

# After Alexander

Daniel 8:8b-9, 21-25a;  
11:5, 29-32

“But as soon as he was mighty, the large horn was broken; and in its place there came up four conspicuous horns toward the four winds of heaven.”

# When Alexander Died...

DANIEL

- He left no heir; a son was posthumously born to his wife, Roxana, but a power vacuum could not wait to be filled until he reached maturity.
- Alexander had many able generals, but there was not a single leader that was able to arise as his logical successor.
- A seven-year struggle resulted in the rise of, you guessed it, four powerful leaders.



## Daniel 8:21-22

DANIEL

**21** The shaggy goat represents the kingdom of Greece, and the large horn that is between his eyes is the first king. **22** The broken horn and the four horns that arose in its place represent four kingdoms which will arise from his nation, although not with his power.



## 4 Generals

1. **Antigonus**, who occupied the country from the Mediterranean to Central Asia
2. **Cassander**, who ruled Macedonia
3. **Ptolemy**, who ruled Egypt and Southern Syria
  - His chief general was **Seleucus**
4. **Lysimachus**, who ruled Thrace





# In 315 B.C.

## DANIEL

- Ptolemy, Cassander, and Lysimachus formed an alliance to check Antigonus, who fashioned himself a second Alexander.
- Ptolemy's armies are led by a charismatic general named Seleucus, who eventually breaks from Ptolemy and becomes an independent conqueror.



## Daniel 11:5

DANIEL

“Then the king of the South [Ptolemy] will grow strong, along with one of his princes [Seleucus] who will gain ascendancy over him and obtain dominion; his domain will be a great dominion indeed.”

# In 311 B.C.

## DANIEL

- Seleucus conquers Babylonia, which marks the beginning of the Seleucid dynasty.
- In 301 B.C., Lysimachus, Seleucus, and Cassander defeat Antigonus, who died on the battlefield at Ipsus.
- Ptolemy had not participated in the battle, but he was promised Palestine at the fall of Antigonus.

# But...

DANIEL

Because Ptolemy did not take part in the fighting, the three allies decided he did not deserve the territory and award it to Seleucus.

However, Ptolemy had already taken possession of the land...







# Ptolemies: 323-198 B.C.

DANIEL

- Jews prospered during the Ptolemaic occupation, and the absorption of the Grecian culture by a great number of Jews led to the translation of the Hebrew Old Testament into Greek.
- During the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285-246 B.C.), the Septuagint (LXX) was published.

# Ptolemy & Seleucus

DANIEL

- Ptolemy dies in 283 B.C., and Seleucus is murdered in 281 B.C.; both are succeeded by their sons.
- The two kingdoms are almost perpetually at war for most of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C.
- Alliances and marriages are consummated only to dissolve in light of conspiracy and murder.



# In 223 B.C.

## DANIEL

- Antiochus III ascends to the Seleucid throne at the age of 18.
- He makes several attempts to conquer Coele-Syria and the Levant, which is described in much detail in Daniel 11.
- He finally succeeds in 198 B.C., and according to Josephus, Antiochus came to Jerusalem, where the inhabitants gave him a cordial welcome.

# Seleucids: 198-166 B.C.

DANIEL

- During the years of Seleucid occupation, the Jews were severely persecuted because they refused to submit to pagan, Hellenizing pressures.
- It was during these years that Roman political influence began to be felt in the region.







