

# The Intertestamental Period

Tom Pennington | September 10, 2017



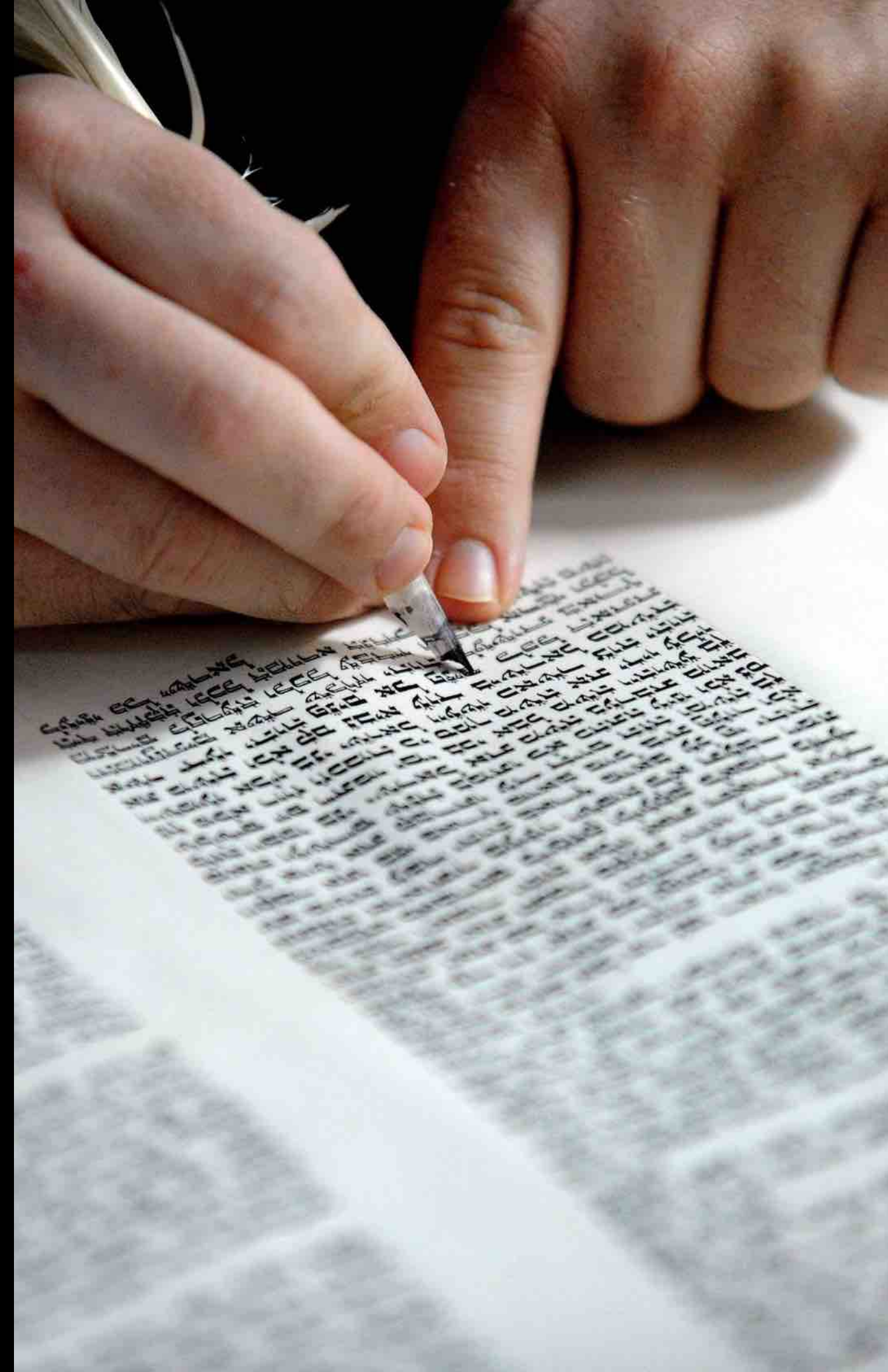
# The Silent Years

What Happened Between the Testaments?



# The Intertestamental Period

- Last OT revelation:
  - 420's BC
  - Malachi
- Birth of John the Baptist:
  - ca. 4 or 5 BC
- From Malachi to John:
  - 400 years







# The Political History



# The Image (2) vs. the Beasts (7)

## **Vision of Pagan King**

- History from Man's point of view
- Noble image w/ expensive metals
- Statue destroyed for no obvious reason
- God's Power Seen as an Inanimate Stone

## **Vision of a Godly Prophet**

- History from God's point of view
- Beasts w/o a conscience
- Nations destroyed for rebellion against God
- God's Power Revealed in The Son of Man



# The Great Word Empires

Image	Metal	Empire	Beast
Head	Gold	Neo-Babylonian	Lion
Chest/arms	Silver	Medo-Persian	Bear
Belly/thighs	Bronze	Greek	Leopard
Legs/feet	Iron	Roman	4th
Toes	Clay	Revived Roman	10 Horns





# Babylonians to MedoPersians

- Daniel lived and ministered during the Babylonian empire
  - the head of gold
  - the lion
- On October 12, 539 BC the Medo-Persian empire
  - captured Babylon
  - killed Belshazzar
  - the breast and arms of silver
  - the Bear
  - primarily Persian from 400-333 BC





# The Greeks

- 333 BC – 323 BC
  - the son of Philip of Macedon
  - captured most of the known world
  - Alexander the Great
  - the bronze belly and thighs
  - the Leopard
  - 333 BC – Alexander beat the Persians at the Battle of Issus.
  - 331 BC – Greece completely defeated Persia.







