

The Grecian Era after Alexander Cont...

Amazing detail is foretold of the conflicts between the Seleucid kings and the Ptolemies. Dan.11:5 states that the first king of the North (Seleucus Nicator) would have a **larger dominion, from Asia to India** and *"in the end of years"* or *"after years"* the King of the South (Philadelphus) would be joined to the King of the North (Theus) and give his daughter (Berenice) to *"make an agreement"* (11:6). Theus was to put away his former wife Laodice and her sons were to renounce any claim to the throne. When Philadelphus died, Theus took Laodice back and she drove Berenice out (*"she shall not retain the power of the arm"*) with her infant son. Laodice had Berenice, her son, and her guard (*"he that strengthened her"*) killed before poisoning Theus (*"neither shall he stand, nor his arm"*) and Seleucus Callinus reigned.

Philadelphus had favoured the Jews in Egypt and paid 72 Jewish elders to translate the Scriptures into Greek. He freed all Jewish slaves including 120,000 in his army. He gave lavish gifts to Eleazar the High Priest and to the Temple.

Berenice's brother (*"a branch out of her roots"*), Ptolemy Eurgetes overran the Northern kingdom to as far as the **Tigris River** and brought back captives, vast spoils and gods (11:7-8). He returned to Egypt and *"continued more years"* than Seleucus Callinus (about 4 years).

The sons of Callinus (Ceraunus and Antiochus the Great) were stirred up but Ceraunus died when he fell from his horse possibly in battle in **Phrygia**. Then *"one"* son, 18-year-old Antiochus the Great, assembled a great army and came against Ptolemy Philopater who met him at at **Raphia** south of Gaza with 70,000 infantry, 5,000 cavalry. Antiochus lost 10,300 men and 4,000 were taken prisoner.

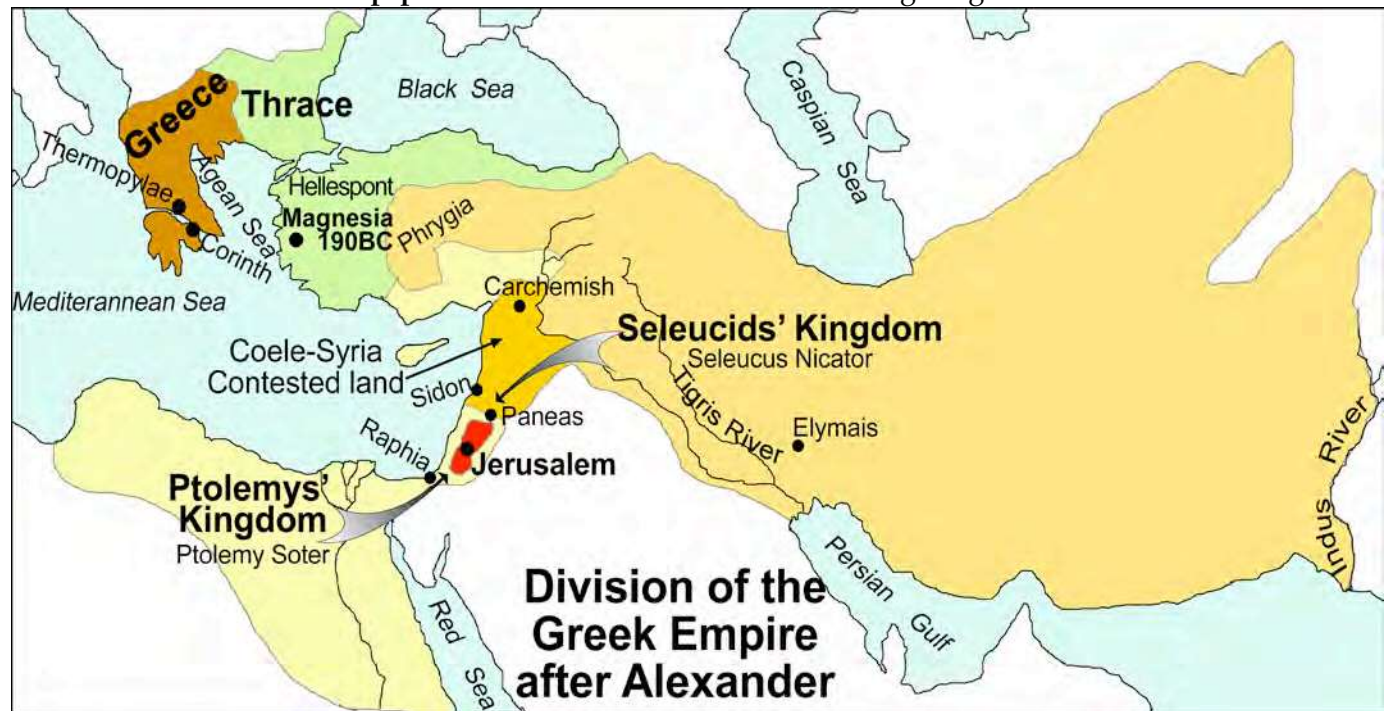
Ptolemy Philopater returned to Egypt and his *"heart was lifted up"*. His life style angered his people and they rebelled.