# Rome Defeats Hannibal

DANIEL

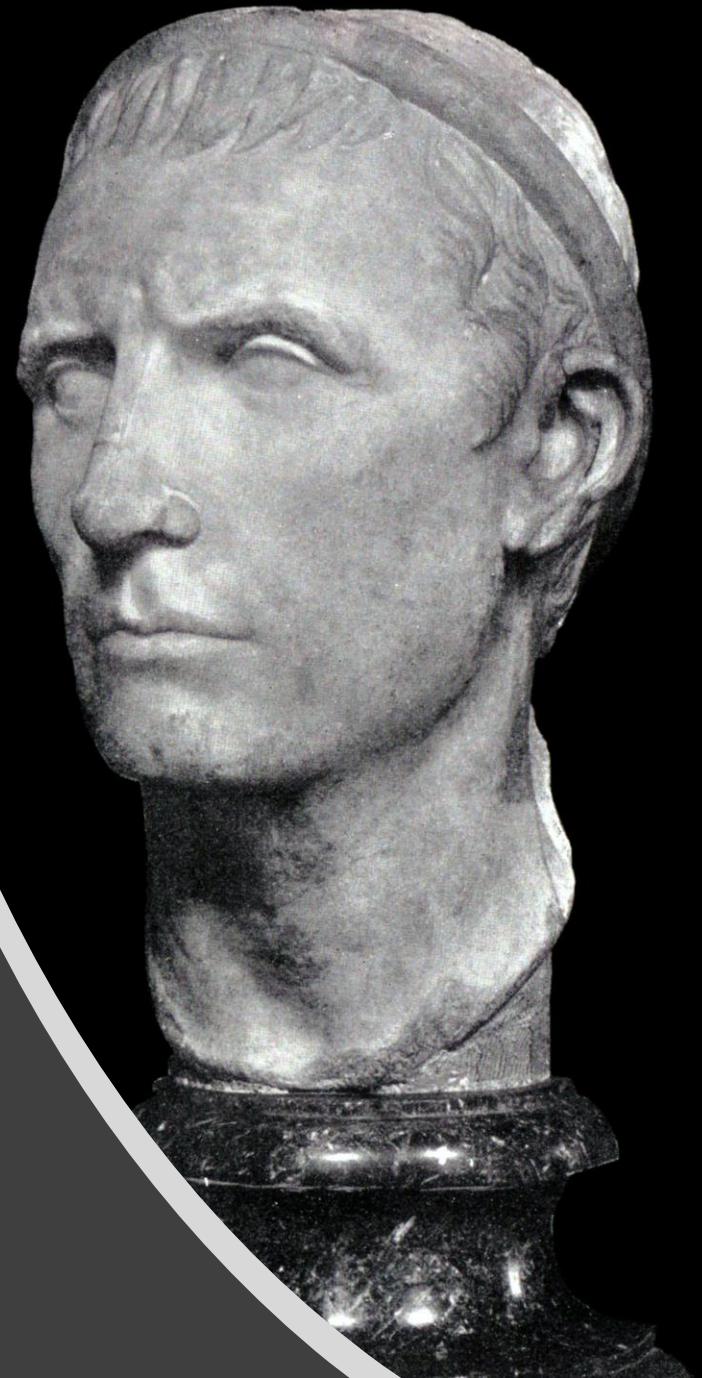
- In 202 B.C., and he flees east, taking refuge in the court of Antiochus III.
- Still interested in troubling Rome, he encourages Antiochus to invade Greece.
- When he does so, Rome declares war of Antiochus.

# Rome Defeats Antiochus DANIEL

- In 190 B.C., and he is forced to pay an enormous indemnity, surrender his war elephants, and his navy.
- His young son, Antiochus IV, was taken to Rome as a hostage for the payment of the indemnity; he would be a prisoner of Rome for 12 years.

12 Years  
Later...

Antiochus IV  
Epiphanes,  
was released,  
returned to  
Syria, and  
shortly after  
was crowned  
king.





## Daniel 8:23-24

DANIEL

**23** In the latter period of their rule,  
When the transgressors have run their  
course, A king will arise, Insolent and  
skilled in intrigue. **24** His power will be  
mighty, but not by his own power, And  
he will destroy to an extraordinary  
degree And prosper and perform his  
will; He will destroy mighty men and  
the holy people.

# Epiphanes: “the illustrious” DANIEL

- The Jews called him Epimanes, “the madman.”
- After 12 years in Rome, he had learned much, and he returned with a sense of mission coupled with political astuteness “to civilize” which meant “to Hellenize” the domain over which he ruled.

## Daniel 8:9

DANIEL

“Out of one of them came forth a rather small horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Beautiful Land.”



# An Important Point

DANIEL

- Antiochus IV was not simply a foreign ruler intent on enslaving a persecuted minority group, the Jews.
- In fact, a sizable number of Jews were impressed with the possibilities of greater conformity to Hellenistic manners and customs.
- Antiochus used this inner dissension to his advantage.

