Brief History Outline

## Babylonian Rule (605-539 BC)

Key developments:

*3 captivity deportations*

*Preservation of the Jewish identity*

Babylon: known for her gardens

## Persian Rule –close of the Old Testament period (539-331 BC)

Persians in power approximately 100 years before Malachi and 100 years after

Jewish nation allowed to do its own thing

Key developments:

*3 returns from captivity to Jerusalem*

*Restoration of the temple and the city (but not to their former glory)*

## Greek Rule (331-143 BC)

Key developments:

*Hellenization of the Hebrew culture*

*(Hellenization= ‘Greekizing’)*

*Ptolemys from Egypt ruled from 331-198BC*

*Seleucids from Syria ruled from 198-143BC*

For a time some of the conquerors of Palestine allowed the Jews to worship as they wished.

But this came to an end under Antiochus.

Antiochus:

.. Tried to stop the Jews from worshipping God.

He tried to get rid of all the copies of the Torah (the 5 books of the Law)

Sabbath worship was prohibited.

*Those who continued to worship were burned alive….*

*Temple worship was abolished*

*Antiochus  commanded the Jews to worship the Greek god, Zeus*

*A statue of Zeus was made and put in the temple*

*It was made to look like Antiochus.*

*He looted the temple.. Sold the women and children of Palestine as slaves*

“*Two women were brought in for having circumcised their children. These women they paraded about the city, with their babies hung at their breasts and then hurled headlong from the wall*”

During this time the Jewish faith was being desecrated

**Reflect:** To help you to understand the feelings of the Jewish nation.

Scenario:  You ‘love’ the church you attend.  But when you approach it on Sunday morning you notice that it has been spray painted with obscenities.  The front doors have been broken and when you enter the sanctuary you see that garbage has been thrown on the pulpit, altar and stage.   Words and pictures making fun of Christians have also been spray painted on the sanctuary walls.

*How would you feel seeing this*? Be detailed.

## Maccabean revolt (164 BC)

Opposition to Antiochus begins in Modin (halfway between Jerusalem and Joppa)

Appelles, the king’s officer, approached Mattathias, a retired, aged priest.

Promises royal favor to Mattathias if he would sacrifice a pig on the altar to the gods of Greece.

Mattathias refuses

Reason: Pigs were seen as being unclean

Trichinosis

A degenerate Jew stepped forward and carried out the king’s order.

Mattathias killed the Jew and the officer of the king.

Then he fled to the hills.

The king had 1000 Jews killed on the Sabbath.

Jews rallied around Mattathias and began defensive warfare to protect their own.

*They also made raids to destroy all evidence of apostasy and heathenism.*

On his death bed Mattathias selected his son, Judas Maccabeus, as his successor.

By his heroic example Judas Maccabeus inspired other Jews to act in bravery.

Maccabeus was his nickname meaning “hammer”

The bravery of the Jews was fueled by the fact that they were

*Fighting for a principle*

*For the faith of their fathers*

*For their very lives.*

After 3 years of the temple being desecrated Judas was able to regain control of it for the Jews.

This event is celebrated in the annual FEAST OF LIGHTS…also called the FEAST OF DEDICATION in John 10:22.

## Hasmonian Rule (143-63 BC)

The Hasmonians were Jewish high priest kings

65 years of peace and freedom

Key development:

*Political independence*

## Roman Rule (63BC-192 AD)

Key developments

*Common language*

*Road system*

*Coming of Jesus Christ*