even though a full calendar year had not actually passed. With regard to the second point, Bar-Kochva (1989: 283–84) states that if this were the case, the expression would have been ἐν τῷ ἐρχομένῳ ἔτει. Bar-Kochva’s retroversions to the original Hebrew are the work of solid scholarship and often compelling, but that is not to say that this particular case is a decisive argument. The following considerations demonstrate the difficulties involved: (1) The reading ἐχόμενῳ (instead of ἐρχομένῳ) is preferred by many scholars, which might affect the meaning or phrasing of the idiom; (2) the two words for ‘year’ (ἔτος and ἐνιαυτός) are often interchangeable in Greek usage; (3) there are major problems with retroverting from the present Greek text back to the (presumed) Hebrew when no portion of the original has survived to act as a control.

All the relevant data in 1 Maccabees and the few relevant dates in 2 Maccabees have now been taken care of. The dates of the letters in chap. 11 are problematic and have often been debated, but they form a separate question (on these, see §3.2 and §15.4.2).

1.3.5. Herodian and Roman Dating

T. D. Barnes (1968) 'The Date of Herod's Death', *JTS* 19: 204–9; **P. M. Bernegger** (1983) 'Affirmation of Herod's Death in 4 B.C.', *JTS* 34: 526–31; **J. van Bruggen** (1978) 'The Year of the Death of Herod the Great', in T. Baarda et al. (eds), *Miscellanea Neotestamentica*, 1–15; **O. Edwards** (1982) 'Herodian Chronology', *PEQ* 114: 29–42; **W. E. Filmer** (1966) 'The Chronology of the Reign of Herod the Great', *JTS* 17: 283–98; **B. Mahieu** (2012) *Between Rome and Jerusalem: Herod the Great and his Sons in their Struggle for Recognition*; **A. K. Marshak** (2006) 'The Dated Coins of Herod the Great: Towards a New Chronology', *JSJ* 37: 212–40; **M. Stern** (1974b) 'Chronology', in S. Safrai and M. Stern (eds), *The Jewish People in the First Century*, 1:62–77.

Most of the dates after the Hasmonaean period relate to Herod, but a number are of important events in Roman history. The table gives the more important dates relating to Herod's reign. However, the exact date of every aspect of Herod's reign cannot be determined for certain nor is it always important to do so for general purposes. There are several dates, however, which are crucial not only to the framework of his own reign but also to the correct chronology of the later history of Judah.

1.3.5.1. *Fall of Jerusalem to Pompey in 63 BCE*

The first date to consider is actually pre-Herodian. According to Josephus (*Ant.* 14.4.3 §66), the temple fell to Pompey's forces in the 3rd month on the fast day (τῆς νηστείας ἡμέρα) in the 179th Olympiad (Sept. 64–Sept. 63: Bickerman 1980: 119), the Roman consuls being G. Antonius and M. Tullius Cicero: 63 BCE (Bickerman 1980: 151). But what time of year? The 'fast day' can refer to the Day of Atonement, which was the 10th of Tishri, the 7th month. Yet Greek and Latin writers often refer to the sabbath as a fast day, for some reason, perhaps because many Jews would not light a fire to cook on that day (Strabo 16.2.40; Suetonius, *Div. Aug.* 76.2); Cassius Dio (37.16) explicitly refers to the sabbath. Marcus (LCL *Josephus*, vol. VII: 481 n.) states that it was 'probably...about July 63 BC'. This problem of the 'fast day' also comes up later.

1.3.5.2. *Appointment as King*

The basic data for the time of Herod's appointment as king are the following: (1) it was during the consulships of Domitius Calvinus (second time) and Asinius Pollio (*Ant.* 14.14.5 §389), which was 40 BCE (Bickerman 1980: 151); (2) Mark Antony and Octavian were in cooperation, but there had been a good deal of friction between them for several years until the pact of Brundisium in September/October 40 BCE;

(3) according to Appian (*Bell. Civ.* 5.75.319) Herod was made king of the Idumaeans and Samaritans in 39 BCE.