## Daniel 8:25a

DANIEL

**25** “And through his shrewdness He will cause deceit to succeed by his influence; And he will magnify himself in his heart, And he will destroy many while they are at ease.”

# Inner Conflict

DANIEL

- To Antiochus, the high priesthood was a political office, and as king, he could appoint whomever he chose.
- To the pious Jew, however, the priesthood was of divine origin, so selling it to the highest bidder was a sin and an affront to God.



# Jason, the “high priest”

DANIEL

- He built a gymnasium in Jerusalem, where young Jewish men exercised in the nude as was the Greek custom.
- Greek names were adopted in place of traditional Jewish names.
- Hebrew orthodoxy was looked upon as antiquated and obsolete.
- On a visit to Jerusalem in 170 B.C., Antiochus encouraged the citizens to call themselves “Antiochites” after their sovereign.

# Resistance Developed

DANIEL

- The Hasidim (the “pious”) attempted to defend orthodox Jewish institutions.
- Antiochus, of course, viewed this as a divisive force, and he looked to implement his unified Hellenistic program.
- The conflict over the high priesthood provided that opportunity.



# A New High Priest

DANIEL

- Menelaus was of the tribe of Benjamin, and as such, had no right to the priestly office.
- Nevertheless, by offering higher tribute to Antiochus than that paid by Jason, he was nominated to the office of High Priest.
- A Syrian garrison was stationed in Jerusalem to insure order and respect for the new high priest.

## Several Years Later...

DANIEL

- When Antiochus was busy fighting in Egypt, Jason raised an army in an attempt to take back the high priesthood.
- He was defeated, but Antiochus grew more wary of the growing dissension.
- In Egypt, Antiochus would have defeated the Ptolemies, but his plans were foiled when Rome intervened.



## Daniel 11:29-30a

DANIEL

**29** At the appointed time he will return and come into the South, but this last time it will not turn out the way it did before. **30** For ships of Kittim will come against him







## Daniel 11:30b

DANIEL

“therefore he will be disheartened and will return and become enraged at the holy covenant and take action; so he will come back and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant.”



# Antiochus Returns

DANIEL

- He occupies Jerusalem, and on a Sabbath attack, when he knew that the orthodox Jews would not fight, he slaughters large numbers of those who opposed Menelaus.
- The city walls were destroyed, and a new fortress, the Akra, was built on the site of the citadel of David.
- And one of the darkest periods in Israel's history began...

# An Edict is Issued

DANIEL

- The elimination of ethnic identification in the empire.
- **Greek deities were to be worshiped by all.**
- Yahweh was identified with Jupiter, and an image of the pagan deity was set up on the Temple altar.



## Daniel 11:31

DANIEL

**31** Forces from him will arise, desecrate the sanctuary fortress, and do away with the regular sacrifice. And they will set up the abomination of desolation.

# Abomination of Desolation

DANIEL

- Greek soldiers and their paramours performed licentious heathen rites in the temple courts.
- **Swine were sacrificed on the altar.**
- The drunken orgy associated with the worship of Bacchus was made compulsory.



# Jews Were Forbidden

DANIEL

- Under the penalty of death:
  - To practice circumcision
  - Observe the Sabbath
  - Observe the Jewish feasts
  - Possess copies of the Hebrew Scriptures
    - If found, they were destroyed

# Utmost Cruelty

DANIEL

- An aged scribe named Eliezer was flogged to death for refusing to eat swine's flesh.
- A mother and her seven children were murdered in succession for refusing to pay homage or a graven image.
- Two mothers who had circumcised their newborn sons were driven through the city and cast from the walls.



# The Grim Reality

DANIEL

Countless orthodox Jews were subjected to brutality and degradation, and many endured heroic suffering, as they “offered (themselves) willingly for the law” (1 Maccabees 2:42).

# Under Antiochus

DANIEL

- Menelaus continued as High Priest, but now he unapologetically served Jupiter.
- Hope seemed lost in the face of this unrivaled persecution.
- But the Hellenizers had gone too far...



## Daniel 11:32

DANIEL

**32** By smooth words he will turn to godlessness those who act wickedly toward the covenant, but the people who know their God will display strength and take action.



# Next Week: | The Rise of the Maccabees



DANIEL