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Alexander the Great Comes to Jerusalem: The Jewish Response to Hellenism

Cecilia M. Peek

When Alexander the Great defeated the forces of Darius III near Gaugamela in 331 B.C., he became heir to the Persian empire.¹ Palestine was among those territories acquired after his victory over the last Achaemenid ruler. For the first twenty years after Alexander's death, this region was hotly contested.² The territory was assigned to Laomedon in the initial division of responsibilities in 323 B.C.; he held it until Ptolemy Soter acquired it in 320. In 315, Antigonos One-Eye seized all of Palestine; Ptolemy retrieved it from Antigonos's son Demetrius in 312. Antigonos recaptured the area in 311, but he was killed at the Battle of Ipsus in 301. Seleucus, who then held Palestine, yielded it to Ptolemy. Ptolemy and his heirs held Judea for the next century. In 200, Antiochus III's decisive victory over the Ptolemies in the Fifth Syrian War made Jerusalem and its environs the concern of the Seleucid monarchs.³ The Seleucids enjoyed political supremacy until Antiochus IV Epiphanes' persecution of the Jewish faith in the 160s B.C. incited the Hasmonean revolt, laying the foundation for the eventual independence of Judea.⁴

For a century and a half, Palestine had continued under the jurisdiction of one or another Hellenistic monarch. Jews came into regular contact with Hellenistic culture in the persons and policies of its rulers (however shifting) and the Greco-Macedonian settlers who penetrated the region.⁵ Interaction between Jews and Greeks became more regular and sustained than ever before. It would be

surprising indeed, if there were no signs of Hellenization (Greek cultural influence) in the Jewish community throughout the Second Temple period.⁶

One may argue, indeed many have argued, about the degree to which Greek models affected Jewish society. An enormous body of scholarship has been devoted to the study of Hellenism and the Jews, with particular attention given to the period of the reign of Antiochus IV Epiphanes (beginning in 170 B.C.) and the ensuing Hasmonean revolt down to the high priesthood of Simon, last of the Maccabean brothers, in 140.⁷

The initial encounter between Hellenism and Judaism has been variously treated by scholars. One view holds that “two opposing parties” existed within Judaism. On one hand were the “devout” Jews—usually linked in the first centuries with the Pharisees and the Essenes—who were pious observers of the law and naturally, if not always successfully, opposed to Greek influences. On the other hand were the “Hellenists”—Jews who accepted and promoted Greek culture, which was energetically championed by Antiochus IV Epiphanes. The devout Jews gained a decisive advantage when the Selucid king tried to substitute Greek rites for traditional Jewish worship. The Jewish faith, previously giving way to Greek practices, was ironically preserved by the king’s overzealous attempt at Hellenization. The sponsors of Hellenistic culture suddenly met with the active resistance of the monotheistic Jews.⁸ For those who view this resistance as successfully prevailing, the Jewish community “was and remained in political institutions, in observances and in its culture and literary products” markedly “un-Hellenistic.”⁹

Another view claims that the Greek influence in Palestine was profound and pervasive, originally meeting no resistance and influencing everything from politics and economics to literature and philosophy. According to this school, there was a process of assimilation and understanding that resulted in a decidedly Hellenized Palestinian Judaism, not notably distinct from the Judaism of the Diaspora. The process of assimilation in the period of initial encounter was interrupted only by the nationalistic uprising of the Maccabees.¹⁰ The main proponents of cultural assimilation and accommodation, in time, became known as the Sadducees.

Evidence of Jewish Reception of Greek Culture

Jewish sources themselves suggest that at least some Jews were receptive to Hellenistic culture and that Jewish involvement with Greek traditions was not always considered a threat to religious piety. The writer of 1 Maccabees, himself critical of the corrupting influences of Greek culture, admits a widespread, Jewish-initiated desire to participate in some of the forms of Greek life in the second century B.C. After a cursory summary of the career of Alexander the Great and his political successors, he records:

From them came forth a sinful root, Antiochus Epiphanes, son of Antiochus the king; he had been a hostage in Rome. He began to reign in the one hundred and thirty-seventh year of the kingdom of the Greeks. In those days lawless men came forth *from Israel*, and misled many, saying, "*Let us go and make a covenant with the Gentiles round about us*, for since we separated from them many evils have come upon us." This proposal pleased them, and *some of the people eagerly went to the king*. He authorized them to observe the ordinances of the Gentiles. So they built a gymnasium in Jerusalem, according to Gentile custom, and removed the marks of circumcision, and abandoned the holy covenant. They joined with the Gentiles and sold themselves to evil. (1 Macc. 1:9-15; italics added)¹¹

The language is strongly biased, being that of an author whose own life postdated the events he describes here by a generation¹² and who viewed the Jewish involvement with the "ordinances of the Gentiles" as a departure from the sacred traditions of the fathers. The only thing one can say with any certainty about the actions of these unnamed Jews, apart from the author's interpretation of those actions, is that they approached the Seleucid king and requested and received authorization to build a gymnasium, the traditional site for Greek education. The interest in this Greek custom in Jerusalem originated with the Jews themselves, although in time this development admittedly became problematic for some Jews.¹³

A more precise account is given in 2 Maccabees. This book describes a dispute over the high priesthood between a certain Simon and the high priest Onias. Jason, the brother of Onias, is said to have gone to the king, Antiochus IV, and obtained the high priesthood for himself by promising the king 80 talents more tribute than he had hitherto received. Jason offered an additional 150 talents, over and above the 80 talents already proffered, for

permission to establish by his (Jason's) authority a gymnasium, a body of youth to attend it, and the right to register Antiochenes in Jerusalem.¹⁴ The king assented; Jason took office and "shifted his countrymen over to the Greek way of life" (2 Macc. 4:7-10).

This account likewise attributes the impetus for a gymnasium and perhaps other Greek cultural practices to certain Jews themselves—in this case to Jason. There is no evidence of resistance to the gymnasium in Jerusalem. The author of 2 Maccabees regards the response in Jerusalem as a dangerous rejection of the laws of God, for which the Jews would be punished (2 Macc. 4:16-17), but such a view is interpretive. Of the admittedly few contemporaneous sources, none characterizes the gymnasium or Jason and his Hellenizing reforms as an evil destined to bring on God's wrath.¹⁵ At the time the gymnasium was established, it seems to have been very popular, and the priests seem to have participated enthusiastically.¹⁶ The Jewish high priest was, however, careful to secure the activity under priestly control—Jason specifically requests that it might be established under *his* authority, perhaps to be free from any non-Jewish management in the regulation of the enterprise.

The story of Jason establishing a gymnasium describes just one Jewish response to Hellenistic culture. Elements of Greek society other than the gymnasium and periods other than the Maccabean could serve as further case studies for the Jewish relationship to Hellenistic culture in intertestamental and New Testament times. In other subjects and other times, it is also possible to see Jewish acceptance and appropriation of Greek traditions. Two examples may be mentioned—the writings of Jewish historians and the work of Jewish artisans.

Jewish writers sometimes adopted the historiographic methods of Greek historians of the Hellenistic era. Writing in Greek, Jewish historians claimed the non-Greek origin of Greek culture. This practice was by no means limited to Jewish authors: one of the earliest known examples of this kind of nationalistic apologetic comes from Hecataeus of Abdera, who was commissioned by King Ptolemy of Egypt to write a history of that country. His *Kulturgeschichte*, which represented Egypt as the original source for the great cultural achievements of Greece, served as a model for several Hellenistic Jewish authors.¹⁷

The Jew Eupolemus calls Moses the first wise man, using the Greek term *sophos*. Moses is, therefore, not just the conduit of God's commandments to Israel, but the first *philosopher*, the originator of Greek wisdom.¹⁸ Artapanus, writing in the second century B.C., portrays Abraham, Joseph, and Moses all as cultural benefactors. Abraham taught astrology to the king of the Egyptians. Joseph instituted successful farming innovations and discovered measures as well. Moses is credited with a variety of practical inventions, including ships, devices for lifting stones, as well as Egyptian weapons, fighting techniques, and philosophy. Besides these, he is supposed to have had a hand in organizing Egyptian worship, to have been a great military leader, and to have had virtually magical powers.¹⁹