The last point might seem to contradict the dating of 40 BCE (Filmer 1966: 285). However, the first two points appear to be conclusive for the year 40, even though Josephus has been known to make a mistake in his dating by consulships (e.g., *Ant.* 14.1.2 §4). The last point can probably be reconciled with these since it relates to activities of Mark Antony after leaving Rome, whereas Herod's appointment was earlier while he was still there; furthermore, the statement in Appian is about Herod as ruler over Samaria and Idumaea, not Judah. This could be interpreted as a reference to territories added to Herod's realm once Antony came to the region (Stern 1974b: 1:63–64).

1.3.5.3. *Conquest of Jerusalem*

This has traditionally been placed in 37 BCE, though with considerable discussion about the time of year in which it occurred. Recently, it has been argued that the date should be 36 BCE (Mahieu 2012: 60–99; Steinmann 2009: 8–11; Filmer 1966: 285–91; see the counter arguments of Barnes 1968: 204–9; Bernegger 1983: 526–31; Bruggen 1978). The problem with Steinmann is that he ignores all the solid data and depends on the figure of 27 years since Pompey's conquest of Jerusalem, as well as on a sabbatical year reckoning, which is, unfortunately, incorrect (see §1.3.6). In a very confusing discussion, Mahieu begins the siege in Tishri 37 and ends it on Adar 13, 36 BCE; the reasons are not at all clear, though she also uses an incorrect sabbatical year. To resolve the problem of the siege of Jerusalem, we must first enumerate the basic data, which are the following:

- During the consulships of Marcus Agrippa and Caninius Gallus (*Ant.* 14.16.4 §487), which was 37 BCE, or of Claudius and Norbanus (Cassius Dio 49.23.1), which would make it 38 BCE (though Mahieu [2012: 61] may be correct that Dio is referring only to Sosius's appointment as being in that consular year). (Note that Steinmann [2009: 11] misleadingly quotes Dio, inserting a bracketed '37 BCE' for the year following the siege, as if it were the proposed year of the siege.)
- In the 185th Olympiad (*Ant.* 14.16.4 §487), which covered 1 July 41 to 30 June 37 BCE.
- 27 years from the capture of the city under Pompey in 63 BCE (*Ant.* 14.16.4 §487); one must keep in mind that this may be inclusive reckoning or even a possible miscalculation on Josephus's part.

- In the ‘third month’ (*Ant.* 14.16.4 §487; 14.4.3 §66) or the ‘fifth month’ (*War* 1.18.2 §351). According to *Ant.* 14.16.2 §473 the city fell sometime in the summer (θέρους). It may be that the ‘third month’ refers to a siege of three months, while the ‘fifth month’ meant the fifth month of the calendar, i.e., the month of Av. Or (less likely) possibly a siege of five months, ending in the month of Sivan (the third month of the Jewish calendar), though this would better fit the Olympiad. But the ‘third month’ could simply be an error (see below).
- On the ‘Fast Day’ (*Ant.* 14.16.4 §487) or the sabbath day (Cassius Dio 49.22.4; 37.16.4). The ‘fast day’ as the Day of Atonement does not fit with the other data in the passage, while a capitulation of Jerusalem on the Day of Atonement exactly 27 years after its fall to Pompey seems stylized and rather suspect. But as noted above, non-Jewish sources often referred to the sabbath as a fast day, which agrees with Dio’s statement.
- During a ‘sabbatical year’ (*Ant.* 14.16.2 §475). The summer of 137 BCE was getting toward the end of a sabbatical year, which would have exacerbated the problem with lack of food for the besieged.

We must distinguish between those data that Josephus probably took from sources and those based on his own calculations. References to consuls, Olympian dates, ‘third/fifth month’ and the sabbatical year were probably in his sources. The 27 years since Pompey’s taking of Jerusalem may well have been his own (mis?)calculation. Despite the contrary arguments of Mahieu, Steinmann and Filmer, the date 37 BCE seems to be firm, not only because the consuls (as given by Josephus) are correct but also because Mark Antony invaded Parthia with a large army in the spring of 36 BCE (though Mahieu wants to make the fall of Jerusalem before Antony’s invasion of Parthia). Since a large Roman force also aided Herod during his siege, it is unlikely that such would have been available in 36 BCE (Stern 1974b: 1:67; *GLAJJ* 2:361–62). Also, from what is known of the sabbatical year cycle at that time, the sabbatical year mentioned by Josephus would have been autumn 38 to autumn 37 (§1.3.6 below).