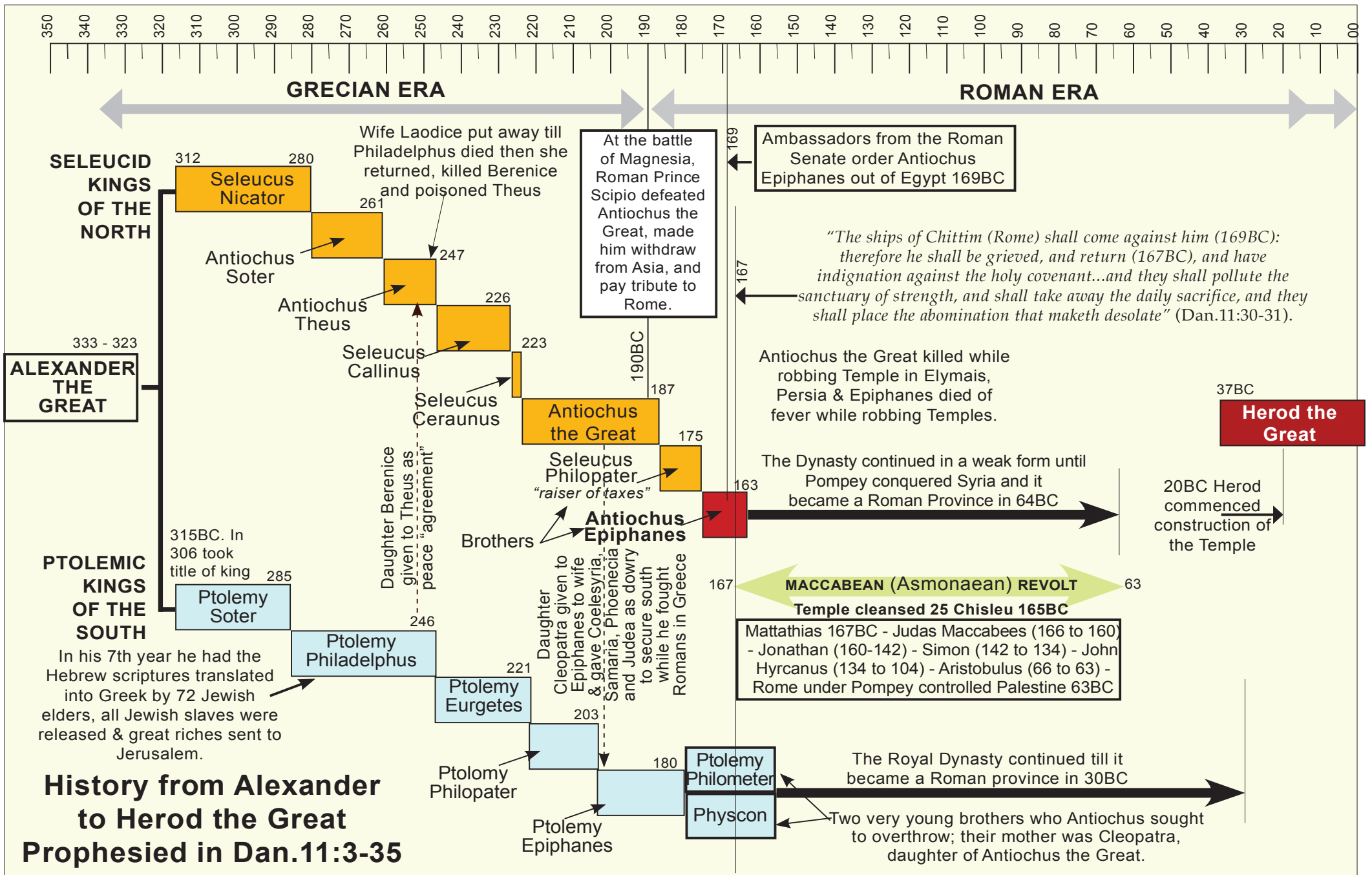
Antiochus the Great spent years securing his northern kingdom in Persia and India where he gathered a great army and after *"certain years"* (14 years) in 198BC, came against the very young Ptolemy Epiphanes. Ptolemy Philopater had died.