By fashioning Moses and his patriarchal predecessors as cultural benefactors of Egypt, Artapanus indirectly asserts Jewish superiority over the Greeks. According to Hecataeus, on whose history Artapanus strongly relied, the Greeks derived their wisdom and learning from the Egyptians; according to Artapanus, the Egyptians derived theirs from the Jews.²⁰

Jewish artisans likewise imitated Greek styles, utilizing Greek architectural and mythological motifs in the ornamentation of their own religious and secular structures. Archaeology has yielded some interesting finds in Palestinian synagogues. Jewish symbols sometimes coexist with Greco-Roman mythology. The synagogue at Hammath-Tiberias from around the third and fourth centuries A.D. preserves a mosaic of Helios with globe and whip in hand.²¹ The third-century synagogue at Chorazin has a frieze representing



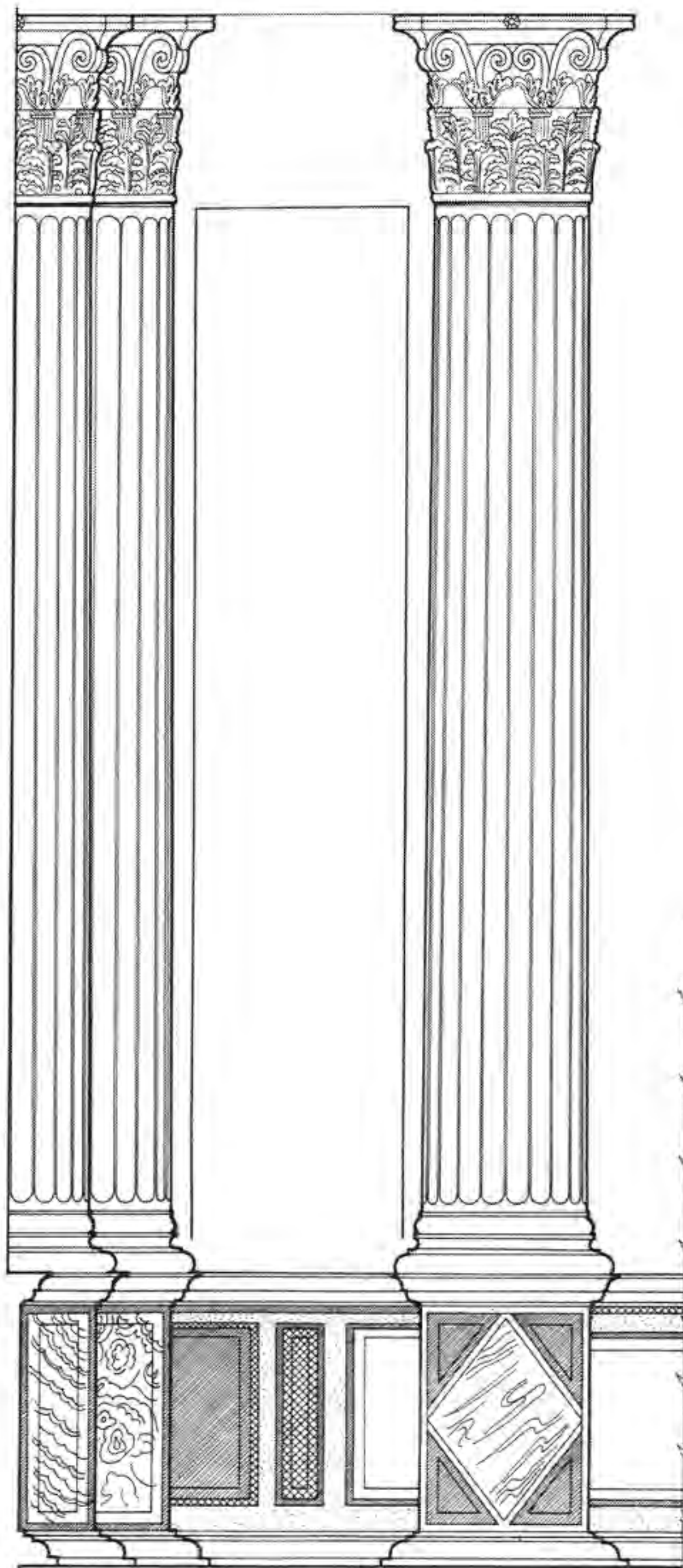
Corinthian capital from Masada. Reflecting the influence of Hellenistic traditions upon Herod's architecture, this engaged capital (specifically the upper drum) is from the banquet hall of the Northern Palace.

