

NSS Ethics and Religious Studies Curriculum Support Materials

1

The Impact of Greek rule on the Jews

3 - 34

The Independent War of Maccabees

35 - 58

Roman Occupation

59 - 92



Topic 3

History between the Two Testaments

Suggested teaching time: 3 periods (1 hour per period)

Main points:

1. The influence of Greek rule on the Jews
2. The Independent War of Maccabees
3. Roman Occupation

Text Interpretation:

The Jews believed that in 1004 BC, King David united the 12 tribes of Israel and established a monarchy as the state of Israel. In 931 BC, Israel was divided into the southern (Kingdom of Judah) and the northern (Kingdom of Israel) kingdoms. The Kingdom of Israel was defeated by the Assyrian Empire in 722 BC. In 586 BC, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, invaded Jerusalem and destroyed the Temple. The elites of the Jews were captured to Babylon.

In 538 BC, Cyrus, king of Persia made a proclamation to end the slavery of the Jews in Babylon (for about 50 years), allowing them to return to their own country and rebuild the Temple.

In 336 BC, Alexander the Great of Greece replaced the Persian Empire. Since then the Jews were ruled by the Greek. Alexander the Great respected the virtues of the Jews and adopted a tolerant attitude in his religious policy. However, during the rule of Antiochus IV, not only did they attempt to complete Hellenization of the Jews, they also repeatedly blasphemed against the Temple and suppressed Jewish religious practices, finally causing the Jews to unite and fight. The deeds of Antiochus IV forced the Jews to rebel – the famous “Independent War of Maccabees” in the Jewish history – and establish the Hasmonean dynasty. The Maccabee incident lasted for only three years (167 – 164 BC) but it was very significant in the Jewish history.

During that period, the Jews lacked political leaders. Thus, they failed to develop into a stronger state. Later, internal riots kept rising. In 63 BC, their neighbour Romans conquered Jerusalem with exceptional military strength. The Kingdom of Judah fell and the king of Judah was abolished.

The Jews gradually developed different attitudes towards the invasion of Greek and Roman culture, leading to the emergence of different Jewish parties, namely (1) the Pharisees, (2) the Sadducees, (3) the Zealots, and (4) the Herodians. Those supported the foreign government were the Sadducees. Some who opposed foreign government were mild while others were more aggressive. The Pharisees belonged to the mild opposition group while the Zealots were aggressive. The rise of different parties witnessed the flourish of the Jewish religion and political thoughts, and at the same time formed part of the cultural and religious background of the New Testament.

Since the four parties had different religious and political standpoints. They reacted differently and held different opinions towards Jesus' teachings, thus posing different degrees of influence on Jesus' missionary.

Period 1: The impact of the Greek rule on the Jews

1. Objectives:

- To learn about the impact of Greek rule and Hellenization on the Jews.
- To understand how Antiochus IV's suppressive rule impacted different groups of Jews.
- To understand that Antiochus IV's suppressive rule had polarised the Jews. Some Jews reacted strongly and wanted to uphold their religious tradition. As a result, different Jewish religious parties emerged.



2. Teaching strategies

Background Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greece reigned over the Jews and carried out Hellenization in order to assimilate different cultures within the Greek boundary. • At the beginning, the Greek governing policy was more conciliatory. The Greeks respected the Jewish religious traditions, making the Jews more ready to accept Hellenization. • In 175 BC, Antiochus IV became the king. Due to his insecure political authority and the weak treasury, he changed the governing policies and practised suppressive ruling. • Antiochus IV forced the Jews to accept Greek customs and culture. He forced them to accept idols and forbade them to have circumcision or observe Sabbath. Whoever failed to obey the rules would have his whole family exterminated. The attempted Hellenization meant extreme "de-Judaization" to the Jews. • Different classes of Jews reacted differently towards Antiochus IV's suppressive rule. The Jews had various religious and political standpoints, leading to the emergence of different religious parties in the Jewish society.
Issues for Explorations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What governing strategies did Greece use on Palestine? What impact did these strategies bring to the Jewish culture, religion and their own identity?

Enquiry Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was the impact of the Greek rule on the Jewish culture? • What governing strategies did the Greek king Antiochus IV use on the Jews? • What was the reaction of different Jewish social classes towards the suppressive rule of Antiochus IV? What values and attitudes were revealed?
Learning Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through introducing the history of Greek rule over the Jews, let students learn the impact of Hellenization on all aspects of life of the Jews. • Through role-playing, let students learn about the reasons of and the change in Antiochus IV's governing policy. • Through role-playing, let students think about the different reaction of different Jews towards Antiochus IV's suppressive rule and to think about their interests.
Key Concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hellenization • Suppressive rule
Generic skills, values and attitudes involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to the 'Generic Skills, Values and Attitudes' tables included in the corresponding lesson plans.
High-order Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different Jews had different reactions towards Antiochus IV's suppressive rule. What were the values and attitudes behind their responses?
Extended Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deduce the reaction of people in modern times towards suppressive rule.

Activity One

Enquiry Question	Generic Skills	Values and Attitudes
What was the impact of the Greek rule on the Jewish culture?	Critical thinking skills	Appreciation, openness

Teaching steps:**1. Teacher does warm-up exercise with students by helping them understand different governing policies to rule over foreign nationalities.**

- Teacher asks students to imagine themselves as an advisory official to a king. Now that the king needs to rule over a foreign nation but his authority is not yet secure. He is not sure how to govern the foreigners. What governing plan will you suggest to the king?
 - i. Teacher shows “PowerPoint 1” (Characteristics of a foreign tribe) to let students understand the characteristics of this foreign nation which will soon be governed by the king.
 - ii. Teacher asks students to form groups of four and distributes “Worksheet 1” (Suggested governing plan). Let students write down the governing strategies according to the characteristics of the foreign nation.
- Students present their governing strategies after finishing the worksheet.
- Teacher summarises:
 - i. Governance over foreign nations was common in the history of mankind. There were numerous conflicts between the ruling nation and the nation being ruled. Inappropriate governance would intensify the conflicts and even cause blood-shedding tragedies.
 - ii. In the Chinese history, the Qing government requested all Han people to keep long plaits like what the Manchurian people did. The Han Chinese were resentful. They wanted to overthrow the Qing government and to restore the Ming Dynasty.
 - iii. After having a preliminary understanding of the background of the Greek ruling over the Jews, we will examine the governing strategies of Greece and the impact of the Greek rule on the Jews.

2. Teacher carries out “Ancient Greek Civilisation” activity with the students. Help students understand the characteristics of ancient Greek civilisation and the historical background of the Jews being ruled by Greek civilisation.

- Teacher raises the question:
 - i. Do you know that the Jews had been ruled by the Greeks?
- Teacher shows “PowerPoint 2” (Ancient Greek Civilisation) to let students learn about the Greek territory, its excellent educational system, Greek myths and some famous Greeks such as Plato etc. so that students can understand the magnificence of the ancient Greek civilisation.
- Teacher shows “PowerPoint 3” (History of kingdoms and the Jews) to let students understand that the Jews had been governed by different nations after the fall of Judah. The main points are as followed:
 - i. The Jews were ruled by the empires of Babylon, Persia, Greece and Roman etc.
 - ii. Alexander the Great unified Greece and established a new empire in which Palestine was included in the Greek territory. The Jews thus lived under the Greek rule.
 - iii. Since Alexander the Great, the Greek kings executed different extent of Hellenization, hoping to promote the great Greek civilisation.
 - iv. The Greek culture was very different from the Jewish one. Some Jews accepted the Greek culture while others upheld the Jewish traditions. The Jews reacted differently towards different governing strategies and political attitudes of various Greek rulers.

3. Teacher carries out the “Greek culture entering Jewish lives” activity with the students and helps them understand how the Greeks brought their culture into the Jewish society.

- Teacher shows “PowerPoint 4” (Greek culture entering Jewish lives) to let students learn that the Greek culture gradually entered the lives of the Jews after the Greek rule began. For instance, the Greeks
 - i. Developed many commercial ports
 - ii. Constructed Greek-style gymnasiums and theatres
 - iii. Promoted the development of culture, gradually resulting in masterpieces in philosophy, history and science
 - iv. Built great libraries

- v. Translated the Jewish Bible from Hebrew to Greek, and called it “Septuagint”. The Greek language was widely used as well. It became a common language in the government and the civil society.

- Teacher and students discuss:
 - i. Did the Greek culture impact the Jewish lives in the ideological and religious aspects?
 - ii. Was the “Hellenization” strategy a kind of “soft” assimilation or “hard” suppression?
 - iii. What would the reaction of the Jews be towards the above mentioned cultural interventions?

4. Teacher summarises:

- Since the Greeks ruled over the Jews, they developed many commercial ports and the Jews could travel freely within the Greek administration areas.
- The lives of the Jews changed due to the cultural exchange between the Greeks and the Jews:
 - i. A lot of Greek-styled architectures could be seen in different administration areas, including Palestine.
 - ii. The Jews gradually accepted Greek as their mother tongue. They would not read the Hebrew Bible. The Septuagint was enough to satisfy their needs.
 - iii. Jesus’ mother tongue was Aramaic. The books of the New Testament after Jesus’ death were written in Greek, while the books written in between the two Testaments were both in Hebrew and Greek.

Activity Two

Enquiry Question	Generic Skills	Values and Attitudes
What governing strategies did the Greek king Antiochus IV of the Seleucid Empire use on the Jews?	Critical thinking skills	Appreciation, openness

Teaching steps:

- Teacher carries out “Governance by conciliation” activity with students and helps them understand that the Greek authority had implemented different governing strategies on the Jews.**
 - Teacher points out: at the beginning, the Greek rulers carried out Hellenization by using soft methods to assimilate the Greek culture into the lives of the Jews.
 - Teacher shows “PowerPoint 5” (Governing strategies of the Greek authority over the Jews) to briefly introduce the early governing strategies of Greece.
 - Teacher distributes ‘Students’ Reference: Material 1’ (Greece’s “Governance by conciliation”) to sum up the above content.
- Teacher carries out “If I’m an advisory official to the Greek king” activity with students and helps them understand the historical background of the Greek King Antiochus IV changing the ruling principles over the Jews.**
 - Teacher raises the question:
 - Under what circumstances would the Greek change their governing strategies?
 - Teacher distributes “Appendix 1” (The power status of Antiochus IV and the strength of his kingdom) to let students understand the power status of Antiochus IV and the strength of his kingdom.
 - Teacher shows “PowerPoint 6” (Characteristics of the Jews under the Greek rule) to let students understand the characteristics of the Jews at that time.
 - Teacher asks students to form groups according to the “Preparation activity”. With reference to the suggested governing strategy in Worksheet 1, let students imagine that they were the advisory officials of Antiochus IV. Facing the Jews with the characteristics discussed above, would the suggested governing strategies be appropriate in Antiochus IV’s times? Why?
 - Teacher invites students to present their ideas.

3. Teacher carries out “Guiding principles of Antiochus IV’s governance” activity with students and helps them understand why Antiochus IV changed his governing policies over the Jews.

- Teacher distributes “Appendix 2” (Guiding principles of Antiochus IV’s governance) and “Worksheet 2” (Analysis of suppressive rule). Ask students to stay in the same groups and analyse:
 - Why did Antiochus IV change the governing principles? Did he want to consolidate his authority or to weaken the Jews?
 - Antiochus IV exercised suppressive policies and intensified Hellenization (strengthen Greek culture in the lives of the Jews). Does it mean extreme “de-Judaization” to the Jews (weaken Jewish culture in the lives of the Jews)?
 - Antiochus IV implemented “de-Judaization” in religious, cultural and economic aspects. Which aspect would be seriously impaired by “de-Judaisation” policies? Why did he choose this aspect as the starting point to implement Hellenization?
- Teacher invites students to present their analysis.

4. Teacher summarises:

- In the ancient times, religion was the foundation of people’s lives. It affected the nation’s culture, traditions and lifestyle. Thus, if an authority could assimilate a nation’s religion, it could also assimilate the culture, traditions and lifestyle of the nation.
- Antiochus IV implemented Hellenization forcefully upon the Jewish religion because it would be easier for the Greeks to further assimilate the Jewish culture, traditions and lifestyle. By doing so, the Greeks would be able to weaken the Jews, consolidating the authority of the Greek king.
- The Greek religion was very different from the Jewish religion. [Teacher can distribute ‘Students’ Reference: Material 2’ (Characteristics of the religions in the Greek and Jewish cultures) to let students understand the differences between the two]. The Jews thought that the suppressive Hellenization policy had blasphemed their religion, insulted their nation and threatened the lives of the Jews.

- Ever since their ancestor Abraham, the Jewish culture had deeply rooted in every Jew's heart. Above all, they observed the holy laws and rules, forming the foundation of the Jewish religious life and cultural traditions. Even though they had gone through a lot, such as the succession of different empires, being sent for penal servitude etc, they could preserve their culture because they had been scrupulously abided by their religious traditions.
- The Jewish and Greek cultural clash was tense. Since the Jewish religion faced contempt or even the risk of elimination, the Mattathias family revolted for the Jewish religion and the freedom of the nation.

