

Daniel Chapter 11

The Persian Period

This chapter outlines the succession of kings during the transition period from Persian to Roman dominance. The struggle for control of Palestine between the rival Hellenistic Greek kingdoms of the Ptolemies [Egypt] and Seleucids [Syria] receives the greatest attention. However, toward the end of the chapter [11:36], the Romans also enter our story.

Chapter 11 continues the vision of Daniel 10. The Lord God himself shows Daniel the coming wars and succession of kings in the Persian and Grecian Empires. The year 535 B.C. marked about 70 years of the Jews' captivity in Babylon. At this time, some of the Jews returned to their own country and began to rebuild the Temple as Cyrus had given them permission to do.

This vision deals mainly with the successor kings after the death of Alexander the Great in 330 B.C. The Jewish homeland lay between their dominions and suffered as the Egyptian and Syrian armies marched back and forth across their land.

"Together with chapter 12, Daniel 11 gives a far more detailed and accurate prophecy than the first four visions of Daniel. A case could be made that this is the most detailed and accurate prophecy in the Bible."¹ These empires are discussed in chapter 11.

Medo-Persian Empire from 539 to 330 B.C.
Macedonia-Greece from 330 to 64 B.C.
Pompey invades Jerusalem 63 B.C.
Roman Empire from 64 B.C. to AD 70
Death of Julius Caesar 44 B.C.

11:1 "Also in the first year of Darius the Mede, I, even I, stood up to confirm and strengthen him.

"In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans—" (Daniel 9:1, NKJV)

in the first year of Darius the Mede.... "When Babylon was subdued by the Medes and Persians in 539 B.C., Darius took command of the empire. The two rulers, Cyrus and Darius, began simultaneously. By the time of this prophecy, Cyrus had already ruled for three years.... Although the vision occurs in the third year of the reign of Cyrus the Persian (535 B.C.), Daniel is told by the angel of events three years earlier during the first year of the reign of Darius the Mede."²

¹ Jay Rogers, In the Days of These Kings, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 70.

² Jay Rogers, In the Days of These Kings, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 70.

I, even I, stood up to confirm and strengthen him... Who stood up, and who was strengthened?

The “I” was the unnamed angel of chapter 10, possibly Gabriel; it was he that stood up. The “him” appears to be Darius the Mede. He may have needed this help because he was facing the oppression of his demonic advisors who were attempting to kill Daniel. There we read that “*the administrators of the kingdom, the prefects, satraps, advisers, and governors*” (6:7) laid a trap for Daniel to get him thrown into the lion’s den.

“And the king, when he heard these words, was greatly displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him.” (Daniel 6:14, NKJV)

Perhaps it was on this occasion that Gabriel “stood up to strengthen and protect him” or Darius.

Cyrus and the Four Persians Kings
539 BC to 465 BC

11:2 *And now I will tell you the truth: Behold, three more kings will arise in Persia [Cambyses, Pseudo-Smerdis, Darius], and the fourth [Xerxes] shall be far richer than them all; by his strength, through his riches, he shall stir up all against the realm of Greece [Second Persian War].*

And now I will tell you the truth.... “...these words, which introduce the long description of verses 2b–45, are a return to the wording of 10:21: “I will tell you what is inscribed in the book of truth.””³ This is the “truth” that Gabriel is proclaiming.

three more kings shall arise in Persia.... The kings that followed:

Rulers of the Persian Empire⁴	
Cyrus The Great	559P/549M/547L/539B/-530
Cambyses II	530–522
Smerdis Magus III (Gaumata)	522
Darius I “The Great”	522–486
<i>Xerxes I (Ahasuerus)</i>	486–465
Artaxerxes I	465–424

³ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 278.

⁴ J. M. Cook, *The Persian Empire* (London: Dent, 1983), 206.

