

“The Iron Beast, Its Eleven Horns, and the Three Horns Uprooted by the Eleventh – An Exploration into the Seleukid Allegory of *Daniel 7*”

I. Abstract

Daniel’s oracular vision of a giant beast with ten horns, the last three of which were ‘uprooted’ by the eleventh, has puzzled biblical and historical scholars for over two millennia. It is largely accepted that the ten horns are an allegory for the Seleukid lineage. Likewise uncontested is that the eleventh horn stands for Antiochos IV Epiphanes, under whom the cult of Yahweh in Jerusalem was effectively banned. No previous commentator has been able to present a consistent identification of the ten kings preceding Epiphanes in the dynastic list. All available studies include spurious kings such as Alexander the Great or Ptolemy VI Philometor of Egypt; and most lists regard Demetrios I as the tenth king, but he would rise to power only after the successor of Epiphanes was killed in 162 BCE, so that he cannot be one of the three kings ‘uprooted’ by Epiphanes. There is, however, a clear-cut solution, if all the legally co-ruling kings of the dynasty are included. Based on this principle, a coherent list of ten Seleukid kings who predeceased Epiphanes can be drawn up, including the co-ruling kings Seleukos, son of Antiochos I, Antiochos, son of Antiochos III, and Antiochos, son of Seleukos IV. Moreover, Antiochos IV could easily be slandered to have been involved in the premature death of his three immediate predecessors. Eventually, the revised king list enables us to better understand the ideological distortions of the author behind Daniel, a contemporary of Antiochos IV and V.

II. Preliminary Notes on *Daniel*

The Biblical *Book of Daniel* has come down to us in a heterogeneous shape. Leaving aside the later additions 13–14, its oldest preserved text version is in *Hebrew* (1.1–2.4a; 8.1–12.13) & *Aramaic* (2.4b–7.28), and is typically quoted after its 10th-century-CE edition (*Masoretic Text*). We further have two early Greek translations which may be as old as the late-2nd century BCE, the *Old Greek* and the *Theodotion* versions, the latter of which was included in a revised edition of the *Septuagint* = *LXX*.

Chapters 1–6 present ‘Daniel’ (in the third person) as a wise Jewish seer who interprets the dream visions of Babylonian or ‘Median’ kings; in chapters 7–12, ‘Daniel’ talks about his own apocalyptic visions in the first person. While scholars agree that many of the motifs go back to the Bronze or early-Iron ages, there is controversy regarding the composition date(s) of the extant narratives.

While only religious fundamentalists insist on the historicity of the narrative frameworks, all serious scholars agree that chapters 7–12 were written under the impression of the attack on the Jewish cult by **Antiochos IV Epiphanes** (175–164 BCE): he pillaged the temple treasury (169), besieged Alexandria, but was sent home by the Romans (168), crushed Jason’s revolt in Jerusalem (168), sent further troops to Jerusalem and eventually desecrated the temple (‘Abomination of Desolation’ on 25 Kislev / in Dec. 167), thrived at the Daphne parade (166), embarked on his eastern campaign (165), died in Persia (Dec. 164), around the same time as Judas Maccabee purified the temple (25 Kislev 164).

We are conducting a chronological and literary analysis of *Daniel*, based on the hypothesis that all twelve chapters were written or at least rewritten under the rule of Antiochos IV Epiphanes, and more specifically that chapter 11 dates to ca. 166, but did no longer form part of the edition of January 163, which included chapters 7–9 (for now, see Coşkun 2019 for details).

III. Source 1: *Dan 7*, the Four Beasts, and the Eleven Horns

The Greek Word. Greek Old Testament (Septuagint), which reproduces Elpenor’s Old Testament with the transl. of L.C.L Brenton. URL: <https://www.ellopos.net/elpenor/greek-texts/septuagint/default.asp>.