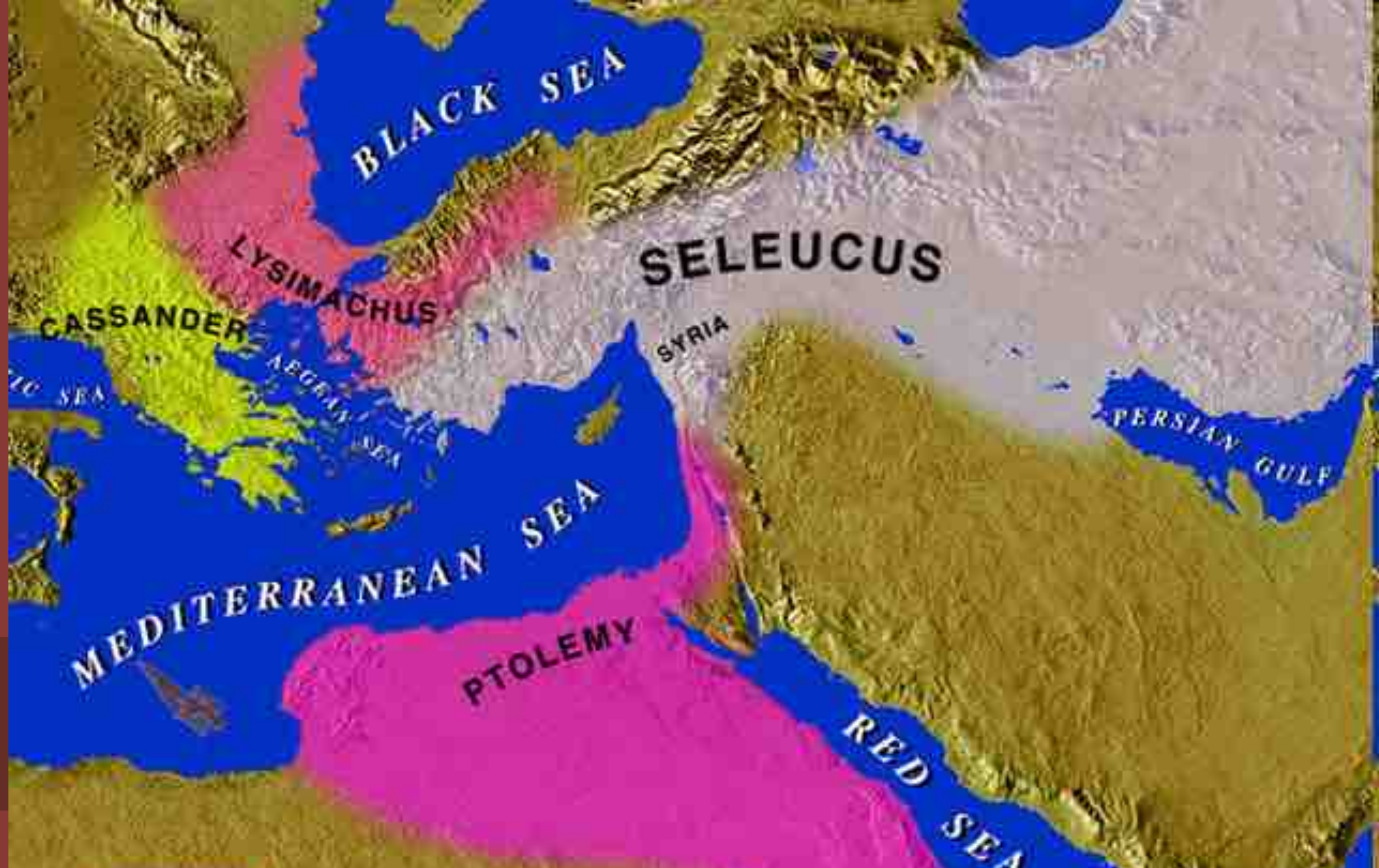


# The Greeks

- Four generals divided the empire
  - Lysimachus – Thrace
  - Cassander – Macedonia
  - Seleucus – Syria
  - Ptolemy – Egypt
- Until 198 BC – the Ptolemies (of Egypt) dominated Palestine









# The Seleucids (Syria)

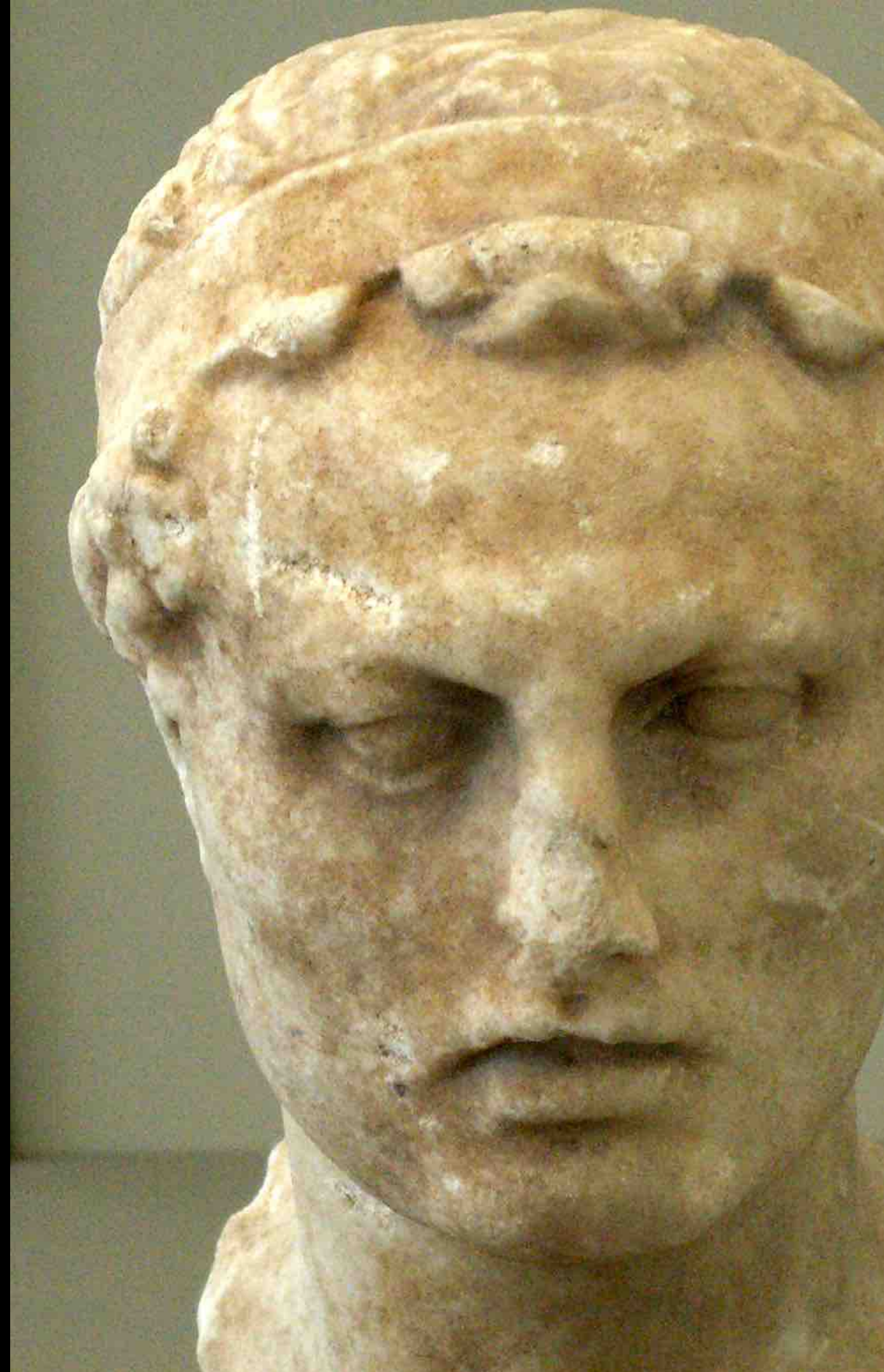
- 198 BC – 63 BC – Palestine became a political football.
  - 198 BC – Antiochus the Great
    - A Seleucid ruler of Syria
    - Cleopatra's father
    - Captured Jerusalem
- 175 BC: Antiochus Epiphanes became king of Syria.
- 170 BC: he defeated Ptolemy VI