Xerxes II	424 – reigned 45 days	
Sogdianos	424–423	
Darius II	423–404	
Artaxerxes II	404–358	
Artaxerxes III	358–338	
Artaxerxes IV	338–336	
Darius III	336–331	

and the fourth shall be far richer than them all; by his strength, through his riches, he shall stir up all against the realm of Greece.

a fourth.... This was Xerxes I, 486–465. “Xerxes was arguably the richest of the kings and was the one who was most involved with battles against the Greeks.”⁵

“This “fourth” king extended the Persian Empire to its greatest lengths, all the way east to India and west to Asia Minor and even into Greece.”⁶

“Xerxes I, also known as Ahasuerus to the Jews, is the king described in Esther. The personality and temperament of Esther’s king fits the historical Xerxes, a womanizer given to rash actions and harsh judgments. The Greek historian Herodotus describes Xerxes as a tall and handsome man who was the vice-regent of the province of Babylon prior to ascending to the throne.”⁷

riches.... “...this fourth ruler will be wealthier than all those kings who ruled before he came to power.”⁸

“...he showed the riches of his glorious kingdom and the splendor of his excellent majesty for many days, one hundred and eighty days in all.” (Esther 1:4, NKJV)

he shall stir up all against the kingdom of Greece.

⁵ Victor Harold Matthews, Mark W. Chavalas, and John H. Walton, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), Da 11:2.

⁶ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 351.

⁷ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 351.

⁸ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 281.



This begins the first of more than 130 prophecies “in the first 35 verses that are validated by a review of the history of the period. God’s omniscience and omnipotence (power over history) are unmistakably set forth in this chapter.”⁹

The Greek Period 334 BC – 323 BC

As we will note, there is a 131-year space between Xerxes I (11:2) and Alexander (11:3). This is a tendency in chapter 11 that we must be careful to note. Chapter 11 is not an ongoing story from one king to another without gaps. But in fact, there are gaps in the text that we should take note of. At 11:36, we will see a gap of significance; such gaps are common to this chapter.

11:3 *Then a mighty king shall arise* [Alexander], *who shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will.*

***a mighty king* or *warrior king*....** “The mighty king is none other than Alexander the Great. The text skips about 130 years from the end of Xerxes’ reign to 336, when Alexander took the throne of Macedon. Within five years, his military prowess had toppled the Persian empire and ushered in the Greek.”¹⁰

***who shall rule with great dominion* or *rule a vast realm*....** “Between 334 and 331 B.C. Alexander won a series of battles against Darius III of Persia and became ruler of an empire that stretched from Greece to India.”¹¹

“Alexander III of Macedonia is known to all as Alexander the Great (356 to 323 B.C.). He was the second son of King Philip II of Macedonia (reign: 359-336 B.C.), a kingdom

⁹ Ted Cabal et al., *The Apologetics Study Bible: Real Questions, Straight Answers, Stronger Faith* (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2007), 1289.

¹⁰ Victor Harold Matthews, Mark W. Chavalas, and John H. Walton, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), Da 11:3.

¹¹ John H. Walton, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 554.

in the northern part of the Balkan Peninsula. Philip took what was considered a backward region with an unorganized military and subjugated all the surrounding territories of the Balkan Peninsula. ...

Philip and his son Alexander were descendants of the Argead Dynasty, who traced their origins to Argos in southern Greece and believed they were ultimately descended from the god Zeus through Heracles (Hercules in Roman mythology). Alexander studied under the great philosopher Aristotle and inherited the role his father had set for him.”¹²

We see him predicted in Daniel 8.

“And as I was considering, suddenly a male goat came from the west, across the surface of the whole earth, without touching the ground; and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes. Then he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing beside the river, and ran at him with furious power. And I saw him confronting the ram; he was moved with rage against him, attacked the ram, and broke his two horns. There was no power in the ram to withstand him, but he cast him down to the ground and trampled him; and there was no one that could deliver the ram from his hand. Therefore the male goat grew very great; but when he became strong, the large horn was broken, and in place of it four notable ones came up toward the four winds of heaven.” (Daniel 8:5–8, NKJV)

and do according to his will. “The idea is that he will be subject to no one and will do as he himself pleases.”¹³

Alexander’s Successors 322 BC to 282 BC

11:4 And when he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken up and divided toward the four winds of heaven [a four-way split of Alexander’s empire], **but not among his posterity** [not to his natural heirs] **nor according to his dominion with which he ruled** [the successor did not rule with Alexander’s power]; **for his kingdom shall be uprooted, even for others besides these** [military commanders rather than natural heirs].