1 In the first year of Baltasar, king of the Chaldeans Daniel had a dream, and visions of his head upon his bed: and he wrote his dream. 2 I Daniel beheld, and, lo, the **four winds of heaven** blew violently upon the great sea. 3 And there came up **four great beasts out of the sea**, differing from one another. 4 The **FIRST** (was) as a **lioness**, and her **wings as an**

EN ἔτει πρώτῳ Βαλτάσαρ βασιλέως Χαλδαίων Δανιήλ ἐνύπνιον εἶδε, καὶ αἱ ὀράσεις τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τῆς κοίτης αὐτοῦ, καὶ τὸ ἐνύπνιον αὐτοῦ ἔγραψεν· 2 ἐγὼ Δανιήλ ἐθεώρουν ἐν ὀράματί μου τῆς νυκτὸς καὶ ἰδοὺ οἱ τέσσαρες ἄνεμοι τοῦ οὐρανοῦ προσέβαλον εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν τὴν μεγάλην. 3 καὶ τέσσαρα θηρία μεγάλα ἀνέβαινον

eagle's; I beheld until her wings were plucked, and she was lifted off from the earth, and she stood on human feet, and **a man's heart was given to her**. 5 And, behold, a SECOND beast like a **bear**, and it supported itself on one side, and there were **three ribs in its mouth**, between its teeth: and thus they said to it, Arise, **devour much flesh**. 6 After this one I looked, and behold ANOTHER (THIRD) wild beast as a **leopard**, and it had **four wings of a bird** upon it: and the wild beast had **four heads**, and power was given to it. 7 After this one I looked, and behold a FOURTH beast, dreadful and terrible, and exceedingly strong, and its **teeth were of iron**; devouring and crushing to atoms, and it **trampled the remainder with its feet**: and it was altogether different from the beasts that were before it; and it [had] **ten horns**. 8 I noticed his horns, and behold, **another little horn came up in the midst of them, and before it three of the former horns were rooted out**: and, behold, [there were] eyes as the eyes of a man in this horn, and a mouth speaking great things. 9 I beheld until the thrones were set, and the Ancient of days sat; and his raiment was white as snow, and the hair of his head, as pure wool: his throne was a flame of fire, [and] his wheels burning fire. 10 A stream of fire rushed forth before him: thousand thousands ministered to him, and ten thousands of myriads, attended upon him: the judgment sat, and the books were opened. 11 I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which that horn spoke, until the wild beast was slain and destroyed, and his body given to be burnt with fire. 12 And the dominion of the rest of the wild beasts was taken away; but a prolonging of life was given them for certain times. 13 I beheld in the night vision, and, lo, [one] coming with the clouds of heaven as **the Son of man**, and he came on to the Ancient of days, and was brought near to him. 14 **And to him was given the dominion, and the honour, and the kingdom**; and all nations, tribes, and languages, shall serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom shall not be destroyed. ... 19 Then I enquired carefully concerning the FOURTH BEAST; for it differed from every [other] beast, exceeding dreadful: its **teeth were of iron**, and its **claws of brass**, devouring, and utterly breaking to pieces, and it trampled the remainder with its feet: 20 and concerning it **ten horns** that were in its head, and **the other that came up, and rooted up [some] of the former**, which had eyes, and a mouth speaking great things, and his look was bolder than the rest. 21 I beheld, and **that horn made war with the**