# Antiochus Epiphanes

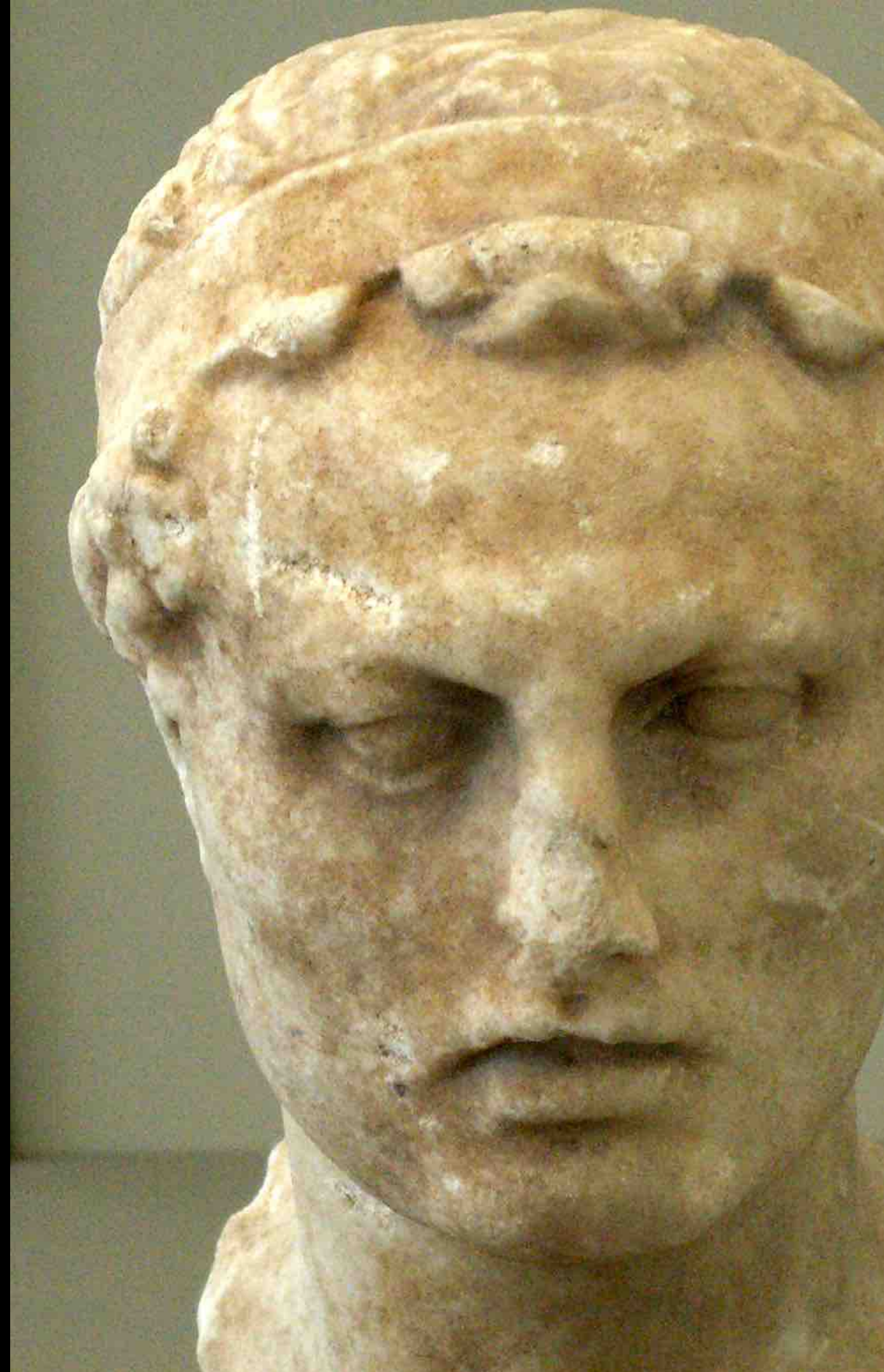
- 168 BC: Ptolemy rebelled, so Antiochus invaded Egypt a second time.
- Laenus, the Roman envoy, confronted Antiochus.
- Antiochus retreated through Jerusalem and plundered it.
- He decided to unify his kingdom by Hellenizing it.





