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**The Jews Under Greece**

One of the things I've said *ad nauseum* is that there is no kingdom now on earth. When Christ came he said in the Sermon on the Mount that we should pray for the kingdom to come on earth as it is in heaven that the will of God may be done on earth as it is in heaven. This captures the truth that there are only two aspects of the kingdom. The heavenly kingdom where God always reigns and the earthly kingdom where God does not now reign but intends to establish His reign. In light of that, one of the questions that came up last week was, "What about where Jesus said the kingdom of God is within you? What about Jesus reigning in our hearts?" This is a common misunderstanding of the kingdom based on a mistranslation of Luke 17:20-21. When Jesus said the kingdom of God is within you he was talking to the Pharisees. If the kingdom of God was within the Pharisees then we have a slight problem since Jesus elsewhere says the Pharisees were of their father the devil. The simple explanation is that the word translated "within" should be translated "among." Jesus was saying the kingdom of God is among you in the sense that He as the King of the kingdom was in their midst. But there is no kingdom in our hearts any more than there was in the hearts of the Pharisees.

I want to give an example of just how massive this confusion is. Here's a man, well-intentioned, writing about the Book of Daniel and the same four Gentile kingdoms we look at in the Book of Daniel and here's what he says of the fourth kingdom Rome when Christ came. "So it was, during the days of the Roman Empire, the King of Kings came from heaven, took the form of man at Bethlehem, and inaugurated His eternal kingdom." Now that's his whole position. He stated right there that we live in an inaugurated form of God's eternal kingdom. He says again, "Throughout the history of this fallen world, men had sought to establish their own kingdoms, but "the stone not cut with

human hands" (Daniel 2:34) came to establish His everlasting Kingdom by crushing all earthly kingdoms through" and here's the key part, "through the spiritual transformation of wicked men." Notice how he interprets the statue's destruction in Daniel 2. It's by spiritual transformation of wicked men. Question? Is that how any of the four previous kingdoms was destroyed? No, they were all destroyed by military power. So does it make sense to interpret the last one different than the prior four? No, it logically follows that the everlasting Kingdom will also destroy all the others by military power and not spiritual transformation. That's what the 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel is all about! Notice also he's presupposing that the prior four kingdoms were earthly but the eternal Kingdom is not, it's just some ethereal, heavenly thing. This is all a complete misreading of the dream. Daniel had no thought that the Jewish kingdom would be restored to some heavenly sphere. Total nonsense. The author goes on, "God's purpose for fallen man was to establish a Kingdom that would crush all earthly kingdoms that held power over fallen men (Daniel 2:44). Jesus the Anointed One, King of Kings, came to earth to fulfill the will of the Father." What's he trying to do with that statement? He's trying to establish in your head that since it was the Father's will for Jesus to establish the kingdom then He must have done so at His first coming. Finally he says, "Though the Scripture says the consummation of the Kingdom will be Christ reigning on this earth with the curse reversed," and with that we'd give a hearty amen, he still holds out for a future earthly kingdom, but look what he does with the next expression, "Jesus Christ inaugurated the Kingdom at His first coming and the domain of His reign is the hearts of sinners who trust in Him." So he's invented this inaugural form of the kingdom now where Christ is reigning in believer's hearts to transform them. He then quotes the mis-translated passage we mentioned before about the kingdom being within you. The audience was the Pharisees, sons of the devil. His most important point he says this way, "This is super important, so let's say it again: Jesus came to earth to establish a Kingdom; to reign in the hearts and lives of sinners and transform them." That is worthless garbage. Jesus came to establish His kingdom on the earth, not in the hearts and lives of sinners. David's throne is not in your little heart any more than it is in heaven. But this is so typical; they hold to a kingdom theology called already-not. Jesus is ruling in the kingdom already-not yet. This is nonsense. And it's this very nonsense that is behind non-cessationism and Lordship Salvation. The guy I've been quoting from this whole time is trying to prove that the sign gifts, miracles and tongues continue today as they did in the Book of