Activity Three

Enquiry Questions	Generic Skills	Values and Attitudes
What was the reaction of different Jewish social classes towards the suppressive rule of Antiochus IV? What were the values and attitudes revealed?	Communication skills, critical thinking skills	Leniency, caring

Teaching steps:**1. Teacher and students discuss:**

- Before the suppressive rule of Antiochus IV, the Jews had enjoyed Greece's governance with conciliation and some benefits of the Greek culture. Now that Antiochus IV implemented Hellenization forcefully. How would the Jews react towards the Greek culture?
- Teacher guides students to understand that there were two major attitudes in the Jewish society towards the Greek culture:
 - Hellenized Jews: They were like the "Liberal Jews" who were not keen to uphold the Jewish traditions, welcoming the Greek culture and ideology.
 - Conservative Jews: They tried their best to preserve the Jewish religion, culture and traditions, rejecting the Greek culture.

2. Teacher raises the questions:

- When Antiochus IV changed the guiding principle of governance and implemented specific suppressive policies, how would the Jews react? Which social class would support the Greeks? Who would protect the Jewish culture?

3. Teacher carries out "Reaction to Suppressive rule" activity with students and helps them think about how different Jewish social classes reacted to the suppressive rule of Antiochus IV.

- Teacher distributes "Worksheet 3" (Reaction to suppressive rule) and divides students into the following four groups. Ask each group to imagine they were one of the following Jews:
 - Common people
 - Intellectuals and influential people in the society
 - Religious leaders (High Priest)

- Religious people (Such as the Hasideans)
- Teacher shows “PowerPoint 7” (Chronicles of Antiochus IV) or distributes ‘Students’ Reference: Material 3’ (Suppressive policies of Antiochus IV) to let students learn about Antiochus IV’s specific suppressive policies in the (1) religious, (2) economic and (3) cultural areas.
- Teacher asks students (1) whether the Jewish social classes they represent would support the Greek culture or the Jewish culture? Why? (2) would their attitude towards Antiochus IV’s suppressive policies be submissive or opposing? (3) what values upheld by that social class were revealed? Afterwards, write down the discussion result on ‘Worksheet 3’.
- Teacher invites students to present their ideas after finishing the worksheet.

4. Teacher and students discuss:

- What values in the Greek and the Jewish culture were the most conflicting? Were these values progressive or conservative? Could these conflicts among values be solved? How?
- If you were against the rule of Antiochus IV, how would you express your discontent?

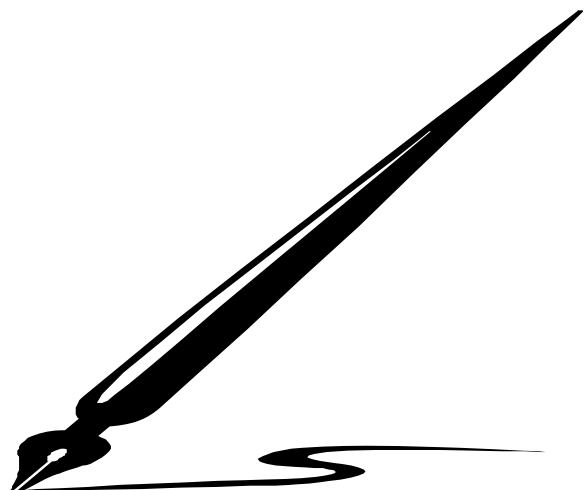
5. Teacher summarises:

- Antiochus IV’s suppressive rule in the religious aspect caused most resentment among the Jews. The Jews were divided into two groups: one was submissive to Antiochus IV’s rule while the other was against it.
- The Jews who protected the Jewish religious traditions opposed the suppressive rule, while the High Priest and the influential people supported the rule of Antiochus IV.
- The suppressive rule of Antiochus IV aggravated the divergence of opinion among the Jews. In the following 30 years, different religious parties emerged. For instance, the Pharisees supported the traditional Jewish religious culture and opposed Hellenization; and the Sadducees, whose members were mainly influential people in the society, were close to the Greek authority and welcomed the Greek culture.

6. Teacher distributes ‘Students’ Reference: Material 3’ (Suppressive policies of Antiochus IV), briefly explains it and wraps up the activity.

Extended Activities:

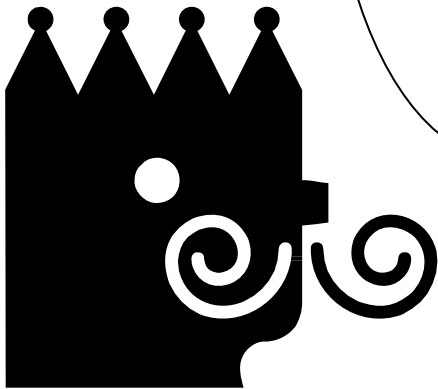
1. Teacher asks students to search for information to understand the reaction of people in modern times towards suppressive rule, such as in Myanmar and India, and answer the following questions:
 - What are the people's reactions?
 - What highest values are people longing for?
 - What are your comments?
2. If you were oppressed by the suppressive rule:
 - What highest values would you long for?
 - How would you react to the suppressive rule? Why?
3. Teacher can ask students to share what they think in the next period.





Appendix 1: The power status of Antiochus IV and the strength of his kingdom

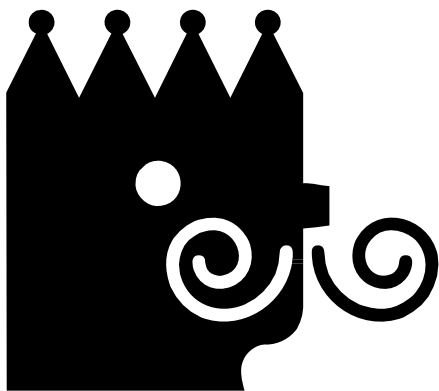
1. After Antiochus IV (175 – 163 BC) of the Seleucid Empire had ascended to the throne, he changed the policies towards the Jews.
2. Kings before Antiochus IV were defeated by Rome. The Greek nation had to pay large amount of tributes at Antiochus IV's time. The financial status of the Seleucid Empire was poor.
3. The Seleucid Empire at Antiochus IV's time was not unified. Different races in the territory were in conflict with each other. Since the empire was not strong, Antiochus IV would like to strengthen the administration by intensifying Hellenization.
4. Antiochus IV was arrogant, cruel and audacious. He advocated more intense Hellenization to strengthen his empire.





Appendix 2: Guiding principles of Antiochus IV's governance

1. Religion: Since religion was the strongest pillar in the Jewish tradition, the Jews might accept the Greek culture completely if their religion was abolished.
2. Culture: Intensifying Hellenization meant weakening the customs and traditions of the Jews.
3. Economy: Seizing the prosperous Jewish lands would increase the wealth of the Greek empire.



Material 1: Greece's "Governance by conciliation"

1. The Greek policy to rule over the Jews with leniency

- After Alexander the Great united Greece, he started conquering Palestine. Later, the Ptolemaic Dynasty (322 – 198 BC) and the Seleucid Empire (198 – 167 BC) of Greece ruled over the Jews respectively.
- After the death of Alexander the Great, the country was divided. The Ptolemaic Dynasty wished to stabilise their regime and they adopted conciliatory and lenient policies over the Jews. Under the rule of the Ptolemaic Dynasty, the Jews enjoyed more freedom.
- The Jews enjoyed freedom of religion. They continued to observe their religious traditions and they were allowed to choose their own High Priest.
- The Ptolemaic Dynasty respected the Jewish culture. They invited scholars to translate the Jewish Bible into Greek, which became the famous Septuagint.
- The Ptolemaic Dynasty allowed the Jews to move to Egypt. Many Jews moved to Alexandria.
- Later in the Seleucid Empire, Antiochus III the Great (who had ruled over Palestine from 198 to 187 BC) was particularly lenient to the Jews. He implemented the following policies:
 - Maintained the rights of the Jews in the Ptolemaic Dynasty;
 - Released all captives and allowed the Jewish refugees to go home;
 - Exempted tax for three years;
 - Allowed the Jews to observe all laws passed by Moses;
 - Allotted funds to repair the Temple which was damaged during wars.

References:

1. 黃錫木、孫寶玲、張略等著 (2002)：《新約歷史與宗教文化導論》。香港：基道。
2. 禡浩榮著 (2005)：《圖片兩約中間四百年》（頁 167-189）。香港：天道書樓。

Material 2: Characteristics of religion in the Greek culture and the Jewish culture

1. Characteristics of religion in the Greek culture

The Romans revered the Greek culture. Thus, they extensively absorbed and inherited the Greek culture and ideology, relying on the Greek culture to build their city-states. The Romans also accepted the Greek gods. Therefore, the Greek and the Roman religions shared some features in common. After the Romans ruled over Palestine, the Roman religion became one of the popular religious ideologies in Palestine in the 1st Century.

a. Polytheism

- It was shown in Greek myths and on the remains of the temples that the Greeks believed in many gods. The gods lived on Mount Olympus, with Zeus as the leader of all gods. Different gods were in charge of different aspects in nature and human lives. For instance, the god of sun Apollo was in charge of archery, music and medicine; Athena was the god of wisdom and warfare, and was in charge of arts and law.

b. Image of the gods

- The Greek gods had the image, emotions and experiences of human beings. They behaved like mortals, fighting for interests and power. They even had human weaknesses. Thus, the Greek gods were close to the humans. The only difference was that the Greek gods were superior to humans and they had eternal and supernatural powers. Some people considered that the Greek gods were glorified humans.

c. Existential and social functions of religion

- The Greek gods were close to the humans. They would be in direct contact with human beings and participated in events in the human world.
- The Greeks would ask for daily necessities and guidance from their gods. The Greek gods seldom required moralities from the humans. The Greeks did not have to lead a life satisfying certain moral standards to please their gods.

- The Greek religion was the spiritual pillar for the survival of the Greek families and city-states. Different groups in the city-states became closer when they attended religious ceremonies, indirectly strengthening the harmony and unity among the city-states.

d. Freedom of religion

- The Greek religion lacked influential religious bodies to control the interpretation of its religion. Therefore, the Greeks could freely worship different gods and had different opinions about the gods. There was no differentiation between orthodoxy and heterodoxy.

e. Apotheosising the kings

- The process of apotheosising the kings usually took place after the kings' deaths. Their successors made statues for the dead kings so that the people could worship them.
- Worshipping the kings could enhance the authority of the ruling dynasty and strengthen people's patriotism.
- Kings who were worshipped by the Greeks included Alexander the Great of Greece, Gaius Julius Caesar of the Roman Empire, and Antiochus IV of the Seleucid Empire.
- Antiochus IV claimed himself to be Zeus, the leader of the Greek god. He required the Greeks to worship him as if he were the incarnation of Zeus. He also required his apotheosised face to be stamped onto the coins. In 40 AD, the Roman king Caligula (Gaius Julius Caesar Augustus Germanicus) even commanded his statue to be placed in the Temple of Jerusalem.

3. Characteristics of religion in the Jewish culture

a. Monotheism

- The Jews believed that Yahweh was the only God and they were the chosen people of God. As long as they obeyed the laws, God would make their nation strong.

b. Image of God

- God affirmed in the Ten Commandments that the Jews should not make any image for Him, like what they did to other living creatures.

c. Moral function of religion

- God required His people to be moral. The Jews had to obey God's moral teaching to live a holy life, so that they could please God and deserved to be called God's chosen people.

d. Faithfulness in religion

- God affirmed in the Ten Commandments that His believers could only worship Him. They should worship no other god except Him.
- In the Old Testament, the Israelites were often tempted by foreign nations to worship other gods. Consequently, they were punished by God and suffered from the fall of their nation.

e. Against worshipping the kings

- During the times of Greek and Roman rule, the Jews could not accept worshipping the kings because they only believed in one God.
- Antiochus IV seized the valuables of the Temple and forced the Jews to worship foreign gods, triggering the Mattathias family to start the Independent War of Maccabees.
- In 40 AD, the Jews fought against the Romans as the Roman king Caligula put his statue into the Temple in Jerusalem.

f. Differences and conflicts between the Jewish and the Greek religion

- There were great differences between the Greek and the Jewish religion. For instance, the Greeks believed in many gods while the Jews believed in only one God; the Greek gods had mortal images but God had no image; Greek gods had human emotions and weaknesses but God was perfect, without any human flaws.
- The Jews believed that the fall of their nation was the result of being unfaithful to Yahweh. Thus, during the times between the two Testaments, the Jews tried hard to strengthen their relationship with God. Some extremists even thought that the Jewish nationality should be consecrated, secluding themselves from other races and rejecting foreign culture.

- As the Jews became more and more conservative towards their religion, they insisted more on the loyalty and pureness of believing in one God. The incompatibility with the Greek religion became more and more acute.
- Some Greek and Roman kings forced the Jews to accept religious thoughts that were completely different from the Jewish traditions. The Jews were resentful and they revolted against the foreign powers.
- In fact, some Jews were willing to accept the Greek culture to some extent. Some authors of the New Testament wrote according to the Greek ideology.

Material 3: Suppressive policies of Antiochus IV

1. Implemented complete Hellenization to promote Greek culture and religion
 - To unify the dynasty, strengthen the nation's power and weaken the foreign races, Antiochus IV decided to implement complete Hellenization at all costs to eliminate the Jewish culture.
 - Antiochus IV was a lot more cruel and violent than the previous kings in pushing Hellenization.
2. Established altars for pagan religions
 - Antiochus IV established altars for the Greek gods all over the nation and forced the monotheistic Jews to worship gods like Zeus.
3. Robbed the Temple
 - After Antiochus IV ascended to the throne, he still needed to pay large amount of tributes to Rome. Thus, he took away the valuables of the Temple to save the nation from financial crisis.
 - There was no banking system at that time. People usually put their valuables in synagogues and the Temple. They thought that those places were safe as they were protected by God. Since Palestine was quite rich, the Temple in Jerusalem became a target for robbery.
 - Antiochus IV led the army to rob the Temple, massacred the Jews and kept women and children as slaves.
4. Levied heavy tax
 - To improve the treasury, Antiochus IV levied heavy taxes and even confiscated lands from the people, adversely affecting the livelihood of the Jews.
5. Built gymnasiums
 - To hasten Hellenization, the Greeks built Greek-styled gymnasiums in Jerusalem to attract Jewish youths, disregarding the Jewish faith and customs.
 - Greeks conducted athletics naked. Although the Jewish youths did not mind about that, some did not want the Greeks to find out that they were circumcised. Some underwent surgeries to hide the signs of circumcision.