Ptolemy Epiphanes sent his General Scopus against Antiochus the Great but he was defeated and fled with

10,000 of his men to **Sidon** and was besieged. Ptolemy sent three of his best Generals with elite troops to rescue Scopus but they failed and returned to Egypt. Scopus surrendered when his food ran out.

At this time Rome was threatening from the west and so Antiochus the Great gave his daughter Cleopatra to young Ptolemy Epiphanes to wife hoping she would support him *"but she shall not stand on his side, neither be for him"* (11:17). Antiochus the Great also gave a dowry of all the lands he had just conquered, between Syria and Egypt, back to Ptolemy while he went to *"the isles"* in the **Aegean Sea** to meet the challenge from the Romans. After conquering all Asia he crossed the **Hellespont** and by 192BC he was established in Greece north of Corinth. In 191BC Antiochus was defeated at **Thermopylae** (Greece) and he retreated to Ephesus in Asia. In 190BC the Roman Prince Scipio defeated Antiochus at **Magnesia** and ordered him to pay 1,000 talents of silver each year to Rome. He was killed 3 years later while robbing a temple at **Elymais in Persia** and his son Seleucus Philopater reigned. He was a *"raiser of taxes"* and died a few days after a failed attempt to rob the Temple at **Jerusalem** by poisoning *"neither in anger, nor in battle"* (11:20). **Seleucus Philopater's brother Antiochus Epiphanes** then took the throne and fought against the Maccabees.





The Maccabean Wars from Antiochus Epiphanes to Herod - 167BC to 40BC

In the days of the Seleucid King Antiochus Epiphanes, there began a Jewish movement for independence led by the Asmonaeon (Maccabean) family, the head of which was a priest named Mattathias who had five sons. Mattathias had retired from priestly service in the Temple to the small town of Modin near Jerusalem.

Antiochus Epiphanes plundered the Temple at Jerusalem and erected an idol on the altar of burnt sacrifice. He sacrificed swine on the altar, sprinkled swine's broth in the Temple, and demanded that all people in his kingdom worship his god. Copies of the law were burned and circumcision was forbidden. **Mattathias** refused to sacrifice to the pagan deity and when he saw a Jew go forward to sacrifice, slew him, and broke down the altar. This act triggered the War of Independence led by the Asmonaeans which raged until the Roman era in the time of Herod the Great; a period from 167BC to 40BC when Herod began to reign.

When Mattathias died his third son **Judas Maccabeus** took the military leadership. The Jewish revolt was primarily a reaction to interference by pagans in Temple worship and the right to live according to the Law. Antiochus made three invasions of Egypt and on one occasion when he was returning to Syria he slew 40,000 Jews and took 40,000 captive.

Antiochus sent Lysias to put down the Jewish revolt while he went to plunder Temples in Persia in 163 BC. After hearing that Lysias, had been defeated by Judas Maccabees in Judaea, he fell ill and died, full of remorse saying,

"Now I remember the evils that I did at Jerusalem...and, behold, I perish through great grief in a strange land" (I Maccabees 6:12-13).