Hercules, the Medusa, a centaur, and some decidedly Dionysiac humans.²² Whatever the motivation for such depictions, we must assume by their presence in the centers of Jewish religious life that they were aesthetically acceptable to some pious Jewish audiences.

The Reception of Alexander as a Prototype

In antiquity, individual Jewish attitudes to Hellenism likely varied as much as modern interpretations of them. There can be little doubt that the introduction of Hellenistic rule gave rise to recurring and energetic discussions concerning the appropriate Jewish response to the policies of Hellenistic monarchs in Palestine and the cultural forms that accompanied them.

Consider the visit of Alexander the Great to Jerusalem after his conquest of Tyre in 332 B.C. Greek historians make no mention of this visit; in fact, no surviving non-Jewish source mentions any connection between Alexander and the Jews. The Jewish historian Josephus is the earliest extant author to record a visit by Alexander to Jerusalem.²³ The tradition behind Josephus's narrative is obscure at



Restored section of the Northern Palace's banquet hall. The Corinthian capitals combined with the painted pedestals reflect a mix of styles.

best.²⁴ It is possible that Alexander visited Jerusalem, but the preserved descriptions of his visit are almost certainly fictional, “mere *ex post facto* legends.”²⁵ This is not to say that Josephus’s account is therefore without historical value. Albeit untrustworthy in reconstructing the facts of history, it does offer valuable insight into at least one Jewish view of the appropriate relationship between the Jews and a Greek ruler.

According to Josephus, Alexander, while engaged in the siege of Tyre, sent a letter to the Jewish high priest Jaddus. Alexander had already defeated Persian forces at the Granicus and taken Damascus and Sidon. The siege of Tyre was proving more arduous and time-consuming than he had anticipated.²⁶ In his letter to Jaddus, Alexander demanded assistance, provisions, and the tribute that had formerly been paid to the Persian king Darius. The high priest refused to violate his oath to Darius as long as the king remained alive. Jaddus’s refusal enraged Alexander, and he vowed to attack the high priest and make an example of him once he had subdued Tyre.²⁷

After the Macedonian forces took Tyre and Gaza, Alexander became anxious to go to Jerusalem.²⁸ When the high priest heard of his approach, he was naturally frightened, and he joined the people in offering sacrifice and praying to their God to protect and deliver them. Jaddus was commanded by God in a dream to decorate the city with wreaths, to open its gates, and to go out and meet the approaching force. The people were to be dressed in white garments; the priest himself in his priestly regalia. Jaddus was assured that they would suffer no harm.²⁹ Alexander’s arrival is the dramatic moment of the account:

When [Jaddus] learned that Alexander was not far from the city, he went out with the priests and the body of citizens, and . . . met him at a certain place called Saphein. This name, translated into the Greek tongue, means “Lookout.” For, as it happened, Jerusalem and the temple could be seen from there. Now the Phoenicians and the Chaldaeans who followed along thought to themselves that the king in his anger would naturally permit them to plunder the city and put the high priest to a shameful death, but the reverse of this happened. For when Alexander while still far off saw the multitude in white garments the priests at their head clothed in linen, and the high priest in a robe of hyacinth-blue and gold, wearing on his head the mitre with the golden plate on it on which was inscribed the name of God, he approached alone and prostrated himself before . . . the high priest.³⁰

