

## Study of Daniel

### Chapter 11: Vision of Future Kings and Kingdoms

### Chapter 12: The Time of the End

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Remember that the information given in the latter chapters of Daniel will help the Jews who live hundreds of years later, who will not have the benefit of the existence of God's prophets. The Jews will need the assurance that God cares for them and is still in control of what's happening around them. Chapter 11 gives a most detailed account of what will happen during those times. Those who don't believe in predictive prophecy discount the fact that this information was written in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC, because it's *too* detailed.

#### Chapter 11, Verses 2-4:

The four kings of Persia after Cyrus, in succession, were Cambyses II, Smerdis, Darius I, and Xerxes I (485-465). Xerxes did, in fact, attack Greece – most famously in the Battle of Thermopylae in 480. The Greeks were greatly outnumbered but held off the Persians until they were betrayed by a local resident. Later that year, at the Battle of Salamis, Xerxes was defeated, and in 479 was ousted from Greece at the Battle of Plataea. The Greeks never forgot the attempted takeover by Persia. Many years later, a “mighty king” arose and conquered all of Persia and much more. His reign was short-lived though, and he died at a young age. His kingdom was divided among four of his generals.

1. In what other book of the OT do we read of Xerxes?
2. Who was that “mighty king” of Greece?

#### Verse 5:

Two of the four kingdoms were the Seleucids (in Syria – the “north”) and the Ptolemies (in Egypt – the “south”). The first king of the Ptolemies was Ptolemy I Soter (306-282). At the same time, there was a king appointed in Syria named Nicator, but he was thrown out by Antigonos, a former general in Alexander's army. Nicator fled to Egypt and became a general in Soter's army. He won some victories and managed to displace Antigonos. Nicator actually went back to Syria and took the throne, with an agreement to be protected for some time by the Ptolemy. But Nicator (311-281) became strong; so strong that he became greater than the king that was protecting him.

#### Verse 6:

A new Ptolemaic king arises: Ptolemy II Philadelphus (282-246), the son of Soter. The Seleucid king here is the grandson of Nicator, Antiochus II Theos (261-246). Philadelphus decides to form an alliance with Syria, so he gave his daughter, Berenice, to Theos to be his wife. Since Theos was already married, he divorced his current wife, Laodice. Two years later, Ptolemy II dies, so Antiochus takes Laodice back as wife. Shortly after that, Antiochus dies (probably from poisoning by Laodice). Laodice arranges to have Berenice murdered too, along with her Egyptian servants. So the marital alliance formed to bring peace only brings strife between the two nations. Ptolemy II, Antiochus II, and Berenice all die in the same year (246).

#### Verses 7-9:

Berenice's brother, Ptolemy III Euergetes (246-222, the son of Ptolemy II), wants revenge for the murder of his sister, so he invades Syria. Laodice is actually ruling at the time. She is killed by Euergetes. He continues to dominate Syria for about five years, and carries much spoil back to Egypt. Seleucus II (246-226, son of Antiochus II), son of Laodice, attacks Euergetes, but without success.

3. According to verse 8, what did Ptolemy III carry back to Egypt?

Verses 10-19:

“His sons” are the sons of Seleucus II: Seleucus III (226-222) and Antiochus III, the Great (222-187). Antiochus III became king at age 18 and reigned 36 years. He has success in many battles. Ptolemy IV (222-204) of Egypt raises a great army, 70,000 foot-soldiers, 5,000 cavalry, and 73 elephants, to go up against Antiochus. Antiochus raises a great army as well: 62,000 foot-soldiers, 6,000 cavalry, and 102 elephants. They engage in a great war in 217 BC which Ptolemy wins. Instead of pressing the advantage and procuring land for himself, attacking again, etc., Ptolemy revels in his victory back in Egypt. This gives Antiochus time to rebuild his armies. So in 202 BC, he attacks Egypt again. It happens to be at the time that Ptolemy IV dies, and Ptolemy V (204-180) is made king at the young age of 4. It is an opportune time for Antiochus the Great to strike. Many Jews join his army, but an Egyptian general, Scopas, retaliates against the Jews and kills many of them (v14). Scopas takes the city of Caesarea Philippi, but Antiochus lays siege to it in the battle of Panium in 198 BC. Scopas is soundly defeated. During this time, the Seleucids secure their hold on Jerusalem and the land of Judea. In about 192 BC, Antiochus gives his daughter, Cleopatra, to the young king Ptolemy V to try to influence him. Cleopatra, though, turns and sides with the Ptolemies. Antiochus then turns his attention to taking some areas around the Mediterranean. By this time, the Romans have come to power. They have several battles with the Seleucids. Antiochus is defeated at the Battle of Thermopylae in 191 BC (driven out of Greece) and the Battle of Magnesia in 190 (driven out of Asia Minor). Rome forced Antiochus to sign the Treaty of Apamea of 188 BC, which, among many other things, made him give up territory, pay huge indemnity fines, give up a significant part of his army, and hand over twenty hostages annually, which included his son Antiochus IV. Because of this treaty, parts of the empire began to assert their independence. Antiochus III was killed trying to raid a temple treasury in his own land in 187 BC.