ἐκ τῆς θαλάσσης διαφέροντα ἀλλήλων. 4 τὸ πρῶτον ὡσεὶ λέαινα, καὶ πτερὰ αὐτῆ ὡσεὶ ἀετοῦ· ἐθεώρουν ἕως οὗ ἐξετίλη τὰ πτερὰ αὐτῆς, καὶ ἐξήρθη ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς καὶ ἐπὶ ποδῶν ἀνθρώπου ἐστάθη, καὶ καρδία ἀνθρώπου ἐδόθη αὐτῆ. 5 καὶ ἰδοὺ θηρίον δεύτερον ὅμοιον ἄρκω, καὶ εἰς μέρος ἐν ἐστάθη, καὶ τρεῖς πλευραὶ ἐν τῷ στόματι αὐτῆς ἀναμέσον τῶν ὀδόντων αὐτῆς, καὶ οὕτως ἔλεγον αὐτῆ· ἀνάστηθι, φάγε σάρκας πολλὰς. 6 ὀπίσω τούτου ἐθεώρουν καὶ ἰδοὺ θηρίον ἕτερον ὡσεὶ πάρδαλις, καὶ αὐτῆ πτερὰ τέσσαρα πετεινοῦ ὑπεράνω αὐτῆς, καὶ τέσσαρες κεφαλαὶ τῷ θηρίῳ, καὶ ἐξουσία ἐδόθη αὐτῆ. 7 ὀπίσω τούτου ἐθεώρουν καὶ ἰδοὺ θηρίον τέταρτον φοβερὸν καὶ ἔκθαμβον καὶ ἰσχυρὸν περισσῶς, καὶ οἱ ὀδόντες αὐτοῦ σιδηροὶ μεγάλοι, ἐσθίον καὶ λεπτῦνον καὶ τὰ ἐπίλοιπα τοῖς ποσὶν αὐτοῦ συνεπάτει, καὶ αὐτὸ διάφορον περισσῶς παρὰ πάντα τὰ θηρία τὰ ἔμπροσθεν αὐτοῦ, καὶ κέρατα δέκα αὐτῷ. 8 προσενόουν τοῖς κέρασιν αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἰδοὺ κέρας ἕτερον μικρὸν ἀνέβη ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῶν, καὶ τρία κέρατα τῶν ἔμπροσθεν αὐτοῦ ἐξερριζώθη ἀπὸ προσώπου αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἰδοὺ ὀφθαλμοὶ ὡσεὶ ὀφθαλμοὶ ἀνθρώπου ἐν τῷ κέρατι τούτῳ καὶ στόμα λαλοῦν μέγα. 9 ἐθεώρουν ἕως οὗ οἱ θρόνοι ἐτέθησαν, καὶ παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν ἐκάθητο, καὶ τὸ ἔνδυμα αὐτοῦ λευκὸν ὡσεὶ χιών, καὶ ἡ θριξ τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ ὡσεὶ ἔριον καθαρὸν, ὁ θρόνος αὐτοῦ φλογὶ πυρός, οἱ τροχοὶ αὐτοῦ πῦρ φλέγον· 10 ποταμὸς πυρὸς εἴλκεν ἔμπροσθεν αὐτοῦ· χίλια χιλιάδες ἐλειτούργουν αὐτῷ, καὶ μύρια μυριάδες παρειστήκεισαν αὐτῷ· κριτήριον ἐκάθισε, καὶ βιβλοὶ ἠνεύχθησαν. 11 ἐθεώρουν τότε ἀπὸ φωνῆς τῶν λόγων τῶν μεγάλων, ὧν τὸ κέρας ἐκεῖνο ἐλάλει, ἕως οὗ ἀνηρέθη τὸ θηρίον καὶ ἀπόλετο, καὶ τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ ἐδόθη εἰς καῦσιν πυρός. 12 καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν θηρίων μετεστάθη ἡ ἀρχή, καὶ μακρότης ζωῆς ἐδόθη αὐτοῖς ἕως καιροῦ καὶ καιροῦ. 13 ἐθεώρουν ἐν ὁράματι τῆς νυκτὸς καὶ ἰδοὺ μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ὡς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ἐρχόμενος ἦν καὶ ἕως τοῦ παλαιοῦ τῶν ἡμερῶν ἔφθασε καὶ ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ προσηνέχθη. 14 καὶ αὐτῷ ἐδόθη ἡ ἀρχὴ καὶ ἡ τιμὴ καὶ ἡ βασιλεία, καὶ πάντες οἱ λαοί, φυλαί, γλῶσσαι αὐτῷ δουλεύσουσιν· ἡ ἐξουσία αὐτοῦ ἐξουσία αἰώνιος, ἣτις οὐ παρελεύσεται, καὶ ἡ βασιλεία αὐτοῦ οὐ διαφθαρήσεται. ... 19 καὶ ἐζήτησαν ἀκριβῶς περὶ τοῦ θηρίου τοῦ τετάρτου, ὅτι ἦν διαφέρον παρὰ πᾶν θηρίον, φοβερὸν περισσῶς, οἱ ὀδόντες αὐτοῦ σιδηροὶ καὶ ὄνυχες αὐτοῦ χαλκοί. ἐσθίον καὶ λεπτῦνον καὶ τὰ ἐπίλοιπα τοῖς ποσὶν αὐτοῦ συνεπάτει· 20 καὶ περὶ τῶν κεράτων αὐτοῦ τῶν δέκα τῶν ἐν τῇ κεφαλῇ αὐτοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἑτέρου τοῦ ἀναβάντος καὶ ἐκτινάξαντος τῶν προτέρων τρία, κέρας ἐκεῖνο, ὃ οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ καὶ στόμα