Upon seeing this, all the Jews shouted greeting to Alexander and surrounded him. Alexander's men were amazed at their leader's behavior, and his general Parmenion asked him why he, to whom others do obeisance, had bowed down to the high priest of the Jews.³¹ Alexander explained that he had prostrated himself not before Jaddus, but rather before the God whom Jaddus served and whose name appeared on the high priest's mitre. He claimed that he had previously seen Jaddus in a dream, dressed in the very attire in which they now beheld him. In Alexander's dream, the high priest urged him "not to hesitate but to cross over [into Asia] confidently, for he himself would lead [Alexander's] army and give over [to him] the empire of the Persians."³² Encountering the living version of the apparition in his dream assured Alexander of divine guidance and future success.³³

Alexander then gave the high priest his hand, and the whole multitude proceeded into the city, which stood open to receive him. Alexander offered sacrifice to the God of Israel in the temple,³⁴ honored the priests, and bestowed gifts on the inhabitants of the city. He was shown a copy of the book of Daniel,³⁵ in which the fall of Persia at the hands of a Greek was prophesied, and Alexander took this Greek to be himself. Perhaps most importantly, he granted the high priest's request that the Jews be free to observe their country's laws and be exempt from tribute every seventh year. He even extended the free observance of their laws to the Jews in Babylon and Media. Those who wished could join his army, and we are told that many did.³⁶

The tale in Josephus has been characterized as "two sub-stories." The ceremonial reception of Alexander upon his arrival in Jerusalem constitutes the first part; the miraculous preservation of the Jewish people and their temple because of divine dreams, the second.³⁷

It is said that the account of Alexander's arrival and that of his epiphany must originally have been two distinct narratives, which are thematically irreconcilable: the former demonstrates Jewish submission to Alexander, while the latter demonstrates Alexander's submission to the God of the Jews.³⁸ However, is it not the very disjunction between the narratives that accurately characterizes the tension in the relationship between Alexander and the

Jewish people? The story as a whole represents an effort to clarify and relieve that tension by defining the Jewish place in a world dominated by the Hellenistic world-conqueror. The hard fact is that the Jews must acknowledge the *temporal* overlordship of the victorious Alexander and, by extension, whichever of his successors should control Palestine. But their lives are also governed by their God and the laws established by Him, and He takes precedence. The superiority of God's claims must be upheld, while Alexander must be satisfied.

The *adventus* and epiphany aspects of the story combined achieve the desired effect; together they define the proper relationship: God's chosen people are prepared, under certain circumstances, to open their city, serve in the army, and render other signs of temporal submission to an earthly king. The earthly king must in turn submit, literally or figuratively, to their God. Alexander bows to the God of Israel; he offers sacrifice to Him in His temple. In addition, he bestows gifts on the Jews and agrees to allow them freedom to observe their traditional laws unmolested. As Alexander favored the Jews, so the God of the Jews would favor Alexander. Jewish prophetic predictions of Alexander's success and Jewish fidelity to him are at one with Alexander's acknowledgment of God. Their submission is possible precisely because Alexander does bow to their God, who is Lord over all. Here is a worldly king they may recognize.

Fanciful though Josephus's account of Alexander the Great's visit to Jerusalem may be, it is powerful metaphor. It commemorates and contemplates the introduction of Hellenism to Judea. Greeks and Jews were aware of each other before Alexander conquered the Persian empire, but the imposition of Hellenistic rule in Palestine that accompanied Alexander's conquest brought more lasting contact and the possibility for a more profound influence between these cultures. The relationship that developed was often friendly, sometimes violently strained, and always complex.

Josephus—or, better stated, his source—appropriately chose to describe the very inception of this relationship as the model for it. Alexander is the type of the Hellenistic ruler, the first and the best of them. His favor for and warm reception by the Jews symbolize the ideal interaction between the Jewish people and a

foreign sovereign. Interaction with Hellenistic overlords and their Roman replacements would continue for many years after Alexander's lifetime, and the story of his visit to Jerusalem was perhaps in part *ex post facto* justification of the political reality of Hellenistic and Roman rule in Judea. Foreign kings did hold sway in Palestine, but submission to their authority could be explained and justified.