6. Abolished Jewish religious rituals

- Antiochus IV knew clearly that if he wanted to eliminate the Jewish culture, it would be the most important to eradicate the Jewish religion.
- Therefore, Antiochus IV forbade the Jews to obey Jewish laws, including:
 - i. The Jews were forbidden to offer sacrifices according to the Jewish laws;
 - ii. The Jews were forbidden to observe the Sabbath;
 - iii. The Jews were forbidden to celebrate any traditional Jewish festivals;
 - iv. The Jews were forbidden to carry out circumcision for their children;
(Circumcision was the sign of the covenant between God and Abraham.)
 - v. The Jews were forbidden to follow the strict Jewish rules regarding food;
 - vi. Jewish law books were destroyed and burnt.
 - vii. Anyone who obeyed the Mosaic Law or kept Jewish law books would be executed.

References:

1. 黃錫木、孫寶玲、張略等著 (2002)：《新約歷史與宗教文化導論》。香港：基道。
2. 禰浩榮著 (2005)：《圖片兩約中間四百年》（頁 167-189）。香港：天道書樓。

Worksheet 1: Suggested governing plan

1. According to the characteristics of the foreign nation to be governed, suggest some governing strategies to the king. Put a \checkmark in the appropriate ☐ and write your answers in the space provided.

Governing mode	Governing strategy	Other suggestions	Goal of governance
Governance by conciliation	<input type="checkbox"/> Please the foreign race with more infrastructure <input type="checkbox"/> Advocate the culture of the foreign race, such as translating their classic <input type="checkbox"/> Tax exemption		
Suppressive rule	<input type="checkbox"/> Force the foreign race to abandon their own religion, culture and customs <input type="checkbox"/> Levy heavy taxes to increase income for the treasury <input type="checkbox"/> Confiscate lands and private assets		
Democratic election	<input type="checkbox"/> Allow the foreign race to select their leaders <input type="checkbox"/> Allow the foreign race to vote for autonomy or autocracy <input type="checkbox"/> Establish a legal system to protect their basic human rights		

Open policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Allow the race to lead their original way of life <input type="checkbox"/> Allow the race to move in and out of the territory and even emigrate to other places <input type="checkbox"/> Allow the foreign race to do business with any other races.		
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Worksheet 2: Analysis of suppressive rule

1. If you were a political critic, analyse ‘Students’ Reference: Material 1’ and complete the following table.

Analysis of Antiochus IV’s rule	
Why did Antiochus IV change the way of governing? Did he want to consolidate his authority or to weaken the Jews?	
Antiochus IV exercised suppressive policies and intensified Hellenization, strengthen the Greek culture in the lives of the Jews. Did it mean extreme “de-Judaization” to the Jews, weaken the Jewish culture?	
Antiochus IV implemented “de-Judaization” in religious, cultural and economic aspects. Which aspect would “de-Judaization” policies impair the Jewish nationality most seriously? Why did he choose this aspect as the starting point to implement Hellenization?	

Worksheet 3: Responses to suppressive rule

1. Analyse one of the Jewish social classes and answer the following questions. Put a ✓ in the appropriate ☐.



Common people

Social class: the ordinary class

Main concern: tried their best to observe God's laws in their daily life, including Sabbath and religious rituals.



Intellectuals and influential people in the society

Social class: the upper class

Main concern: admired the Greek culture and did not resist the Greek ideology, enjoying the privileges of having high social status.



Religious leaders (High Priests)

Social class: the upper class

Main concern: supported Hellenization and collaborated with the Greek authority to consolidate their positions as the High Priests.



Religious people (Such as the Hasideans)

Social class: the ordinary class

Main concern: tried their best to be pious and protect the holiness of God's laws.

<p>The Jewish social class to be analysed</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious people (Such as the Hasideans) <input type="checkbox"/> Religious leaders: High Priests <input type="checkbox"/> Intellectual and influential people in the society <input type="checkbox"/> Common people	<p>The social class they belonged to</p> <input type="checkbox"/> The upper class <input type="checkbox"/> The ordinary class
<p>Did the Jewish social class support the Greek culture or the Jewish culture? Why?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Greek culture, because: _____ _____ _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Jewish culture, because: _____ _____ _____	
<p>Would their attitude towards Antiochus IV's suppressive policies be submissive or opposing?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Submissive <input type="checkbox"/> Opposing	
<p>What values would be revealed by their different attitudes? (Can ✓ more than one item)</p>	<p><u>To preserve the traditional religious culture</u></p> <input type="checkbox"/> Protect the dignity of the Jews <input type="checkbox"/> Would start revolts for the sake of preserving the pureness and holiness of the Jewish religion <input type="checkbox"/> Try their best to protect the Jewish religious traditions <input type="checkbox"/> Hope that God would keep His promise and send the Messiah to save the Jews <input type="checkbox"/> Remain silent and work hard for one's living <p><u>To accept the foreign culture</u></p> <input type="checkbox"/> Tend to protect the vested political and economic interests <input type="checkbox"/> Be attracted to political and economic status and interests <input type="checkbox"/> Support the Greek authority <input type="checkbox"/> Support the Hellenized way of living, such as the Greek literature, customs, habits and entertainment, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Have no particular standpoint	



Material 1: Greece's "Governance by conciliation"

1. The Greek policy to rule over the Jews with leniency
 - After Alexander the Great united Greece, he started conquering Palestine. Later, the Ptolemaic Dynasty (322 – 198 BC) and the Seleucid Empire (198 – 167 BC) of Greece ruled over the Jews respectively.
 - After the death of Alexander the Great, the country was divided. The Ptolemaic Dynasty wished to stabilise their regime and they adopted conciliatory and lenient policies over the Jews. Under the rule of the Ptolemaic Dynasty, the Jews enjoyed more freedom.
 - The Jews enjoyed freedom of religion. They continued to observe their religious traditions and they were allowed to choose their own High Priest.
 - The Ptolemaic Dynasty respected the Jewish culture. They invited scholars to translate the Jewish Bible into Greek, which became the famous Septuagint.
 - The Ptolemaic Dynasty allowed the Jews to move to Egypt. Many Jews moved to Alexandria.
 - Later in the Seleucid Empire, Antiochus III the Great (who had ruled over Palestine from 198 to 187 BC) was particularly lenient to the Jews. He implemented the following policies:
 - Maintained the rights of the Jews in the Ptolemaic Dynasty;
 - Released all captives and allowed the Jewish refugees to go home;
 - Exempted tax for three years;
 - Allowed the Jews to observe all laws passed by Moses;
 - Allotted funds to repair the Temple which was damaged during wars.

References:

1. 黃錫木、孫寶玲、張略等著 (2002)：《新約歷史與宗教文化導論》。香港：基道。
2. 禡浩榮著 (2005)：《圖片兩約中間四百年》(頁 167-189)。香港：天道書樓。



Material 2: Characteristics of religion in the Greek culture and the Jewish culture

1. Characteristics of religion in the Greek culture

The Romans revered the Greek culture. Thus, they extensively absorbed and inherited the Greek culture and ideology, relying on the Greek culture to build their city-states. The Romans also accepted the Greek gods. Therefore, the Greek and the Roman religions shared some features in common. After the Romans ruled over Palestine, the Roman religion became one of the popular religious ideologies in Palestine in the 1st Century.

a. Polytheism

- It was shown in Greek myths and on the remains of the temples that the Greeks believed in many gods. The gods lived on Mount Olympus, with Zeus as the leader of all gods. Different gods were in charge of different aspects in nature and human lives. For instance, the god of sun Apollo was in charge of archery, music and medicine; Athena was the god of wisdom and warfare, and was in charge of arts and law.

b. Image of the gods

- The Greek gods had the image, emotions and experiences of human beings. They behaved like mortals, fighting for interests and power. They even had human weaknesses. Thus, the Greek gods were close to the humans. The only difference was that the Greek gods were superior to humans and they had eternal and supernatural powers. Some people considered that the Greek gods were glorified humans.

c. Existential and social functions of religion

- The Greek gods were close to the humans. They would be in direct contact with human beings and participated in events in the human world.
- The Greeks would ask for daily necessities and guidance from their gods. The Greek gods seldom required moralities from the humans. The Greeks did not have to lead a life satisfying certain moral standards to please their gods.

- The Greek religion was the spiritual pillar for the survival of the Greek families and city-states. Different groups in the city-states became closer when they attended religious ceremonies, indirectly strengthening the harmony and unity among the city-states.

d. Freedom of religion

- The Greek religion lacked influential religious bodies to control the interpretation of its religion. Therefore, the Greeks could freely worship different gods and had different opinions about the gods. There was no differentiation between orthodoxy and heterodoxy.

e. Apotheosising the kings

- The process of apotheosising the kings usually took place after the kings' deaths. Their successors made statues for the dead kings so that the people could worship them.
- Worshipping the kings could enhance the authority of the ruling dynasty and strengthen people's patriotism.
- Kings who were worshipped by the Greeks included Alexander the Great of Greece, Gaius Julius Caesar of the Roman Empire, and Antiochus IV of the Seleucid Empire.
- Antiochus IV claimed himself to be Zeus, the leader of the Greek god. He required the Greeks to worship him as if he were the incarnation of Zeus. He also required to have his apotheosised face stamped onto the coins. In 40 AD, the Roman king Caligula (Gaius Julius Caesar Augustus Germanicus) even commanded his statue to be placed in the Temple of Jerusalem.

2. Characteristics of religion in the Jewish culture

a. Monotheism

- The Jews believed that Yahweh was the only God and they were the chosen people of God. As long as they obeyed the laws, God would make their nation strong.

b. Image of God

- God affirmed in the Ten Commandments that the Jews should not make any image for Him, like what they did to other living creatures.

c. Moral function of religion

- God required His people to be moral. The Jews had to obey God's moral teaching to live a holy life, so that they could please God and deserved to be called God's chosen people.

d. Faithfulness in religion

- God affirmed in the Ten Commandments that His believers could only worship Him. They should worship no other god except Him.
- In the Old Testament, the Israelites were often tempted by foreign nations to worship other gods. Consequently, they were punished by God and suffered from the fall of their nation.

e. Against worshipping the kings

- During the times of Greek and Roman rule, the Jews could not accept worshipping the kings because they only believed in one God.
- Antiochus IV seized the valuables of the Temple and forced the Jews to worship foreign gods, triggering the Mattathias family to start the Independent War of Maccabees.
- In 40 AD, the Jews fought against the Romans as the Roman king Caligula put his statue into the Temple in Jerusalem.

f. Differences and conflicts between the Jewish and the Greek religion

- There were great differences between the Greek and the Jewish religion. For instance, the Greeks believed in many gods while the Jews believed in only one God; the Greek gods had mortal images but God had no image; Greek gods had human emotions and weaknesses but God was perfect, without any human flaws.
- The Jews believed that the fall of their nation was the result of being unfaithful to Yahweh. Thus, during the times between the two Testaments, the Jews tried hard to strengthen their relationship with God. Some extremists even thought that the Jewish nationality should be consecrated, secluding themselves from other races and rejecting foreign culture.

- As the Jews became more and more conservative towards their religion, they insisted more on the loyalty and pureness of believing in one God. The incompatibility with the Greek religion became more and more acute.
- Some Greek and Roman kings forced the Jews to accept religious thoughts that were completely different from the Jewish traditions. The Jews were resentful and they revolted against the foreign powers.
- In fact, some Jews were willing to accept the Greek culture to some extent. Some authors of the New Testament wrote according to the Greek ideology.



Material 3: Suppressive policies of Antiochus IV

1. Implemented complete Hellenization to promote Greek culture and religion
 - To unify the dynasty, strengthen the nation's power and weaken the foreign races, Antiochus IV decided to implement complete Hellenization at all costs to eliminate the Jewish culture.
 - Antiochus IV was a lot more cruel and violent than the previous kings in pushing Hellenization.
2. Established altars for pagan religions
 - Antiochus IV established altars for the Greek gods all over the nation and forced the monotheistic Jews to worship gods like Zeus.
3. Robbed the Temple
 - After Antiochus IV ascended to the throne, he still needed to pay large amount of tributes to Rome. Thus, he took away the valuables of the Temple to save the nation from financial crisis.
 - There was no banking system at that time. People usually put their valuables in synagogues and the Temple. They thought that those places were safe as they were protected by God. Since Palestine was quite rich, the Temple in Jerusalem became a target for robbery.
 - Antiochus IV led the army to rob the Temple, massacred the Jews and kept women and children as slaves.
4. Levied heavy tax
 - To improve the treasury, Antiochus IV levied heavy taxes and even confiscated lands from the people, adversely affecting the livelihood of the Jews.
5. Built gymnasiums
 - To hasten Hellenization, the Greeks built Greek-styled gymnasiums in Jerusalem to attract Jewish youths, disregarding the Jewish faith and customs.
 - Greeks conducted athletics naked. Although the Jewish youths did not mind about that, some did not want the Greeks to find out that they were circumcised. Some underwent surgeries to hide the signs of circumcision.