# Antiochus Epiphanes

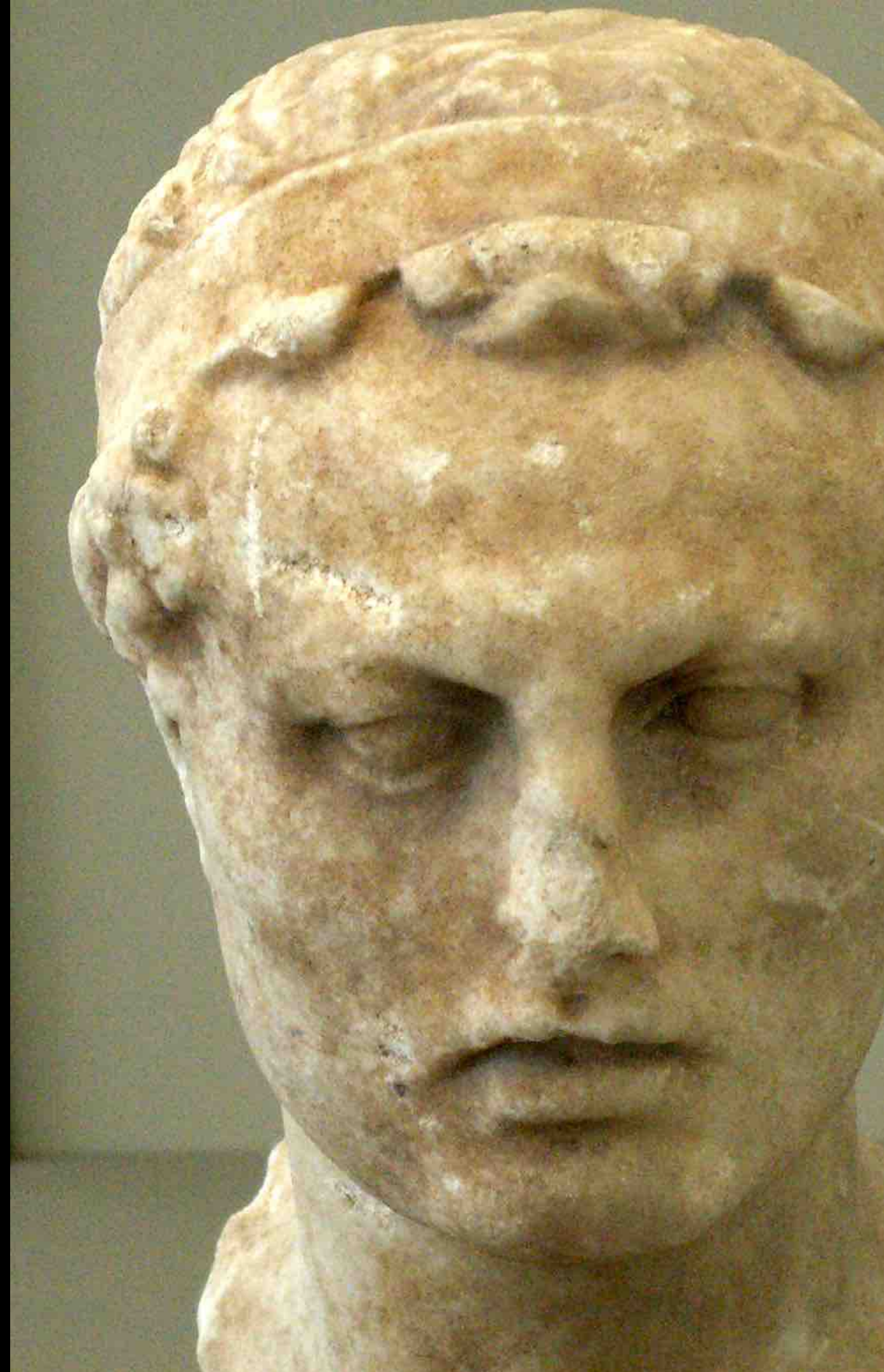
- 166 BC: Antiochus returned to Jerusalem:
  - Stripped the Temple of its valuables.
  - Massacred 1,000s
  - Carried 10,000 captives back to Syria (Josephus)
  - Demolished the walls of the city
  - Built a tower and supplied it with armed mercenaries
  - Desecrated the Temple by erecting an image of Zeus
  - Offered a pig on the altar and sprinkled its blood around the temple grounds





# Antiochus Epiphanes

- Set out on a comprehensive plan to force the Jews to think, and act like Greeks—to Hellenize them
  - Erected shrines to Greek deities throughout the land
  - Burned copies of the Law of God and executed their owners
  - Refused to let them circumcise their children
  - Strangled circumcised children along with their mothers





# The Maccabean Revolt

- Village of Modin
- 20 miles northwest of Jerusalem
- Apelles, Antiochus' general, demanded the village offer a sacrifice on a pagan altar.
- First demanded that a leader and a priest, named Mattathias offer the sacrifice.
- Mattathias refused.
- Another Jewish man did.
- Mattathias and his five sons killed the Jewish traitor, Antiochus' general Apelles, and the soldiers.





# The Maccabean Revolt

- Mattathais, his five sons, and many others left the village for the Judean hill country.
- In the months that followed, they fought a guerilla war against the stronger Syrian force.
  - Ranks continued to grow
  - Mattathias
    - Became terminally ill
    - Appointed his son Simon as administrator
    - Appointed his oldest son, Judas, as General of the Army
- Judas was called Maccabeus—the Hammer.





# Judas Maccabeus

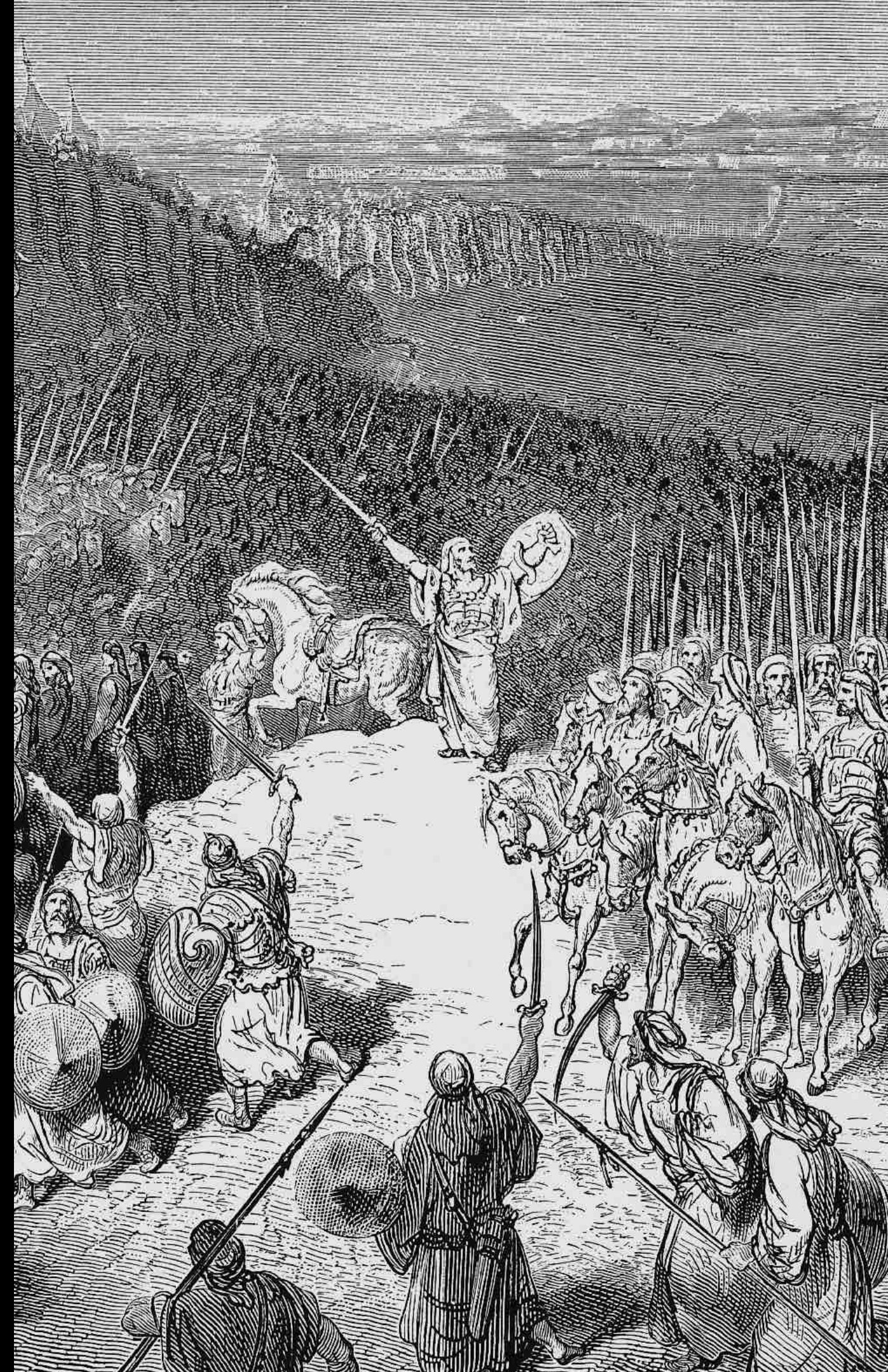
- Under Judas' leadership, the Jews recaptured the Temple in December, 165 BC.
- 25th of Kislev, 165 BC - Worship of YHWH restored!
- The celebration
  - lasted 8 days
  - singing, feasting, and sacrifices
  - decided to celebrate every year
  - the festival of lights, or Hanukkah
  - Hanukkah celebrates the cleansing of the temple under Judas Maccabeus.