The *quid pro quo* of the Jewish exchange with Alexander is mythical assurance that the Jews are favored and protected by their God and that there is no shame in accepting the government of a great man who recognizes that Israel's God is greater still.³⁹ This concept was not only metaphor; it also illustrated genuine sentiment. Jewish fidelity to any ruler depended on that ruler's respect for their religion, as Antiochus IV Epiphanes discovered to his sorrow. When he threatened Jewish religious independence, the Jews jeopardized foreign control over Palestine—a situation that Herod the Great and his successors continued to confront, down to the time of Masada.⁴⁰

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NOTES

¹On Gaugamela and its aftermath, see Arrian, *Anabasis* 3.7-22; Diodorus Siculus, 17.54-73; Quintus Curtius, 4.9-5.13; Plutarch, *Alexander* 31-43; and Justin, *Epitome* 11.13-15. Although there had been conquests in abundance before this encounter and Darius himself escaped this one, Alexander considered Gaugamela decisive. After this battle, he adopted the official title of the ruler of the Persian empire—"king of kings." See Plutarch, *Alexander* 34.1.

Alexander and his Hellenistic successors have traditionally been described as intentionally initiating and effecting the infiltration of Hellenistic culture—the language, philosophy, art, and customs of Greece—into the non-Greek world. This view is sometimes still perpetuated in textbooks of Greek history. John B. Bury and Russell Meiggs, *A History of Greece to the Death of Alexander the Great* (New York: St. Martin's, 1980), 446, refers to "the expansion of Hellas and the diffusion of Hellenic civilization which destiny had chosen [Alexander] to accomplish." It is now widely recognized that there was more of cultural exchange than of infiltration. Two examples: the Seleucids depended largely on styles of governance put in place by their Achaemenid predecessors to manage their extensive realm. The Ptolemies eagerly adopted and adapted the ancient

Phaoronic traditions of Egypt to confirm their rule of that territory. On the Seleucids, see Susan Sherwin-White, "Seleucid Babylonia: A Case-Study for the Installation and Development of Greek Rule," in *Hellenism in the East*, ed. Amélie Kuhrt and Susan Sherwin-White (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987), 1-31. For the Ptolemies, see Dorothy Thompson, *Memphis under the Ptolemies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 106-54.

²The area was strategic for its proximity to Coele-Syria. See Peter Green, *From Alexander to Actium: The Historical Evolution of the Hellenistic Age* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990), 497.

³Diodorus Siculus, 18.3; 19.59.2; 19.80-86; 19.93.4; 21.1.4; 39.6; Quintus Curtius, 10.10.2; Justin, *Epitome* 13.4.12; 31.1.1-2; Polybius, 16.18-19. For discussion of the Fifth Syrian War and its outcomes, see Frank W. Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius*, 3 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), 2:523-25, 546-47.

⁴Epiphanes' baffling behavior has been sensibly reconsidered by Erich S. Gruen, "Hellenism and Persecution: Antiochus IV and the Jews," in *Hellenistic History and Culture*, ed. Peter Green (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993), 238-64. Epiphanes' Seleucid predecessors had been markedly supportive of Jewish traditions in Palestine. See Josephus, *Antiquities* 12.138-46; and 2 Maccabees 3:2-3 for Antiochus III and Seleucus IV. Hasmonean rule of Judea lasted approximately from 165 to 35 B.C.

⁵Greek *poleis* (city states) were eventually spread across Palestine, as noted by Gruen, "Hellenism and Persecution," 240, and 241, figure 38.

⁶Indeed, the politics, personal tastes, and architecture of King Herod the Great that are reflected at Masada are only a few of the evidences of Hellenistic influences in the world of the Jews leading up to the time of the New Testament. As Masada testifies, Greek influences in Palestine were strong, but they were neither universal nor unproblematical.

⁷Samuel K. Eddy, *The King Is Dead: Studies in the Near Eastern Resistance to Hellenism, 334-31 B.C.* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1961), 183. Eddy rightly observes that Hellenistic Judaism is "virtually a separate field."

⁸Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.-A.D. 135)*, ed. and rev. Geza Vermes and Fergus Millar, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1973-79), 1:145-46.

⁹Fergus Millar, "Background to the Maccabaeian Revolution: Reflections on Martin Hengel's *Judaism and Hellenism*," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 29-30 (spring 1978): 1-21.