“Verses four and five covers the period from Alexander’s death through the reigns of the first kings of the two empires, [Egypt and Syria] about forty years.”¹⁴

his kingdom shall be broken up and divided toward the four winds of heaven....

“Alexander died in 323, and a twenty-year struggle for succession ensued that

¹² Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 367.

¹³ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 282.

¹⁴ Victor Harold Matthews, Mark W. Chavalas, and John H. Walton, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), Da 11:5.

eventually led to a four-way division of the empire....”¹⁵ At the death of Alexander, the kingdom did not pass into the hands of his sons. “His twelve generals divided the spoils of the empire among themselves. At first, Aridæus was made king, but finally, the four-fold division, already described in Dan. 8:8ff. emerged, and these four kingdoms were established.”¹⁶

1. **Antigonus I** was the founder of the Antigonid Dynasty of Asia Minor.
2. **Cassander** was the son of Antipater and the founder of the Antipatrid Dynasty in Macedonia.
3. **Ptolemy I** was the founder of the Ptolemaic Dynasty in Egypt.
4. **Seleucus I** founded the Seleucid Empire in Mesopotamia and Central Asia (Syria).

“The first two rulers above, Antigonus and Cassander, are not specifically mentioned or alluded to in Daniel’s prophecy, but they were two of the “four heads,” “four wings” or “four winds,” from which two kingdoms – the Seleucids and the Ptolemies – soon emerged.”¹⁷

“Therefore the male goat grew very great; but when he became strong, the large horn was broken, and in place of it four notable ones came up toward the four winds of heaven.” (Daniel 8:8, NKJV)

but not among his posterity.... Or his heirs. “The kingdom does not pass over to the actual children of Alexander. Alexander had two sons; one named Hercules, by Barsine the daughter of Darius, who was assassinated soon after his father’s [Alexander’s] death by Polysperchon; the other, by Roxana, who was named Alexander, and with his guardian, Philip Aridæus, was shortly cut off in the same manner.”¹⁸

nor according to his dominion with which he ruled.... “None of the subsequent kingdoms shall be as great as was that of Alexander. On the contrary, they shall be far inferior.”¹⁹

“This indicates that the successors’ kingdom would be unlike that of the “warrior king” (Alexander the Great).”²⁰ “To be more precise, it has to do with the degree of power: “nor will its power be comparable to his” (REB); “nor shall it be so powerful as it was in

¹⁵ Victor Harold Matthews, Mark W. Chavalas, and John H. Walton, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), Da 11:4.

¹⁶ Edward J. Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1980), 233–234.

¹⁷ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 365.

¹⁸ Edward J. Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1980), 233.

¹⁹ Edward J. Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1980), 233.

²⁰ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 283.

his hands” (MFT).”²¹ The combined power of the successors was not as great as was Alexander’s.

for his kingdom shall be uprooted, even for others besides these. “When Alexander the Great died, he was succeeded by his military leaders rather than by his sons.”²²

From these four generals, four kingdoms followed:

“The Ptolemaic Kingdom ... was a Hellenistic kingdom based in ancient Egypt. It was ruled by the Ptolemaic dynasty, which started with Ptolemy I Soter's accession after the death of Alexander the Great in 323 B.C. and which ended with the death of Cleopatra and the Roman conquest in 30 B.C..”²³

The Ptolemies [Egypt]

Ptolemy I Soter/Lagi	323–285
Ptolemy II Philadelphus	285–246
Ptolemy III Euergetes	246–221
Ptolemy IV Philopater	221–203
Ptolemy V Epiphanes	203–181
Ptolemy VI Philometor	181–146

“The Seleucid Empire ... was a Hellenistic state ruled by the Seleucid dynasty which existed from 312 B.C. to 63 B.C.; Seleucus I Nicator founded it following the division of the Macedonian Empire vastly expanded by Alexander the Great. Seleucus received Babylonia (321 B.C.) and, from there, expanded his dominions to include much of Alexander's near-eastern territories. At the height of its power, the Empire included central Anatolia, Persia, the Levant, Mesopotamia, and what is now Kuwait, Afghanistan, and parts of Pakistan and Turkmenistan.”²⁴

The Seleucids [Syria]

Seleucus I Nicator	312–280
Antiochus I	280–261
Antiochus II	261–246
Seleucus II	246–226
Seleucus III	226–223
Antiochus III the Great	223–187
Seleucus IV	187–175

²¹ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 283.