# The Maccabees

- 165 BC – 63 BC: Descendants of Judas led the nation.
- 129 BC: John Hyrcannus won political independence.





# The Romans in Palestine

- 63 BC: Pompey
  - annexed Syria and arrived in Damascus
  - decided something had to be done with Judea
  - entered the Temple; and the Holy of Holies
- 63 BC: Judea and Jerusalem came under Roman occupation.



Pompey



# The Romans

- 63 BC – 31 BC: Rome's civil wars
- 31 BC: Octavian won
- 27 BC: Octavian gained the title, Caesar Augustus
  - Octavian rewarded Antipater for his help.
  - Antipater's son was made governor over Palestine.
  - Herod
  - Later called, Herod the Great



Caesar Augustus

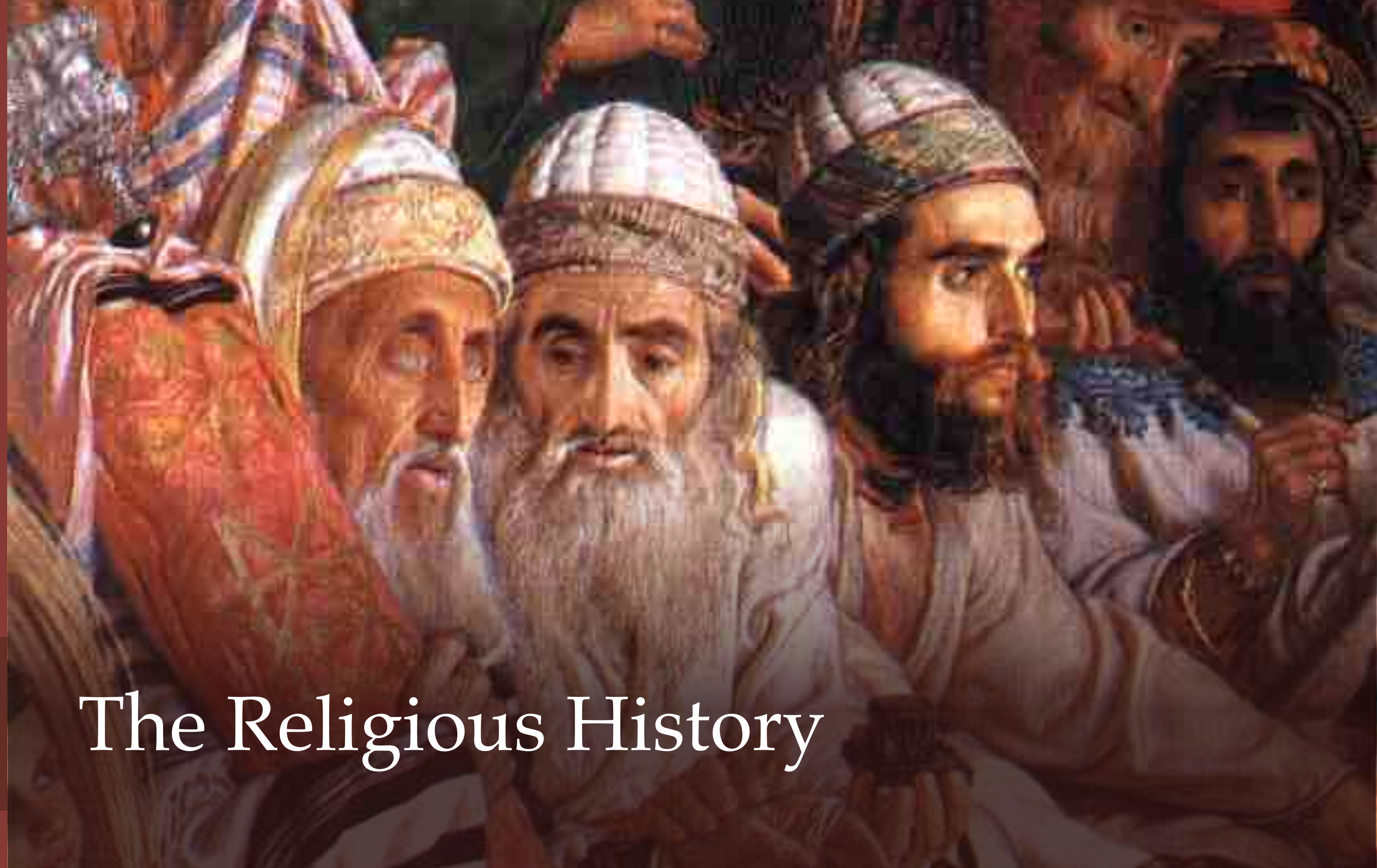


# Herod the Great

- Brilliant & brutal
- Ten wives
  - loved Mariamne passionately
  - suspected her of infidelity, so he had her killed
  - 7 BC: executed her two sons
- 4 BC: ordered the execution of the babies in Bethlehem, 2 years and younger
- 4 BC: 5 days before his death had his favorite son executed







