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#### IV. THE DIASPORA (cf. Jn. 7:35, the Dispersion among the Greeks).

- A. The Diaspora. This term describes the scattering of the Jews outside of Palestine.
- B. Causes of the Dispersion.
  - 1. The Israelites were taken by force into various lands.
    - a. Israel was taken by Assyria in 722 BC.
    - b. Judah was taken to Babylon in 605, 597, 586 BC.
  - 2. Wars and famine at home made foreign residence more desirable (Machen, 39).
    - a. Some of the Jews who had been scattered preferred to stay where they were when conditions improved (e.g., the Jews in days of Esther).
    - b. In the days of Jeremiah there were communities of Jews in Egypt at Tahpanhes, Migdol, Memphis, and in the land of Pathros (Jer. 42:14; 43:7; 44:1).
    - c. There was a Jewish colony at Elephantine, an island in the upper Nile, in the 5th century BC.
  - 3. "The Seleucid kings of Syria encouraged Jewish colonies in the cities of Asia Minor" (Machen 39).
  - 4. Advantages of commerce may have caused voluntary migration.
- C. "By New Testament times it was estimated that more Jews lived outside of Palestine (perhaps as many as three to five million) than lived in the homeland" (Drumwright 119).
  - 1. Josephus could observe: "There is not a community in the entire world which does not have a portion of our people" (Josephus, Bell. ii. 16.4).
  - 2. Many of the cities Paul visited throughout Asia and Europe had Jewish communities (e.g. Acts 13:14; 14: 1; 16:3, 13; 17: 1, 17; 18:24; 19:8; 28:17). This provided a great benefit to early Christianity!