4. What is the “glorious land”? (v16)
5. How many times do you find the phrase “he shall do as he wills” (or similar) in this chapter, and what is it usually followed by?

Verses 20-24:

Seleucus IV Philopater (187-175) succeeds Antiochus the Great. To help pay the tribute to Rome, he sends his minister Heliodorus to attempt to plunder the temple treasury in Jerusalem. Seleucus dies in 175 BC under mysterious circumstances, possibly being poisoned by Heliodorus, who claims the throne. Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-164), a “contemptible person”, ousts Heliodorus and becomes the next Seleucid king. He gained power, not by being the next in line, but by devious political means. He paid those who supported his rise to power. (He had been a hostage of Rome, but was exchanged for his nephew Demetrius I Soter, the true heir to the throne.) He seized the throne for himself. Ptolemy VI Philometer (180-145) came up against Antiochus in battle, but was defeated and held hostage. Ptolemy VI may be the “prince of the covenant” (v22), because he attempted to make an alliance with Antiochus to regain his throne in Egypt which had been taken by his brother Ptolemy VIII. Ptolemy VI did regain the throne, but he later broke the covenant, and joined forces with his brother against Antiochus. Antiochus also managed to obtain wealth for himself by plundering some of the richest areas belonging to Egypt.

6. What similarities do you see in this section with the description of the “little horn” in 8:23-25?

Verses 25-35:

More detailed information is given here concerning the battle against Ptolemy VI. Ptolemy’s own counselors plot against him and advise him to go to war, but he is defeated. The “two kings”, Antiochus and Ptolemy VI, covenant together to go against Ptolemy VIII, but they both “speak lies”, never intending to honor their agreement. Still, they gain all of Egypt except Alexandria. Later, brothers Ptolemy VI and VIII join forces to rule Egypt. In 168 BC, Antiochus launches a second attack on Egypt, especially Alexandria, sending a fleet also to Cyprus. This time, however, he found that Rome had sent an envoy named Gaius Popillius Laenas to intercept him before he came to Alexandria. Popillius bore a message from the Roman Senate stating that Antiochus was to withdraw all his forces from Egypt and Cyprus or consider themselves in a state of war with Rome. Antiochus said he needed to discuss it with his council, but Popillius drew a circle in the sand and told him not to cross the line until he gave him an answer. Antiochus wisely chose to withdraw. Enraged at this humiliation, Antiochus returned to his land in 167,

only to find an insurrection going on with the Jews. Antiochus took out his anger upon them - those of the “holy covenant”. 80,000 of the Jews were lost, either killed or sold into slavery; the temple was plundered; regular sacrifices were outlawed; an altar to Zeus was erected in the temple on December 15, 167 and swine (most likely) was offered upon it soon after. This action polarized the Jews. Antiochus rewarded those Jews who accepted the new Hellenistic policies, but many chose to stand, rather than go against the law of God. Many died in the process. Thus began the Maccabean Revolt.

Verses 36-39:

*[At this point in the prophecy, some believe the text continues to describe Antiochus IV Epiphanes, but others think it shifts to describe another, more powerful ruler, namely, the Romans. Still others, who hold a premillennial view, say this passage is describing the Antichrist. There are difficulties with every approach. For reasons we’ll discuss in class, this lesson will assume that the Roman Empire is being described.]*

The Roman emperors were known for exalting themselves, even to the point of enforcing emperor-worship. As mentioned in Daniel often, the Roman Empire was known for its strength (“iron”); it was their god (the “god of fortresses”). They abandoned any former allegiance to state honor, and sold out to power. They made alliances with other nations and adopted their gods for help. They rewarded obeisance with titles of rulership.

Verses 40-45:

This may be a description of the campaign of the Roman leader Pompey, who marched into Syria in 63 BC to intervene in the Judean civil war between Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II. Pompey aided Hyrcanus and laid siege to Jerusalem, which fell after three months. Josephus records that thousands of Jews died. Judea was then annexed by Rome. Pompey continued his campaign, but was not able to take the areas described as Edom, Moab, and parts of Ammon. This section may also describe the final years of the Ptolemaic kingdom under Cleopatra VII (51-31), and their last war with Rome at the Battle of Actium. This marked the end of the Ptolemies (giving full control of Egypt to Rome) and beginning of the Roman Empire. Other parts of Africa came under Roman rule as well. Rome had to defend many fronts. Those on the eastern and northern borders of the Roman Empire included the Parthians and the Germanic tribes. Rome dealt with all with excessive force. Rome exerted her influence on Judea by placing temples wherever they wanted, described as “right in the middle” (“between the sea and the glorious holy mountain”). But in the end, after they served His purposes, God would bring the empire down.

