

IV. THE JEWS UNDER THE PTOLEMIES.

- A. Palestine came under the control of the Ptolemies (320—198 BC)
- B. The Jews seemed to fare well during this period. Many were brought, or came voluntarily, to Egypt- A large population of Jews lived in Alexandria.
- C. During the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus (285—246 BC) the Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures was begun. It was called the Septuagint. Hellenism was now so prevalent that the Jews were beginning to speak Greek.
 - 1. The Letter of Aristeas, written about 100 BC, purports to have been written by an official in the court of Ptolemy Philadelphus (note date of his reign!). It says that six elders were chosen by the High Priest in Jerusalem from each of the 12 tribes to do the work of translation.
 - 2.. The Septuagint is designated by LXX (the nearest round number in Roman numerals to 72).
 - 3. The LXX was probably the work of Egyptian Jews.
 - 4. This meant that every person who read Greek could read the Scriptures. It made the prophecies of the Messiah available to thousands who could not have read Hebrew.
 - 5. More than one half of the quotations in the New Testament from the Old Testament are from the LXX. The man of Ethiopia was reading Isaiah in the Greek Bible (Acts 8:32).