¹⁰Martin Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in Their Encounter in Palestine during the Early Hellenistic Period*, vols. 1-2 (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974), 6-106. Hengel speaks of the "repudiation" of Hellenism after the Hasmonean rebellion.

¹¹The anti-Gentile, anti-Antiochus bias of the author is obvious. Compare Jonathan Goldstein, "Jewish Acceptance and Rejection of Hellenism," in *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition*, ed. Ed P. Sanders, A. I. Baumgarten, and Alan Mendelson, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981), 2:75, where he discusses the Jewish "desire for closer association with the Greeks and for the establishment of a gymnasium."

¹²Jonathan Goldstein, *I Maccabees* (New York: Doubleday, 1976), 62–63.

¹³These buildings “were decorated with representations of various gods and . . . the students in these classrooms were expected, even compelled, to take part in pagan religious festivals”; moreover, in their physical exercises, “athletes performed in the nude,” all of which “helps explain the negative attitude of traditional Jews toward the gymnasium.” John T. Townsend, “Education (Greco-Roman),” in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman, 6 vols. (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 2:313.

¹⁴What precisely is meant by “registering Antiochenes in Jerusalem” is debated. The prevailing views are summarized by Gruen:

Scholars have interpreted it either as the installation of a Greek *politeuma* of Hellenized Jews within the city of Jerusalem or as a wholesale conversion of Jerusalem into a Greek *polis*, a new “Antioch-at-Jerusalem.” It is hard to imagine just what would be meant by the latter. Certainly Jerusalem did not adopt a full panoply of Greek political institutions, nor did she abandon her traditional structure of governance. The “Antioch-at-Jerusalem” comprised, at most, a select body of individuals keen on the promotion of Hellenism. The discernible consequences lie in the sphere of culture rather than politics. (See Gruen, “Hellenism and Persecution,” 243, with n. 13)

¹⁵Goldstein, “Jewish Acceptance,” 81, mentions the books of Jubilees, Enoch, Daniel, and the Testament of Moses. The book of Jubilees expresses some misgivings about the Jewish relationship to Greeks but does not criticize the establishment of a gymnasium. Neither Enoch nor Daniel refer to Jason’s reforms as much of an event. The Testament of Moses partially blames the sins of Israel for the persecution under Antiochus, but the sins described have nothing to do with participation in the gymnasium.

¹⁶2 Maccabees 4:13–14; Goldstein, “Jewish Acceptance,” 79–80. Goldstein attributes more interest in these activities to Antiochus IV than the account seems to justify. He also surprisingly assumes that the reforms sponsored by Jason and approved by the Seleucid king “provided that Greek law rather than the Torah was to be followed in at least some aspects” (78, 79), but there is no good evidence for this conclusion, and it is, at best, guesswork. On priestly participation in the gymnasium, see also Gruen, “Hellenism and Persecution,” 243.

¹⁷It became commonplace “for eastern writers to dispute (in Greek!) the claim that the Greeks with their gods and heroes had been civilizers of mankind.” Arthur J. Droge, “The Interpretation of the History of Culture in Hellenistic-Jewish Historiography,” *Society of Biblical Literature: Seminar Papers*, no. 23 (1984): 135–36, 139. Compare Phillip Sigal, “Manifestations of Hellenistic Historiography in Select Judaic Literature,” *Society of Biblical Literature: Seminar Papers*, no. 23 (1984): 161–85.

¹⁸Carl R. Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors*, vol. 1, *Texts and Translations*, no. 20 (Chico, Calif.: Scholars, 1983), 113. See also Droge, “Interpretation,” 140.

¹⁹Holladay, *Fragments*, 205–25; Droge, “Interpretation,” 154.

²⁰Droge, “Interpretation,” 151.

²¹Joseph M. Baumgarten, "Art in the Synagogue: Some Talmudic Views," *Judaism* 19 (spring 1970), 196-206, especially 197.

²²Baumgarten, "Art in the Synagogue," 197. What precisely is to be inferred from such decoration is debated. Some argue that it was standardized ornamentation and that it says nothing about the theology of the artists or those who commissioned them. Others view it as evidence for "a syncretistic kind of Jewish mysticism."