6. Abolished Jewish religious rituals

- Antiochus IV knew clearly that if he wanted to eliminate the Jewish culture, it would be the most important to eradicate the Jewish religion.
- Therefore, Antiochus IV forbade the Jews to obey Jewish laws, including:
 - i. The Jews were forbidden to offer sacrifices according to the Jewish laws;
 - ii. The Jews were forbidden to observe the Sabbath;
 - iii. The Jews were forbidden to celebrate any traditional Jewish festivals;
 - iv. The Jews were forbidden to carry out circumcision for their children;
(Circumcision was the sign of the covenant between God and Abraham.)
 - v. The Jews were forbidden to follow the strict Jewish rules regarding food;
 - vi. Jewish law books were destroyed and burnt.
 - vii. Anyone who obeyed the Mosaic Law or kept Jewish law books would be executed.

References:

1. 黃錫木、孫寶玲、張略等著 (2002)：《新約歷史與宗教文化導論》。香港：基道。
2. 禡浩榮著 (2005)：《圖片兩約中間四百年》(頁 167-189)。香港：天道書樓。

Period 2 : The Independent War of Maccabees

1. Objectives:

- To learn why and how the Jews initiated the Independent War of Maccabees.
- To learn that during the Independent War of Maccabees, the Jews defeated their enemies by their religious beliefs.
- To understand the impact of the Independent War of Maccabees on the religious beliefs and political matters of the Jews.



2. Teaching Strategies

Background Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The differences between the Greek and Hebrew cultures and the insulting acts of Antiochus IV towards the Jewish religion triggered the Independent War of Maccabees. • The military strength of the Jews was weaker than that of Antiochus IV. However, they had strong religious beliefs and they were able to triumph in the end. They even established an independent dynasty called the Hasmonean Dynasty afterwards. • Though the Hasmonean Dynasty was eventually defeated by the Romans, the Independent War of Maccabees alerted certain Jews. They became more defensive of their religious traditions, longing for the coming of the Messiah and resisting foreign rule. Such religious and political beliefs were upheld during the Roman rule.
Issues for Exploration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What were the causes of the Independent War of Maccabees? • What had happened during the war and what was the impact?
Enquiry Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What were the causes of the Independent War of Maccabees? • What happened during the Independent War of Maccabees? • How did the Independent War of Maccabees impact the religious and political beliefs of the Jews?

Learning Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through arranging data cards, let students learn the causes of the Independent War of Maccabees. • Through role-playing, let students understand that the Independent War of Maccabees was a very difficult war for the Jews. They depended on their strong religious beliefs to triumph. • Through discussions and role-playing, let students learn about the impact of the Independent War of Maccabees on the religious and political beliefs of the Jews.
Key Concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Hasideans • The Pharisees • The Sadducees
Generic skills, values and attitudes involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to the 'Generic Skills, Values and Attitudes' tables included in the corresponding lesson plans.
High-order Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why were religious beliefs able to help the Jews gain victory in wars?
Extended Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the national values pursued by Aung San Suu Kyi and Ghandi.

Activity One

Enquiry Question	Generic Skills	Values and Attitudes
What were the causes of the Independent War of Maccabees?	Communication skills, collaboration skills	Patriotism, freedom, self-determination

Teaching Steps:

Step 1: Teacher does warm-up exercise with students. Help students understand the causes of the Xinhai Revolution led by Sun Yat Sen and the ideals of the Three Principles of the People.

- Teacher raises the question :
 - What do you know about the Xinhai Revolution, a very important revolution in the modern history of China?
- Teacher shows PowerPoint 1 (The Xinhai Revolution and the Three Principles of the People) to help students understand the background and the course of the Xinhai Revolution, and also the main points of the Three Principles of the People.
- Teacher asks students :
 - Why did the people revolt against the foreign Manchurian government?
 - What were the values they held on to?
 - Was the revolution successful in the end?
- Teacher points out :
 - Sun Yat Sen led the Chinese people to revolt against the Manchurian government. Their slogan was “expel the Manchus, restore the Han, found a republic and divide the land ownership equally”. It meant that they wanted to expel the foreigners and to practise self-governance and democracy.
 - During the period between the two Testaments, the Jews also lived under the rule of the foreign Greeks. They were oppressed by the Greek king Antiochus IV and thus, they revolted against the Greek regime.

Step 2: Teacher discusses with students.

- Teacher raises the question :

- Antiochus IV implemented oppressive policies in areas of religion, culture and economy. How did Antiochus IV blaspheme the Jewish religion?
- Teacher points out :
 - Later, Antiochus IV further blasphemed the Jewish religion by (1) forcing the Jews to eat pork (unclean food); (2) erecting an altar to the god Zeus in the holy Temple of the Jews and allowing the sacrifice of pork.
- Teacher raises the question :
 - What Antiochus IV did was like a stranger entering your house to remove your ancestral tablets, or the symbols of your faith such as the cross. Was Antiochus IV too forceful to the Jews?
 - If you were a Jew, how would you respond to the persecution of and insults to your race?

Step 3: Teacher carries out “Oppression and the Jewish Rebellion” activity with students to help students understand the causes of the Independent War of Maccabees.

- Teacher points out :
 - i. At that time, some Jews supported the Jewish traditions and planned a revolution to overthrow the oppression of Antiochus IV. They wanted a new government.
- Teacher asks students to form groups of four and distributes Appendix 1 (The Oppressive Policies of Antiochus IV) and Worksheet 1 (Oppression and Rebellion). Ask students to play the role of the Jews who supported the Jewish traditions.
 - i. Fill in the first half of the worksheet: How were the Jews oppressed under the rule of Antiochus IV?
 - ii. Fill in the second half of the worksheet: What was the goal of the revolution?
- Teacher invites students to present their ideas. Ask them to focus especially on the goal of the revolution and see if the goals could help free the Jews from oppression.

Step 4: Teacher points out:

- The differences between the Greek and the Jewish religious values had worsened the conflict between the Jews and the Greek rulers.

- In 168 B.C., Antiochus IV blasphemed the holy Temple by erecting an altar to the god Zeus and offering pork as sacrifice (pork was considered unclean according to the Jewish laws). He violated the Jewish religious traditions and disappointed the priests. The Jews became more resentful towards the Greek nation.
- In face of the insults inflicted on the Jewish religion by Antiochus IV, the Jews made different choices:
 - Some Jews, such as the priests, chose to adhere to the power of Antiochus IV;
 - Some chose to hold on to their traditional faith. They include the Hasideans, who were the fore-runners of the Pharisees;
 - Some Jews chose to rebel against the Greeks. They organised underground activities and started a revolution. Mattathias and his family fled to the wilderness and led the people to start the Independent War of Maccabees.
- Some Jews could not tolerate the difference between the Greek and Hebrew religions. Also, they could not bear the oppressive rule of Antiochus IV and the king's insults towards the Jewish faith. Hence, they rebelled against the Greek nation and started a revolution, known as the "Maccabean War of Independence".

Step 5: Teacher distributes 'Students' Reference Material 1' (The Family of Mattathias), briefly explains it and wraps up the activity.



Activity Two

Enquiry Question	Generic Skills	Values and Attitudes
What had happened during the Independent War of Maccabees?	Communication skills, collaboration skills	Faith, justice

Teaching Steps:**Step 1: Teacher points out:**

- If the Jewish revolution were about to break out, how would you prepare for it?

Step 2: Teacher carries out “Preparation for War” activity with students. Help students understand that the Jews were able to prevail over the more powerful Antiochus IV with strong religious faith.

- Teacher asks students to form groups of four and distributes Appendix 2 (The Comparison of the military might of the pre-Maccabean Greeks and the Jews) to each group. Let students understand the strengths of both parties.
- Teacher distributes Worksheet 2 (The Pre-war Strength Analysis) to each group and asks students to evaluate if the Jews were likely to win in the Independent War of Maccabees in accordance to the data in the students’ reference material. Ask students to fill in the first part of Worksheet 2.
- After reading the second part of Worksheet 2, discuss what else the Jews could rely on given that their military strength was much weaker than the Greeks. Students need to fill in the second part of Worksheet 2.
- After discussion, teacher invites students to present their ideas.

Step 3: Teacher distributes ‘Students’ Reference Material 2’ (The Course of the Independent War of Maccabees), briefly explains the course of the war and helps students understand that the strong religious faith of the Jews was an important factor for their victory in the war.

Step 4: Teacher discusses with students:

- Would the Jews be able to win the Independent War of Maccabees relying on their military strength alone?

- During the war, what religious conviction did the Jews have?
- Did the Jews prevail by their military strength or their faith?
- Why was religious faith able to help the Jews obtain victory?

Step 5: Teacher summarises:

- In the Independent War of Maccabees, the Greek army was obviously much stronger than the Jewish people. They also had more powerful weapons. They should be able to defeat the Jews easily.
- The Jews were far weaker than the Greek army in terms of military strength. Yet, they were able to prevail over the much stronger Greek army in the end with their strong religious faith, i.e. by believing that God would send His Messiah to help them overthrow the foreign rule,.
- After their victory, the Jews established an independent dynasty known as the Hasmonean Dynasty and practised self-government.

Activity Three

Enquiry Question	Generic Skills	Values and Attitudes
How did the Independent War of Maccabees impact the religious and political beliefs of the Jews?	Communication skills, collaboration skills	Patriotism, independence

Teaching Steps:

Step 1: Teacher carries out “The Fall of a Dynasty” activity with students to help students understand that the Hasmonean Dynasty eventually collapsed due to domestic conflicts and foreign invasion:

- Teacher points out:
 - Even though the Jews defeated the Greek army during the Independent War of Maccabees and established the Hasmonean Dynasty, the Dynasty only lasted for a short time and was eventually defeated by the Romans.
- Teacher shows PowerPoint 2 (The End of a Dynasty) and helps students understand the course of the fall of the Hasmonean Dynasty.
- Teacher discusses with students :
 - What were the causes of the fall of the Hasmonean Dynasty?
 - What was the more important factor leading to the fall of a dynasty, domestic conflicts or foreign invasion?
 - If you were the leader of a dynasty, how would you solve the problems of domestic conflicts and foreign invasion?

Step 2: Teacher summarises:

- The victory of the Independent War of Maccabees allowed the Jews to establish a self-governing dynasty known as the Hasmonean Dynasty.
- However, the dynasty did not last long. Later on, due to domestic conflicts, the dynasty was too weak to fight when the powerful Roman invaded. The Hasmonean Dynasty was eventually defeated.

Step 3: Teacher carries out “Commenting on the Impact of War” activity with students. Let students learn about the impact of the Independent War of Maccabees on the religious beliefs and political matters of the Jews.

- Teacher shows PowerPoint 3 (How did the Jewish people think about the fall of the dynasty) and lets students understand the general views of the Jewish people towards the fall of the Hasmonean Dynasty. Teacher asks students to pay special attention to the different religious and political standpoints that appeared in the Jewish society after the Hasmonean Dynasty.
- Teacher asks students to form groups of four, hands out Worksheet 3 “Commenting on the Influence of War” to each group. Guide students to play the role of a political commentator and analyse the impact of the Independent War of Maccabees on the Jews in the following three areas: (1) the attitude towards foreign rule, (2) the support for the Jewish religious traditions and (3) the expectation for the coming of the Messiah.
- After discussion, teacher invites students to present their ideas.

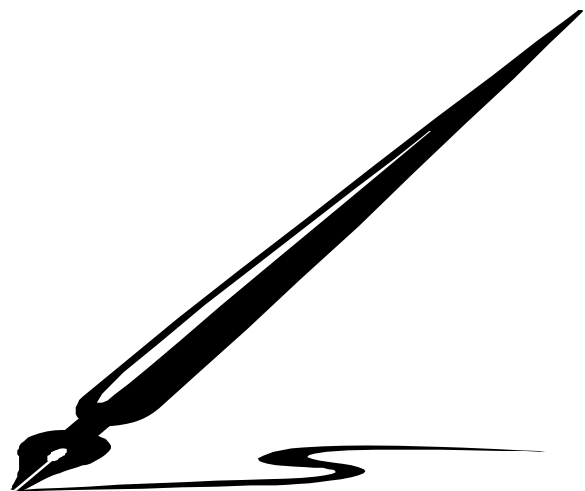
Step 4: Teacher summarises:

- The victory of the Independent War of Maccabees reinforced the Jewish expectation for the coming of the Messiah, and they believed that the Messiah would bring them liberty.
- The success of the Independent War of Maccabees enabled the Jews to maintain high national spirits. They firmly believed that they were God’s holy and unique chosen people.
- The victory of the Independent War of Maccabees enabled the Jews to realise their dream of self-governance, making them even more resistant to foreign rule. Even though their Hasmonean Dynasty was defeated by the Romans and they were ruled by foreigners again, they still held on to the conviction of resisting foreign rule and realising self-governance. They also anticipated that the Messiah would emancipate them.
- During the war, the tension between the Jewish Hasmonean Dynasty and the Greek Seleucid Dynasty gave rise to two parties among the Jews, namely the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The Pharisees originated from the Hasideans in the past. They were zealous, pious, patriotic, apologetic, moralistic and resistant to all foreign influence (1 Maccabees 2:42). They opposed foreign rule. The Sadducees were descendants of the Zadoc family. They admired the Greek culture and supported the foreign rule by the Greeks. They were two very active parties in New Testament times.