²² René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 283.

²³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ptolemaic_Kingdom

²⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seleucid_Empire

Antiochus IV Epiphanes 175–164

“The **Antigonid dynasty** ... was a dynasty of Hellenistic kings descended from Alexander the Great's general Antigonus I Monophthalmus ("the One-eyed")....

Succeeding the Antipatrid dynasty in much of Macedonia, Antigonus ruled mostly over Asia Minor and northern Syria. His attempts to take control of the whole of Alexander's empire led to his defeat and death at the Battle of Ipsus in 301 B.C. Antigonus's son Demetrius I Poliorcetes survived the battle, and managed to seize control of Macedon itself a few years later, but eventually lost his throne, dying as a prisoner of Seleucus I Nicator. After a period of confusion, Demetrius's son Antigonus II Gonatas was able to establish the family's control over the old Kingdom of Macedon, as well as over most of the Greek city-states, by 276 B.C..”²⁵

“**Cassander** ... "son of Antiparos" (c. 350 B.C. – 297 B.C.) was king of the Hellenistic kingdom of Macedon from 305 B.C. until 297 B.C., and *de facto* ruler of southern Greece from 317 B.C. until his death.

Eldest son of Antipater and a contemporary of Alexander the Great, Cassander was one of the Diadochi who warred over Alexander's empire following the latter's death in 323 B.C. Cassander later seized the crown by having Alexander's son and heir Alexander IV murdered. In governing Macedonia from 317 B.C. until 297 B.C., Cassander restored peace and prosperity to the kingdom, while founding or restoring numerous cities (including Thessalonica, Cassandra, and Thebes); however, his ruthlessness in dealing with political enemies complicates assessments of his rule.”²⁶

The Six Syrian Wars 274 BC to 168 BC

First Syrian War	(274–271 B.C.)
Second Syrian War	(260–253 B.C.)
Third Syrian War	(246–241 B.C.)
Fourth Syrian War	(219–217 B.C.)
Fifth Syrian War	(202–195 B.C.)
Sixth Syrian War	(170–168 B.C.)

“The Syrian Wars were a series of six wars between the Seleucid Empire and the Ptolemaic Kingdom of Egypt, successor states to Alexander the Great's empire, during the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC These conflicts drained the material and manpower of both parties and led to their eventual destruction and conquest by Rome and Parthia. They are briefly mentioned in the Books of the Maccabees.”²⁷

²⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antigonid_dynasty

²⁶ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cassander>

²⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syrian_Wars

The First Syrian War (274–271 B.C.)

Daniel 11:5

“A decade into his rule, Ptolemy II faced Antiochus I, the Seleucid king who was trying to expand his empire's holdings in Syria and Anatolia. Ptolemy proved to be a forceful ruler and skilled general. In addition, his recent marriage to his court-wise sister Arsinoe II of Egypt had stabilized the volatile Egyptian court, allowing Ptolemy to successfully carry out the campaign. ...

The First Syrian War was a major victory for the Ptolemies [Egypt].

11:5 “Also the king of the South [Ptolemy] shall become strong, as well as one of his princes [Seleucus]; and he [Seleucus] shall gain power over him and have dominion. His dominion shall be a great dominion.

