

Week 8: CASKET EMPTY Handout

Expectations - Our topic of study and thought for the week ahead and for discussion next week

Overview: The “Expectations” period is the beginning of the New Testament era. It combines together the agony of the exile and the disappointment of the second temple period into a full longing for a Savior... a Messiah to deliver them into the kingdom they always wanted. This 400 year period lacking biblical documentation is filled with history which prepares the world for the Savior.

Timeline: 430 - 6 B.C.

Biblical books: None written but Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel apply.

Extra-Biblical books: Apocrypha esp. 1-4 Maccabees, Josephus’ “The Jewish War”

Characters: Alexander the Great, Pompey, Julius Caesar, Caesar Augustus, Herod, the Maccabees.

Discussion

Daniel 7:1 -14 (Vision) 7:15-28 (Interpretation)

Many commentators see the vision of Daniel in the conquests of the following 4 empires. Babylon, Persia, Alexander the Great, and finally Rome. These kingdoms are eventually defeated and the Kingdom of God is established in full!

A couple of significant historical movements are:

1. Alexander and the Hellenization period

Alexander led a swift movement of conquest that ended with his death at 32 years of age. He was enthralled with Greek culture and had spread its influence which continued with the Roman empire. This created a vast society where communication with one language was possible. Furthermore, the Roman Empire featured many roads throughout the land which led to Rome making travel more possible than ever. “All roads lead to Rome.” (Watch the video below)

2. The Maccabean revolt and the story of Hanukkah is inspirational. The Maccabees were a family of priests who stood up against an evil ruler, Antiochus IV Epiphanes. They won the battle which ushered in a new era of conservatism resulting in the Pharisees of Jesus’ day. (Watch the video below)

Here are a few bullet points from the Casket Empty (New Testament) book.

- Israel becomes part of the Greek World - Alexander the Great (330 BC) [Dan 8]
- Israel suffers in wars of Alexander’s successors [Dan 11]
- God delivers Israel through the Maccabees (167-164 BC)
 - Antiochus IV, Maccabean revolt, history of Hanukkah
- Israel is humbled by the return of Roman rule
 - Pompey, Julius Caesar, Caesar Augustus, Herod
- Israel expects the Messiah: awaiting the OT promises of God

Mark 1:4-5; 1:16-20

How do these descriptions testify to the hunger of the people at this time?

What were the people of God waiting for in regard to the following passages?

Zech 14:9

Dan 7:11-14

Jer 23:5

Dan 9:24

Jer 31:31-34

Joel 2:28-29

Ezek 37

Isaiah 52:7

1 Peter 1:10-12 Jesus is the fulfillment!

Gal 4:4

How might the influence of the Roman Empire have done the groundwork, made time “full”, in preparation for the Messiah?

How do our heart’s longings or expectations help us to relate to the people of this time?

How does this “expectations” period help you deal with your own expectations?

Further Studies on Expectations

Casket Empty: New Testament Study Guide - Chapter 1 Expectations

Watch:

History - Alexander the Great <https://youtu.be/FyjAylyXOeM>

History - Hanukkah <https://youtu.be/-6FBX53ZblU>

Messiah THM [Bible Project] <https://youtu.be/3dEh25pduQ8>

New Testament Overview THM [Bible Project] <https://youtu.be/Q0BrP8bqj0c>

Son of Man THM [Bible Project] <https://youtu.be/z6cWEcqxhI>