# The Religious History



# The Pharisees

- Arose in the time of Antiochus
- Called the Hasidim
- Means “separated ones”
- Opposed bringing Greek, pagan elements into the Jewish culture
- Most conservative of Israel’s leaders
- Scribes were primarily Pharisees
- Chief responsibilities:
  1. interpret the Law (using oral tradition; eventually recorded in the Mishnah by 200 AD)
  2. teach the Law
  3. apply the eternal Law to changing circumstances





# The Sadducees

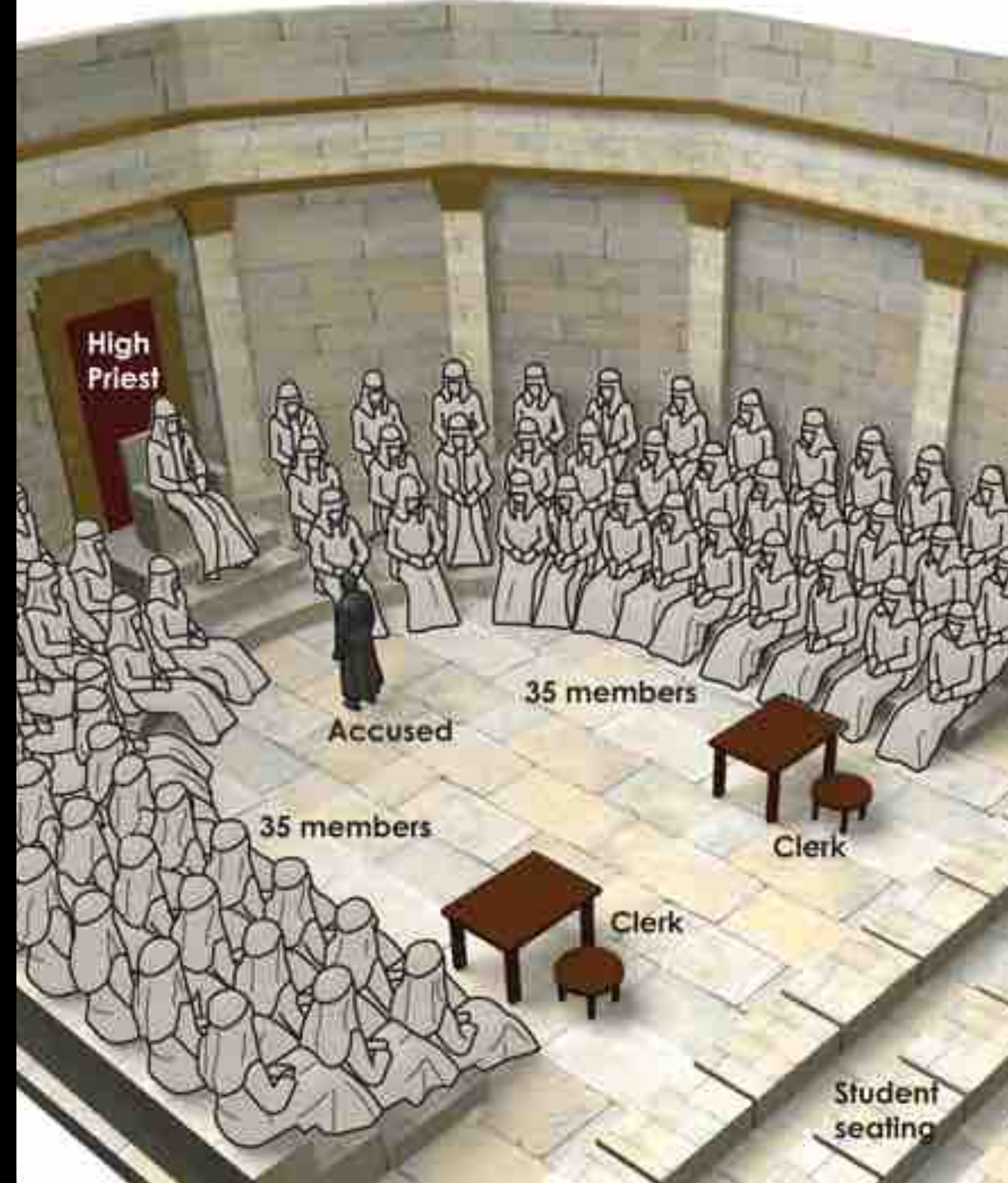
- Named after Zadok, high priest of David's time
- Primarily priests
- Wealthy, aristocratic families
- Most of the political leaders
- The Pentateuch
- Rejected oral law
- Anti-supernaturalists
  - God doesn't intervene.
  - There is no spirit world (angels).
  - There is no resurrection.
- Pragmatists
- Hellenists