The king of the South.... This is Ptolemy I Soter (c. 305 B.C. to c. 285 B.C.) son of Lagus, one of Alexander’s generals, who became governor of Egypt after Alexander’s death and declared himself king of Egypt in 305 B.C. He founded a long-lasting dynasty.”²⁸

one of his princes.... This would be Seleucus I Nicator (c. 312 B.C. to c. 280 B.C.). “A former general of Alexander the Great, Seleucus seized control of the Asian segment of the empire following Alexander’s death and founded the Seleucid Dynasty, which ruled from 312 to 64 B.C..”²⁹

and he.... Here the angel speaks of Seleucus I Nicator, king of Asia Minor, and Syria, whose successors are here called the kings of the north because their dominions lay to the north of Jerusalem.

shall gain power over him and have dominion. “Seleucus I “gradually extended his realm until it became the largest of the four successor kingdoms of Alexander’s empire. The struggle between the dynasty he founded, the Seleucids, and the Ptolemies for control of Syria and Palestine was a major factor in the history of the Jews for over two centuries.”³⁰

The Second Syrian War (260–253 B.C.)

Daniel 11:6

“Antiochus II succeeded his father in 261 B.C., and thus began a new war for Syria. He reached an agreement with the current Antigonid king in Macedon, Antigonus II

²⁸ John H Walton, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 560.

²⁹ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 71.

³⁰ John H Walton, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 560–561.

Gonatas, who was also interested in pushing Ptolemy II out of the Aegean Sea. With Macedon's support, Antiochus II launched an attack on Ptolemaic outposts in Asia. ...



Aegean Sea

It is clear that Antigonus' fleet defeated Ptolemy's at the Battle of Cos in 261, diminishing Ptolemaic naval power. Ptolemy appears to have lost ground in Cilicia, Pamphylia, and Ionia, while Antiochus regained Miletus and Ephesus. Macedon's involvement in the war ceased when Antigonus became preoccupied by the rebellion of Corinth and Chalcis in 253 BC, possibly instigated by Ptolemy, as well as an increase in enemy activity along Macedon's northern frontier. ...



Battle of Cos



Cilicia, Pamphylia, and Ionia

The war was concluded around 253 BC with the marriage of Antiochus to Ptolemy's daughter, Berenice Syra. Antiochus repudiated his previous wife, Laodice, and turned over a substantial domain to her. He died in Ephesus in 246 BC, poisoned by Laodice according to some sources. Ptolemy II died in the same year.”³¹

Laodice I “In 252 BC after the Second Syrian War, Antiochus II was obliged to make peace with the Egyptian Greek Pharaoh Ptolemy II Philadelphus. Antiochus made peace with the Pharaoh by divorcing Laodice and marrying the daughter of Ptolemy II, Berenice, with the understanding that any children born from their union would inherit the Seleucid throne.

On January 28, 246 BC, Ptolemy II died and was succeeded by Ptolemy III Euergetes. After the death of Ptolemy II, Antiochus II left his second family in Antioch and returned to Laodice. He named his first son with Laodice as his successor to the throne.

In July 246 BC, Antiochus II died (some suggest that he was poisoned by a revengeful Laodice), leaving a confusing dynastic situation. Seleucus II succeeded his father as king and his brother Antiochus Hierax was named co-ruler in Sardis. They lived with Laodice at Ephesus. Laodice, either for revenge or to prevent civil war, had Berenice and her son murdered in the late summer of 246 BC.

Out of his outrage, the brother of Berenice, Ptolemy III declared war and invaded the Seleucid Empire. His suspicions about the deaths of his sister and nephew were firmly grounded and were a part of the cause of the Third Syrian War also known as the

³¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syrian_Wars

'Laodicean War' or the 'War of Laodice'. Ptolemy captured Laodice and had her killed."³²

Berenice I, (c. 246 BC), "daughter of Ptolemy II Philadelphus and Arsinoe I of Egypt. She was married to the Seleucid ruler Antiochus II Theos, supplanting his first wife, Laodice, whose children she persuaded him to bar from the succession to the throne in favor of her own. Laodice, however, persuaded Antiochus to come to Ephesus (in Asia Minor), where he died in 246, perhaps a victim of her intrigues. The former queen then ordered her partisans to kill Berenice and her children, who had taken refuge at Daphne, near Antioch, in Syria. Aroused by the murder, Ptolemy III Euergetes, Berenice's brother, launched a successful war (the Third Syrian War) against Laodice and her son, Seleucus II."³³

11:6 *And at the end of some years they* [Ptolemy II and Antiochus II] *shall join forces* [make a treaty], *for the daughter of the king of the South* [Berenice] *shall go to the king of the North* [Antiochus] *to make an agreement; but she shall not retain the power of her authority* [she was deposed], *and neither he* [Antiochus] *nor his authority shall stand* [he was poisoned]; *but she shall be given up* [she was assassinated], *with those who brought her* [her Egyptian entourage], *and with him who begot her* [Ptolemy II's treaty was repudiated], *and with him who strengthened her in those times* [probably referring to Ptolemy III, who tried to rescue her].

