

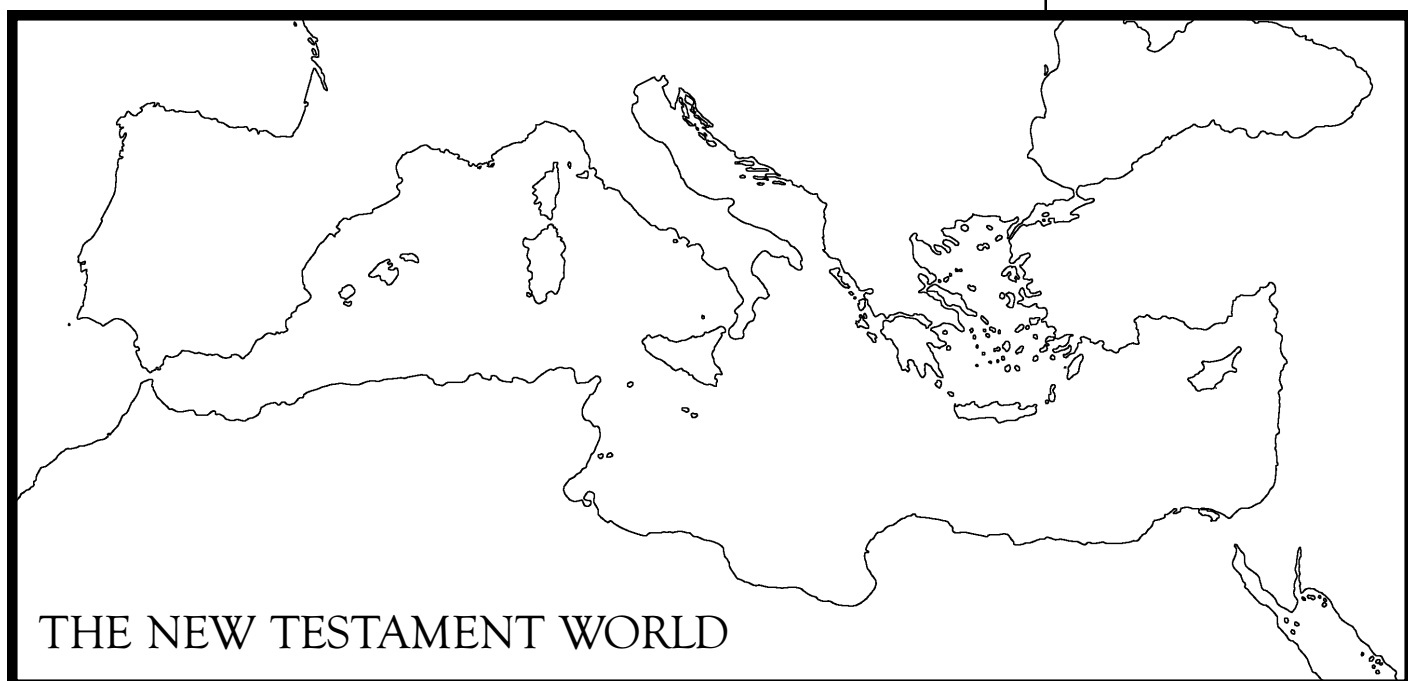
THE HELLENISTIC WORLD

The conquest of Persia by Alexander the Great drew the world into a Greek orbit, but if Alexander had lived much past the age of 32 it might have swung back to the Orient. As it was, his death precipitated the division of his empire into the sub empires of the Diadochi, (the Successors).

It is rumored that when Alexander was on his deathbed he was asked who should inherit his kingdom. He said, "It goes to the strongest." That idea was at least lived out by the various aides that had followed Alexander throughout his campaigns. Ptolemy took Egypt, and Seleucus took Syria and Mesopotamia. For the next three hundred years these kingdoms with their Greek culture ruled and fought over the area that became our New Testament world. When the Romans under Pompey the Great showed up in Jerusalem in 60 B.C. the culture in Palestine was Hellenistic. The New Testament was written in Greek, and many of the quotations of the Old Testament were from the Greek version called the Septuagint. The temple that Christ and His apostles visited was a Greek structure built by Herod to the styles of his time.

How did all of this take place? What events took us from the ancient world of Persia and Egypt to the more modern antiquity of Greece and Rome?

This text does not purport to be a history of those kingdoms. Another volume for each would be needed to do them even brief justice. This cursory glance at the times of Alexander and what followed his conquest is to draw us into the world of Christ and His apostles as it appeared in the Mediterranean region for the short 70-80 years that are covered by the New Testament. The background histories are given to funnel us into the narrow place that was encountered by the Christ and was foundational to Christianity. This text will be different from Volume One in that the subjects get progressively closer to the ground. These subjects become more detailed with the information of a condensed time frame in which we encounter the backdrop for Christ and His Apostles.



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JOSEPHUS
ANTIQUITIES BOOK XI,
CHAPTER 8, V. 4-5

Now Alexander, when he had taken Gaza, made haste to go up to Jerusalem; and Jaddua the high priest, when he heard that, was in an agony, and under terror, as not knowing how he should meet the Macedonians, since the king was displeased at his foregoing disobedience. He therefore ordained that the people should make supplications, and should join with him in offering sacrifice to God, whom he besought to protect that nation, and to deliver them from the perils that were coming upon them; whereupon God warned him in a dream, which came upon him after he had offered sacrifice, that he should take courage, and adorn the city, and open the gates; that the rest should appear in white garments, but that he and the priests should meet the king in the habits proper to their order, without the dread of any ill consequences, which the providence of God would prevent. Upon which, when he rose from his sleep, he greatly rejoiced, and declared to all the warning he had received from God. According to which dream he acted entirely, and so waited for the coming of the king.

5. And when he understood that he was not far from the city, he went out in procession, with the priests and the multitude of the citizens. The procession was venerable, and the manner of it different from that of other nations. It reached to a place called Sapha, which name, translated into Greek, signifies a *prospect*, for you have thence a prospect both of Jerusalem and of the temple. And when the Phoenicians and the Chaldeans that followed him thought they should have liberty to plunder the city, and torment the high priest to death, which the king's displeasure fairly promised them, the very reverse of it happened; for Alexander, when he saw the multitude at a distance, in white garments, while the priests stood clothed with fine linen, and the high priest in purple and scarlet cloth-

ALEXANDER THE GREAT & THE DIADOCHI

In 356 B.C., in Pella of Macedonia, Philip II and Olympias had a son. That night the great temple of Artemis in Ephesus burned down. The goddess was busy, some said, protecting the birth of Alexander the Great.