In 163 BC Lysias besieged Jerusalem in Judas' absence and many Jews sued for peace. An army led by Nicanor was sent to destroy Judas and his army but Nicanor was defeated in two decisive battles in 161BC at Capharaslama and at Adasa but Bacchides caught Judas with only a small company of his men and he died in battle at Eleasa in 161 BC.

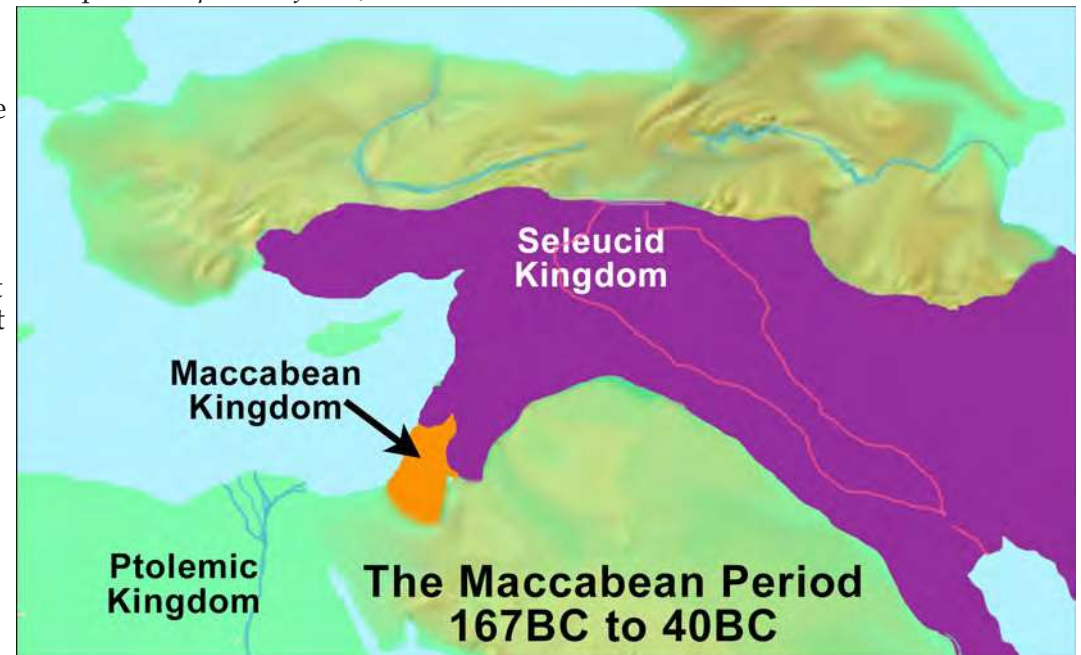
Jonathan, the youngest son of Mattathias took over the leadership and continued the fight gaining a measure of independence until in 144 BC he was captured by Tryphon and later slain.

Simon, the last surviving son of Mattathias negotiated the independence of the Jews in 143 BC to obtain the favour of Rome which was becoming the dominant world power as the Grecian world crumbled. Simon and his two sons were murdered in 135 BC.

John Hyrcanus was the next to lead the nation but soon after this, Judea was again invaded by a Seleucid King and Jerusalem besieged. The Jews surrendered and agreed to pay redemption money but later shook off the Seleucid yoke. Hyrcanus opened the tomb of David and was able to hire mercenary troops for his army. He and his sons destroyed the Samaritan Temple which had been built on Mount Gerizim in the days of Alexander the Great. It was later rebuilt by Herod the Great. The Jews were thus able to maintain their independence until the **Roman General Pompey occupied Jerusalem in 63 BC**.

Herod, an Idumaeon (Edomite), was made governor of Galilee by Mark Antony in 47 BC. and the Roman Senate was persuaded to make him King of Judaea in 40 BC. The last Asmonaeon leader, Antigonus, held Herod at bay for three years but Herod finally asserted his authority as king and captured Jerusalem in 37 BC. Antigonus was beheaded by the Romans. Josephus states:

"the government of the Asmonaeans ceased 126 years after it was set up" (*Antiquities of the Jews* Book XIV, Ch.XVI).