"The text now moves forward about forty years. These years had witnessed the first and second Syrian wars (274–271; 260–253), mostly over the control of the trade routes, ports, and natural resources of Syria. In the aftermath of the second war, there was interest in peace, and the text now focuses on this pivotal moment in history. About 252, Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285–246) sent his daughter, Berenice, with her entourage to marry the Seleucid king, Antiochus II Theos (261–246), and thereby to establish an alliance between their kingdoms."³⁴

Sometime later, "Berenice had a child, but a former wife of Antiochus, Laodice, whose sons had been cut off from succession, allegedly poisoned Antiochus and consequently had Berenice and her son (along with many from her entourage) murdered."³⁵

And at the end of some years.... There is a period of 40 years between verse 11:5 and 11:6.

they shall join forces.... It is Ptolemy II of Egypt and Antiochus II of Syria that join forces or make a treaty. This treaty is built around a marriage between Berenice I Syra, the daughter of Ptolemy II of Egypt and Antiochus II of Syria.

³² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laodice_I

³³ <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Berenice-daughter-of-Ptolemy-II>

³⁴ Victor Harold Matthews, Mark W. Chavalas, and John H. Walton, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), Da 11:6.

³⁵ Victor Harold Matthews, Mark W. Chavalas, and John H. Walton, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), Da 11:6.

the daughter of the king of the South.... Ptolemy II Philadelphus is the **king of the south** who gave his daughter, Berenice, to Antiochus Theos, ***the king of the North***, the son of Antiochus I and grandson of Seleucus I.

to make an agreement.... Ptolemy II Philadelphus succeeded his father, Ptolemy I as the second ruler of Ptolemaic Egypt. In about 250 B.C., Ptolemy II [Egypt] made an alliance [***agreement***] with Antiochus II [Syria] and as a condition of the treaty, Antiochus had to marry Berenice I his daughter. This meant that Antiochus II had to divorce his existing wife, Laodice, (the woman for whom the city of Laodicea was named) and disinherit his two sons by her. Later, he had another son by Berenice I, but after two years he was reconciled to Laodice.

During his reign, he [Ptolemy II Philadelphus of Egypt] signed a peace accord with Rome in 271 B.C., which formalized a trade relationship between Egypt and Rome that lasted for centuries. Already, we see Rome entering the picture; Rome's role will grow over the coming years.

but she shall not retain the power of her authority, and neither he nor his authority shall stand; but she shall be given up.... "In the year 246 B.C., Ptolemy II Philadelphus of Egypt died, and his son Ptolemy III Euergetes came to power. Ptolemy III wanted to use his sister, Berenice, as leverage to make Syria give territory back to Egypt. Antiochus II Theos responded by divorcing Berenice and putting Laodice back on the throne as queen. Laodice did not forgive so easily. She took revenge by poisoning Antiochus, Berenice and their young son, also named Antiochus. Her son, Seleucus II Callinicus, then took the throne of the Seleucid Empire."³⁶

The Third Syrian War 246–241 B.C.

Daniel 11:7-9

"Also known as the Laodicean War, the Third Syrian War began with one of the many succession crises that plagued the Hellenistic states. Antiochus II left two ambitious mothers, his repudiated wife Laodice and Ptolemy II's daughter Berenice Syra, in a competition to put their respective sons on the throne. Laodice claimed that Antiochus had named her son heir while on his deathbed, but Berenice argued that her newly born son was the legitimate heir. Berenice asked her brother Ptolemy III, the new Ptolemaic king, to come to Antioch and help place her son on the throne. By the time Ptolemy arrived, Berenice and her child had been assassinated.