This handsome young man was made for his achievements. His father was a competent king and warrior, and his mother doted on her son. In his teenage years his tutor was Aristotle. By the age of sixteen he was commanding troops in the field, and by eighteen he held the left wing at the famous battle of Chaeronea in which his troops broke the undefeated Sacred Band of Thebes.

The assassination of his father in 336 B.C. brought him both the acclaim of the army and the inheritance of the throne of Macedon and Greece. His father had been planning an invasion of Persia, so Alexander took up the task. An oracle called him invincible, and Alexander believed it. The Greeks resented this rule by the young Macedonian and tried to escape his power, but Alexander ruthlessly punished them and stabilized his home front before setting off to conquer the world.

In 334 B.C. Alexander crossed the Dardanelles with 30,000 men and 5,000 cavalry. After visiting the site of Troy he encountered the Persians at the Granicus River (see appendix for Arrian's account of the battle). His personally courageous actions and his example brought defeat to the Persians and the liberation of Western Asia Minor. The route of his march led him south through Miletus and Halicarnassus, then up through central Asia to Gordium. After "untying" the Gordian Knot, Alexander headed south again to the Cilician Gates, the first pass out of Asia Minor, and into the Middle East.

Darius III had prepared to stop him there at Issus, but not well enough. According to Arrian, the Persians had 600,000 men to Alexander's 35,000. In the end there were 100,000 dead Persians with the rest in flight, and the family of Darius captured by Alexander.



MOSAIC OF ALEXANDER (FAR LEFT) FIGHTING DARIUS III (CENTER) AT ISSUS

Instead of chasing Darius, Alexander headed down the coast of the Mediterranean in order to take the Phoenician cities of Sidon, Byblos and Tyre. The last took seven months, mostly to build the land bridge out to their island citadel. According to Josephus, the Jews in Jerusalem saw the coming of Alexander as both a threat and a fulfillment of the prophecies of Daniel. The priest and people met him as he approached, and they opened the city to him. It is said that he went to the Temple of God and offered sacrifices and worshipped.

Alexander had been wounded in the siege of Gaza south west of Jerusalem and his recovery cost him some time. That delay gave him time in Egypt during the November of 332 B.C. He treated their culture and religion graciously, founded a government, and established, in the delta of the Nile, the most famous of the many cities called Alexandria. While in Egypt he visited the oracle of Amon-Ra at the Siwah Oasis out in the Sahara. There, the priests of the oracle greeted him as a god, and since then history has wondered if he believed it.

In 331 he headed back to Tyre and then into Mesopotamia. Darius had been in communication with Alexander, desiring to ransom his family. The Persian king had offered 10,000 talents and all the territory west of the Euphrates. Alexander's close friend and general Parmenio said, "I would accept if I were Alexander," to which Alexander replied, "So would I, were I Parmenio." Darius had to regroup to battle Alexander. He selected a place that was more suited to the huge size of the Persian army. That place was the Plain of Gaugamela, near the town of Arbela. Once again the superior tactics of the Macedonian Phalanx brought decisive victory to the Greeks, and Darius fled into Media, where he was killed by the locals.

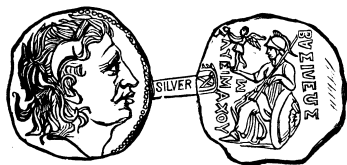
Alexander had conquered Persia, but after he settled concerns in Babylon, Susa, Persepolis, and Ecbatana, he headed north into Bactria and Sogdiana. While there, he married Roxana, the daughter of Oxyartes, king of Sogdiana. By 327, with a larger army of 120,000 (according to Plutarch) Alexander crossed the Hindu Kush into Afghanistan. On reaching India his troops mutinied. They wanted to be done and Alexander granted their request, sailed down the Indus to the sea, and headed west to Babylon. Once there, his attempts to rule his vast empire turn to established Oriental/Persian ways. In fact, if Alexander had not died young, our world today would probably not be looking at the Graeco Roman culture for our classics. His death, which saves European history from Orientalism happens when Alexander is only 33 years old. Alexander gets a fever after drinking too heavily. After 10 days on June 13, 323, eleven years after he crossed into Asia, Alexander the Great died.

AFTER THE DEATH OF ALEXANDER

Alexander's father, Philip II, had another son. He, Philip Arrhidaeus, was illegitimate and retarded, but he was made co-king with Alexander IV, Alexander the Great's son by Roxana. However, there was too much power at stake for such incompetence to rule without objection, so they were both murdered. Friends, generals and officers of Alexander's army then began a bitter struggle to remake the empire they had created so quickly.

Between 323 and 319 B.C. the dynasty of Phillip and Alexander was supported by an able general named Antipater, but after his death in 319 all bets were off. His own son, Cassander, (who had never liked Alexander) murdered the royal family (Olympias, Alexander IV, and Roxana) and looked around for

ing, with his mitre on his head, having the golden plate whereon the name of God was engraved, he approached by himself, and adored that name, and first saluted the high priest. The Jews also did all together, with one voice, salute Alexander, and encompass him about; whereupon the kings of Syria and the rest were surprised at what Alexander had done, and supposed him disordered in his mind. However, Parmenio alone went up to him, and asked him how it came to pass that, when all others adored him, he should adore the high priest of the Jews? To whom he replied, "I did not adore him, but that God who hath honored him with his high priesthood; for I saw this very person in a dream, in this very habit, when I was at Dios in Macedonia, who, when I was considering with myself how I might obtain the dominion of Asia, exhorted me to make no delay, but boldly to pass over the sea thither, for that he would conduct my army, and would give me the dominion over the Persians; whence it is that, having seen no other in that habit, and now seeing this person in it, and remembering that vision, and the exhortation which I had in my dream, I believe that I bring this army under the Divine conduct, and shall therewith conquer Darius, and destroy the power of the Persians, and that all things will succeed according to what is in my own mind." And when he had said this to Parmenio, and had given the high priest his right hand, the priests ran along by him, and he came into the city. And when he went up into the temple, he offered sacrifice to God, according to the high priest's direction, and magnificently treated both the high priest and the priests. And when the Book of Daniel was showed him (23) wherein Daniel declared that one of the Greeks should destroy the empire of the Persians, he supposed that himself was the person intended. And as he was then glad, he dismissed the multitude for the present; but the next day he called them to him, and bid them ask what favors they pleased of him; whereupon the high priest desired that they might enjoy the laws of their forefathers, and might pay no tribute on the seventh year. He granted all they desired. And when they entreated him that he would permit the Jews in Babylon and Media to enjoy their own laws also, he willingly promised to do hereafter what they desired. And when he said to the multitude, that if any of them would enlist themselves in his army, on this condition, that they should continue under the laws of their forefathers, and live according to them, he was willing to take them with him, many were ready to accompany him in his wars.