The Roman Empire - The Final Stage of the Times of the Gentiles

The fourth and last kingdom in the “*times of the Gentiles*” is the Roman Empire and Antichrist is the final Roman prince. Historically, Rome has never ceased to exist down through the last 2,000 years; it has simply changed its form.

The Roman Empire is both political and religious. Just as Nebuchadnezzar used his golden image to control all peoples, so Rome has used Emperor worship on pain of death to control its peoples. When Constantine proclaimed the Roman Empire to be “Christian” it was for political reasons because it was estimated there were 7 million Christians around the Mediterranean Sea. However Christendom corrupted and became “*mystery Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth*” (Rev.17:5). The idolatry of Babylon entered the Roman Church and when Rome was overrun by the German tribes the Pope crowned Charlemagne, King of the Franks (Germans), Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire (AD800).

The Papacy ruled through its secular arm: the kings of the earth who were subject to the Pope.

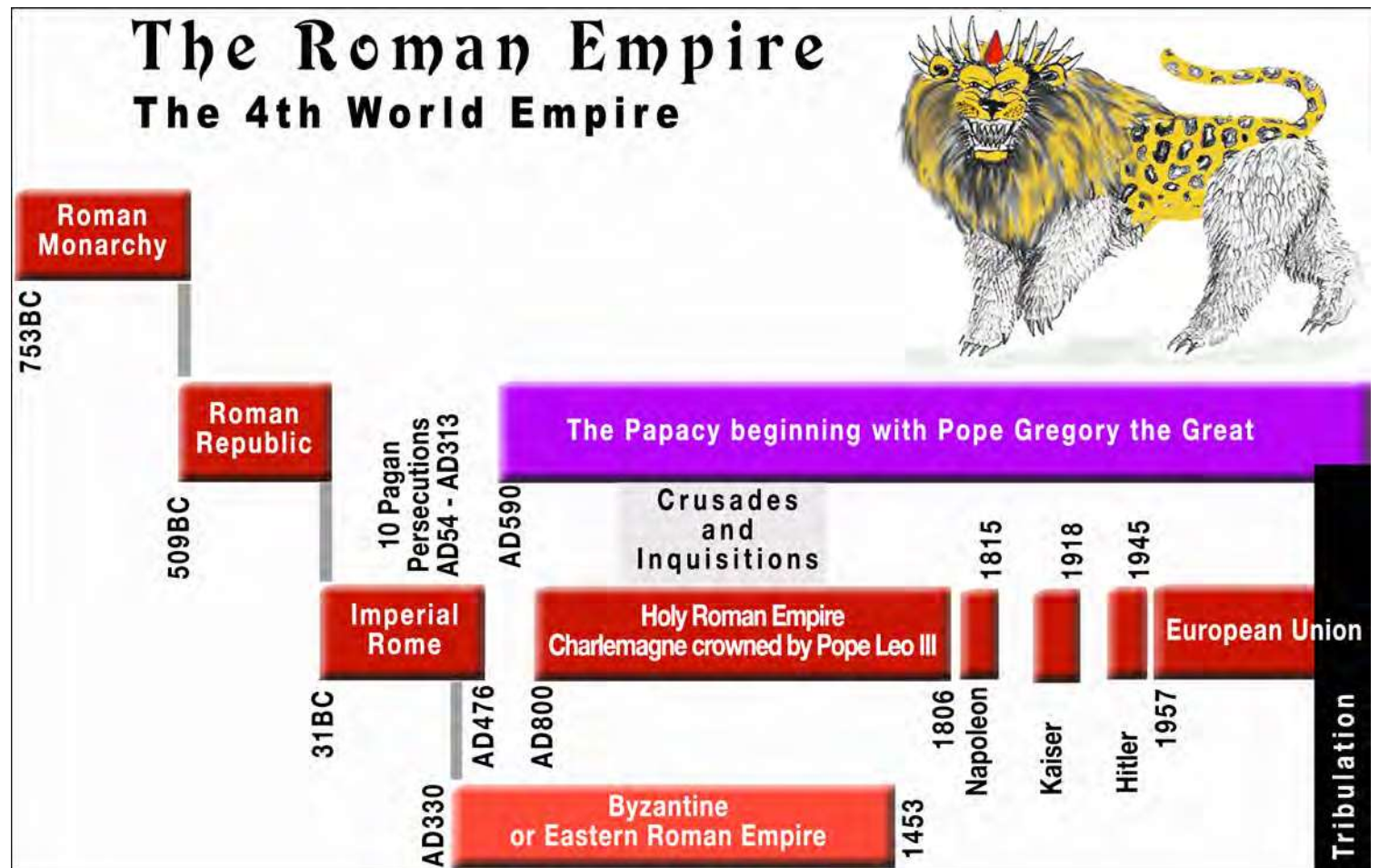
Scripture indicates that the Roman Empire would go through a stage of disintegration and is likened to **part iron and part clay**; “*partly strong and partly broken*” as seen in the image of Nebuchanezzar (Dan.2:42).