# The Great Sanhedrin

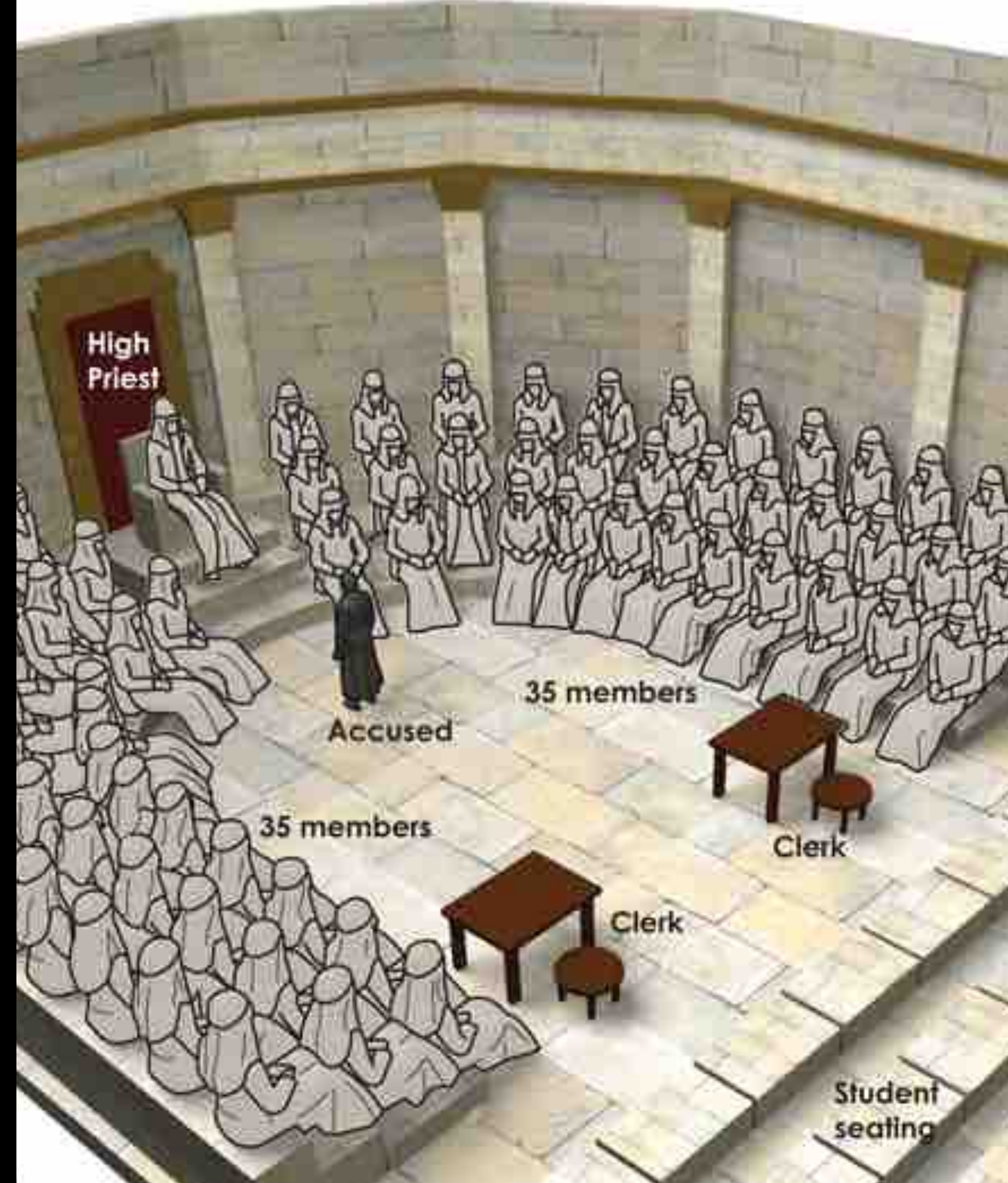
- Mishnah – 71 men
- Mostly ...
  - Aristocracy
  - the Sadducees
  - the high priest
- High priest presided
- Met in the Temple precincts
  - “The Chamber of Hewn Stone”





# The Great Sanhedrin

- Sat in a semi-circle
- Two scribes kept a written record
- Their authority:
  - Interpret the Mosaic Law
  - Govern civil affairs of the nation
  - Try certain criminal cases under the Roman procurators authority





# The Synagogue

- Origin: Babylonian captivity in the 6th century BC
- Greek means “a gathering of the people or a congregation”
- The Hebrew word is Kneset.
- A local place to meet, pray, and hear the Word read and explained
- Required a quorum of 10 men





# The Synagogue

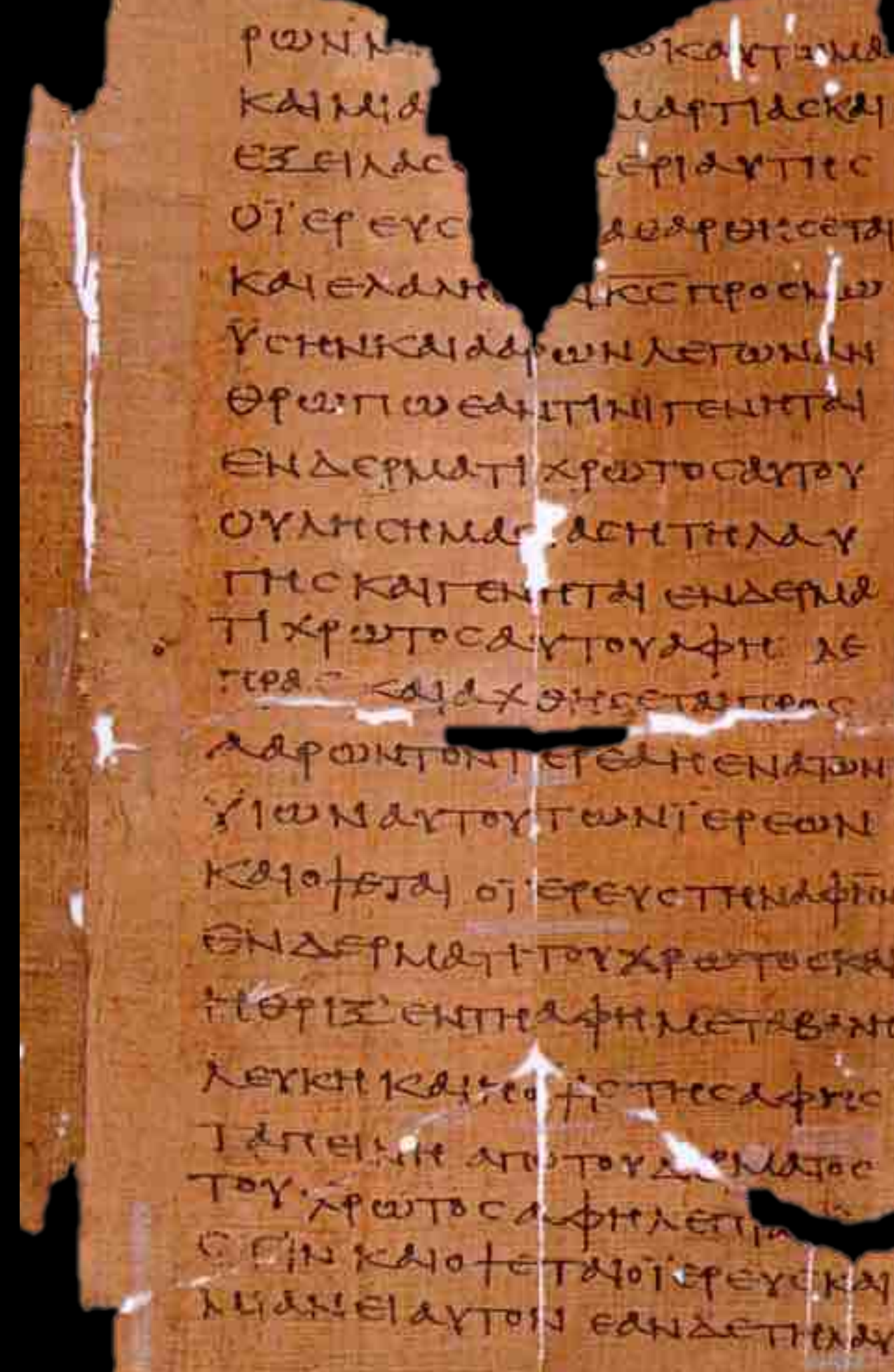
- Initially, men and women sat together; eventually, separate
- The weekly service in the time of Christ:
  - Prayers – the 18 benedictions
  - The reading of the Scripture, particularly the Pentateuch
  - An explanation of the biblical text or an exposition
- Often find Christ or Paul in the synagogues.