Lysimachus

SELEUCID KING LIST

Seleucus I Nicator	358-281
Antiochus I Soter	324-261
Antiochus II Theos	287-246
Seleucus II Callinicus	265-225
Seleucus III Soter	245-223
Antiochus III the Great	242-187
Seleucus IV Philopator	218-175
Antiochus IV Epiphanes	215-163
Antiochus V Eupator	163-162
Demetrius I Soter	162-150
Alexander Epiphanes Balas	150-145
Antiochus VI Epiphanes Dionysius	145-142
Demetrius II Nicator	145-139
Antiochus VII Sidetes	139-129
RETURN OF DEMETRIUS II	129-125
Antiochus VIII Grypus	125-113 & 111-96
Antiochus IX Philopator	116-95

barriers to his own advancement. The most likely candidate for filling Alexander's shoes in this vacuum was Antigonus of Phrygia, and so Cassander of Macedon, Ptolemy of Egypt and Lysimachus of Thrace (each separatist generals) attempted in alliance to defeat him. They failed, but another separatist general named Seleucus managed to peel Mesopotamia off of the empire. Antigonus, realizing that this was his opportunity in history, attempted to chastize these all with an attack on Seleucus in 310, on Ptolemy in 306, and on Cassander in 304. In 306 B.C. Antigonus had, perhaps anticipating success, taken the royal title for himself. That, when combined with his military exploits, convinced the other generals to unite in order to stop him. When they met at Ipsus in Phrygia in 301 B.C., the combination of Seleucus, Ptolemy, Cassander and Lysimachus proved to be too much for Antigonus. He was killed, and the last real hope for unifying the Greek empire was lost.

At his death in 297 B.C., Cassander's control of Macedonia was passed on to his sister, Phila, in her advantageous marriage to Antigonus's son, Demetrius. This dynasty managed to carry on until the Romans defeated their great-grandson, Philip V, in 197 B.C.

Lysimachus of Thrace gained north and central Asia Minor after Ipsus. A war with Demetrius of Macedon in 285 won him both Macedon and Thessaly. It also gave him "heir of Alexander" ideas, which led to his going to war with Seleucus I, his old ally. At the Battle of Corupedium in 281 B.C. Seleucus defeated and killed Lysimachus, ending his involvement in the history of the Diadochi.

The two remaining Successors were Seleucus and Ptolemy, and they continued to be each other's primary competition for dominance. The region of Palestine, situated between the two powers, moved back and forth between them over the next century.

THE SELEUCID KINGDOM

Seleucus I Nicator was not a prominent general under Alexander, but he was a personal associate. At Alexander's death Seleucus was left as a satrap of Babylon (321). As Antigonus tried to hold the empire together, Seleucus allied with him to subdue another satrap, Eumenes of Cappadocia, who had been Alexander's secretary. Seleucus lost his control over Babylon and had to flee, but in 312 or 311 he returned and regained control, beginning the Seleucid Era.

After Ipsus gave Seleucus access to the Mediterranean in Syria, he started to push his concerns westward up into Cilicia. He founded two major cities in Syria: Antioch (later famous for St. Paul, Barnabas, and origin of the name "Christian") and Seleucia (the port city for Antioch).

Seleucus' defeat of Lysimachus at Corupedium gave him Asia Minor, and still looking west he began to consider the possibility of taking Macedonia. In 281 B.C. he crossed into Europe but was murdered before anything could be accomplished.

Seleucus had appointed his son, Antiochus I Soter, as co-regent in 292, so the succession was assured. Antiochus came to the throne less concerned with the western parts of his empire having ruled the eastern territories for his father. In fact, he signed a treaty with Antigonus II Gonatas (grandson of Antigonus) which maintained a peace between Macedonia and Seleucia for a long time. His growing problem was Ptolemaic Egypt, and between 274 and 261 he lost the coastlands of Asia Minor to the Ptolemies (I Syrian War). Sometime around

273 Antiochus defeated a large invasion of Gauls into Asia Minor. This was called "The Elephant Victory", and gave him the name of "Soter" (savior). These are the people that, three centuries later, St. Paul addressed in his letter to the Galatians.

Antiochus, before his death in 261, had appointed his eldest son, Seleucus, as co-regent. That failed, perhaps due to his son's treason. Whatever the cause, the second son, Antiochus II Theos, ruled in his stead. Under him, in the II Syrian War, the Seleucids regained much that had been lost to the Ptolemies of Egypt. To make peace, Antiochus repudiated his wife, Laodice, with her children, and married Ptolemy II's daughter, Berenice. The marriage doesn't last and with Laodice's return to prominence, she took her opportunity and poisoned Antiochus and murdered Berenice with her children. Her son Seleucus II Callinacrus ruled as the next king of Seleucia.

THE PTOLEMAIC KINGDOM

Meanwhile in Egypt, Ptolemy I Soter had established a kingdom. He had served with distinction under Alexander as one of his "companions", one of the "lifeguards", and as "Major domo of the household".

After the death of Alexander he became satrap of Egypt. Ptolemy did this by executing an unappointed "pretender to the position" named Cleomenes. Though Ptolemy was unsuccessful in his various wars with Antigonos between 315 and 301, in 304 he nonetheless declared himself king.

Ptolemy's achievements were notable. He conquered Palestine, Cyprus and parts of Asia Minor and the Aegean. His title "Soter" came from his delivering the island of Rhodes from the control of Antigonos. He organized Egypt's government and wrote a life of Alexander which is now lost (we believe that Arrian had considerable access to it in his work). Ptolemy also brought two new religions to Egypt. One was the cult of Alexander (he had taken the body from Babylon to Egypt) and the other the cult of Serapis.

Ptolemy I also used the practice of co-regency to stabilize the succession. His son, Ptolemy II Philadelphus, rose to the throne in 283/2 B.C. Under him, in the I Syrian War, the Ptolemies gained the territories in Asia Minor from the Seleucids, but shortly afterward, his intrigues against Antigonos Gonatas (Chremonidean War) weakened Ptolemy's grip in the Aegean. When Ptolemy II lost the II Syrian War he married his daughter, Berenice, to Antiochus to a calamitous effect. Though his efforts militarily were mixed in their result, his cultural contributions were immense. He founded the "Museum" as a workplace for scholars and artists. With that he also built the the world famous Library of Alexandria, and one of the Seven Wonders of the World, the Pharos Lighthouse. As if that wasn't enough, he constructed a canal linking the Nile with the Red Sea. Biblically, we have one great work for which to thank Ptolemy II. It was suggested that the Jewish Law be translated into Greek, and so the story goes, Ptolemy commissioned 72 Jewish scholars to do the translating. From this beginning we received the Septuagint (referred to as the "LXX" for 70). This pre-Christian text of the Old Testament is a very valuable resource in the study of much later Hebrew versions of the text.