Step 5: Teacher distributes ‘Students’ Reference Material 3’ (The development from the Hasidim to the Pharisees and the Sadducees) , briefly explains it and wraps up the activity.

Extended Activities:

1. Teacher asks students to visit the following websites to learn about the lives of Aung San Suu Kyi and Ghandi and to understand their pursuits of their national ideals.
 - <http://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E7%BF%81%E5%B1%B1%E8%98%87%E5%A7%AC>
 - <http://zh.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=%E7%94%98%E5%9C%B0&variant=zh-hk>
2. Teacher briefly introduces the lives of Aung San Suu Kyi and Ghandi and asks students to think about the following questions:
 - What kind of national values did they lead their people to pursue?
 - What difficulties did they encounter during their pursuit for such values?
 - Would they succeed?
 - How do you evaluate them? Please share your opinion.
3. Teacher may invite students to share their thoughts in the following period.



Appendix 1 : The Oppressive Policies of Antiochus IV



Plundered the treasures in the holy Temple in Jerusalem

Forced the Jews to worship the Greek god Zeus

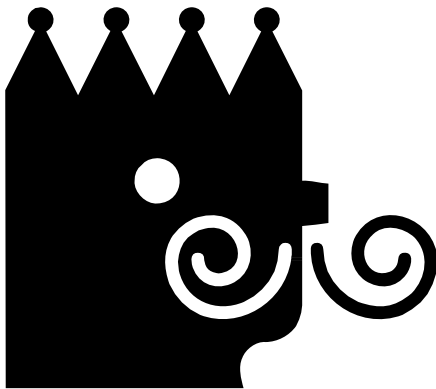
Massacred the Jewish people

Forced Jewish women and children into slavery

Levied heavy taxes

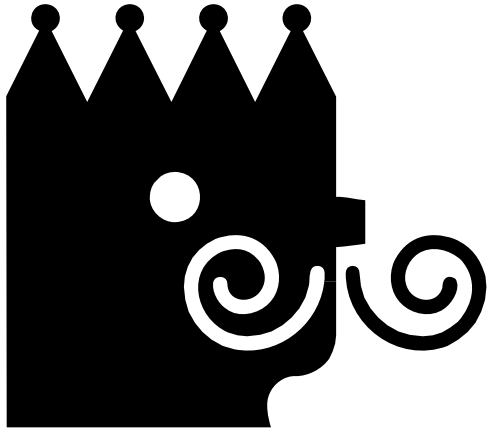
Forbade the Jews to follow the Jewish laws

Burned Jewish law books





Appendix 2 : The Comparison of the Military Strength of the pre-Maccabean Greeks and the Jews



The military resources owned by Antiochus IV:

- The Seleucid Empire was rich and large. Its rule extended not only to the whole Palestinian area, but also to Asia Minor and the east of Palestine.
- Greece had plentiful resources and the country was prosperous.
- The army was strong, powerful and well-equipped. They even had the new weapon imported from Africa - the war elephants which had great destructive power.

The military resources owned by the Jews:

- The whole Palestine was under the rule of Antiochus IV. The Jews did not have their own territory.
- They could only live in Palestine where the territory was limited. Hence, they had little resources and were relatively poor.
- Their army was small and not well-equipped.





Material 1: A brief introduction of the Maccabees

1. Background

- Antiochus IV ruled over the Jews with an iron fist. He blasphemed and plundered the holy Temple, and forbade the Jews to perform circumcision.
- In 168 B.C., some officials forced the Jews to offer sacrifices to pagan gods. When confronted with this incident, the old priest Mattathias from the Maccabean family killed the Jew who was about to offer sacrifice and the official who forced him to do so. Mattathias killed the two men in front of everybody.
- This incident caused a huge tumult. Mattathias and his five sons fled to the Judean wilderness. They gathered a crowd of Jews who were zealous about the Law and were ready to fight. They started the so-called Maccabean Rebellion, hoping to overthrow foreign rule. “Maccabee”, meaning “the man with a hammer”, was probably a nickname given to the family (mainly to the three sons of Mattathias) to describe their tough character. (Jeremiah 50:23)

2. Religious beliefs

- They were zealous about the Jewish faith and they adhered strictly to the Law of God. They did not allow the Jewish faith to be defiled. They were determined to restore the worship rituals as stipulated in the Law and to preserve the pureness of the Jewish religion.
- They believed that God would support their military actions, and would even send the Messiah to help them overthrow foreign rule. (Some scholars thought that the Maccabees once regarded themselves or being regarded by the others as the Messiah).

3. Political beliefs

- They insisted on being Jewish, resisted Hellenization and foreign rule. They considered all foreign policies as threats intended to undermine the Jewish culture.
- They longed for self-governance and tended to use military actions to attain political liberation.

References :

1. 吳羅瑜編（1996）：《聖經新辭典》，下冊，（頁 90-92）。香港：天道。
2. 羅慶才、王錫木主編（2005）：《聖經通識手冊》（頁 167-168）。香港：基道出版社。



Material 2: The course of the Independent War of Maccabees

<p>The revolution began (167-166 B.C.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to practise Hellenization, Antiochus IV sent messengers to Mattathias, asking him to lead the villagers to offer sacrifices to pagan gods. Mattathias rejected the order for the sake of maintaining the purity of their religion. He killed the messengers and all the villagers who offered sacrifices to pagan gods. • Mattathias and his five sons fled to the mountains of Judea. • Many conservative Jews who knew about this event also fled to the mountains to follow the Mattathias family. • Mattathias opposed passive resistance. He thought that the Jewish people should be militarily armed and fight against Antiochus IV, vowing to attain religious freedom. • In the Jewish history, their rebellion was known as the Independent War of Maccabees.
<p>Re-capture of the holy Temple (166-160 B.C.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few months into the war, Mattathias was killed in a battle. His third son Judah (also named Maccabee, meaning the man with a hammer) became the leader. • His guerilla and ambush tactics enabled him to gain numerous victories, attracting many other Jews to join his team. • Antiochus IV led an army to conquer the east and gave the governing responsibilities to his deputy. In one battle, the Jewish army ambushed the Greek army and succeeded. Not only did they get a lot of spoils, but they recovered their morale to capture Jerusalem. • In 164 B.C., Judah regained the holy Temple. They dismantled the statutes of the Greek gods, consecrated the altar and the equipment for worshipping, and once again offered sacrifices to God. • The victories encouraged the Jews to believe that God wanted to revive the Israel nation and free His people from foreign rule. So they kept on fighting against the Seleucid army.

<p>Governorship of Judea (160-143 B.C.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 160 B.C., Judah died in a battle. His brother Jonathan became the leader. • At that time, the Seleucid Dynasty was plunged into internal turmoil and power struggle due to the death of Antiochus IV. • In the struggle for the throne, the Seleucid kings Alexander Epiphanes and Demetrius I both wanted to gain the support of the Jews. They made Jonathan the High Priest and promoted him to be the governor of Judea. Jonathan has consolidated the political and religious authorities with his own hands.
<p>Independence of the Jewish kingdom (142-135 B.C.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both Seleucid kings wanted Jonathan's support. Jonathan was tactful in dealing with the kings and he was able to obtain freedom for his people and reinforce his own power. However, the time of peace was too short and Jonathan was eventually killed in the battles for the Seleucid throne. His elder brother succeeded him as the leader of the Jews. • During the power struggle, both kings wanted to fight for the recognition of their kingship and therefore issued an edict to exempt the Jews from taxation. • The Seleucid Dynasty had implicitly recognised the independence of the Jews. The edict became the constitution of independence, and so the Jews formally declared their independence. In the same year, Simon, son of Mattathias reached an agreement with Rome and Sparta to recognise the independent sovereign rule of the Jewish kingdom.

References:

1. 禰浩榮 (2005):《圖片兩約之間四百年》(頁 89-108)。香港:天道書樓。
2. 魏道思拉比著、劉幸枝譯 (2006):《猶太信仰之旅:猶太人的信仰、傳統與生活》(頁 237)。台北:聖經資源中心。



Material 3: The development from the Hasidim to the Pharisees and the Sadducees

Opposition to the Seleucid Authority

- When Antiochus IV was king of Seleucid, he implemented oppressive policies towards the Jews and forced them to be Hellenized, making the conservative traditionalists very resentful. These traditionalists were called the Hasidim (Chasidim).
- The Hasidim were very concerned about the Law. They wanted to protect the Law, the rituals and the priestly traditions.
- The Hasidim were very supportive towards Mattathias and his family who started the Independent War of Maccabees. They were willing to join them in opposing the Seleucid government as well. The Hasidim played a very important role in the war. Yet, they were different from the Maccabees as they had no political ambition. They fought only for religious reason, wanting to protect the Law of God. They were the fore-runners of the Pharisees.

Development

- In 153 B.C., the Seleucid king Demetrius wanted to please the Maccabean leader Jonathan and therefore made him the High Priest (1 Maccabees 10:15-21). However, ever since the Davidic Dynasty, the place of the High Priest was always held by members of the Zadoc family. At that time, the descendants of the Zadoc family, the Sadducees (this term came from the name of the High Priest Zadoc) were very proud of their lineage from the High Priest Zadoc (Ezekiel 40:46; 44:15; 48:11). They were also powerful people in the society. Therefore, they could not accept Jonathan being the High Priest. However, they dared not to express their anger and discontent. They could only wait.
- During the Hasmonean Dynasty, the Pharisees and the Sadducees, who belonged to two different social strata, had developed into two parties with very strong influence towards the religion and the political matters at that time. The Pharisees were not happy with the Hasmonean Dynasty because the rulers were not from the David's line and therefore should not be kings. The Sadducees supported Hellenization and the Greek rule.
- These two parties were active in New Testament times.

References:

1. 禰浩榮 (2005):《圖片兩約之間四百年》(頁 63-106)。香港:天道書樓。
2. 羅慶才、王錫木主編 (2005):《聖經通識手冊》(頁 212)。香港:基道出版社。

Worksheet 1: Oppression and Rebellion

1. First, fold this worksheet along the dotted line and refer to Appendix 1. Imagine you are a Jew and pick five of the oppressive policies of Antiochus IV that are the most difficult to bear.



I find the following oppressive policies of Antiochus IV the most difficult to bear:

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

E. _____

-
2. What goals do you want to attain by revolting? Write your answers below.



I would like to attain the following goals:

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

E. _____

Unfold the worksheet and refer to your answers in Question 1 and 2, can your goals help free the Jews from their oppression?

Worksheet 2: The Pre-war Strength Analysis

1. Based on the data about the military strength of Antiochus IV and that of the Jews, make comparison of the two parties in the following areas.

	Antiochus IV	The Jews
Land owned		
Land resources		
Estimated army size		
Technological level		

Conclusion: Which party was more powerful? _____

2. In the first part, we already know the military strength of both parties. What else could the Jews rely on to win the war? Pick the best plan from the following and write down your reasons.

Warfare Policies

Plan 1: Recruit many other kinsmen to join fighting. (Possible difficulty encountered: would the others be willing to join?)

Plan 2: Strengthen military armament. (Possible difficulty encountered: was there enough money to do so?)

Plan 3: Rely on the messianic promise of God, and believe that the Messiah would lead the Jews to overthrow the foreign rule.

Plan chosen: _____

Reasons:

Worksheet 3: Commenting on the Impact of the War

In the following three areas, discuss the impact of the Independent War of Maccabees on the religious beliefs and political matters of the Jews:

	The impact of the Maccabees on the religious beliefs and political matters of the Jews
Attitudes towards foreign rule <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To give up self-governance from now on? • To fight for independence? • To stay neutral? • Others 	
Upholding the Jewish religious traditions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To abandon the Jewish religious traditions from now on? • To support Jewish religious traditions? • To stay neutral? • Others 	
Expectation of the Messiah <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To give up expecting the Messiah? • Awaiting the Messiah to come? • To stay neutral? • Others 	



Material 1: A brief introduction of the Maccabees

1. Background

- Antiochus IV ruled over the Jews with an iron fist. He blasphemed and plundered the holy Temple, and forbade the Jews to perform circumcision.
- In 168 B.C., some officials forced the Jews to offer sacrifices to pagan gods. When confronted with this incident, the old priest Mattathias from the Maccabean family killed the Jew who was about to offer sacrifice and the official who forced him to do so. Mattathias killed the two men in front of everybody.
- This incident caused a huge tumult. Mattathias and his five sons fled to the Judean wilderness. They gathered a crowd of Jews who were zealous about the Law and were ready to fight. They started the so-called Maccabean Rebellion, hoping to overthrow foreign rule. “Maccabee”, meaning “the man with a hammer”, was probably a nickname given to the family (mainly to the three sons of Mattathias) to describe their tough character. (Jeremiah 50:23)

2. Religious beliefs

- They were zealous about the Jewish faith and they adhered strictly to the Law of God. They did not allow the Jewish faith to be defiled. They were determined to restore the worship rituals as stipulated in the Law and to preserve the pureness of the Jewish religion.
- They believed that God would support their military actions, and would even send the Messiah to help them overthrow foreign rule. (Some scholars thought that the Maccabees once regarded themselves or being regarded by the others as the Messiah).

3. Political beliefs

- They insisted on being Jewish, resisted Hellenization and foreign rule. They considered all foreign policies as threats intended to undermine the Jewish culture.
- They longed for self-governance and tended to use military actions to attain political liberation.

