

Intertestamental Period

Terminology: Intertestamental Period refers to the time span between the writing of the Old Testament and the New Testament.

Intertestamental Period's Importance in Biblical Studies: We do not have any Biblical record of the Intertestamental Period. However, we do know through secondary sources that Judaism went through some significant changes during this time. Therefore, a historical understanding of the events that occurred during this time enables the Bible student to have valuable knowledge into the Judaism in which Jesus was born and into which His disciples followed Him.

Sources: Old Testament Apocrypha (1&2 Maccabees) and the writings of Josephus.

Dating: Roughly, the Intertestamental Period includes the time between 200 BC and AD 100. However, some scholars include the time between the Babylonian Exile in 586 BC up through the 1st century.

Historical Sections: The history of Palestine may be divided into six sections, corresponding to the different rulers.

- 1) Palestine Under Persian Rule (Closing of OT time to B.C. 332)
- 2) Palestine Under Alexander the Great (B.C. 332 – B.C. 323)
- 3) Palestine Under the Ptolemys (B.C. 324 – B.C. 204)
- 4) Palestine Under the Selucids (B.C. 204 – B.C. 165)
- 5) Palestine Under the Maccabees (B.C. 165 – B.C. 63)
- 6) Palestine Under Romans (B.C. 63 – through the remainder of Bible history)

Important Historical Events Between the Testaments:

- 334 B.C. – Alexander crosses the Hellespont
- 331 B.C. – Alexander defeats the Persians
- 323 B.C. – Alexander dies at age thirty-two in Babylon
- 250 B.C. – The translation of the Septuagint
- 214 B.C. – The Great Wall of China begun
- 175 B.C. – Apocryphal literature completed
- 169 B.C. – Antiochus Epiphanes IV defiles the Temple on December 15
- 166 B.C. – The revolt of the Maccabees
- 165 B.C. – The cleansing of the Temple on December 25
- 146 B.C. – Destruction of Carthage by Rome and the end of the Punic Wars
- 63 B.C. – Pompey conquers Jerusalem
- 44 B.C. – Julius Caesar is assassinated in March
- 37 B.C. – Herod is appointed to govern Jerusalem
- 20 B.C. – The rebuilding and enlargement of the Temple