Toward the end of his reign, Ptolemy II, surreptitiously created trouble in Greece in order to occupy the Antigonids, and while they were thus diverted, he reclaimed his Aegean losses.

PTOLEMAIC KING LIST

Ptolemy I Soter	304-285
Ptolemy II Philadelphias	285-246
Ptolemy III Euergetes I	246-222
Ptolemy IV Philopator	222-204
Ptolemy V Epiphanes	204-180
Ptolemy VI Philometor	180-145
Ptolemy Neos Philopater	145
Ptolemy VII Euergetes II	145-116
Ptolemy VIII Soter II	116-80
Ptolemy IX Alexander I	107-88
Ptolemy X Alexander II	80
Ptolemy XI Neos Dionysos	80-51
Cleopatra VII Thea Philopater	51-30
Ptolemy XII	51-47
Ptolemy XIII	47-44
Ptolemy XIV Caesarion	36-30

THE SELEUCID KINGDOM

Seleucus II Callinacus is said to have spent his life on campaign. In the east, Bactria broke away and Parthia emerged, a new nation which caused much trouble for the Romans later on. In the west, Asia Minor managed a short-lived independence. Controlling the size of his empire was complicated by family trouble. His step-brother attempted to take power, which in turn encouraged Ptolemy III to attack in what is known as the III Syrian War. Also a younger brother, Antiochus Hierax, tried to grab Asia Minor in 230 allied with Pontus, Bithynia, and Galatia. This was beaten back by Attalus I of Pergamum, but consequently Asia Minor, excepting Cilicia, was then in the hands of Pergamum. Seleucus II's successor, Seleucus III Soter had a short-lived attempt at unseating Attalus but was murdered for reasons unknown. His brother, Antiochus III the Great, found, in these difficult times, his opportunity. It didn't begin well. In the IV Syrian War, as he attempted to take Ptolemaic Syria and Palestine back from Egypt he was decisively beaten by Ptolemy IV at the Battle of Raphia (217 B.C.). Afterwards things began to look up. His campaigns in the east brought Armenia into his kingdom and subjugated both Bactria and Parthia. It was his very aggressive establishment of his interests in India and Arabia that earned him the title "the Great".

When Antiochus returned to concern himself with his western interests he stepped into a difficulty that few of his period were expecting. Rome was expanding into the east and had bumped violently into Philip V of Macedon. It did not help the Romans to see Antiochus, who had siezed Syria and Palestine, now attempting, by a secret treaty with Philip, to dislodge various overseas holdings from Egyptian control. With those hidden intentions Antiochus invaded Thrace in 196, crossing into Europe. The Romans opened negotiations and for 3 years the efforts between the Roman Senate and Antiochus got nowhere. During this diplomacy Antiochus had gained the support and then presence of Rome's worst enemy. Hannibal of Carthage had, after his defeat in 201 at Zama, served as an official in Carthage, but when his intrigues with Antiochus were discovered, he fled to the Seleucids for safety and became an advisor.

Antiochus was getting impatient and he finally acted by invading Greece. Rome met him in two land battles (Thermopylae and Magnesia *ad Sipylum*) and one naval battle. Antiochus lost all three battles, even though at Magnesia he outnumbered the Romans by more than 2 to 1. After these battles in 188 B.C. the Peace of Apamea had cost Antiochus dearly, and had ended any sea aspirations the Seleucids may have had. They had to give up all their war elephants, fleet, and had to deliver Antiochus' third son to Rome as a hostage. They also had to pay a war indemnity of 15,000 talents over the next 12 years. In 187, as Antiochus III was raiding a temple of Baal to raise money, the priests locked him in the temple, removed the roof tiles and used them to stone him to death. Hannibal fled after Magnesia to Crete where, suspecting that Roman assassins were after him, he committed suicide.

Seleucus IV Philopator, Antiochus' second son ruled in his place. He was a benign force and even traded his own son, Demetrius, to obtain the return of Antiochus IV (the third son of Antiochus III) from Rome. Seleucus kept the treaty and stayed at peace with Macedon and Egypt until he was murdered for unknown reasons by one of his ministers, Heliodorus.

THE PTOLEMAIC KINGDOM

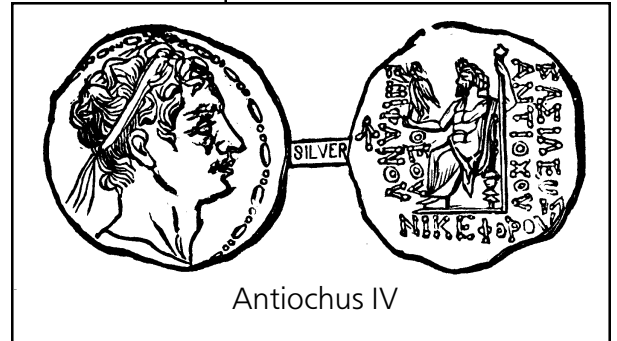
Back in Egypt in the mid 200s Ptolemy III Euergetes ruled in his father's place. His reign, down to 221 B.C., brought important parts of Syria and Asia Minor into the Ptolemaic kingdom (III Syrian War). The dynasty had started to corrupt, and problems in Egypt forced more homeland concerns to the front. His successor, Ptolemy IV Philopator, although he managed a decisive defeat of Antiochus III at Raphia, only managed it with native Egyptian troops added to his Greek armies. Consequently, this gave greater status to the Egyptian, and they proceeded to cause more and more disruption. With the accession of a minor child to the throne, Ptolemy V Epiphanes, and the death of his father being kept secret, Egypt was cast into a few decades of revolts and the partitioning of outlying territories by the Macedonian and Seleucid kings. Ptolemy VI Philometer rose to power at the age of 4 to 6 (180 B.C) being the son of Ptolemy V and Cleopatra I, daughter of the Seleucid king. Because of the new king's minority and looking to the ancestry of his mother, the Seleucids claimed inheritance rights of what was left of Egypt. The rest of the extended family of Ptolemies became pawns for both internal dynastic fights and external pressures from the advent of Rome and the claims of the Seleucids.

THE SELEUCID KINGDOM

The king of the Seleucids that had been a hostage in Rome was now (175 B.C.) on the throne. His name was Antiochus IV Epiphanes. His father had been defeated by Rome, and his own time in the Roman capital had given him a certain appreciation for this "New" power. His own efforts reflect this respect. His brother's assassin had tried to take power so his initial efforts were in stabilizing his right to the throne. The chaos in Seleucia allowed Ptolemy IV to make an attempt to reclaim Southern Syria, Palestine and Phoenicia, areas conquered by Antiochus III. Both the Ptolemies and Antiochus IV appealed to Rome for mediation, but the Senate took no action. By 173 B.C. Antiochus had paid off the indemnity of the Peace of Apamea and considered himself well within his rights to invade Egypt when he heard they were contemplating an invasion of Palestine. Conveniently, the Ptolemy in power was his nephew (son of Antiochus' sister, Cleopatra I) and he could keep Rome from interfering by ruling Egypt as a guardian. Egypt, except Alexandria, was in his power, though the whole thing was wobbly.