saints, and prevailed against them; 22 until the Ancient of days came, and he gave judgment to the saints of the Most High; and the time came on, and the saints possessed the kingdom. 23 And he said, The FOURTH BEAST SHALL BE THE FOURTH KINGDOM ON THE EARTH, WHICH SHALL EXCEL ALL [OTHER] KINGDOMS, and shall devour the whole earth, and trample and destroy it. 24 And his ten horns are ten kings [that] shall arise: and after them shall arise another, who shall exceed all the former ones in wickedness and he shall subdue three kings. 25 And he shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and shall think to change times and law: and [power] shall be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time. 26 And the judgment has sat, and they shall remove [his] dominion to abolish it, and to destroy it utterly. 27 And the kingdom and the power and the greatness of the kings that are under the whole heaven were given to the saints of the Most High; ...

λαλοῦν μεγάλα καὶ ἡ ὄρασις αὐτοῦ μείζων τῶν λοιπῶν. 21 ἐθεώρουν καὶ τὸ κέρασ ἐκεῖνο ἐποίει πόλεμον μετὰ τῶν ἁγίων καὶ ἴσχυσε πρὸς αὐτούς, 22 ἕως οὗ ἦλθεν ὁ παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν καὶ τὸ κρίμα ἔδωκεν ἁγίοις Ὑψίστου, καὶ ὁ καιρὸς ἔφθασε καὶ τὴν βασιλείαν κατέσχον οἱ ἅγιοι. 23 καὶ εἶπε· τὸ θηρίον τὸ τέταρτον, βασιλεία τετάρτη ἔσται ἐν τῇ γῆ, ἣτις ὑπερέξει πάσας τὰς βασιλείας καὶ καταφάγεται πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν καὶ συμπατήσῃ αὐτὴν καὶ κατακόψει. 24 καὶ τὰ δέκα κέρατα αὐτοῦ, δέκα βασιλεῖς ἀναστήσονται, καὶ ὀπίσω αὐτῶν ἀναστήσεται ἕτερος, ὃς ὑπεροίσει κακοῖς πάντας τοὺς ἔμπροσθεν, καὶ τρεῖς βασιλεῖς ταπεινώσει· 25 καὶ λόγους πρὸς τὸν Ὑψίστον λαλήσει καὶ τοὺς ἁγίους Ὑψίστου παλαιώσει καὶ ὑπονοήσῃ τοῦ ἀλλοιωῦσαι καιροὺς καὶ νόμον. καὶ δοθήσεται ἐν χειρὶ αὐτοῦ ἕως καιροῦ καὶ καιρῶν καὶ ἡμισυ καιροῦ. 26 καὶ τὸ κριτήριον καθίσει καὶ τὴν ἀρχὴν μεταστήσουςι τοῦ ἀφανίσει καὶ τοῦ ἀπολέσει ἕως τέλους. 27 καὶ ἡ βασιλεία καὶ ἡ ἐξουσία καὶ ἡ μεγαλωσύνη τῶν βασιλέων τῶν ὑποκάτω παντὸς τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἐδόθη ἁγίοις Ὑψίστου, ...