More difficult is the time of year. The Olympic year assignment of Josephus suggests the siege would have been finished by the end of June; however, a number of Josephus’s Olympic-year datings are incorrect in this part of the *Antiquities*, if he counted from summer to summer as is normally done; however, there was no consistent reckoning for the start of the Olympic year in antiquity, and some authors counted from the autumn instead of the summer (cf. Bickerman 1980: 76). Also, the start of the siege

was definitely in the 185th Olympiad, even if counted from June, which could also be a source of confusion. What does the ‘third month’ mean, and what about the ‘fifth month’ mentioned elsewhere? The ‘third month’ may actually be an error, since it correctly belongs to Pompey’s siege and may well have been accidentally inserted here (Stern 1974b: 1:66). The siege would thus have begun at the end of winter and have lasted five months, which would put it sometime in mid-summer of 37 BCE.

Puzzling is Josephus’s statement that the fall of Jerusalem was on the ‘day of the fast’. While this normally refers to the Day of Atonement in his usage, the ‘fifth month’ just noted does not accord with this. It has been widely accepted that Josephus has mistakenly interpreted his source here (probably Strabo). Among pagan writers it was common to refer to the sabbath as a fast day. That the city fell on a weekly sabbath is stated by Dio Cassius. If Strabo or another source referred to the sabbath by the designation ‘fast day’, it would be perfectly understandable that Josephus misunderstood this as Yom Kippur. Thus, a sabbath in midsummer 37 BCE seems to be the correct time of the city’s capture.

Finally, Josephus states that the siege of Jerusalem by Herod fell during a sabbatical year (*Ant.* 14.16.2 §§475). Since the siege took place at least partly during the summer (§473), this would put it close to the end of the sabbatical year, which would come with late summer or autumn. In spite of some contrary views, it is now almost universally accepted that Herod’s siege of Jerusalem ended in 37 BCE, even though the exact month is still debated.

1.3.5.4. *Herod’s Death*

Although Herod’s death has generally been placed in 4 BCE just before Passover, this has not been accepted by everyone. Both Edwards (1982) and Bernegger (1983) have recognized some of the difficulties with the figures in Josephus, while Mahieu (2012), Steinmann (2009) and Filmer (1966) have attempted to redate it to 1 BCE. The data are as follows:

- Herod had ruled 37 years since being declared king or 34 years over Jerusalem (*War* 1.33.8 §665; *Ant.* 17.8.1 §191).
- After a certain number of activities relating to attempts to cure his ailment, he died just before Passover (*War* 2.1.3 §10; *Ant.* 17.9.3 §213);
- An eclipse of the moon occurred shortly before Herod’s death (*Ant.* 17.6.4 §167).
- The subsequent reigns of Herod’s sons were definitely counted from about 4 BCE (Edwards 1982; Bruggen 1978).

Much of the discussion has centred around the placing of the eclipse and the Passover that followed. It has been common to accept the eclipse on 13 March 4 BCE, but the major problem has been to fit all the activities after the eclipse in the time before the Passover, which came one month later. Indeed, it is because of the argument that it was not possible to do so that Filmer tried for another dating (but cf. Bruggen 1978: 6–8). Two arguments have now been advanced against this eclipse. The first is that other lunar eclipses seem to have been more spectacular (Steinmann 2009: 12):

- 23 March 5 BCE, total eclipse a month before Passover
- 15 September 5 BCE, total eclipse, seven months before Passover
- 13 March 4 BCE, partial eclipse, a month before Passover
- 10 January 1 BCE, total eclipse, three months before Passover

It is then argued that the eclipse in 1 BCE is not only a ‘better’ candidate by being a total eclipse but that it gives more time for all the activities to do with Herod’s death to have taken place. Unfortunately, these arguments are a complete red herring.