Agents of Antiochus in Palestine had murdered the high priest of the Jews, Onias III. The Greeks had placed their own high priest, Menelaus, in the position, but in the absence of Antiochus in Egypt, a certain Jason deposed Menelaus, believing that Antiochus is dead. Antiochus is in no mood for trouble in Palestine but Egypt was still a problem. Parts of the royal family in Egypt were prevailed upon to establish an opposition government in Alexandria. The Macedonians under Perseus (son of Philip V) had applied to Antiochus for help against the Roman threat, and the Ptolemies had appealed to Rome for help against Antiochus. Antiochus managed a naval victory at Cyprus and gained the surrender of the Egyptian commander. In 168 he re-invaded Egypt and demanded the cession of both Cyprus and Pelusium. His forces occupied all of Lower Egypt and surrounded Alexandria. It seemed to be the end of Egypt.

The winds of fortune can change in a moment. The Romans had met



Perseus in battle at Pydna on June 22, 168 B.C.. The defeat of Macedon tilted the gameboard back against Antiochus. The Romans sent an ambassador, named Gaius Popillius Laenas, to Egypt and he had a startling degree of Roman confidence. At Eleusis, a suburb of Alexandria, he spoke personally to Antiochus and demanded that he leave Egypt and Cyprus immediately. Antiochus asked for time to think about it. The Roman drew a circle in the dirt around the Seleucid king and told him to answer before he left the circle. Antiochus backed down and turned his concerns to Palestine.

He was, as we said, in no mood for Jewish nonsense. He banned the worship of Yahweh, and on December 25, 167 B.C he committed the Abomination of Desolation. He offered a pig to his god, Jupiter Capitolinus, in the Holy of Holies of the temple in Jerusalem. This and other tribulations for the Jews lead to war. It was called the Maccabean Revolt, and within 3 years Antiochus had lost Palestine as well to the Jews. He died at Ishfahan while on an expedition into Arabia in 164 B.C.

The rest of the Seleucid dynasty was, like the Ptolemies, fraught with internal factional intrigue, and the growth of substantial enemies on the outside. The Seleucids came to an end at the beginning of the first century B.C., pinched between the expansion of Rome and Parthia.

1 MACCABEES (APOCRYPHA - KJV), CHAPTER 1

1: And it happened, after that Alexander son of Philip, the Macedonian, who came out of the land of Chettiim, had smitten Darius king of the Persians and Medes, that he reigned in his stead, the first over Greece, 2: And made many wars, and won many strong holds, and slew the kings of the earth, 3: And went through to the ends of the earth, and took spoils of many nations, insomuch that the earth was quiet before him; whereupon he was exalted and his heart was lifted up. 4: And he gathered a mighty strong host and ruled over countries, and nations, and kings, who became tributaries unto him. 5: And after these things he fell sick, and perceived that he should die. 6: Wherefore he called his servants, such as were honourable, and had been brought up with him from his youth, and parted his kingdom among them, while he was yet alive. 7: So Alexander reigned twelves years, and then died. 8: And his servants bare rule every one in his place. 9: And after his death they all put crowns upon themselves; so did their sons after them many years: and evils were multiplied in the earth. 10: And there came out of them a wicked root Antiochus surnamed Epiphanes, son of Antiochus the king, who had been an hostage at Rome, and he reigned in the hundred and thirty and seventh year of the kingdom of the Greeks. 11: In those days went there out of Israel wicked men, who persuaded many, saying, Let us go and make a covenant with the heathen that are round about us: for since we departed from them we have had much sorrow. 12: So this device pleased them well. 13: Then certain of the people were so forward herein, that they went to the king, who gave them licence to do after the ordinances of the heathen: 14: Whereupon they built a place of exercise at Jerusalem according to the customs of the heathen: 15: And made themselves uncircumcised, and forsook the holy covenant, and joined themselves to the heathen, and were sold to do mischief. 16: Now when the kingdom was established before Antiochus, he thought to reign over Egypt that he might have the dominion of two realms. 17: Wherefore he entered into Egypt with a great multitude, with chariots, and elephants, and horsemen, and a great navy, 18: And made war against Ptolemee king of Egypt: but Ptolemee was afraid of him, and fled; and many were wounded to death. 19: Thus they got the strong cities in the land of Egypt and he took the spoils thereof. 20: And after that Antiochus had smitten Egypt, he returned again in the hundred forty and third year, and went up against Israel and Jerusalem with a great multitude, 21: And entered proudly into the sanctuary, and took away the golden altar, and the candlestick of light, and all the vessels thereof, 22: And the table of the shewbread, and the pouring vessels, and the vials. and the censers of gold, and the veil, and the

