



THE KINGDOM IN THE

*CULTURE*

# The 5 Jewish Responses to Hellenism

- What is Hellenism?
  - the national character or culture of Greece, especially ancient Greece.
  - the study or imitation of ancient Greek culture.

# The 5 Jewish Responses to Hellenism

- Sadducees – Ally with the culture
- Herodians – Incorporate the culture
- Essenes – Isolate from the culture
- Zealots – Fight against the culture
- Pharisees – Separate within the culture

# Goal for this Message

1. To understand the New Testament better
2. To evaluate our own response to the culture
3. To better understand the response others in the church have to the culture
4. To grow more like Jesus

# AFTER ALEXANDER



## HELLENIZATION, KINGDOMS, AND CITIES

## Historical Context

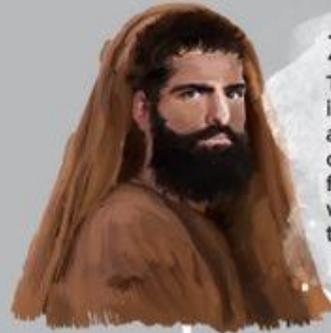
1. Abraham
2. The Exodus
3. David's Kingdom
4. The Babylonian Exile
5. Ezra and Nehemiah
6. Alexander the Great
7. Hellenization
8. Maccabean Revolt
9. Rome

# The 5 Jewish Responses to Hellenism

- What is Hellenism?
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# RELIGIOUS FACTIONS

Though politics and religion were rapidly changing in the turbulent time of Jesus of Nazareth, these were the principal Jewish factions of his day.



## ZEALOTS

The Zealots believed in using violence against troops, officials, and even fellow Jews who were too loyal to Rome.



## HERODIANS

In stark contrast to the Zealots, this group supported King Herod's dynasty and was willing to accept some degree of cooperation with the Roman Empire.



## SANHEDRIN

The Sanhedrin, or High Council, was a council of Jewish leaders who functioned as a governing senate of the Judea province.



## PHARISEES

The Pharisees were a religious faction who disapproved of Roman occupation and interpreted Jewish law for the masses; views that made them popular with the common people.



## SADDUCEES

The Sadducees represented the aristocracy and aligned themselves with the Roman political establishment. Unlike the Pharisees, they deemed that Jewish law should remain closely connected to the Temple.

The High Council would have been composed of Sadducees and Pharisees

# Sadducees – Allying with the Culture

- Rationalists – focused on this life, not on the supernatural
- Political opportunists

Pro: Worked with the culture practically.

Con: Corruption and dead religion.



# Herodians – Identifying with the Culture



- Supporters of Herod and the benefits he brought to society though he wasn't a true son of David.
- Maintained their Jewish faith, while identifying with the Greek culture.

Pro: Engaged with the culture

Con: Compromised in certain areas

# Essenes – Isolating from the Culture

- Essenes isolated themselves from the culture to live in ascetic communities.
- Loved the Scripture and held to it as strictly as possible.

Pro: Maintained a pure, holy, and separate life

Con: Had little impact on the world around them

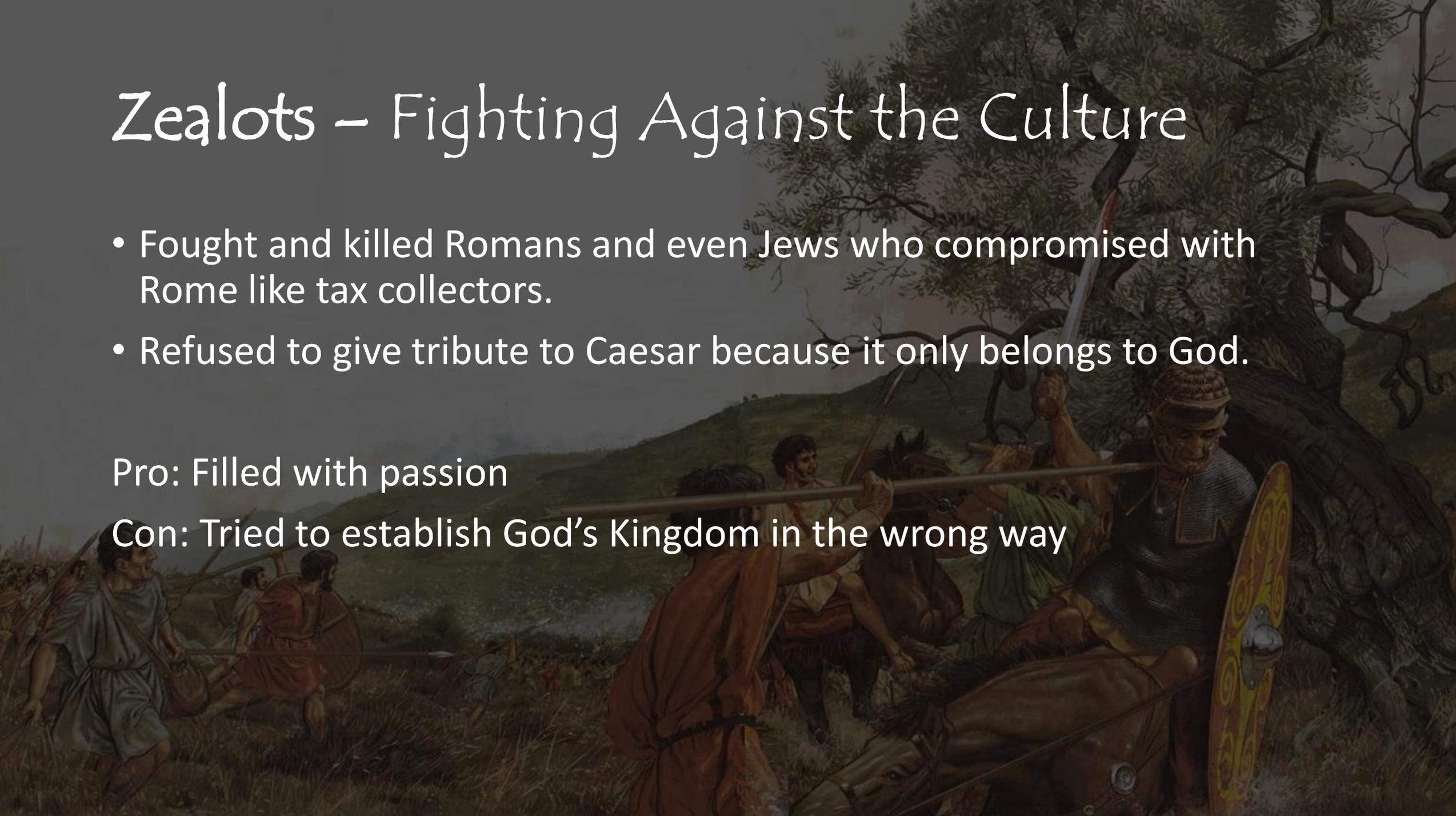


# Zealots – Fighting Against the Culture

- Fought and killed Romans and even Jews who compromised with Rome like tax collectors.
- Refused to give tribute to Caesar because it only belongs to God.

Pro: Filled with passion

Con: Tried to establish God's Kingdom in the wrong way



# Pharisees – Separate within the Culture

- Attached great value to tradition and ritual
- Applied the rules of Scripture inconsistently, according to Jesus
- Looked down upon people who didn't follow the law the way they did

Pro: Maintained separation from the culture without leaving it

Con: Focused on the letter of their traditions rather than the spirit of the Scripture