Josephus does not appear to refer to the lunar eclipse as a chronological indicator. He mentions it only in passing but in a context in which he lists the punishment of individuals named Matthias. One was a high priest by this name whom Herod removed from office; the other was an individual seen as instigating rebellion whom Herod had burnt alive. The context suggests that the lunar eclipse is mentioned as a heavenly portent, which would have been the normal reaction of people at that time when astronomical events coincided with spectacular events on the human plane (cf. Plutarch, *Aemilius Paullus* 17.7–10, where a lunar eclipse was interpreted by soldiers as sign of the eclipse of their king). A partial lunar eclipse could well have been remembered by the source that Josephus used for those events. However, it is not clear that the deposition of the high priest happened on that date. In the immediate context, it was the burning of the other Matthias that happened on the day of the eclipse. This could have been the carrying out of a sentence that had been pronounced earlier, possibly even after Herod’s death.

As for the time for the events before Passover, Josephus is not very clear about the chronology of these last days of Herod. After the reference to the eclipse, he talks about the progress of his illness, various other events, his death and the funeral march that took his body for burial in Herodium (*Ant.* 17.6.5–8.3 §§168–99). There is no reason to assume that all of this happened between the lunar eclipse and the Passover. The focus on the eclipse has skewed the discussion.

On the other hand, the other data all point to 4 BCE. The 37 years since Herod's accession as king and the 34 years since he had Antigonus executed (after retaking Jerusalem) both fit 4 BCE, if reckoned inclusively. Similarly, Archelaus's rule of 9 or 10 years ended in 6 CE (*War* 2.7.3 §§111; *Ant.* 17.13.2 §342; 18.2.1 §26), which is ten years reckoned inclusively. Steinmann (2009: 22) proposes that Archelaus began to rule before Herod's death, so that his 9 or 10 years overlapped with the last part of Herod's rule. This is pure speculation to get them out of a difficulty. Mahieu (2012: 397–98) explains it away by speculating that the figure is based on Josephus's 'reconstruction', rather than the number in his source(s). Again, this is speculation for which there is no supporting evidence.

Philip ruled 37 years until his death, in the 20th year of Tiberius (*Ant.* 18.4.6 §106), which would be about 34 CE. Some have wanted to read Tiberius's '22nd' year, based on a reading in a Latin manuscript (Steinmann 2009: 23–24; Mahieu 2012: 399). But the Latin is only a translation, whereas so far all the extant Greek manuscripts read '20'. Steinmann suggests the reading '22nd' is the *lectio difficilior*, and in textual criticism the most difficult reading is often to be preferred (though no text critical rule is absolute; each must be weighed against other considerations). In this case, however, '22nd' in the Latin translation is easily explained. In the general context, Josephus tells us that Tiberius died after ruling 22 years and some months (*War* 2.9.5 §180; cf. *Ant.* 18.6.10 §225). The '22nd' for Philip's reign looks like an assimilation to this. This date also tells us something else: Josephus reckons Tiberius's reign from 14 CE (not 12 CE, as could be argued). It also seems unlikely that Josephus would record Philip's death as Tiberius's 22nd year without associating it with Tiberius's own death, but he clearly separates them.

As for Herod Antipas, we have coinage minted by him in the year 43 (Hendin 2010: 254–55; cf. Mahieu 2012: 274–78). Again, this poses a serious difficulty for Mahieu, because there is no way that Antipas could fit 43 years between 1 BCE and his being deposed in 39 CE. Again, she resolves the difficulty by speculation: 'Antipas may be responsible for the coins of 24, 33, 34, and 37, while those of the year 43 would have emanated from a different authority' (Mahieu 2012: 275). Why a 'different authority' would have continued to issue Antipas's coins long after he was deposed is not clarified, nor is any evidence for such a different authority provided.

In sum, in spite of some recent doubts, the length of Herod's reign from known dates and the reigns of his successors all point to 4 BCE as the date of Herod's death. The only concrete datum that might go against this is the '22' years of Philip's rule in the Latin translation, but it is not supported by any Greek manuscript and looks like simply a cross contamination from Tiberius's length of reign.