crown, and the golden ornaments that were before the temple, all which he pulled off. 23: He took also the silver and the gold, and the precious vessels: also he took the hidden treasures which he found. 24: And when he had taken all away, he went into his own land, having made a great massacre, and spoken very proudly. 25: Therefore there was a great mourning in Israel, in every place where they were; 26: So that the princes and elders mourned, the virgins and young men were made feeble, and the beauty of women was changed. 27: Every bridegroom took up lamentation, and she that sat in the marriage chamber was in heaviness, 28: The land also was moved for the inhabitants thereof, and all the house of Jacob was covered with confusion. 29: And after two years fully expired the king sent his chief collector of tribute unto the cities of Juda, who came unto Jerusalem with a great multitude, 30: And spake peaceable words unto them, but all was deceit: for when they had given him credence, he fell suddenly upon the city, and smote it very sore, and destroyed much people of Israel. 31: And when he had taken the spoils of the city, he set it on fire, and pulled down the houses and walls thereof on every side. 32: But the women and children took they captive, and possessed the cattle. 33: Then builded they the city of David with a great and strong wall, and with mighty towers, and made it a strong hold for them. 34: And they put therein a sinful nation, wicked men, and fortified themselves therein. 35: They stored it also with armour and victuals, and when they had gathered together the spoils of Jerusalem, they laid them up there, and so they became a sore snare: 36: For it was a place to lie in wait against the sanctuary, and an evil adversary to Israel. 37: Thus they shed innocent blood on every side of the sanctuary, and defiled it: 38: Insomuch that the inhabitants of Jerusalem fled because of them: whereupon the city was made an habitation of strangers, and became strange to those that were born in her; and her own children left her. 39: Her sanctuary was laid waste like a wilderness, her feasts were turned into mourning, her sabbaths into reproach her honour into contempt. 40: As had been her glory, so was her dishonour increased, and her excellency was turned into mourning. 41: Moreover king Antiochus wrote to his whole kingdom, that all should be one people, 42: And every one should leave his laws: so all the heathen agreed according to the commandment of the king. 43: Yea, many also of the Israelites consented to his religion, and sacrificed unto idols, and profaned the sabbath. 44: For the king had sent letters by messengers unto Jerusalem and the cities of Juda that they should follow the strange laws of the land, 45: And forbid burnt offerings, and sacrifice, and drink offerings, in the temple; and that they should profane the sabbaths and festival days: 46: And pollute the sanctuary and holy people: 47: Set up altars, and groves, and chapels of idols, and sacrifice swine's flesh, and unclean beasts: 48: That they should also leave their children uncircumcised, and make their souls abominable with all manner of uncleanness and profanation: 49: To the end they might forget the law, and change all the ordinances. 50: And whosoever would not do according to the commandment of the king, he said, he should die. 51: In the selfsame manner wrote he to his whole kingdom, and appointed overseers over all the people, commanding the cities of Juda to sacrifice, city by city. 52: Then many of the people were gathered unto them, to wit every one that forsook the law; and so they committed evils in the land; 53: And drove the Israelites into secret places, even wheresoever they could flee for succour. 54: Now the fifteenth day of the month Casleu, in the hundred forty and fifth year, they set up the abomination of desolation upon the altar, and builded idol altars throughout the cities of Juda on every side; 55: And burnt incense at the doors of their houses, and in the streets. 56: And when they had rent in pieces the books of the law which they found, they burnt them with fire. 57: And whosoever was found with any the book of the testament, or if any committed to the law, the king's commandment was, that they should put him to death. 58: Thus did they by their authority unto the Israelites every month, to as many as were found in the cities. 59: Now the five and twentieth day of the month they did sacrifice upon the idol altar, which was upon the altar of God. 60: At which time according to the commandment they put to death certain women, that had caused their children to be circumcised. 61: And they hanged the infants about their necks, and rifled their houses, and slew them that had circumcised them. 62: Howbeit many in Israel were fully resolved and confirmed in themselves not to eat any unclean thing. 63: Wherefore the rather to die, that they might not be defiled with meats, and that they might not profane the holy covenant: so then they died. 64: And there was very great wrath upon Israel.

DANIEL'S PROPHEESIES

It is self evident to say that the Intertestamental Period is not addressed in the context of the Old or New Testaments. The Old Testament ends somewhere in the mid 300's B.C. and the New Testament begins with the Birth of Christ around 4 B.C. Much of what happened in the 350 year gap is important to Our New Testament understanding, and it is often ignored in the classes that address ancient history. Still, there is one approach of Biblical context that is unique. In the Book of Daniel, the prophet has to deal with five prophesies, and at least two of those are undeniably pointing to the events of the Intertestamental Period. It may be that all five do, but there is a variety of Christian interpretation on those, so we will give our attention to the two clear prophesies.

When Daniel was taken into captivity in Babylon it was 605 BC. Very early in his training, King Nebuchadnezzar II had a dream which bothered him. None but Daniel was able to interpret it, and he did so, describing it as a general outline of empires. We shall call that dream, The Statue.

In it a statue is perceived that is made of sequentially less valuable metals starting at the head. Gold is the head, with chest of silver, thighs of bronze, legs of iron and feet of iron and clay mixed. That statue is hit by a stone that falls from heaven which destroys the statue and then grows to fill the earth. Daniel names the head of gold as Nebuchadnezzar, but the rest of the identifications are largely dependant on the eschatology of the reader. This at least makes the prophesy unclear, if not the most unclear of them all.

In chapter 7 of Daniel, when Belshazzar is king, Daniel has a dream of The Four Beasts. In this, four beasts, with different monstrous characteristics, come out of the sea. The most terrible was the fourth beast. It had ten horns which were followed by a Little Horn which wars against the people of God. This is also unclear.

Chapter 8 has our first clear prophesy. We say "clear" in that the angel of God tells Daniel sufficient information such that we can be certain about our identifications. This is the Prophesy of The Ram and the He-Goat.

In it a two horned ram is defeated by a unicorned He-Goat. At the height of its power, the one horn of the He-Goat is broken off and is replaced by four horns. Out of one of those, a Little Horn arises and gives problems to the people of God. The angel Gabriel interprets these visionary events as the kingdoms of Medo-Persia (the Ram) and Greece (the He-Goat) with the one horn being its first great king (Alexander). His end brings the four Diadochi, to power and out of one, the Seleucids, arises Antiochus IV Epiphanes (the Little Horn). Antiochus puts the Jews to much tribulation in 171 BC until the Jews rise up in the Maccabean Revolt. This is a clear prophesy.

In Chapter 9 the prayers of Daniel regarding the return to Israel are answered by the prophesy of the Seventy Weeks.

In this, Gabriel visits once again and tells Daniel that the punishment to Israel will not be entirely served until the Seventy Sevens are complete. Most agree that this refers to "weeks" of years (7 years) and 70 of those (490 years). Those weeks are divided in the vision into 7 weeks (49 years), 62 weeks (434 years) and 1 week (7 years). The completion of this period brings about the anointing of a most holy place. What is unclear about this prophesy is that all

contentions for its interpretation have some difficulty with the math and making it fit their desired end.

The last prophesy in Daniel is the one regarding the Kings of the North and South. It is, without question, a clear prophesy, as the interpretation is directly tied to the kings of Daniel's day. It tells the tale of the development of the antipathy of the North (Seleucids) and the South (Ptolemies). It is carried through many generations, following the history of those people very accurately, until the coming of a nasty king (Antiochus IV) of the North who gives grief to the People of God.

We will examine the two clear prophesies for context of the period.