# The Septuagint (LXX)

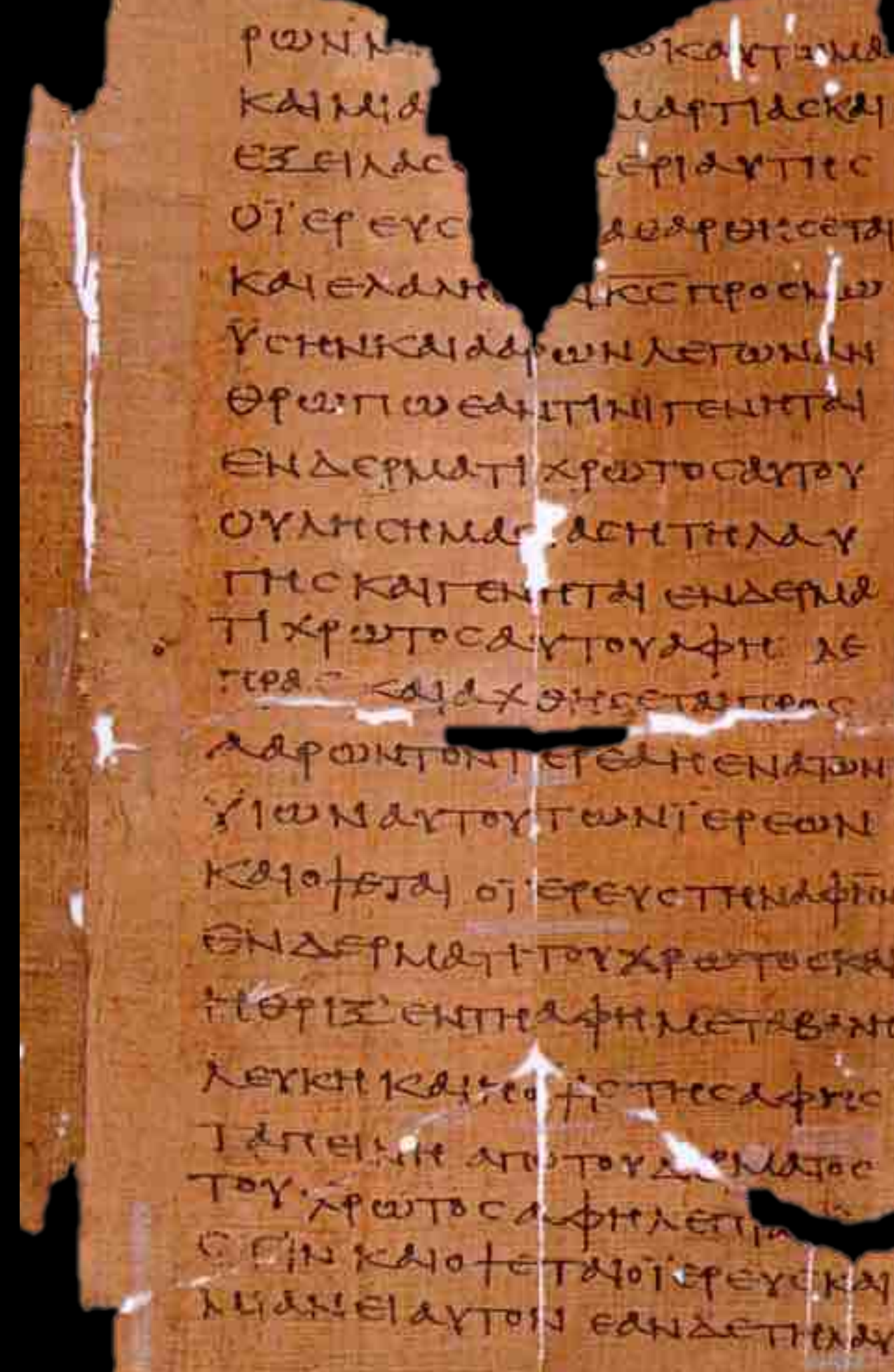
- Ptolemy II of Egypt commissioned a Greek translation of the Hebrew OT.
  - Jews spread around the empire no longer spoke Hebrew
  - Provide a copy of the Jewish Bible to the library in Alexandria





# The Septuagint (LXX)

- Jews from Palestine
- Legend
  - 72 scholars, 72 days.
- Called the Septuagint (70)
- Probably completed in the 100's BC
- The Bible of NT times
- Jesus, the apostles, and Paul freely quote from this translation.





# Why 400 Silent Years?

During those 400 silent years,  
God was  
preparing the  
world for the  
arrival of His Son.





# The Greeks

- The Greek language
  - A precise language, especially suited to the revelation of the NT's doctrine
  - A universal, trade language that would allow the spread of the apostle's writings across the empire.





# The Romans

- The Pax Romana
  - Relative peace across the world
  - A united world, where national boundaries and loyalties would not prevent the spread of the gospel.
- A network of roads that made travel and communication by letters much simpler.
- An openness to religions of various kinds





# The Jews

- Oppressed by the Romans
  - Looking for a deliverer
  - Looking for a Messiah
- Dispersed throughout the empire (the Diaspora)
- A Greek translation of their Scripture
  - Took this Greek version of the OT wherever they went.
  - In the NT era, even God-fearing gentiles had the OT in the language they could understand.





# The Silent Years

“When the fullness of the time came,  
God sent forth His Son.”

*Galatians 4:4*