The last stage of the Roman Empire before Christ comes from heaven will have **ten divisions** symbolized by the ten toes of the image in chapter 2 and by the ten horns on the fourth beast in chapter 7.

The “*ten horns out of this kingdom are ten*

kings that shall arise: and another shall arise after them...and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time” (three and a half years) (Dan.7:24-25).

The “*little horn*” (Dan.7:8) that arises from among the ten horns is the person of the Antichrist who will have total global control for the last 42 months of the 7-year Tribulation (Rev.13:5). But Christ will come “*immediately after the Tribulation*” (Matt.24:29) and He will reign from Jerusalem for 1,000 years.



The Seventy "Weeks" Prophecy

Daniel 9:24-27. The Key to Last-Days Prophecy

"70 weeks (sevens) are determined upon **THY PEOPLE (ISRAEL)** and upon **THY HOLY CITY (Jerusalem)**, to finish the transgression, and make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy" (Dan.9:24).

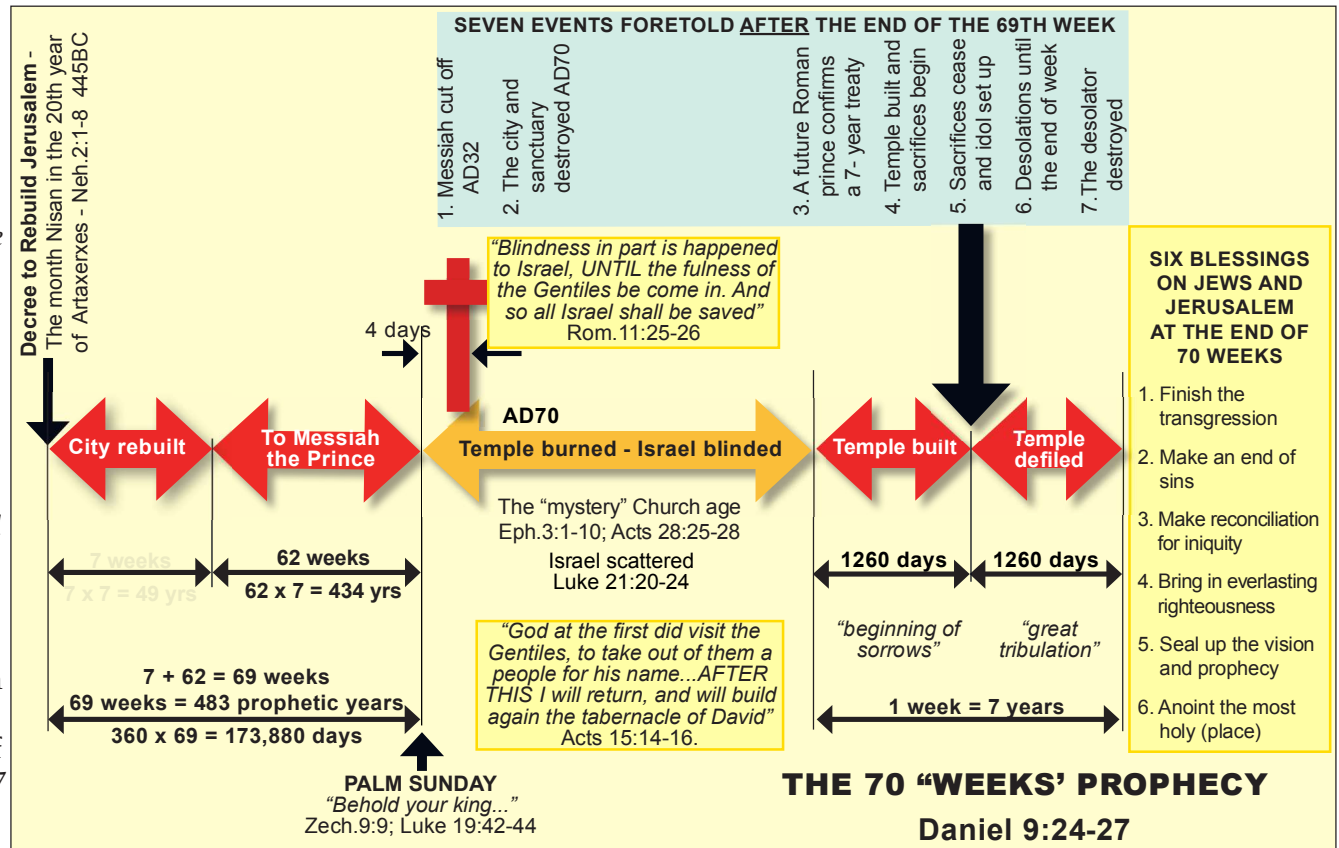
This amazing prophecy defines God's plan for His people Israel and for Jerusalem. We know exactly when the prophecy would begin: "from the going forth of the commandment to **restore and build Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince** shall be seven 'weeks', and threescore and two 'weeks'" (Dan.9:25).

