

CHART 2. HELLENISTIC AND ROMAN ERAS.

A. FROM THE MACCABEAN REVOLT TO THE REDACTION OF THE MISHNAH

General History	Jewish History
163. Beginning of civil wars between claimants to the Seleucid throne, eventually leading to the decline of the Seleucid state. 146. Imposition of Roman control on Greece and Macedonia.	163–140. Continuation of the Maccabean struggle against the Seleucids, despite the end of the religious persecutions. 161. Judah the Maccabee is killed and his brother Jonathan becomes leader of the Maccabean forces. 140. Jonathan is killed; an assembly in Jerusalem recognizes his brother Simon as High Priest and ethnarch of independent Judea, these offices to be hereditary in the Hasmonean family thereafter. 134–104. Rule of John Hyrcanus, Simon’s son. 104–103. Rule of Judah Aristobulus, John Hyrcanus’s son.
100 BCE 65. Pompey’s victory over the king of Pontus leaves all of Asia Minor and Syria in Roman hands. 48. Julius Caesar defeats Pompey and becomes the most powerful political figure in Rome. 44. Assassination of Julius Caesar. 42. Mark Anthony and Octavian defeat the anti-Caesar party at Philippi; Anthony takes control of the eastern half of the Roman empire, Octavian of the western. 31. Octavian defeats Anthony at Actium; end of the Roman civil war. Octavian (Augustus) becomes emperor. 1 BCE	103–76. Rule of Alexander Janneus, John Hyrcanus’s second son. Extension of Judean control over most of Palestine and Trans-Jordan. Civil war between John Hyrcanus and the Pharisees. 76–67. Rule of Salome Alexandra, wife of Alexander Janneus. She makes peace with the Pharisees. 67–63. Struggle between Salome’s two sons for the throne of Judea. 63. The Roman general Pompey supports Hyrcanus and captures Jerusalem for him. Hyrcanus becomes High Priest; his advisor Antipater becomes administrator of Judea. 40. The Parthians invade Judea; Antipater’s son Herod flees to Rome, where he is recognized as king of Judea. 37. With the help of a Roman army, Herod recaptures Jerusalem and regains control of Judea. 37–4. Reign of Herod as Roman client king of Judea. 4 BCE. Division of Herod’s kingdom between three of his sons.

General History	Jewish History
1 CE 14-37. Tiberius, Roman emperor. 37-41. Gaius Caligula, Roman emperor. 41-54. Claudius, Roman emperor. 54-68. Nero, Roman emperor. 69-79. Vespasian, Roman emperor. 79-81. Titus, Roman emperor. 81-96. Domitian, Roman emperor. 96-98. Nerva, Roman emperor. 98-117. Trajan, Roman emperor.	6 CE. The Roman government assumes direct rule in Judea. Early first century CE. Death of the sages Hillel and Shammai. c. 20 BCE-c. 50 CE. The philosopher Philo of Alexandria. 26-36. Pontius Pilate is the Roman governor of Judea. c. 30. Crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth. 66-70. Jewish revolt against Rome, ending in Roman reconquest of Judea and the destruction of Jerusalem and of the Second Temple. 74. Fall of Masada, the last rebel stronghold. 70s. The rabbinic council, the Sanhedrin, reassembles in the town of Yavneh.
100 CE 114-117. Trajan invades Parthian Mesopotamia but is forced to retreat. 117-138. Hadrian, Roman emperor. 138-161. Antoninus Pius, Roman emperor. 161-180. Marcus Aurelius, Roman emperor. 180-192. Commodus, Roman emperor.	114-117. Revolt of Jews in Egypt, Cyrene, Cyprus. 132-135. Jewish revolt in Judea under Simon bar Kokhba. 135. Beginning of a period of severe anti-Jewish persecutions in Palestine; martyrdom of Rabbi Akiva and other scholars. 140s or 150s. End of the persecutions; the Sanhedrin reassembles in the Galilee. c. 170-217. Judah I is patriarch (<i>Nasi</i>) of the Sanhedrin and recognized leader of the Jewish people in the Roman empire. Under his auspices is redacted the Mishnah, the basic code of rabbinic law.