References:

1. 吳羅瑜編（1996）：《聖經新辭典》，下冊，（頁 90-92）。香港：天道。
2. 羅慶才、王錫木主編（2005）：《聖經通識手冊》（頁 167-168）。香港：基道出版社。



Material 2: The course of the Independent War of Maccabees

<p>The revolution began (167-166 B.C.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to practise Hellenization, Antiochus IV sent messengers to Mattathias, asking him to lead the villagers to offer sacrifices to pagan gods. Mattathias rejected the order for the sake of maintaining the purity of their religion. He killed the messengers and all the villagers who offered sacrifices to pagan gods. • Mattathias and his five sons fled to the mountains of Judea. • Many conservative Jews who knew about this event also fled to the mountains to follow the Mattathias family. • Mattathias opposed passive resistance. He thought that the Jewish people should be militarily armed and fight against Antiochus IV, vowing to attain religious freedom. • In the Jewish history, their rebellion was known as the Independent War of Maccabees.
<p>Re-capture of the holy Temple (166-160 B.C.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few months into the war, Mattathias was killed in a battle. His third son Judah (also named Maccabee, meaning the man with a hammer) became the leader. • His guerilla and ambush tactics enabled him to gain numerous victories, attracting many other Jews to join his team. • Antiochus IV led an army to conquer the east and gave the governing responsibilities to his deputy. In one battle, the Jewish army ambushed the Greek army and succeeded. Not only did they get a lot of spoils, but they recovered their morale to capture Jerusalem. • In 164 B.C., Judah regained the holy Temple. They dismantled the statutes of the Greek gods, consecrated the altar and the equipment for worshipping, and once again offered sacrifices to God. • The victories encouraged the Jews to believe that God wanted to revive the Israel nation and free His people from foreign rule. So they kept on fighting against the Seleucid army.

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Material 3: The development from the Hasidim to the Pharisees and the Sadducees

Opposition to the Seleucid Authority

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Development

- In 153 B.C., the Seleucid king Demetrius wanted to please the Maccabean leader Jonathan and therefore made him the High Priest (1 Maccabees 10:15-21). However, ever since the Davidic Dynasty, the place of the High Priest was always held by members of the Zadoc family. At that time, the descendants of the Zadoc family, the Sadducees (this term came from the name of the High Priest Zadoc) were very proud of their lineage from the High Priest Zadoc (Ezekiel 40:46; 44:15; 48:11). They were also powerful people in the society. Therefore, they could not accept Jonathan being the High Priest. However, they dared not to express their anger and discontent. They could only wait.
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Period 3 – Roman Occupation

1. Teaching Objectives:

- To learn about the governing policies adopted by the Roman Empire during its reign of Palestine in the first century A.D.
- To learn about the religious and political beliefs of the four Jewish sects (namely the Pharisees, Sadducees, the Herodians and the Zealots) emerged during Roman's reign and their responses towards the Roman governing policies.
- To understand the pressure from the major Jewish sects that Jesus had to face when he preached.



2. Teaching Strategies:

Background Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Seleucid Dynasty of the Greek Empire was conquered by Pompey, a senior Roman general, in 63 B.C. Since then, the Jews had been under the rule of Rome. • The Romans granted the Jews religious freedom, allowing them to uphold their religious traditions. However, the Jews were controlled and censored politically. • During the Roman's reign, the Jews had formed different political sects to express their religious and political aspirations. These sects included the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Herodians and the Zealots. • As they held different religious and political stances, they responded differently towards the words and deeds of Jesus. Their attitudes had exerted different levels of pressure on Jesus.
Issues for Explorations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How would you describe the life of the Jews under Roman occupation in the 1st century?
Enquiry Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What were the ruling strategies of the Roman Empire at that time? • What were the stances held by different Jewish sects regarding the Roman rule? What were their respective religious and political beliefs? • What were the attitudes of the four sects towards Jesus' teachings?

Learning Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through group activities, to know more about the governing strategies used by the Roman Empire during its reign over Palestine in the 1st century. • Through role-playing, to understand the religious and political beliefs of the four Jewish sects (including the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Herodians and the Zealots) and their responses towards the Roman governing policies. • Through role-playing, to learn about the responses of the four sects towards Jesus' teachings.
Key Concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Pharisees • The Sadducees • The Herodians • The Zealots
Generic skills, values and attitudes involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to the tables of 'Generic Skills, Values and Attitudes' included in the corresponding learning activities.
High-order Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the era of Roman occupation, how did the responses of the Jewish sects affect Jesus' preaching?
Extended Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit the Hong Kong Jewish Community Centre and the Ohel Leah Synagogue to learn about the religious culture of the Jewish synagogues.

Activity One



Enquiry Questions	Generic Skills	Values and Attitudes
What were the ruling strategies of the Roman Empire at that time?	Collaboration skills, communication skills, critical thinking skills	Diversity; the succession of culture; sense of belonging; cohesiveness

Teaching Steps:

Step 1: Teacher does warm-up exercise with students by introducing some background information about Rome to them. Back in 200 B.C., Rome was already a very powerful empire. It took over Palestine at around 64 B.C. and reigned over the territory.

- Teacher displays a world map and guides the students to locate modern Rome.
- Teacher points out:
 - Rome is well known as the capital of Italy.
 - The city of Rome was in fact founded in 753 B.C. It was the cradle of the Roman Empire.
 - In around 200 B.C., Rome was so well-developed that it became a powerful empire and annexed the coastal territory of the Mediterranean Sea. In around 63 B.C., the Roman took over Palestine.
 - (Teacher shows on the map) The domain of the Roman Empire at that time encompassed the entire world around the Mediterranean Sea. Its border extended south to the Sahara Desert, west to the Atlantic Ocean, east to the Euphrates and north to the Rhine and the Danube Rivers.

Step 2: Teacher carries out the “Romans’ governing policies on the Jews” activity with the students. Let students understand the strategies used by the Roman Empire during the 1st century.

- Teacher shows PowerPoint 1 (Roman Culture and Governing Policies) and allows students to understand (1) the features of Roman culture (e.g. polytheism, imperial cult); (2) the governing policies adopted in Palestine under Roman rule in the 1st century (e.g. allowing the Jews to re-build the Temple and to apply for household registration; appointing Herod the Great as King of the Jews; levying heavy tax...etc) and relevant biblical incidents. By doing so, teacher enhances students’ understanding of the background of Roman rule.

- Teacher asks students to form groups of four to play the role of a policy commentator. Teacher distributes “Appendix 1” (Roman Culture and Mode of Governance of the Jews) and “Worksheet 1” (Roman Culture and Mode of Governance of the Jews) and guides students to analyse the following: (1) Were there any differences or similarities between the Roman and Jewish cultures? (2) How did the Romans rule over the Jews? (e.g. Did they respect the Jewish religion? Did they grant the Jews freedom? Did they exercise political suppression? etc)
- After discussion, teacher invites students to present their ideas.

Step 3: Teacher discusses with students:

- The Jews had wrested self-governance from foreign rule with the establishment of the Hasmonean Dynasty. However, the autonomy did not last long and the Jews were subject to Roman rule. How would the Jews feel? Were they still hopeful of attaining self-governance? Did they resist or submit to Roman rule?

Step 4: Teacher summarises:

- Pompey, a senior Roman general, conquered the Greek Empire in 63 B.C. Since then, the Jews had been under the rule of Rome. The Roman government had no intention to meddle in the Jewish affairs especially their religious matters.
- The Roman government had constructed many aqueducts, roads, theatres, arenas and temples. The government had also standardised the coinage, the laws and the regulations for the convenience of the people. The convenient transportation had decentralised the Jews (the Diaspora). The Jews who had settled in other countries were comparatively more open-minded.
- As the Roman Empire ruled over a vast territory, it intended to have control over the provinces within its jurisdiction. The Senate would appoint a Prefect to administer those provinces that were in good social order. Provinces with frequent riots would be governed by an ethnarch, a procurator or a chief provincial official. These provinces would also be garrisoned by troops appointed by the emperor. For instance, Judea was one of the provinces governed by Roman procurators. The procurators had absolute authority on important matters, such as punishing or persecuting a citizen.
- The Romans granted the Jews religious freedom but exercised political control and suppression on their lives.

Step 5: Teacher distributes “Students’ Reference: Material 1” (An Introduction of the Situations of Foreign Rule over Palestine) and “Students’ Reference: Material 2” (Roman Culture and Mode of Governance) to wrap up the above activity.



Activity Two



Enquiry Questions	Generic Skills	Values and Attitudes
What were the stances held by different Jewish sects regarding the Roman rule? What were their respective religious and political beliefs?	Collaboration skills, communication skills, cohesiveness	Freedom; common blessings

Teaching Steps:

Step 1: Teacher raises questions, leading students to think whether they would accept Roman governance if they were the Jews at that time:

- If you were one of the Jews at that time,
 - would you accept these governing policies?
 - which policy would be the most difficult to accept?
 - which policy would you like to amend?
- Teacher allows students to express their views and leads them to carry out the following activity, which enables them to understand the reactions of different social classes towards Roman governance.

Step 2: Teacher carries out the “The four sects during Roman occupation” activity with students. Let them understand the religious and political beliefs of the four sects (namely the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Herodians and the Zealots) during the era of Roman rule and their responses towards the Roman governing policies.

- Teacher raises questions:
 - What were the two Jewish sects that had emerged during the reign of the Greeks? What were their responses towards Greek rule?
- Teacher asks two students to talk about the religious and political stances held by the Pharisees and the Sadducees.
- Teacher discusses with students the following questions:
 - The Jews had been ruled by the Greeks. They regained independence by establishing the Hasmonean Dynasty. But the dynasty was defeated by the Romans afterwards. What was the impact of the drastic changes on the Jewish social classes?
 - Would any Jews support the Roman regime?
 - Would any Jews yearn for the autonomy enjoyed during the Hasmonean Dynasty and think about stirring up another revolution against the Roman regime?

- Teacher tells students that during the Roman regime in the 1st century, there were sects formed in the Jewish society. They were (1) the Pharisees; (2) the Sadducees; (3) those who favoured the Roman regime; and (4) those who upheld their belief in the coming of the Messiah and were eager to launch another revolution against the Roman regime. Teacher then asks students to form groups of four and distributes “Worksheet 2” (The Reaction of the Jewish Social Classes to Roman Regime). Teachers leads students to play the role of the above sects and:
 - Deduce their religious and political stances;
 - Recall the rule of Antiochus IV (teacher may distribute “Appendix 1” of Period 2 (Oppressive Policies of Antiochus IV).
 - Compare the modes of Greek rule and Roman rule over the Jews. Remind students to pay attention to their religious and political stances. Ask them to think about which mode of governance would they accept? Would they resist both of them?
- Teacher asks students to complete “Worksheet 2”.
- After discussion, teacher invites students to present their ideas.

Step 3: Teacher goes further to discuss with the students:

- Based on the result of the discussion, ask students to deduce whether the Jews’ religious and political stances were conservative, extreme or liberal.
- What was the relationship among the four sects like? Were they hostile towards one another?

Step 4: Teacher summarises:

- Since the Greek culture had spread to the Near East, the Jews struggled long and hard to preserve their culture and national autonomy.
- Since then, the Jews had formed different sects to express their religious and political expectations. These sects included the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Herodians and the Zealots.

- Teacher distributes “Student’s Reference: Material 3” (More about the Four Sects) to help students understand the religious and political beliefs of the four sects during the Roman regime and their responses towards Roman governing policies.
- Teacher then uses the following table to sum up the religious/political stances of the four sects:

	Extreme	Mild
Religious stance	Pharisees	Sadducees
Political stance	Zealots	Herodians



Activity Three

Enquiry Questions	Generic Skills	Values and Attitudes
What were the attitudes of the four sects towards Jesus' teachings?	Collaboration skills, communication skills, cohesiveness	Succession of culture

Teaching Steps:

Step 1: Teacher raises questions:

- According to “Student’s Reference: Material 3”, what would the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Herodians and the Zealots expect from a person who claimed himself as the Son of God and the Messiah?
- Teacher guides the students to sum up their respective expectations:
 - The Pharisees: He should be law-abiding and consecrated.
 - The Sadducees: He should not infringe upon their political rights or oppose the Government.
 - The Herodians: He should not oppose Herod, the Roman ruler.
 - The Zealots: He should observe the Jewish laws; be able to lead the people to overthrow the Roman regime and restore national self-governance by violence.

Step 2: Teacher discusses with the students:

- Were the religious and political expectations of the four Jewish sects very different from each other?
- How would a person be treated if he claimed to be the Son of God and the Messiah but failed to satisfy the expectations of different sects?

Step 3: Teacher carries out the “How the four sects thought about Jesus” activity with the students. Help students understand the social background of Jesus’ ministry during Roman occupation.

- Teacher asks the students to form groups of four, each playing one of the four roles, i.e. the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Herodians and the Zealots. Teacher asks students to put tags on for easy identification.

- Teacher shows PowerPoint 2 (Some facts about Jesus), covering the following content:
 - Jesus healed the sick on the Sabbath;
 - Jesus cleaned up the Temple;
 - Jesus performed a miracle to raise Lazarus from death;
 - Jesus always brought people together to preach about the Kingdom of Heaven, leading the Roman Government to think that there was going to be a revolution;
 - Jesus rode on a young donkey to enter Jerusalem, the center of religious and political power.
- Teacher asks each group of students to comment on the above things Jesus did. Help them understand the pressure and conflicts Jesus had to face when he preached.

Step 4: Teacher summarises:

- Through learning the Greek and the Roman rule over Palestine, we understand more about the religious, cultural and political background of the Jewish society at that time.