1.3.6. *The Sabbatical Year*

P. Benoit et al. (eds) (1961) *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert II: Les grottes de Murabba'ât*; **D. Blosser** (1981) 'The Sabbath Year Cycle in Josephus', *HUCA* 52: 129–39; **G. Dalman** (1932) *Arbeit und Sitte in Palästina*; **B. Kanael** (1971) 'Notes on the Dates Used During the Bar Kokhba Revolt', *IEJ* 21: 39–46; **M. R. Lehmann** (1963) 'Studies in the Murabba'at and Nahal Hever Documents', *RevQ* 4: 53–81; **P. Schäfer** (1981) *Der Bar Kokhba-Aufstand: Studien zum zweiten jüdischen Krieg gegen Rom*; **B. Z. Wacholder** (1973) 'The Calendar of Sabbatical Cycles during the Second Temple and the Early Rabbinic Period', *HUCA* 44: 153–96; **idem** (1975) 'Chronomessianism: The Timing of Messianic Movements and the Calendar of Sabbatical Cycles', *HUCA* 46: 201–18; **idem** (1983) 'The Calendar of Sabbath Years during the Second Temple Era: A Response', *HUCA* 54: 123–33; **R. Yaron** (1960) 'The Murabba'at Documents', *JJS* 11: 157–71; **S. Zeitlin** (1918–19) 'Megillat Taanit as a Source for Jewish Chronology and History in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods', *JQR* o.s. 9: 71–102; **idem** (1919–20) 'Megillat Taanit as a Source for Jewish Chronology and History in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods', *JQR* o.s. 10: 49–80; **B. Zuckermann** (1866) *A Treatise on the Sabbatical Cycle and the Jubilee*.

Many discussions on Maccabean and Herodian chronology have made some reference to the sabbatical year (שמיטה *šēmittāh* or שבִּיעִית *šēvī'it*) described in Lev. 25.1–7 and Deut. 15.1–11. The sabbatical year is still observed by Orthodox Jews in the land of Israel, based on a consistent cycle. This cycle was established in the Middle Ages by the authority of Maimonides (see the discussion by Zuckermann 1866; his tables list the sabbatical years from 535 BCE to 2239 CE). According to this, the next sabbatical year will be autumn (Tishri) 2021 to autumn 2022. This cycle has been accepted by many authors, some thinking it sufficient to project back into the Second Temple period without further argument (e.g., S. Zeitlin 1918–19: 71–102; 1919–20: 49–80, 237–90). Although there is broad agreement that the sabbatical year was observed during the Second Temple period, it is not infrequently asserted that the exact timing of it cannot be ascertained or that there was no consistent cycle (Bernhardt 2017: 529; Dagut 1953: 156 n. 42; Bickerman 1979: 114).

Some scholars, however, have wanted to go with B. Z. Wacholder's calculations. He has claimed that the cycle of Orthodox Jews is wrong, advancing a proposal which puts the sabbatical year one year later in each case (Wacholder 1973: 153–96; cf. also 1975: 201–18). A criticism of part of Wacholder's study was given by Blosser (1981: 129–39), to which Wacholder replied (1983: 123–33). Wacholder was also criticized by J. A. Goldstein (1976: 315–18). Was there a consistent cycle and, if so,

can it be determined with reasonable assurance? The answer in both cases is yes: the data to determine the question are not extensive but they seem to be decisive.

Josephus states that the siege of Jerusalem by Herod fell during a sabbatical year (*Ant.* 14.16.2 §475). Since the siege took place at least partly during the summer (§473), this would put it close to the end of the sabbatical year, which would come with late summer or autumn. It is now almost universally accepted that Herod's siege of Jerusalem ended in 37 BCE, even though the exact month is still debated (Stern 1974b: 64–68; *GLAJJ* 2:361–62, on Cassius Dio 49.23.1; Bruggen 1978: 13–14). Although Wacholder (1973: 165–67; 1983: 127–28) mentions some problems with determining the time of the capitulation to Herod, he nevertheless seems to accept the year 37 BCE. O. Edwards (1982: 29–42), while attempting to give a new dating for Herod's death, similarly still accepts the year 37 for the fall of Jerusalem. Until recently the only one who seems to have attempted a redating was W. E. Filmer (1966: 285–91), but now A. E. Steinmann (2009) and B. Mahieu (2012) have done so, albeit unconvincingly (see further the previous section, §1.3.5.3).