DANIEL 8: THE RAM AND THE HE-GOAT THE VISION

[1] In the third year of the reign of King Belshaz'zar a vision appeared to me, Daniel, after that which appeared to me at the first. [2] And I saw in the vision; and when I saw, I was in Susa the capital, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in the vision, and I was at the river U'lai. [3] I raised my eyes and saw, and behold, **a ram standing on the bank of the river. It had two horns; and both horns were high, but one was higher than the other, and the higher one came up last.** [4] I saw the ram charging westward and northward and southward; no beast could stand before him, and there was no one who could rescue from his power; he did as he pleased and magnified himself. [5] **As I was considering, behold, a he-goat came from the west across the face of the whole earth, without touching the ground; and the goat had a conspicuous horn between his eyes.** [6] He came to the ram with the two horns, which I had seen standing on the bank of the river, and he ran at him in his mighty wrath. [7] **I saw him come close to the ram, and he was enraged against him and struck the ram and broke his two horns; and the ram had no power to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground and trampled upon him;** and there was no one who could rescue the ram from his power. [8] **Then the he-goat magnified himself exceedingly; but when he was strong, the great horn was broken, and instead of it there came up four conspicuous horns toward the four winds of heaven.** [9] **Out of one of them came forth a little horn, which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the glorious land.** [10] It grew great, even to the host of heaven; and some of the host of the stars it cast down to the ground, and trampled upon them. [11] **It magnified itself, even up to the Prince of the host; and the continual burnt offering was taken away from him, and the place of his sanctuary was overthrown.** [12] And the host was given over to it together with the continual burnt offering through transgression; and truth was cast down to the ground, and the horn acted and prospered. [13] Then I heard a holy one speaking; and another holy one said to the one that spoke, **"For how long is the vision concerning the continual burnt offering, the transgression that makes desolate, and the giving over of the sanctuary and host to be trampled under foot?"** [14] **And he said to him, "For two thousand and three hundred evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state."**

The Ram are the Medes and the Persians. Initially the medes were dominant but after Cyrus the Persian took over Persia became far greater.

The Greeks under Alexander conquered Persia.

Alexander died at the age of 32 and his generals split the kingdom.

One of those kingdoms, the Seleucid had as its later king, Antiochus IV Epiphanes.

He desecrated the temple in Jerusalem by offering a pig to his god, Jupiter Capitolinus in the Hly of Holies.

The Jews, led by the Maccabees fought back and retook the city in approximately 3 years.

THE INTERPRETATION

[15] When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I sought to understand it; and behold, there stood before me one having the appearance of a man. [16] And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the U'lai, and it called, "Gabriel, make this man understand the vision." [17] So he came near where I stood; and when he came, I was frightened and fell upon my face. But he said to me, "Understand, O son of man, that the vision is for the time of the end." [18] As he was speaking to me, I fell into a deep sleep with my face to the ground; but he touched me and set me on my feet. [19] He said, "Behold, I will make known to you what shall be at the latter end of the indignation; for it pertains to the appointed time of the end. [20] **As for the ram which you saw with the two horns, these are the kings of Media and Persia.** [21] **And the he-goat is the king of Greece; and the great horn between his eyes is the first king.** [22] **As for the horn that was broken, in place of which four others arose, four kingdoms shall arise from his nation, but not with his power.** [23] And at the **latter end of their rule**, when the transgressors have reached their full measure, **a king of bold countenance, one who understands riddles, shall arise.** [24] **His power shall be great, and he shall cause fearful destruction, and shall succeed in what he does, and destroy mighty men and the people of the saints.** [25] By his cunning he shall make deceit prosper under his hand, and in his own mind he shall magnify himself. Without warning he shall destroy many; and he shall even rise up against the Prince of princes; but, **by no human hand, he shall be broken.** [26] **The vision of the evenings and the mornings which has been told is true; but seal up the vision, for it pertains to many days hence."** [27] And I, Daniel, was overcome and lay sick for some days; then I rose and went about the king's business; but I was appalled by the vision and did not understand it.

DANIEL 11: THE KINGS OF NORTH AND SOUTH

[1] And as for me, in the first year of Darius the Mede, I stood up to confirm and strengthen him. [2] "And now I will show you the truth. **Behold, three more kings shall arise in Persia; and a fourth shall be far richer than all of them; and when he has become strong through his riches, he shall stir up all against the kingdom of Greece.** [3] Then **a mighty king shall arise**, who shall rule with great dominion and do according to his will. [4] **And when he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not to his posterity, nor according to the dominion with which he ruled; for his kingdom shall be plucked up and go to others besides these.** [5] "Then the **king of the south shall be strong**, but **one of his princes shall be stronger than he and his dominion shall be a great dominion.** [6] After some years they shall make an **alliance, and the daughter** of the king of the south shall come to the king of the north to make peace; but **she shall not retain the strength of her arm**, and he and his offspring shall not endure; but she shall be given up, and her attendants, her child, and he who got possession of her. [7] "In those times a **branch from her roots** shall arise in his place; he shall come against the army and enter the fortress of the king of the north, and he shall deal with them and shall prevail. [8] **He shall also carry off to Egypt their gods** with their molten images and with their precious vessels of silver and of gold; and for some years he shall refrain from attacking the king of the north. [9] **Then the latter shall come into the realm of the king of the south but shall return into his own land.** [10] "His sons shall wage war and assemble a multitude of great forces, which shall come on and overflow and pass through, and again shall carry the war as far as his fortress. [11] **Then the king of the south, moved with anger, shall come out and fight with the king of the north; and he shall raise a great multitude, but it shall be given into his hand.** [12] And when the multitude is taken, his heart shall be exalted, and he shall cast down tens of thousands, but he shall not prevail. [13] For the **king of the north shall again raise a multitude**, greater than the former; and after some years he shall come on with a great army and abundant supplies. [14] "In those times many shall rise against the king of the south; and the **men of violence among your own people** shall lift themselves up in order to fulfil the vision; but they shall fail. [15] Then the king of the north shall come and throw up siegeworks, and take a well-fortified city. And the forces of the south shall not stand, or even his picked troops, for there shall be no strength to stand. [16] But he who comes against him shall do according to his own will, and none shall stand before him; and **he shall stand in the glorious land, and all of it shall be in his power.** [17] He shall set his face to come with the strength of his whole kingdom, and he shall bring terms of peace and perform them. **He shall give him the daughter of women to destroy the kingdom;** but it shall not stand or be to his advantage. [18] Afterward he shall turn his face **to the coastlands, and shall take many of them; but a commander shall put an end to his insolence; indeed he shall turn his insolence back upon him.** [19] Then he shall turn his face back toward the fortresses of his own land; but he shall stumble and fall, and shall not be found. [20] "Then shall arise in his place one who shall send an exactor of tribute through the glory of the kingdom; but **within a few days he shall be broken, neither in anger nor in battle.** [21] In his place shall arise a contemptible person to whom royal majesty has not been given; he shall come in without warning and obtain the kingdom by flatteries. [22]

Cyrus II
Cambyses II
Darius I
Xerxes I launched a major campaign against Greece in 480 B.C. recorded by Herodotus.

Alexander the Great
His early demise broke up his kingdom amongst his generals (The Diadochi) rather than be given to his son, who was assassinated by Cassander.

The southern kingdom of the Diadochi was Egypt, ruled by the Ptolemies, the second king being Ptolemy II Philadelphus.

Berenice, the daughter of Ptolemy II, married Antiochus II (the kings of the North were the Seleucids) but was deposed by the first wife Laodice and was murdered with her son.