IV. Source 2: Jerome, *Commentarius in Daniele* 7.7f. = Porphyry, *FGrH 260 F 37–38* (ed. Toye)

Porphyry counts the two last beasts, representing the Macedonians and Romans, as a single kingdom of the Macedonians ... wishing the ‘leopard’ to be understood as Alexander himself, and the beast that is different than the other four beasts to be the successors of Alexander. Thereupon, down to the time of Antiochos Epiphanes, he listed ten kings who had been the cruelest, and he does not count these kings from a single kingdom, for example from Macedonia, Syria, Asia, or Egypt, but **he makes a single line of kings from different kingdoms, so that clearly the words of Scripture, ‘a mouth speaking boastfully’, are believed to concern not the Antichrist, but Antiochos.**

Porphyry wrongly suspects that the **little horn**, which arose after the **ten horns**, is Antiochos Epiphanes, and that the **three horns that are plucked out from the ten horns are Ptolemy VI Philometor, Ptolemy VII (VIII) Euergetes, and Artaxias, the king of Armenia.** Of these, the first two died long before Antiochos was born. We know for sure that Antiochos indeed fought Artaxias, but he remained in possession of his kingdom as before.

Porphyrius duas posteriores bestias, Macedonum et Romanorum, in uno Macedonum regno ponit ... ‘pardum’ volens intelligi ipsum Alexandrum, bestiam autem dissimilem ceteris bestiis quatuor Alexandri successores. et deinde usque ad Antiochum cognomento Epiphanen decem reges enumerat qui fuerant saevissimi, ipsosque reges non unius ponit regni, verbi gratia Macedoniae Syriae Asiae et Aegypti, sed de diversis regnis unum efficit regum ordinem, ut videlicet ea quae scripta sunt ‘os loquens ingentia’ non de Antichristo, sed de Antiocho dicta credantur. frustra Porphyrius cornu parvulum, quod post decem cornua ortum est, Epiphanen Antiochum suspicatur, et de decem cornibus tria evulsa cornua sextum Ptolemaeum cognomento Philometorem, septimum Ptolemaeum Euergetem et Artaxiam regem Armeniae, quorum priores multo antequam Antiochus nasceretur mortui sunt. contra Artaxiam vero dimicasse quidem Antiochum novimus, sed illum in regno pristino permansisse.

V. Four Beasts in *Daniel 7*

<i>Daniel 7</i>	Porphyry	Jerome	Collins, Nelson, Newsom, Kosmin	Coşkun, Scolnic
I) Lioness with eagle wings	Babylon	Babylon	Babylon	Successor
II) Bear eating flesh	Medes + Persians	Medes + Persians	Medes	Successor
III) Leopard with 4 wings & heads	Alexander	Macedonians	Persians	Successor
IV) Beast with iron teeth, 11 horns	Macedonians	Romans	Greeks/Macedonians	Seleukids

VI. Eleven (7+3+1) Horns in *Daniel* 7

<i>Daniel</i>	Porphyry	Jerome	Collins	Nelson	Kosmin	Coşkun & Scolnic
1)	The	10	10	<i>Alexander</i>	7	Seleukos I
2)	seven	uncertain	symbolic	Seleukos I	uncertain	Antiochos I
3)	most		number	Antiochos I		Sel., son of A. I
4)	cruel			Antiochos II		Antiochos II
5)	Hellenistic			Seleukos II		Seleukos II
6)	kings			Seleukos III		Seleukos III
7)	plus			Antiochos III		Antiochos III
8) uprooted	Ptolemy VI Philometor			Seleukos IV	Demetrios	A. son of A. III
9) uprooted	Ptolemy VII(I) Euergetes			A. son of Sel. IV	A. son of Sel. IV	Seleukos IV
10) uprooted	Artaxias of Armenia			<i>Demetrios I</i>	Heliodoros?	A. son of Sel. IV
11) small	A. IV Epiphanes	Anti-Christ	Epiphanes	Epiphanes	Epiphanes	Epiphanes

VII. Selected References

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