Acts. He says, "I cannot join my cessationist friends in condemning a belief in the continuation of the gifts and miracles of the Spirit because the Scripture teaches the expansion of God's Kingdom will manifest miracles, gifts, healings and other works of the Spirit as He moves in power upon and within His people." If the kingdom is now in any sense then yes, signs, miracles and wonders. I would be in total agreement. But the Scriptures do not teach what he says. As another reader observed after reading the article, "If I understand you correctly, gifts, miracles and healings are only the surface issue. The real problem, even disagreement, is whether or not the Kingdom of God is now and whether or not Christ is reigning on His throne now. Right?" The author answered, "Right." Well I'd say that's completely wrong. Jesus did come to offer the kingdom to Israel but its actual coming was contingent upon their reception of Jesus as their King. Did Israel receive Him? No, they rejected Him. So did the kingdom come? No. It can't until they do receive Him. Further, did the fourth kingdom of Rome run its full course? Did Rome come to be ruled by ten kings all at the same time and then an eleventh king rose and crushed three kings and then took over the world and persecuted the Jews? No. Then the kingdom of God has not come in any sense. It came near with the King's coming but with His departure the kingdom drew back. In that vacuum we have the Church and this is a very different animal. So it's nonsense to say the kingdom of God was inaugurated in some form at Christ's first coming. And this is why I'm so intent on taking us from the OT kingdom of God through the Intertestamental Times so that when we get to the Gospels and the kingdom is offered we understand the nature of what is being offered and we don't float off into this false idea that we've entered an inaugural form of the kingdom. The kingdom of God can come on the earth only after the final form of Rome has run its course and Israel repents. This has not happened. And the danger of such a position is that logically you would have to be a non-cessationist, all the gifts continuing, and logically you would have to be Lordship Salvation, mixing law and grace. Ideas have consequences.

So let's ramp up to where we're going tonight. So far we have seen the Jews under Babylon and Persia. Babylon was the first of the four successive Gentile kingdoms depicted in the Book of Daniel. The Jews were in exile to Babylon because of their continued violations of the Law of Moses. The exile was therefore God's disciplinary measure on the kingdom of God in history. Nevertheless, life in Babylon was prosperous due to the appointment of men

like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah into top administrative positions where they could work on their behalf. So good was their life that when Persia came to power and King Cyrus issued the right of return, few proportionate to the population at large, actually returned to Israel.

Persia was the second of the four successive Gentile kingdoms depicted in the Book of Daniel. Last time we were only able to complete the period covered by the OT canon which took us to the time of Malachi in 425BC. Until this time the record is clear; the Jews life under Persia was relatively tranquil. Cyrus had intervened on behalf of the Jews by giving them the right to return and rebuild the temple. He even supported the rebuilding by supplying monies from his royal treasury and tax funds from treasuries beyond the River Euphrates. Darius Hystaspes also worked on behalf of the Jews by confirming Cyrus' decree and permitting the completion of the temple. He also supported the rebuilding by supplying funds from the royal treasury and tax funds from treasuries beyond the River. Ahasuerus was also favorable to the Jews as evidenced by Mordecai's holding office in his administration and his marriage to the beautiful Jewess Esther. The only disruption to relative peace was during his reign when Haman deceived the king into making a decree to destroy all the Jews on one day. However, when Ahasuerus discovered Haman's plot he had Haman impaled on the very stake he had prepared for Mordecai and promoted Mordecai to the very place Haman wanted to hold. These are clear indications of a Persian government that favored the Jews. Artaxerxes also supported the Jews as evidenced by his encouraging and permitting Ezra to lead a second return of the Jews to Jerusalem in order to restore the temple worship. A few years later Nehemiah, Artaxerxes trusted cupbearer, was also permitted to return and serve as governor in the province of Judea. All these evidences prove that the Jews fared quite well under Persia until the end of the OT canon with Malachi in 425BC.