²³Josephus, *Antiquities* 11.317-20, 325-39. See also Victor Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews*, trans. S. Shimon Applebaum (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1961), 41-42 and following; Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, 6 and following; Schürer, *History of the Jewish People*, 1:138 n. 1.

²⁴Shaye J. D. Cohen, in "Alexander the Great and Jaddus the High Priest according to Josephus," *Association for Jewish Studies Review* 7-8 (1982-83): 65-67, does not believe that Josephus originated the story, although he does credit him with the form it takes in *Antiquities*. He characterizes it finally as a Palestinian piece of the pre-Maccabean period, sharing "concerns and motifs" of "the literature of Palestine of the second half of the second century B.C.E." Adolphe Büchler, in "La relation de Josèphe concernant Alexandre le Grand," *Revue des études juives* 36 (1898): 1-26, and scholars who followed his lead concluded an Alexandrian anti-Samaritan origin for the Alexander stories as retold in Josephus. Josephus refers, in *Against Apion* 2.43, to a reference by a certain Hecataeus to benefactions granted by Alexander to the Jews. Was this historian perhaps the source for Josephus's account of Alexander's visit to Jerusalem as well?

²⁵Green, *Alexander to Actium*, 499.

²⁶The siege of Tyre spanned several months beginning in early 332 B.C.

²⁷Josephus, *Antiquities* 11.317-320.

²⁸Non-Jewish sources for this period of Alexander's life take him to Egypt almost immediately after he takes Gaza.

²⁹Josephus, *Antiquities* 11.325-328.

³⁰Josephus, *Antiquities* 11.329-331. The Greek verb used in 11.331 and translated "prostrated" is προσκύνησε; it describes an act of obeisance traditionally performed by subjects of the Great King of Persia when in his presence. It can likewise refer to a gesture of submission and humility toward a god.

³¹Such a question would have been anachronistic. While Alexander was destined to receive this form of homage from his Persian subjects, he had not by this time been acknowledged and therefore treated as the great king. For the introduction of *proskynesis* (prostration) at the court and the complexities attending it, see Arrian, *Anabasis* 4.12; Quintus Curtius, 8.5; Justin, *Epitome* 12.7; and Plutarch, *Alexander* 54.

³²Josephus, *Antiquities* 11.334.

³³Josephus, *Antiquities* 11.335.

³⁴There would be nothing surprising, had Alexander actually visited Jerusalem, in his offering sacrifice to the local deity. He displayed similar respect to local religions and cult practices elsewhere. In Egypt, for example, he sacrificed to the sacred Apis bull and other gods in the city of Memphis. Arrian, *Anabasis* 3.1.2-3. See Thompson, *Memphis under the Ptolemies*, 106.

³⁵This claim is, like the supposed query of Parmenion, anachronistic if the book of Daniel can, as most scholars agree, be dated to the 160s B.C. On the date of Daniel, see Louis F. Hartman and Alexander A. DiLella, *The Book of Daniel* (New York: Doubleday, 1978), 9-18.

³⁶Josephus, *Antiquities* 11.335-39.

³⁷Cohen, "Alexander the Great," 45, 49 n. 24, rightly characterizes the reception as an *adventus* story, of which many examples survive in ancient literature, especially from the Roman Empire. The parallels between Josephus's story of Alexander's arrival and the traditional *adventus* ceremony can readily be seen in Cohen's description of an *adventus*. See also Sabine MacCormack, "Change and Continuity in Late Antiquity: The Ceremony of *Adventus*," *Historia* 21 (1972): 721-52; and Fergus Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), 31-40. The miraculous preservation of the people and their temple is called an "epiphany" story, and it too fits into a literary tradition.

³⁸Cohen, "Alexander the Great," 54.

³⁹A similar sentiment is presented in 3 Maccabees, wherein Jewish fidelity to the Ptolemaic ruler is affirmed and the warning issued that God will support only a ruler who favors His people.

⁴⁰L. I. Levine, "Herod the Great," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 3:167-68.