

## **Alexander → Division of the Greek Empire (323 BC)**

After the death of Alexander the Great (323 BC), his empire fractured into four major successor kingdoms (Daniel 8:8; 11:4):

- **Cassander** – Macedonia/Greece
- **Lysimachus** – Thrace/Asia Minor
- **Ptolemy I** – Egypt
- **Seleucus I Nicator** – Syria & Mesopotamia

The **Seleucid Empire** controlled Syria and much of the Near East — including Judea for long stretches.

## **The Seleucid Era & Judea**

The most infamous Seleucid ruler in biblical memory was:

- Antiochus IV Epiphanes (r. 175–164 BC)

He:

- Desecrated the Temple (167 BC)
- Set up the “abomination of desolation” (Daniel 11:31)
- Outlawed Jewish practices

This sparked the **Maccabean Revolt** (167 BC).

## **The Maccabean / Hasmonean Period (167–63 BC)**

Led by:

- Judas Maccabeus
- The Hasmonean family

They defeated Seleucid forces and established a semi-independent Jewish kingdom.

Important shift:

The Seleucid Empire was already weakening due to:

- Internal succession wars
- Eastern pressure (Parthians)

- Growing Roman power in the west

## **Rome Enters the Eastern Mediterranean**

Rome had been expanding steadily:

- Defeated Macedon (168 BC)
- Weakened Seleucid power after the Battle of Magnesia (190 BC)
- Imposed heavy war indemnities on the Seleucids

By the mid-1st century BC, the Seleucid Empire was collapsing internally.

## **Pompey & the Roman Takeover (63 BC)**

In 63 BC:

Pompey intervened in a Jewish civil war between Hasmonean brothers.

He:

- Entered Jerusalem
- Took control of Judea
- Made it a Roman client state

This marks the effective transition from Greek (Seleucid) dominance to Roman rule in Judea.

## **Herodian & Direct Roman Rule**

- Herod the Great (appointed 37 BC)
- After his death (4 BC), Judea increasingly came under direct Roman governance.
- By the time of Jesus:
  - Pontius Pilate governed Judea.
  - The emperor was Augustus.

Now Rome is the dominant empire of Daniel's fourth beast (Daniel 2, 7).

## **Prophetic Transition (Daniel's Framework)**

In Daniel's visions:

1. Babylon
2. Medo-Persia
3. Greece (including Seleucids & Ptolemies)

#### 4. Rome

Daniel 11 traces Seleucid-Ptolemaic conflict in detail (vv. 5–35), then transitions into language many interpreters see moving beyond Antiochus toward a broader imperial power — which historically aligns with Rome’s emergence.

#### **So How Do We Transition?**

Historically:

- Seleucids weaken internally
- Rome defeats Greek powers
- Rome absorbs the eastern Mediterranean
- Pompey annexes Judea (63 BC)

Politically:

- Greek Hellenistic dominance fades
- Roman administrative and military control replaces it

Culturally:

- Greek language remains dominant
- Roman political power governs
- This Greek-language/Roman-rule environment sets the stage for the New Testament world

#### **Why This Matters Biblically**

By the time we reach the Gospels:

- The world speaks Greek.
- The roads and legal structure are Roman.
- Jewish nationalism has been shaped by Maccabean resistance.
- Messianic expectation is heightened under Roman occupation.

The intertestamental period is not silent politically — it is the handoff from the fractured Greek empire (especially Seleucid control) to the unified imperial structure of Rome.