We now enter into the Intertestamental Times. It's at this time that the record becomes sparse though we do have, as we've mentioned before, many prophecies from the OT that were fulfilled in this period, in particular Daniel, as well as Jewish records from Josephus and the Apocrypha and secular historians. After Malachi's composition, about 425BC the Persian throne came to be filled by Darius II Nothus who reigned from 423-404BC. During his reign there is evidence in the Elephantine papyri of a Jewish community

in Upper Egypt. Elephantine was an island city located just north of the current Aswan dam in the middle of the Nile River. Today it's a tourist destination but then it was a Persian military installation. A number of Jewish legal documents and personal letters were discovered there in 1843 that give evidence of a Jewish community. The letters reveal that they had correspondence privileges with Jews in the land and that they were polytheistic or syncretistic, meaning they worshipped YHWH in a temple but they also introduced and worshiped other gods like Eshem-bethel, Herem-bethel and Anath-bethel (Bright, p 376). When a rebellion broke out in 410BC their temple was destroyed. Consequently they sent letters to the high priest Johanan in Jerusalem asking for assistance in rebuilding. Since Johanan did not recognize any temple other than the one in Jerusalem he did not respond. Three years later Johanan was no longer governor and so fresh letters were sent, this time to the new governor of Judah and also to the governor of Samaria. This time the response from both the Jews and Samaritans was to send funding to assist in rebuilding the temple. This establishes that at least in 407BC the relations between Jew and Samaritan were not in serious disorder. By 402BC the temple at Elephantine was completed. However, this temple was quite different than the one God had authorized in Jerusalem in that the Egyptians did not tolerate animal sacrifices and so the Jews complied with Egyptian culture.

The Jews life under Persia becomes even more sketchy during the reign of Artaxerxes Mnemon from 404-358BC. Significantly, he lost Asia Minor to the Greeks but he re-took it at a later time. Asia Minor was commonly an area of dispute between the Greeks and the Persians and Alexander the Great will start his campaign to spread his Greek empire over the whole earth in Asia Minor. After his reign we come to Artaxerxes III Ochus who ruled from 358-338BC. At the end of his reign he and his sons were killed by a vizier named Bagoas. This Bagoas appointed Darius III in 336BC. He then tried to poison him but Darius found out about it and made Bagoas drink the poison instead. When Darius came to power the Persian kingdom was unstable as many of the satraps were in rebellion or conflict with the king. It is then that we come to the rise of the Greeks under Philip of Macedon and his son Alexander the Great.

Philip II of Macedon came to rule Greece in 359BC. His military skills and expansionist vision of Macedonian greatness brought him early success. "His

most important innovation was doubtless the introduction of the phalanx infantry corps, armed with the famous sarissa, an exceedingly long spear, at the time the most important army corps in Macedonia.” His reign is characterized almost entirely by wars which did little to expand his kingdom. When he finally set off to invade Persia in 336BC in order to fulfill his dreams of expansion he was assassinated. In his stead, his son, Alexander the Great, at just 20 years of age, inherited his father’s expansionist dreams. He had been a disciple of Aristotle until the age of 16. He believed his destiny was to complete his father’s dream and spread Greek culture all over the world.

The Book of Daniel contains some of the most remarkable prophecies concerning Alexander and the Greek kingdom. First, in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of the four metal statue in Dan 2 Greece is symbolized by the waist and thighs of bronze. Bronze is a less valuable but harder metal than gold and silver. It would therefore have an inferior economy and a stronger military. These two go hand in hand in that as you expand your kingdom through military might the need arises to resort to a fractionalized banking system in order to provide the logistics for supporting the expansion. Greece certainly encased Babylon and Medo-Persia and expanded far beyond the borders of either. It became so large, in fact, that when Alexander died no one ruler could manage it as he could. After years of fighting it eventually was divided among his four generals. In any case, the dream of Daniel 2 says that this third kingdom, which was Greece, would “rule over all the earth” pointing to the dominant aspect of this kingdom, which is expansion.

Second, in Daniel’s dream and visions of the four beasts in Dan 7 the Greek kingdom is symbolized by a leopard like creature with four wings and four heads. Or is it? Is the leopard Greece or is it Greece embodied in Alexander? The ambiguity is probably intentional as Alexander was the embodiment of Greece and its greatest ruler. The leopard with four wings signifies a very rapid conquest. Alexander’s conquest of all of Persia and beyond took only ten years. The leopard’s four heads signifies that after the rapid conquest his kingdom would be divided into four parts. After Alexander’s conquest he died and his kingdom was divided into four parts and governed by his four generals; Cassander, Lysimachus, Ptolemy and Seleucus.