Step 5: Teacher distributes “Student’s Reference: Material 4” (The Four Sects and Jesus) to wrap up the above activity.

Extended Activities:

1. Teacher can bring the students to the Hong Kong Jewish Community Centre and the Ohel Leah Synagogue. Let them know more about the religious culture of the Jewish synagogue.
 - The address of the Hong Kong Jewish Community Centre:
70 Robinson Road, Mid-Levels, Hong Kong (The Ohel Leah Synagogue is adjacent to the centre)
2. Teacher asks students to think about the following questions with reference to the information collected:
 - How does Judaism interpret the law?
 - What are the foremost teachings in Judaism?
 - What are the views of modern Jews on Hong Kong's political and religious conditions?
3. Teacher can invite students to share their opinions in the next period.





Appendix 1 – Roman Culture and Mode of Governance of the Jews



The Romans worship multiple gods.

As long as the religious practices are properly performed, the Jewish religion is still accepted.

The Roman emperors have to be praised as gods. People have to pay tribute to them.

Herod is appointed to govern the Judea Province although he is not an Israelite.

The Roman Government has no intention to unify the languages, religious beliefs, different cultures and ways of living in the empire.

The Jews have to observe the Roman stipulations on tax. Any individual between 14 and 63 has to pay a heavy tax, even for a slave, regardless of gender.

Theatres, bath complexes, schools will be built in Jerusalem. The Temple will also be expanded.

The Jews enjoy legal self-governance. Sanhedrin is the supreme legal body of the Judea Province. Chaired by the High Priest, the Sanhedrin is responsible for settling religious matters and lawsuits with respect to the Jewish law. It has the full authority to enforce the law, except that the authority to pronounce death sentence still rests on the Proconsul appointed by the Roman Government.



Material 1: An Introduction of the Situations of Foreign Rule over Palestine

When the Southern Kingdom of Judah was defeated by Babylonia in 587 B.C., the number of Jews exiled to Babylon was 4,600 (Jeremiah 52:28-30). Some estimated that Palestine had a Jewish population of about 120,000 in 587 B.C. When the Jews returned from Babylon, however, the population was below 20,000. Perhaps a large population of the Jews was slaughtered by Babylonia troops. In fact, we know very little about Palestine during the 50-year exile of the Jews. We only know that the Temple and almost all fortified cities in the middle part of the mountain areas were destroyed.

Babylonia was soon defeated by Cyrus, King of Persia. Cyrus was comparatively more lenient towards the Jews. He approved the Jews to return to their homeland and granted them the freedom of religion. Besides, he appointed Zerubbabel to lead the first band of Jews to return to Jerusalem, reconstructing the Temple. However, the number of Jews returning from Babylonian was very little. They felt as though they had moved into a foreign land when they entered Palestine. They had difficulties in getting along with the locals. Therefore, these Jews had low morale and the reconstruction of the Temple had come to a standstill. Later, Nehemiah and Ezra had successively led the exiled Jews back to Palestine. With their encouragement the Jewish society was gradually revitalised with the Temple reconstructed. However, the Aramaic language had gradually replaced Hebrew and become more commonly used.

The Persian Empire had ruled over Palestine for about two hundred years before it surrendered to the Greek Empire. During his 13-year reign, Alexander the Great had established an even more powerful Empire. However, after his death in 323 B.C., the Greek Empire began to collapse. It was the period when the Greek culture started to penetrate into the Jewish lives.

Alexander's Empire was divided between two of his generals, Ptolemy and Seleucus, and split into the Ptolemaic Dynasty occupying Egypt and the Seleucid Dynasty occupying Babylon. Palestine was located right between the two territories and it was contested by the two powers. At last, the Ptolemaic Dynasty succeeded in bringing Palestine under its domain. We know little about the Jewish society in Palestine during this period, but the King of the Ptolemaic Dynasty probably adopted the mode of Greek rule. The rulers granted the Jewish ministers prerogative to collect tax on their behalf, making them as powerful as a secular king.

In 198 B.C., Antiochus of the Seleucids defeated the Ptolemaic troops and took Palestine. Antiochus adopted the Persian governing policies and was very lenient towards the Jews. He allowed the people to return to their homeland and waived their tax for three years in order to help the Jews revive their economy. Nevertheless, the Greek culture had profoundly influenced the Jewish society at that time.

Such cultural penetration did not seem to cause great conflicts until political pressure has become increasingly evident. When Antiochus of the Seleucids started to suppress Judaism, the Jews were ready to revolt against the Greek regime, leading to the Independence War of Maccabees.

Reference:

布賴特著，蕭維元譯 (1981)：《以色列史》（頁 443-469）。香港：基督教文藝出版社。



Material 2: Roman Culture and the Mode of Rule over the Jews

The Roman Occupation of the Kingdom of Judah

The conflicts between the Pharisees and the Sadducees led to the break-up of the Kingdom of Judah and culminated in a civil war. While its national power was weakened by civil disorder, the Kingdom of Judah also became the target of contending foreign powers. Syria had been besieged by Roman troops led by Pompey for years by that time. At last, Pompey conquered Jerusalem in 63 B.C. Since then, the Kingdom of Judah had become a subject state of Rome and had to pay tribute to Rome.

The Roman Religious Culture

1. Accepting foreign religions:

- The gods and goddesses worshipped by the Romans were those from the conquered territories. The incorporation of foreign gods into the Roman religion had much to do with their belief that a complete conquest of a foreign nation could only be achieved when the gods in those territories were worshipped by the Romans.
- The Romans accepted other religions as long as the worshippers performed their religious rituals properly.

2. Imperial cult:

- The Roman emperors were revered as gods. Augustus was declared a god by the Senate upon his death in 14 A.D. Romans worshipped him in order to maintain the prosperity of the empire. Augustus' successors also declared themselves to be gods.

Mode of Roman Rule over the Jews

1. On political matters:

- As the Roman Empire ruled over a vast territory, it had to take an authoritarian control over the provinces within its jurisdiction. The Senate would appoint a Prefect to administer those provinces that were in good social order. Provinces with frequent riots were administered by an ethnarch, a procurator or a chief provincial official. They would be garrisoned with troops directly deployed by the emperor. For instance, the Judea Province was governed by Roman procurators. They had absolute authority over important matters, such as persecuting a citizen.

- The Roman emperor made Herod the Great¹ “King of Judea” to govern Galilee so as to ensure stability of the nation. After Herod’s death, his three sons were still granted Roman territories and could enjoy political power.

2. On people’s livelihood:

- The Roman Government had no intention to unify different languages used, religious beliefs, cultures and ways of living in its nation.
- The Roman Government had constructed many aqueducts, roads, theatres, arenas, temples; and has standardised the coinage, laws and regulations to make life more convenience. The convenient transportation had decentralised the Jews (the Dispora). Those who had settled in other countries were comparatively more open-minded.
- The Jews enjoyed legal self-governance. Sanhedrin was the supreme legal body of the Judea Province. Chaired by the High Priest, the Sanhedrin was responsible for settling religious matters and lawsuits with respect to the Jewish law. It had the full authority to enforce the law, except that the authority to pronounce death sentence still rested on the Proconsul appointed by the Roman Government. Therefore, the Jewish leaders handed Jesus to Pilate, the procurator, when they wanted to put Jesus to death. (Mark 15:1)
- Nevertheless, the Jews had to observe the Roman stipulations on tax. Any individual between 14 and 63 had to pay a heavy tax, even for a slave, regardless of gender. Jesus was once challenged with the question about paying taxes. (Mark 12:13-17)

References:

1. 羅慶才、黃錫木主編（2005）：《聖經通識手冊》。香港：基道。
2. 黃錫木、孫寶玲、張略（2002）：《新約歷史與宗教文化導論》。香港：基道。
3. 麥資基著、蘇蕙卿譯（1986）：《新約導論》。香港：文藝。

¹ The Bible refers “Herod” to four people of a family at various points. They are not pure Israelites by blood (not belong to tribe of Judah either), but Idumaeans (i.e. Edomites, the descendants of Esau). They were appointed by Romans as kings to govern Palestine. However, in the eyes of devoted Israelites, they were absolutely not qualified for it.



Material 3: More about the Four Sects

	Pharisees	Sadducees
Origin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formed during the time of John Hyrcanus I of the Hasmonean Dynasty (135-104 B.C.) An anti-government party at that time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formed during the time of John Hyrcanus I of the Hasmonean Dynasty (135-104 B.C.) A pro-government party at that time
Meaning of name	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The word "Pharisee" means "separated". They were in disagreement with the rulers and separated themselves from the others as a group of devoted people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The name "Sadducee" might come from "Zadok" (1 Kings 2:35)
Member's background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A religious group Operated a membership system with a set of stringent admission requirements Before becoming a member, one must be observed over a period of time ranging from a month to a year and must make an oath to observe all the Mosaic Laws. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zadok was a priest during the time of David and Solomon (2 Samuel 18:17; 1 Kings 1:34). From that time onwards until the Maccabee Revolt, High Priests of the Temple in Jerusalem were elected from the descendants of Zadok's family (2 Chronicles 31:10). Most members were aristocrats. Some of them were High Priests. They were rich and powerful people, even military leaders. They were in frequent conflicts with the Pharisees due to different power status.

Religious belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that the Mosaic Laws could be passed down and practised by the people. • Israel should become the Kingdom of priests and God's holy people. Holiness was not limited to moral requirements in a general sense, but also on ritual purification. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively less strict than the Pharisees, but were opposed to adding too many prohibitions on top of the Law as what the Pharisees did. • Denied the supernatural, the existence of angels and demons, the life after death (the immortality of the soul), and the concept of Heaven.
Religious behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Pharisees requested the common people to live like priests observing rules and rituals at home, especially dietary rituals and the Sabbath. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only observed the laws of the first five books of the Old Testament.
Political stance or influences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Pharisees were politically less influential than the Sadducees but they were supported by a lot of people concerning religious matters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Favoured the Greek Government • The Sadducees supported the Roman Government since Romans ruled over Palestine

	Herodians	Zealots
Origin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opinions about the origin of the Herod's Party varied Most scholars considered the Herodians neither a religious sect nor a political faction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Founded by Judas of Galilee in 6 A.D. They were considered an organised group during the period between the Old Testament and the New Testament because they inherited the revolutionary spirit of the Maccabees.
Meaning of name	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The name referred to a kind of attitude towards the world, meaning supporters of the Herodian Dynasty. Therefore, they also supported Roman rule. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The name "Zealot" was known as a fanatic of the Law.
Member's background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most of them came from families of rank and prestige. The group size was small because most people did not support the Herodian Dynasty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some members were well-behaved while some formed a rabble with some radical Pharisees.
Religious belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Close to those of the Sadducees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Similar to those believed by the Pharisees: Lord was the only one true God
Religious behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Close to those of the Sadducees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They were law fanatics, strictly observing the laws.
Political Stance or Influences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members of the Herod's Party supported the rule of the Herodian Dynasty over the Jews. They supported the Romans politically, hoping to restore Israel to its former glory through political operations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They opposed the Government and advocated the use of violence against those who breached the Law.

References:

- 羅慶才、黃錫木主編（2005）：《聖經通識手冊》。香港：基道。
- 黃錫木、孫寶玲、張略等著（2002）：《新約歷史與宗教文化導論》（頁 266-273）。香港：基道。
- 滕慕理著，梁汝照、李月娥譯（1985）：《新約背景》（頁 91-106）。香港：種籽。



Material 4: The Four Sects and Jesus

Party Affiliation	Criticism and challenges Jesus faced when preaching
Pharisees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus met a man with a paralysed hand on the Sabbath. Some teachers of the law and some Pharisees were already watching Jesus closely. They wanted to accuse Jesus of violating the rules of the Sabbath if he healed the man's hand. (Mark 3:1-6) • Although some Pharisees plotted to murder Jesus, Jesus was nice to them. Simon, a Pharisee even invited Jesus for dinner at his home. (Luke 7:40)
Sadducees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once argued with Jesus on the question about resurrection (Matthew 22:23-32) • Joined the Pharisees to trap Jesus: "Some Pharisees and Sadducees who came to Jesus wanted to trap him, so they asked him to perform a miracle for them...." (Matthew 16:1-4)
Herodians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once joined the Pharisees to embarrass Jesus • Went with the Pharisees to ask Jesus whether it was against the law to pay taxes to Caesar, the Roman Emperor (Mark 12:13-15) • Also plotted with the Pharisees to kill Jesus: "So the Pharisees left the synagogue and met at once with some members of Herodians, and they made plans to kill Jesus." (Mark 3:6)
Zealots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of Jesus' disciples, whose name was Simon, was once a Zealot. Many people at the time wished that Jesus were the Messiah, a hero expected by the Zealots. This expectation was shared by Jesus' disciples as well • Jesus' was misunderstood as one of the Zealots. For instance, he was against the authority; asking men not to be afraid of death but to follow him absolutely. He entered Jerusalem openly. He also expelled the merchants from the Temple. • Jesus differed from the Zealots in many ways: He did not plan to revolt against the government. He would not incite the others with sensitive political issues. He would not evade arguments about paying taxes. He always advocated loving and forgiving one's enemies.

Reference:

1. 羅慶才、黃錫木主編（2005）：《聖經通識手冊》。香港：基道。

Worksheet 1 – Roman Culture and Mode of Governance of the Jews (Reference answers)

Imagine that you were a commentator. Answer the following questions after reading “Appendix 1” (Roman Culture and Mode of Governance of the Jews).

1. Analyse the differences and similarities between Roman and Jewish cultures in terms of their religion, political system and legal system.