Chart 2. (con't)

B. JEWS UNDER ROMAN AND PERSIAN RULE, THIRD TO SIXTH CENTURIES

Roman History	Jews in the Roman Empire	Jews in the Persian Empire	Persian History
200 CE 193-235. The Severan dynasty of emperors; beginning of a period of economic and social troubles. 235-283. Height of political disorder and economic decline; frequent fighting between contenders for rule of the empire. 284-305. The Emperor Diocletian re-establishes order and reforms the Roman administration; widespread persecution of Christians.	225-255. The seat of the patriarchate is moved to the Galilean city of Tiberias. Rabbinic learning continues to flourish in the Galilee, despite the general crisis.	Early 3rd century. Rise of the Babylonian scholar class; the official head of the Jewish community in Persia, the exilarch, encourages the establishment of rabbinic academies in central Babylonia. Second half of 3rd century. Adjustment to Sassanian policies and continued development of rabbinic Judaism in Babylonia.	226-240. Ardashir I, first ruler of the Sassanian dynasty, overthrows the Parthians and seeks to revive ancient Persian power and the Zoroastrian religion. 240-271. Shapur I confirms the religious autonomy of the Jews.
300 CE 306-337. The Emperor Constantine makes Christianity a legal religion. 325. Church council of Nicea.	Early 4th century. First restrictions on Jewish legal rights.	4th century. Rabbinic learning continues to flourish; major scholars include Abbaye and Rava in the first half of the century.	309-379. Shapur II, Sassanian ruler. Prolonged wars with the Romans. Persian power at a zenith toward the end of Shapur II's reign.

Roman Empire	Jews in the Roman Empire	Jews in the Persian Empire	Persian History
361-363. Reign of Emperor Julian the Apostate; he unsuccessfully tries to reverse the Christianization of the empire. 340-397. Ambrose, bishop of Milan. 340-420. Jerome, translator of the Bible into Latin. 354-430. Augustine of Hippo. 379-395. Reign of the Emperor Theodosius I. Christianity fully the official religion of the empire. At his death the division between the western and eastern parts of the empire becomes permanent.	Middle 4th century. Redaction of the Jerusalem (Palestinian) Talmud is under way in the Galilee.	Late 4th century. Beginning of collection of materials to become the Babylonian Talmud, under R. Ashi at Sura.	339. Beginning of persecution of Christians, suspected of ties with the Romans.
400 CE The Western Roman Empire. 5th-6th centuries. Waves of barbarian invasions in Europe and North Africa (the Visigoths, Vandals, Huns, Ostrogoths, Lombards, Franks). 410. Sack of Rome by the Visigoths. 455. Sack of Rome by the Vandals.	420s. Death of the patriarch Gamaliel VI; the office of patriarch is abolished by the Roman government.		First half of 5th century. Toleration, then renewed persecution of Christianity in Persia. 485. Beginning of several decades of political-religious ferment (the Mazdak movement).

Chart 2. (con't)

Roman Empire	Jews in the Roman Empire	Jews in the Persian Empire	Persian History
475–476. Romulus Augustus, the last Roman emperor in the West. The Eastern Roman Empire. 408–450. Reign of Theodosius II; preparation of the first major code of Roman law. Christianity. 5th–6th centuries. Creedal controversies over the nature of Christ (Arian and Monophysite heresies).		c. 455–475. Persecutions of Jews; synagogues and academies closed. c. 500. Re-establishment of Jewish institutions; redaction of much of the Babylonian Talmud.	
500 CE The West. 529. Establishment of the Benedictine monastery of Monte Cassino in Italy. 590–604. Pope Gregory the Great. The East. 527–565. The Emperor Justinian reconquers parts of the western Mediterranean. (They are lost after his death.) Publication of the Justinian Code of Roman law.	c. 600. Pope Gregory defines papal policy toward the Jews. 530s. Beginning of new restrictions on Jewish rights in Roman law.	520s. The king of Himyar in southwestern Arabia converts to Judaism; Himyar is subsequently conquered by Christians and, later in the century, by Persians. 6th century. Babylonian sages (the <i>Saboraim</i>) add comments and notes to the text of the Babylonian Talmud. 589. Traditional date for the beginning of the Geonic period.	531–578. Khosrau I, the Sassanian ruler, reorganizes the Persian state. 589–628. Rule of Khosrau II, last major king of the Sassanian dynasty. Arabia. c. 570. Birth of Muhammad.