Chapter 12, Verses 1-4:

Once again, Michael is on the scene (see 10:13,21). The angel Michael seems to hold a special relationship at this time to God’s people. “That time” may refer to the time total Roman dominance of Judea, described at the end of chapter 11. It’s possible that this terrible time referred to is the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in 70 AD. Those being “delivered” is probably referring to spiritual deliverance, for at that time the gospel message was available and spreading. The “wise” would recognize God’s gift and turn from the law to Christ. Daniel was told to preserve the message, for it would be needed in later times.

Verses 5-13:

So far in Daniel, we have seen references to that fourth, powerful empire – Rome; the struggles of the Jews under Antiochus IV; the destruction of Jerusalem; the ending of the Jewish sacrificial system; persecution of the saints; and the coming of God’s eternal kingdom. It does not seem, therefore, that we should take the prophecies of Chapter 12 to refer to anything beyond that. The angel’s message looked to the completion of God’s mystery that was fulfilled in the gospel - not the end of all time. In answer to the “how long” question, the messenger responds that it would be limited time (“time, times, and half a time”; see 7:25), and only after a time of persecution. Many will choose to acknowledge the Messiah and his teaching, and by doing so, make themselves white. Note that “*the time that the regular burnt offering is taken away and the abomination that makes desolate is set up*” is referring to one specific time (not two) in history, which would be the temple abominations of Antiochus IV Epiphanes in 167 AD. From that time until the end of the “shattering of the power of the holy people” (v7), the destruction of Jerusalem, would be 1290 days; not a “full” time, but a limited one. The angel then pronounces a blessing upon those who are patient and wait another 45 days; perhaps referring to the time when Rome finally falls. Daniel is left not understanding (v8,9,13), but is told to persevere, and that he would take his special place among the prophets (v12).

7. Read Revelation chapters 10-12 and note any similar references to this passage:

*(The following are the pros and cons of the two prevalent views on Daniel 11:36-12:13)*

### **Roman Empire View**

- King of north emperors of Rome and king of south Cleopatra, last of the Ptolemies. They believe this finds fulfillment in events of NT and destruction of Jerusalem
- Examples: Calvin, 343; McGuigan, 170
- Attractiveness: Allows us to connect 12:1 with Matt 24:21 (to events we know about)
  - Matt 24 knows it talks about a crisis described with similar language. wasn't aware of other passages that use the same idea.
- Abomination of desolation 12:11 with Mt. 24:15
- Many OT prophecies fulfilled in NT
- Rome is discussed in chapters 2 and 7
  - 11:30 mentions Kittim, which is taken to be a reference to Rome, but not used like 2, 7
- Problems: Dan 12:11 abomination of desolation is used in 9:27 and 11:31 also
- Where is the evidence of a 200 year break in the text? While these writers often criticize the dispensational jump in the text, they seek to do the same thing
- 10:20 Persia and Greek, no mention there of Rome
  - finds ultimate fulfillment in these kingdoms

### **Antiochus Epiphanes View: Continuation of AE and his wars**

- 1. In 11:36-12:13 no reason the king of South/North different than in rest of the text
- 2. Limits of the vision described in 10:13, 20-21; 12:1
- 3. Verbal connections between Daniel 8 and Daniel 10-12
- 4. Verbal connections between Daniel 11:36-12:13 and 11:21-35

### Points of similarity between Daniel 8 and 10-12:

- Both deal with Persia (8:20; 11:2) and Greece (8:21; 11:2-3)
- Mighty king arising in Greece (8:21; 11:3)
- Kingdom broken and divided into four parts (8:22; 11:4)
- A king from these exalts himself (8:11; 11:36)
- Removes regular sacrifice (8:12; 12:11)
- Destroys many (8:24; 11:33)
- Comes to an abrupt end (8:25; 11:45)
- Keep the vision secret (8:26; 12:4)
- Beautiful land (8:9; 11:16, 41, 45)

Neither of these visions mention:

- The kingdom of God as in Dan. 2 & 7
- The Messiah as in 9:25-26
- The Babylonian or Roman kingdom
- This suggests that both are emphasizing the same thing

### Connections between 11:21-35 and 11:36ff:

- The abomination of desolation 11:31; 12:11
- Removal of regular sacrifice 11:31; 12:11
- Those who have insight 11:33; 12:3, 10
- End time 11:35, 40; 12:4, 6, 9, 13
- Refine, purge, and purify 11:35; 12:10
- Remember all commentators applied the words of 11:21-35 to Antiochus IV

### What about the resurrection?

- Could the resurrection be figurative?
- Ezekiel 37:1-14; Nation coming to life in the grave of Babylonian captivity
- New Testament uses this picture of a resurrection; John 5:24-25, 28-29; Ephesians 2:1-6
- This national crisis awakens many to life and others fail and enter contempt

### Do these words match history?

- 11:45 "The prediction of the location of his death eliminates the figure of Antiochus Epiphanes, who met his end in Persia, after an unsuccessful raid on a temple..." Driver, 196-97
- Baldwin points out that this does not specifically say that he will die in the Holy Land but will pitch his tent against it and die. This may give the reason and not the place of judgment.