Berenice's brother, Ptolemy III, waged war on the Seleucids, won, and reclaimed the gods that the Persians had taken.

Antiochus III attacked Egypt.

Ptolemy IV counter attacked and won the Battle of Raphia.

Antiochus III attacked Egypt again after a few years allied with Philip V of Macedon. Internal revolt disabled the Ptolemies, and Jews tried to manipulate events in order to fulfill the prophesy. They fail.

Antiochus III won the Battle of Panium.

Seleucids controlled Palestine.

Antiochus III married his daughter, Cleopatra to Ptolemy V.

Antiochus III attempted to take Greece and at the battle of Magnesia, was defeated by Rome even though he outnumbered them 2-1. He was killed trying to rob a temple of Baal.

Seleucus IV murdered by an assistant.

Antiochus IV was regent for his nephew.

Antiochus IV had the high priest of the Jews, Onias III, murdered.

Ptolemy VI attempted to resist Antiochus but failed and the Seleucids controlled Egypt.

Antiochus IV deposed for rebellion the high priest he had appointed and appointed another.

He went back to Egypt, but this time he met a Roman ambassador, Gaius Popillius Laenas, who demanded an answer from him regarding leaving Egypt before Antiochus could step out of a circle Laenas drew around him.

Antiochus IV returned to Palestine and desecrated the temple by offering a pig to his god, Jupiter Capitolinus, in the Holy of Holies.

The Hasmonean family raised the Maccabean Revolt.

Epiphanes means "god with us".

Apollo was the supposed ancestor of his dynasty. Adonis/Tammuz is the one beloved by women.

Jupiter Capitolinus; Antiochus built him a temple in Antioch.

Antiochus ruled Egypt as guardian for his "relatives", the current Ptolemies.

Concerns from the East caused him to march into Persia where he died of sickness.

Armies shall be utterly swept away before him and broken, and **the prince of the covenant also**. [23] And from the time that an alliance is made with him he shall act deceitfully; and he shall become strong with a small people. [24] Without warning he shall come into the richest parts of the province; and he shall do what neither his fathers nor his fathers' fathers have done, scattering among them plunder, spoil, and goods. He shall devise plans against strongholds, but only for a time. [25] And he shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army; and the **king of the south shall wage war with an exceedingly great and mighty army; but he shall not stand, for plots shall be devised against him**. [26] Even those who eat his rich food shall be his undoing; his army shall be swept away, and many shall fall down slain. [27] And as for the two kings, their minds shall be bent on mischief; they shall speak lies at the same table, but to no avail; for the end is yet to be at the time appointed. [28] And he shall return to his land with great substance, but **his heart shall be set against the holy covenant**. And he shall work his will, and return to his own land. [29] "At the time appointed he shall return and come into the south; but it shall not be this time as it was before. [30] **For ships of Kittim shall come against him, and he shall be afraid and withdraw, and shall turn back and be enraged and take action against the holy covenant**. He shall turn back and give heed to those who forsake the holy covenant. [31] Forces from him shall appear and **profane the temple and fortress, and shall take away the continual burnt offering. And they shall set up the abomination that makes desolate**. [32] He shall seduce with flattery those who violate the covenant; but the **people who know their God shall stand firm and take action**. [33] And those among the people who are wise shall make many understand, though they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plunder, for some days. [34] When they fall, they shall receive a little help. And many shall join themselves to them with flattery; [35] and some of those who are wise shall fall, to refine and to cleanse them and to make them white, until the time of the end, for it is yet for the time appointed. [36] "And the king shall do according to his will; **he shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god**, and shall speak astonishing things against the God of gods. He shall prosper till the indignation is accomplished; for what is determined shall be done. [37] **He shall give no heed to the gods of his fathers, or to the one beloved by women**; he shall not give heed to any other god, for he shall magnify himself above all. [38] **He shall honor the god of fortresses** instead of these; a god whom his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly gifts. [39] He shall deal with the strongest fortresses by the help of a foreign god; those who acknowledge him he shall magnify with honor. He shall make them rulers over many and shall divide the land for a price. [40] "At the time of the end the king of the south shall attack him; but the king of the north shall rush upon him like a whirlwind, with chariots and horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall come into countries and shall overflow and pass through. [41] He shall come into the glorious land. And tens of thousands shall fall, but these shall be delivered out of his hand: Edom and Moab and the main part of the Ammonites. [42] He shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape. [43] **He shall become ruler of the treasures of gold and of silver, and all the precious things of Egypt**; and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall follow in his train. [44] **But tidings from the east and the north** shall alarm him, and he shall go forth with great fury to exterminate and utterly destroy many. [45] And he shall pitch his palatial tents between the sea and the glorious holy mountain; **yet he shall come to his end**, with none to help him.

The questions presented by the unclear prophecies are partially answered by the common context that the clear ones provide. In the prophecy of the Ram and the He-goat, Antiochus IV Epiphanes is described as a "little horn" who arises from one of the four horns (Diadochi) following Alexander. In the prophecy of the Four Beasts, Daniel has a similar "little horn" arising from one of the Four Beasts after ten kings. It is possible that these four beasts are the Diadochi (seen from a different degree of magnification), the Ten Kings being the first of the Seleucid line, and the "little horn" once again being Antiochus IV Epiphanes.

As for the prophecy of the 70 Weeks, interpretation of it, too, can be aided by contextual usage of terms and ideas. The clarity of the King's prophecy has, at the end, pointed to Antiochus IV Epiphanes (do you sense a pattern?) and, with him comes the ending of the sacrifices and committing the "Abomination of Desolation". Those two violations are also the culmination of the 70 Weeks, and occur in the midst of the last 7 year week. The course of the calamities of Antiochus in Palestine and the rebellion of the Maccabees was between 171 and 164 B.C.. The rest of the math plus Our Lord's comment in Matthew 24:15, keeps the confusion alive and are good arguments against accepting the Maccabean direction of this prophecy.

The most confusing Statue prophecy is only potentially Maccabean in direction if interpreted as follows: The Silver kingdom is the usurpation of Nabonidus (a weaker kingdom than Nebuchadnezzar's), the Bronze is the Persians, the Iron is the Greeks and the Iron/clay is the divided Diadochi who, as the prophecy says, attempt marriage alliances which fail (as witnessed in the Kings prophecy). A problem that still exists for that view is in the identity of the Stone that destroys the statue, if the prophecy's completion is placed in the Maccabean victories and subsequent kingdom.

The clear view that Daniel had of the Intertestamental period is manifested in the Ram and the He-Goat, and in the Kings of the North and South. God was certainly concerned that the Jews be prepared for the events of that time, and it behooves us to become familiar with the period of time that shaped the world that the Christ came into.



Alexander finds the body of Darius III