	Roman culture	Jewish culture
Religion (Which god(s) did they believe in?)	Polytheism	Monotheism; Believed in Jehovah
Politics (Whom did they expect to rule them?)	Be loyal to the ruler, the Roman Emperor	Believed in the reign of God. God would enthrone a King descended from the tribe of Judah and David's family
Legal System (What kind of legal system did they adopt?)	Roman law	Mosaic Commandment

2. Were there any similarities and differences between Roman and Jewish cultures in terms of their religion, political system and legal system? Did these differences/similarities bring about confrontations between the Romans and the Jews?

3. Analyse the characteristics of Roman rule over the Jews. Put a ✓ in the appropriate boxes and write down your views.

- ☐ Respected the Jewish religious belief
- ☐ Exercised political suppression in order to avoid mass revolt
- ☐ Constructed public facilities where appropriate
- ☐ Did not allow the people to elect the ruler
- ☐ Allowed legal self-determination
- ☐ Forced the people to do laborious work in order to avoid mass revolt
- ☐ Others:

4. Sum up the characteristics of Roman rule over the Jews.

Worksheet 1 : Roman Culture and Mode of Governance of the Jews

Imagine that you were a commentator. Answer the following questions after reading “Appendix 1” (Roman Culture and Mode of Governance of the Jews).

1. Analyse the differences and similarities between Roman and Jewish cultures in terms of their religion, political system and legal system.

	Roman culture	Jewish culture
Religion (Which god(s) did they believe in?)		
Politics (Whom did they expect to rule them?)		
Legal System (What kind of legal system did they adopt?)		

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- ☐ Allowed legal self-determination
- ☐ Forced the people to do laborious work in order to avoid mass revolt
- ☐ Others:

4. Sum up the characteristics of Roman rule over the Jews.

Worksheet 2: The Reaction of the Jewish Social Class to Roman Regime

1. Students in groups of four, each plays one of the four roles below. Write down their religious and political stance.

	The Pharisees	The Sadducees	Those who favored the Roman regime	Those who upheld their belief in the Messiah and were eager for the launch of another revolution to overthrow the Roman regime
Religion (Which god did they believe in?)				
Politics (Whom did they expect to rule them?)				
Legal System (What kind of legal system did they adopt?)				

2. With reference to the religious and political stance indicated above and the comparison of the mode of Greek rule (see Appendix 2 of chapter 3.1) and Roman rule (see Appendix 1), think about which mode of governance would you accept? Or, would you resist both of them? Explain your choice.

	The Pharisees	The Sadducees	Those who favored the Roman regime	Those who upheld their belief in the Messiah and were eager for the launch of another revolution to overthrow the Roman regime
Level of freedom of religion, level of respect	e.g. Rome As the Romans respected the Jewish religion and helped rebuild the Temple, their rule was basically acceptable.			
The rulers satisfy my religious and political stance				
The law adopted satisfy my religious and political stance				

3. The religious and political stances among the Jews were different. Were they hostile to one another? Explain.



Material 1: An Introduction of the Situations of Foreign Rule over Palestine

When the Southern Kingdom of Judah was defeated by Babylonia in 587 B.C., the number of Jews exiled to Babylon was 4,600 (Jeremiah 52:28-30). Some estimated that Palestine had a Jewish population of about 120,000 in 587 B.C. When the Jews returned from Babylon, however, the population was below 20,000. Perhaps a large population of the Jews was slaughtered by Babylonia troops. In fact, we know very little about Palestine during the 50-year exile of the Jews. We only know that the Temple and almost all fortified cities in the middle part of the mountain areas were destroyed.

Babylonia was soon defeated by Cyrus, King of Persia. Cyrus was comparatively more lenient towards the Jews. He approved the Jews to return to their homeland and granted them the freedom of religion. Besides, he appointed Zerubbabel to lead the first band of Jews to return to Jerusalem, reconstructing the Temple. However, the number of Jews returning from Babylonian was very little. They felt as though they had moved into a foreign land when they entered Palestine. They had difficulties in getting along with the locals. Therefore, these Jews had low morale and the reconstruction of the Temple had come to a standstill. Later, Nehemiah and Ezra had successively led the exiled Jews back to Palestine. With their encouragement the Jewish society was gradually revitalised with the Temple reconstructed. However, the Aramaic language had gradually replaced Hebrew and become more commonly used.

The Persian Empire had ruled over Palestine for about two hundred years before it surrendered to the Greek Empire. During his 13-year reign, Alexander the Great had established an even more powerful Empire. However, after his death in 323 B.C., the Greek Empire began to collapse. It was the period when the Greek culture started to penetrate into the Jewish lives.

Alexander's Empire was divided between two of his generals, Ptolemy and Seleucus, and split into the Ptolemaic Dynasty occupying Egypt and the Seleucid Dynasty occupying Babylon. Palestine was located right between the two territories and it was contested by the two powers. At last, the Ptolemaic Dynasty succeeded in bringing Palestine under its domain. We know little about the Jewish society in Palestine during this period, but the King of the Ptolemaic Dynasty probably adopted the mode of Greek rule. The rulers granted the Jewish ministers prerogative to collect tax on their behalf, making them as powerful as a secular king.

In 198 B.C., Antiochus of the Seleucids defeated the Ptolemaic troops and took Palestine. Antiochus adopted the Persian governing policies and was very lenient towards the Jews. He allowed the people to return to their homeland and waived their tax for three years in order to help the Jews revive their economy. Nevertheless, the Greek culture had profoundly influenced the Jewish society at that time.

Such cultural penetration did not seem to cause great conflicts until political pressure has become increasingly evident. When Antiochus of the Seleucids started to suppress Judaism, the Jews were ready to revolt against the Greek regime, leading to the Independence War of Maccabees.

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Material 2: Roman Culture and the Mode of Rule over the Jews

The Roman Occupation of the Kingdom of Judah

The conflicts between the Pharisees and the Sadducees led to the break-up of the Kingdom of Judah and culminated in a civil war. While its national power was weakened by civil disorder, the Kingdom of Judah also became the target of contending foreign powers. Syria had been besieged by Roman troops led by Pompey for years by that time. At last, Pompey conquered Jerusalem in 63 B.C. Since then, the Kingdom of Judah had become a subject state of Rome and had to pay tribute to Rome.

The Roman Religious Culture

1. Accepting foreign religions:

- The gods and goddesses worshipped by the Romans were those from the conquered territories. The incorporation of foreign gods into the Roman religion had much to do with their belief that a complete conquest of a foreign nation could only be achieved when the gods in those territories were worshipped by the Romans.
- The Romans accepted other religions as long as the worshippers performed their religious rituals properly.

2. Imperial cult:

- The Roman emperors were revered as gods. Augustus was declared a god by the Senate upon his death in 14 A.D. Romans worshipped him in order to maintain the prosperity of the empire. Augustus' successors also declared themselves to be gods.

Mode of Roman Rule over the Jews

1. On political matters:

- As the Roman Empire ruled over a vast territory, it had to take an authoritarian control over the provinces within its jurisdiction. The Senate would appoint a Prefect to administer those provinces that were in good social order. Provinces with frequent riots were administered by an ethnarch, a procurator or a chief provincial official. They would be garrisoned with troops directly deployed by the emperor. For instance, the Judea Province was governed by Roman procurators. They had absolute authority over important matters, such as persecuting a citizen.

- The Roman emperor made Herod the Great² “King of Judea” to govern Galilee so as to ensure stability of the nation. After Herod’s death, his three sons were still granted Roman territories and could enjoy political power.

2. On people’s livelihood:

- The Roman Government had no intention to unify different languages used, religious beliefs, cultures and ways of living in its nation.
- The Roman Government had constructed many aqueducts, roads, theatres, arenas, temples; and has standardised the coinage, laws and regulations to make life more convenience. The convenient transportation had decentralised the Jews (the Dispora). Those who had settled in other countries were comparatively more open-minded.
- The Jews enjoyed legal self-governance. Sanhedrin was the supreme legal body of the Judea Province. Chaired by the High Priest, the Sanhedrin was responsible for settling religious matters and lawsuits with respect to the Jewish law. It had the full authority to enforce the law, except that the authority to pronounce death sentence still rested on the Proconsul appointed by the Roman Government. Therefore, the Jewish leaders handed Jesus to Pilate, the procurator, when they wanted to put Jesus to death. (Mark 15:1)
- Nevertheless, the Jews had to observe the Roman stipulations on tax. Any individual between 14 and 63 had to pay a heavy tax, even for a slave, regardless of gender. Jesus was once challenged with the question about paying taxes. (Mark 12:13-17)

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Material 3: More about the Four Sects

	Pharisees	Sadducees
Origin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formed during the time of John Hyrcanus I of the Hasmonean Dynasty (135-104 B.C.) An anti-government party at that time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formed during the time of John Hyrcanus I of the Hasmonean Dynasty (135-104 B.C.) A pro-government party at that time
Meaning of name	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The word "Pharisee" means "separated". They were in disagreement with the rulers and separated themselves from the others as a group of devoted people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The name "Sadducee" might come from "Zadok" (1 Kings 2:35)
Member's background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A religious group Operated a membership system with a set of stringent admission requirements Before becoming a member, one must be observed over a period of time ranging from a month to a year and must make an oath to observe all the Mosaic Laws. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zadok was a priest during the time of David and Solomon (2 Samuel 18:17; 1 Kings 1:34). From that time onwards until the Maccabee Revolt, High Priests of the Temple in Jerusalem were elected from the descendants of Zadok's family (2 Chronicles 31:10). Most members were aristocrats. Some of them were High Priests. They were rich and powerful people, even military leaders. They were in frequent conflicts with the Pharisees due to different power status.

Religious belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that the Mosaic Laws could be passed down and practised by the people. • Israel should become the Kingdom of priests and God's holy people. Holiness was not limited to moral requirements in a general sense, but also on ritual purification. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively less strict than the Pharisees, but were opposed to adding too many prohibitions on top of the Law as what the Pharisees did. • Denied the supernatural, the existence of angels and demons, the life after death (the immortality of the soul), and the concept of Heaven.
Religious behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Pharisees requested the common people to live like priests observing rules and rituals at home, especially dietary rituals and the Sabbath. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only observed the laws of the first five books of the Old Testament.
Political stance or influences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Pharisees were politically less influential than the Sadducees but they were supported by a lot of people concerning religious matters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Favoured the Greek Government • The Sadducees supported the Roman Government since Romans ruled over Palestine

	Herodians	Zealots
Origin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opinions about the origin of the Herod's Party varied Most scholars considered the Herodians neither a religious sect nor a political faction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Founded by Judas of Galilee in 6 A.D. They were considered an organised group during the period between the Old Testament and the New Testament because they inherited the revolutionary spirit of the Maccabees.
Meaning of name	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The name referred to a kind of attitude towards the world, meaning supporters of the Herodian Dynasty. Therefore, they also supported Roman rule. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The name "Zealot" was known as a fanatic of the Law.
Member's background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most of them came from families of rank and prestige. The group size was small because most people did not support the Herodian Dynasty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some members were well-behaved while some formed a rabble with some radical Pharisees.
Religious belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Close to those of the Sadducees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Similar to those believed by the Pharisees: Lord was the only one true God
Religious behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Close to those of the Sadducees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They were law fanatics, strictly observing the laws.
Political Stance or Influences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members of the Herod's Party supported the rule of the Herodian Dynasty over the Jews. They supported the Romans politically, hoping to restore Israel to its former glory through political operations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They opposed the Government and advocated the use of violence against those who breached the Law.

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- 滕慕理著，梁汝照、李月娥譯（1985）：《新約背景》（頁 91-106）。香港：種籽。

Material 4: The Four Sects and Jesus

Party Affiliation	Criticism and challenges Jesus faced when preaching
Pharisees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus met a man with a paralysed hand on the Sabbath. Some teachers of the law and some Pharisees were already watching Jesus closely. They wanted to accuse Jesus of violating the rules of the Sabbath if he healed the man's hand. (Mark 3:1-6) • Although some Pharisees plotted to murder Jesus, Jesus was nice to them. Simon, a Pharisee even invited Jesus for dinner at his home. (Luke 7:40)
Sadducees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once argued with Jesus on the question about resurrection (Matthew 22:23-32) • Joined the Pharisees to trap Jesus: "Some Pharisees and Sadducees who came to Jesus wanted to trap him, so they asked him to perform a miracle for them...." (Matthew 16:1-4)
Herodians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once joined the Pharisees to embarrass Jesus • Went with the Pharisees to ask Jesus whether it was against the law to pay taxes to Caesar, the Roman Emperor (Mark 12:13-15) • Also plotted with the Pharisees to kill Jesus: "So the Pharisees left the synagogue and met at once with some members of Herodians, and they made plans to kill Jesus." (Mark 3:6)
Zealots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of Jesus' disciples, whose name was Simon, was once a Zealot. Many people at the time wished that Jesus were the Messiah, a hero expected by the Zealots. This expectation was shared by Jesus' disciples as well • Jesus' was misunderstood as one of the Zealots. For instance, he was against the authority; asking men not to be afraid of death but to follow him absolutely. He entered Jerusalem openly. He also expelled the merchants from the Temple. • Jesus differed from the Zealots in many ways: He did not plan to revolt against the government. He would not incite the others with sensitive political issues. He would not evade arguments about paying taxes. He always advocated loving and forgiving one's enemies.

Reference:

1. 羅慶才、黃錫木主編（2005）：《聖經通識手冊》。香港：基道。