Third, in another vision of Daniel recorded in Dan 8 he saw a ram with two horns, one coming up last and growing longer than the first. This horn was butting in every direction except east and no beast could stand before him. Then Daniel saw a buck goat coming from the west over the surface of the whole earth without even touching the ground. It had one conspicuous horn between his eyes. He came up to the ram with great wrath and struck him, shattering his two horns. The ram was hurled to the ground and there was no one to rescue him from the power of the buck goat. But as soon as the buck goat defeated the ram and became mighty the conspicuous horn between his eyes was broken and in its place came up four conspicuous horns, one in each direction of the compass. Then out of one of the four came a rather small horn which grew great toward the south and toward the east and toward the beautiful land. It caused some stars of heaven to fall to the earth and it trampled them down. It exalted itself and removed the regular sacrifice. For 2300 evenings and mornings the temple was trampled down before it was restored. This extensive vision was then explained to Daniel by the angel Gabriel. The ram with two horns stood for the two branches of the Medo-Persian kingdom. The one coming up last and growing longer stood for the dominant branch Persia. This branch went on to become a great kingdom on the earth. The fact it was butting in every direction except east signified the large-scale conquering of the Medo-Persian kingdom and their enemies' inability to cope with their tremendous military strength. However, the buck goat that came from the west over the surface of the whole earth without even touching the ground signified the rapid conquest of the kingdom of Greece that swept over Persia. The large conspicuous horn between its eyes signified Alexander the Great who shattered Persia almost overnight. The fact that this horn was broken immediately after his conquest signified that Alexander would die immediately after, a fact attested by his death in Babylon. The four conspicuous horns that arose in its place represent the four divisions of the Greek Empire according to the four directions of the compass; Cassander, Lysimachus, Ptolemy and Seleucus. The little horn that grew out of the horn that was in the south and grew large was a king who came out of the Seleucid branch of the Greek empire. This king came to be known as Antiochus Epiphanes IV. He was very arrogant and would commit an abomination of desolation in the temple rendering the temple desolate for 2,300 days. At that time he would be defeated. Dan 8 is the broadest picture of the Greek empire from its inception with Alexander the Great to its

completion with Antiochus Epiphanes IV, insofar as it depicts the Greek's rule over the Jews.

Fourth, in Dan 11 the most detailed picture of the Greek empire is given. Daniel had received a vision and the explanation of the vision was as follows. A mighty king would arise and he would have great authority and do whatever he wanted. But as soon as he gained absolute power his kingdom would be broken up into four pieces and given to the four points of the compass, none of which would be ruled by his descendants and none of which would wield his power and authority. This of course, is the same picture we saw in Dan 7 and 8; Alexander is the mighty king who would rise suddenly and then go to destruction. His kingdom would then be broken up into four pieces and given to his four generals according to the four points of the compass. At this point the explanation of the vision becomes very complex. In essence the vision looks at the ensuing conflict between the two Greek kingdoms that vied for power over Judea which lay directly in between. The king of the north is the Seleucid branch of the Greek Empire and the king of the south is the Ptolemaic branch of the Greek Empire. The Seleucid branch ruled in the Syrian and Babylonian region whereas the Ptolemaic branch ruled in Egypt. Between them lay Judea. The kings of these branches fought with one another to gain ascendancy over Judea. The exact kings, their acts and the shifts of power are predicted in painstaking detail in Daniel 11:5ff. These prophecies are fulfilled in such remarkable detail that liberal students of the book of Daniel argue that it must have been written after these facts of history and not before and by a pseudo-Daniel. Yet their anti-supernatural bias blinds them to the reality that God can and has revealed out of His omniscience specific details of history well in advance of their actual occurrences. So in the details of the predicted conflicts between these two branches of the Greek Empire the Seleucid branch would eventually take dominion over Judea and one would come to power who was despicable and he would use intrigue to take the kingdom. His entire reign would be characterized by deceit and he would desecrate the temple and do away with the sacrifice and set up an abomination of desolation. During this reign of terror some Jews would have insight and they would stand up and lead a small band in resisting him until his end. This is another prediction of Antiochus Epiphanes IV and how he would desecrate the temple and lead a campaign against the Jews. This vision also reveals that some Jews would resist Antiochus. This resistance was led by the family of Mattathias, an aged



priest who was commanded to offer sacrifices to Zeus but resisted and struck down the commander. It was Mattathias' family that came to be known popularly in history as the Maccabeans but more accurately they are the Hasmoneans. This would be the family that had insight and resisted Antiochus until he came to his end. So all of these prophecies are laid out in the book of Daniel far in advance and this is why we're so impressed with God that He would make plain what was to come in the Intertestamental Times and how His people Israel would fare in those times.