As shown in the chart on page 26 the decree of Cyrus in 536B.C. allowed the Jews to return from Babylon to rebuild the Temple but the decree of Artaxerxes in the month Nisan (Passover month), in the 20th year of Artaxerxes (445BC) was the decree that allowed the Jews to **rebuild the CITY** of Jerusalem. From that date to Messiah the Prince would be 7 + 62 (sevens) = 69 (sevens) = 483 years. All Bible prophecy assumes a 360-day year as shown in Gen.7:11 and 8:3-4,13-14 where five months is said to be 150 days. Elsewhere $3\frac{1}{2}$ years = 42 months = 1260 days (Rev.11:2,3; 12:6,14; 13:5).

Jewish feasts followed the **lunar calendar** which differs from the Gregorian **solar calendar**, and Sir Robert Anderson QC has shown in his book, *The Coming Prince*, that from passover in 445BC to passover AD32 was 173,880 days and that the day Jesus presented Himself to Israel as her King was Palm Sunday just before Passover. Jesus said to the Jews: "If thou hadst known, even thou, **at least in THIS THY DAY** the things that belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes" (Luke 19:41).

The prophecy states that **AFTER** this event Messiah would be "cut off": Christ was crucified on the Thursday following Palm Sunday.

The "city and the sanctuary" must then be destroyed, which we know occurred in AD70. So there was a gap between the 69th and 70th "week".



Finally, a **Roman prince** must confirm a "covenant with many for one 'week'" (Dan.9:27) and **this has never happened**. It is therefore **future**. Half-way through the final seven years this Roman prince will cause the sacrifice and oblation in the Temple to cease "for the overspreading of abominations" (idolatry) (Dan.9:27). This cannot be Christ's sacrifice putting an end to Old Testament sacrifices: the purpose is "for the overspreading of abominations".

The obvious implication is that the Temple which was destroyed by the Romans in AD70 must be **rebuilt** under this covenant in order for the Jews to recommence sacrifices. The future Roman "prince" is undoubtedly Antichrist who Paul said would sit in the "temple of God showing himself that he is God" (2Thess.2:4). He is the "little horn" (Dan.7:20), the final ruler of the revived Roman Empire. Jesus mentions this as **future** in Matthew 24:15.

When Christ returns, Antichrist will be destroyed and **the Jews and Jerusalem will experience the six promised blessings in the Kingdom**.