Another date of importance is the sabbatical year around the beginning of the Bar Kokhva revolt. A rental contract (Mur 24) is dated to 'the 20th of Shevat, year 2 of the redemption of Israel' (באשרין לשבת שנת שתיים לגאולת ישראל; Benoit et al. [eds] 1961: 124). This puts the dating of the document itself to about February 134 according to the conventional dating of the revolt (132–35 CE). The dating of the revolt is a whole study in itself, but it is widely accepted among specialists that coins and other documents now confirm the beginning of the revolt in the spring or summer of 132 (P. Schäfer 1981; Kanael 1971). The document states that five full years are being reckoned until the beginning of the sabbatical year. Since the contract is dated about February, how are the six months remaining before Tishri counted? (Wacholder does not discuss this problem.) A study of agriculture in Palestine shows that even grain could be planted as late as the month of Shevat, and late planting of other sorts of crops was common (Dalman 1932: 2:130–39, 176–79, 205–18). Thus, Hillel ben Grys, who rented the field to Yehuda ben Raba in Mur 24, expected the months until Tishri to count as the first year because a full cropping was possible. This puts the sabbatical year in 138–39 CE.

A final question concerns the sabbatical year mentioned in a document from the early part of Nero's reign. A deed of sale of land (Mur 18) is dated to the second year of Nero Caesar (the exact date is lost), which is said to be a sabbatical year, at least as some scholars have translated the passage in question (J. T. Milik in Benoit et al. [eds] 1961: 100–104). Mur 18.7

reads *ושנת שמטה דה*, which has sometimes been understood to mean ‘this (year) is the sabbatical year’, i.e., the document was written in a sabbatical year. Since Nero became emperor on 13 October 54 CE, his second year would have been 55–56 CE. This would seem to put the sabbatical year in 55–56 CE and thus contradict the cycle established above. However, there are two arguments against this. One would reconcile the data of the document with the established cycle of sabbatical dates. Lehmann (1963: 56–57) proposed the following solution: on the basis of a passage in the Babylonian Talmud (*b. B. Bat.* 164a-b), he argued that tied documents such as Mur 18 always count the ruler’s first year as his second out of respect. Although this interpretation is disputed by Wacholder (1973: 170–71), he only doubts it rather than attempting to disprove it, and Lehmann’s interpretation has become widely accepted. The other resolves the problem by rendering the disputed phrase as a conditional clause, making it have no direct bearing on the date of the sabbatical cycle (cf. the translation of Mur 18.6-7 by J. A. Fitzmyer and D. J. Harrington (1978: 139): ‘I will reimburse you with (interest of) a fifth and will settle in en[tirety], even if this is the Year of Release.’ This interpretation was already given by the original editor J. T. Milik (in Benoit et al. [eds] 1961: 102–3) and accepted by R. Yaron (1960: 158). Thus, Mur 18 does not refute the cycle already established by more solid data.

The only real difficulty in this interpretation of the sabbatical year is found in Josephus. *Antiquities* 13.7.4-8.1 §§228-35 states that sometime during John Hyrcanus’s siege of Ptolemy, the sabbatical year came around. According to the cycle established above, the sabbatical year would have been 136–135 BCE, but this does not fit 1 Macc. 16.14, which puts Simon’s death in Shevat at 177 SE. Since Hyrcanus’s siege began shortly after Simon’s death, one cannot state that a sabbatical year beginning with Tishri 136 ‘came on’ (*ἐνίσταται* – §234). Even reckoning Simon’s death by using the earliest dating (Nisan 312, as proposed above) means that the sabbatical year was already well underway by the time of his death in January or February 135. Counting from Tishri 312 or Nisan 311 would put Simon’s death even later). But there are also other problems with this passage. The statement about the sabbatical year seems copied from a non-Jewish source which did not fully understand it. Contrary to the statements in the passage, the sabbatical year was not analogous to the sabbath in forbidding work, and there is no reason why the siege could not have continued despite the onset of the sabbatical year (for example, Judas fought in a sabbatical year: 1 Macc. 6.48-53). Also, the sabbatical year is normally expected to affect the besieged, not the besiegers. The whole passage is peculiar and so far inexplicable.