So let's start with Alexander. He is a prominent person in Bible prophecy and profane history. He came to be king at age 20 when his father Philip was assassinated. Philip's dreams of conquering all of Persia were left unrealized and so it came to Alexander. It was the year 336BC. The Persian kingdom was unstable and Darius III had just come to power. One of the keys to understanding the Greeks is the globalist mentality. They want to conquer the world and unify the world, they're one world type of people. The Babylonians and the Persians didn't think in that direction; they encouraged multiple nations within their nation, they allowed multiple languages and the development of multiple cultures. We've seen that in how they allowed the Jews to retain their culture, their worship, their language and so forth. It's a major factor in why the Jews had such a good life in those kingdoms. But the Greeks realized that these factors didn't promote unification of their kingdoms and so they implemented different policies in order to unify. They sought to establish one culture and they recognized that culture is transmitted through language and so ultimately they trended toward establishing one language throughout their entire kingdom. So a key to understanding the Greeks is the globalist mentality and how a global kingdom requires one culture and one language. Another key to the Greeks is rational thought. The Greeks were the first to reason from man about all sorts of things whereas people prior to them followed the traditions and beliefs of their tribe that had been passed down. So the Greeks challenged all that and they did so on the assumption that the universe was an intelligible whole. This assumption was somehow brought into Greek culture in the 6<sup>th</sup> century and we assume through the Exile of the Jews who took the Hebrew Bible into other cultures. The Hebrew Bible sets forth the concept that the universe is intelligible. The Greeks stole the concept and started to make theories about all sorts of things. Now, theories, we might point out, to the Greeks, were unchallengeable, but they were formed from reason alone. The

Greeks did not do experiments to test their theories because Greeks didn't get their hands dirty and doing experiments requires you to get dirty. That was the work of slaves. So there are a lot of things about the Greeks that are important to understand that made them different from the prior kingdoms and elements of all these kingdoms come down to our own day. They're always being put together in some new permutation and combination in the kingdoms of man. So here's Alexander, he's just received his kingdom and he's setting out with the globalist mentality he got from his father, he's operating under rational thought as a student of Aristotle, he's got a strong military and he's going to go right at the Persian kingdom in 334BC. This man is probably the greatest military strategist the world has ever known. He's going to conquer the kingdom on your map in just ten years. Nothing had ever been seen like this and nothing has ever quite been seen like this since. He makes his move crossing the Bosphorus Straits and wins a decisive battle at Granicus. He sets south to Sardis, Ephesus, Miletus, Halicarnassus, and Gordium, all in 334BC and he's conquering these cities and solidifying them in his kingdom. In 333BC the word reaches Darius that Alexander had crossed the Hellespont and had defeated his lieutenants in the Battle of Granicum and so he gathers his army and heads off to meet him in battle at Issus. No one thought Alexander could defeat the Persians. Josephus says of Darius, "for not he only, but all those that were in Asia also, were persuaded that the Macedonians would not so much as come to battle with the Persians, on account of their multitude; but the event proved otherwise than they expected, for the king joined battle with the Macedonians, and was beaten, and lost a great part of his army. His mother also, and his wife and children, were taken captives, and he fled into Persia." This was at the battle of Issus and this victory was key because it set the tone for the rest of his campaign. He's never going to lose a battle. He didn't win every battle decisively, but he won every battle. From there he heads south along the Mediterranean coastline toward Tyre. Tyre was a difficult city to take because it was an island and Alexander had to construct a causeway to get to it. But after seven months he finally did and he thereby became the first to ever defeat the city of Tyre. But because it slowed him down significantly he razed it to the ground entirely.

Now it was at this time that he came to Jerusalem and Josephus, though I think he's wrong about the time frame and he mixes people from different generations, covers with decent accuracy some of the details about this

period. He says that when Alexander “had taken Gaza, made haste to go up to Jerusalem;” Jaddua was the high priest at the time and you can imagine that he and the people feared. So what Jaddua did according to Josephus was “ordained that the people should make supplications, and should join with him in offering sacrifices 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 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 arose 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. (329) 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...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; (331) 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 clothing, with his mitre on his head having the golden plate on which the name of God was engraved, he approached by himself, and adored that name, and first saluted the high priest. (332) 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. (333) 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 that high priesthood; (334) 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; (335) 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.” (336) 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. (337) And when the book of Daniel was showed him, 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 bade them ask what favors they pleased of him: (338) 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: (339) 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 law 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.” And so the Jews enjoyed excellent treatment under Alexander the Great and that not only in Jerusalem but throughout all areas Alexander would henceforth conquer. Then Josephus records an account of how he came to Shechem, the city of the Samaritans who he calls “apostate Jews” and how whenever “the Jews are in adversity they deny that they are of kin to them...but when they perceive that some good fortune hath befallen them, they immediately pretend to have communion with them, saying, that they belong to them...” And so he saw the Samaritans as a vacillating people and hence at this time, since the Jews were in favor with Alexander, they claimed to be Hebrews. But their names were of Sidonian origin and Alexander caught it and they were forced to admit they were not Jews. Alexander then departed from them into Egypt in order to decide what to do with them at a later time. But Josephus records that by this time the Samaritans had built a temple on Mt Gerizim. His account states that it had come about because a Samaritan named Sanballat had a daughter Nicaso who had married Mannasseh, the brother of the high priest in Jerusalem. And because this was contrary to the law he was commanded to divorce her. Mannasseh then went to his father-in-law Sanballat and told him that

though he loved his daughter Nicaso he was not willing to be disqualified from his priestly role. So Sanballat promised him that he would allow him to serve as a priest and would make him a governor of all his territory he now ruled if he kept his daughter as a wife. Josephus writes, "He also told him further, that he would build him a temple like that at Jerusalem upon Mount Gerizzim, which is the highest of all the mountains that are in Samaria." And this he did and many other priests who had married foreign girls went to the new temple on Mt Gerizzim in Samaria. And so this is how there came to be rival temples in the Gospels and it provides the background for John 4 where Jesus met the Samaritan woman at the well. Jesus the Jew was not only speaking to a woman, which was frowned upon, but a Samaritan at that, with whom Jews have no dealings. In that dialogue the woman says to Him, "our fathers worshiped in this mountain [i.e. Gerizzim], and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. <sup>22</sup>"You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. <sup>23</sup>"But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. <sup>24</sup>"God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." So the Samaritan temple in that story was probably built during the time of Alexander the Great's father, Philip of Macedon. In any case it was standing in 333BC when Alexander was on his conquest. We won't trace all of Alexander's conquest but after departing from Samaria he went down into Egypt and he established one of the greatest cities of the ancient world and named it Alexandria, after himself. Now in this city Josephus records that Alexander "gave them equal privileges of citizens with the Macedonians themselves;"<sup>i</sup> Thus Alexandria became a safe haven for the Jews and there came to be a large and influential Jewish population there that is present in the NT times. Less than 100 years after Alexander the Jews will make a translation of the OT into Greek in Alexandria, Egypt. This translation is known as the Septuagint (LXX) and is the Bible most quoted by Jesus and the apostles in the NT. Alexandria will also come to house one of the most famous libraries in the ancient world making it one of the most important centers of learning in the ancient world. The combination of Greek culture, learning and a large Jewish population would result in the early Jewish allegorists like Aristobulus and Philo who will influence not only Jewish interpretations of the Bible but also early Christian allegorists like

Origen who also lived in Alexandria. Evidence in the NT of highly educated Jews from Alexandria is Apollos who is said to be eloquent and born in Alexandria (Acts 18:24). In any case it was Alexander who founded this city and he was friendly to the Jews and allowed them to practice their religion throughout his kingdom, though he did introduce Hellenization.

So, it was Alexander who implemented the policy of Hellenism and that's basically Greek culture and language but we'll deal with that next time and he didn't take it that far. He granted the Jews quite a bit of freedom due to his vision of the high priest. Later Greek rulers however, would not afford them such leniency but would press them to Hellenize and we'll get to those Greeks next time.

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