Some uncertainty is always the case with historical matters. Nothing more than probability can be established in the light of very incomplete data. Nevertheless, certain reasonably firm dates can give us confidence that the sabbatical year fell according to a regular pattern during the time under consideration. The sabbatical year can thus be used as another source of chronological data. Indeed, the sabbatical year cycle is no more uncertain than many other matters of dating or even the course of events at this time. That is the nature of historical study. But the data about the sabbatical year are too pressing to be simply dismissed as some do. We have a right – indeed, a duty – to consider it alongside other information about dating in our sources for the Hasmonaean period.

1.3.7. *Table of Some Important Dates*

The following are some of the main dates relating to Jewish history, especially those that might be controversial. It should be noted that even when the calculations here differ from those found in many handbooks, they differ only by a year. In the following table, some of the Seleucid era dates are given according to what are regarded here as dates by ‘Jewish reckoning’ (using a SE date from Nisan 312 BCE) but some are clearly given by ‘Babylonian reckoning’ (using a SE date from Nisan 311 BCE).

Julian Date (BCE)	Seleucid Date year (mo., da.)	Subject	Source
175 (Aug.–Sept.)	137 (6, –) BR	Antiochus IV takes throne	Sachs and Wiseman 1954
170 (July–Aug.)	142 (5, –) BR	Executes son of Seleucus IV	Sachs and Wiseman 1954
168 (July)		Antiochus leaves Egypt	Ray 1976
168 (Dec.)	145 (11, 25) JR	‘Abomination of desolation’ set up	1 Macc. 1.19
165 (Dec.)	148 (11, 25) JR	Temple cult resumed	1 Macc. 4.52
164 (Nov.–Dec.)	148 (9, –) BR	Antiochus IV’s death reported	Sachs and Wiseman 1954
161 (Mar.–Apr.)	152 (1, –) JR	Death of Judas Maccabee	1 Macc. 9.3
143–142	170 JR	Simon’s 1st year: freedom for Israel declared	1 Macc. 13.41

141 (Aug.–Sept.)	172 (6, 18) JR	Decree of people regarding Simon (his 3rd year)	1 Macc. 14.27
135 (Jan.–Feb.)	177 (11, –) JR	Simon's assassination	1 Macc. 16.14
63 (summer)	Gaius Antonius and Marcus Tullius Cicero, consuls	Pompey takes Jerusalem	<i>Ant.</i> 14.4.3 §66
40 (Dec)	Gnaeus Domitius Calvinus and Gaius Asinius Pollio, consuls	Herod declared king by Romans	<i>Ant.</i> 14.14.5 §389
38–37 (autumn)		Sabbatical year	<i>Ant.</i> 14.16.2 §475
37 (summer)	Marcus Agrippa and Caninius Gallus, consuls	Herod takes Jerusalem	<i>Ant.</i> 14.16.4 §487
31 (2 Sept)		Battle of Actium	
4 (spring?)	37 years since appointed king	Death of Herod	<i>Ant.</i> 17.8.1 §191

JR = Jewish reckoning of Seleucid area (§1.3.3 above)

BR = Babylonian reckoning of Seleucid era

1.4 Terminology and Other Technical Matters

Readers should be aware of several points:

- The transliteration of Hebrew will be clear to scholars who work in that language, generally following the standard forms; however, I have used *v* and *f* for the non-*dageshed* forms of *bet* and *pe*, while *w* is always used for *waw* (or *vav*, even though now pronounced *v* by most modern users of Hebrew). An exception is *mikva'ot* because this is the way it usually occurs.
- Proper names generally follow the conventional forms used in English Bibles or by classicists where they are not biblical names.
- Translations are normally my own, unless the source of the translation is explicitly given.
- The terms 'apocalyptic' and 'apocalypticism' are used interchangeably here; some North American scholars object to 'apocalyptic' as a noun, but it has a long and respectable history of such usage and is still so used on this side of the Atlantic.

- As set out above (§1.2.1), the term ‘Judaean’ is normally restricted to those who live in Judaea or were at least born there. Otherwise, the term ‘Jew’ is used for anyone in the Jewish ethnic community or who is labelled יהודי/יהודי/ιουδαίος/*Iudaeus* in the historical sources.
- ‘Palestine’ is purely a geographical term, used because it has been widely accepted for many years and because it is sometimes difficult to find a suitable substitute.