Ptolemy declared war on Laodice's newly crowned son, Seleucus II, in 246 BC, and campaigned with great success (his forces possibly being commanded by Xanthippus of Sparta, aka Xanthippus of Carthage, the mercenary general responsible for defeating a Roman army at Tunis/Bagrades in 255). He won major victories over Seleucus in Syria and Anatolia, briefly occupied Antioch and, as a recent cuneiform discovery proves,

³⁶ Jay Rogers, In the Days of These Kings, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 387.

even reached Babylon. These victories were marred by the loss of the Cyclades to Antigonus Gonatas in the Battle of Andros.



Cyclades

Seleucus had his own difficulties. His domineering mother asked him to grant co-regency to his younger brother, Antiochus Hierax, as well as rule over Seleucid territories in Anatolia. Antiochus promptly declared independence, undermining Seleucus' efforts to defend against Ptolemy. ... In exchange for a peace in 241 BC, Ptolemy was awarded new territories on the northern coast of Syria, including Seleucia Pieria, the port of Antioch. The Ptolemaic kingdom was at the height of its power.”³⁷

“The historical reference in this verse is to the intervention of Ptolemy III, the brother of Bernice, who took revenge for the death of his sister in a military expedition against Seleucus II of Syria, son of Antiochus II, in 246 B.C. As indicated in the following verse, he took considerable spoils back to Egypt.”³⁸

11:7 *But from a branch of her roots* [the brother of Berenice, Ptolemy III] ***one shall arise in his place*** [in the place of Ptolemy II], ***who shall come with an army, enter the fortress of the king of the North, and deal with them and prevail.***

But from a branch from her roots one shall arise in his place.... This is the image of a family tree. This is an idiomatic way of saying, “Another offspring of her parents,” that is, Berenice’s brother, Ptolemy III Euergetes, the third king of the Ptolemaic dynasty. The title, *Euergetes* means “Benefactor.”

³⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syrian_Wars

³⁸ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 286.

Ptolemy II died about the same time as Antiochus II. After the death of Antiochus II, his wives, Laodice and Berenice Syra vied on behalf of their sons – Seleucus Callinicus, who was no more than 20-years-old, and the five-year-old son of Antiochus – both in competition to succeed to the throne. Since both sons were unmarried, either Laodice or Berenice could have served as a queen regent.

who shall come with an army enter the fortress of the king of the North, and deal with them and prevail.... “Berenice’s father died before her murder, and it was left to her brother, Ptolemy III, to avenge her. He successfully invaded Syria, capturing the major cities of Antioch and Seleucia, campaigning further to the east, and taking much plunder. This included the images of the gods that Cambyses had taken from Egypt to Persia in 525 B.C. He captured and killed Laodice. When he had to return to deal with trouble in Egypt, Seleucus II, one of Laodice’s sons, regained control of Syria.”³⁹

11:8 And he shall also carry their gods captive to Egypt, with their princes and their precious articles of silver and gold; and he shall continue more years than the king of the North [Ptolemy III ruled until 222, while Seleucus II died in 226].

And he shall also carry their gods captive to Egypt.... “this is one of the few places where the Hebrew text actually gives a geographic name.”⁴⁰ That name is Egypt.

with their princes [gods] and their precious articles of silver and gold....

““Princes” here may be translated as “metal images” of princes, in other words, golden idols.”⁴¹ “...the victor took away the gods of Syria, which were in the form of molten images or statues.”⁴²

“Ptolemy III took many captives, along with the golden idols of the Syrians and other articles of silver and gold, bringing them back to Egypt. However, he was not able to keep control of all the territories he invaded.”⁴³

and he shall continue more years than the king of the North. “Ptolemy III took the throne at the same time as the younger king [of the North], Seleucus II Callinicus. However, Ptolemy’s reign continued on for three years after Seleucus, who died young.”⁴⁴

³⁹ John H Walton, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 562.

⁴⁰ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 287.

⁴¹ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 389.

⁴² René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 287.

⁴³ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 389.

⁴⁴ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 389.

11:9 “Also the king of the North shall come to the kingdom of the king of the South, but shall return to his own land.

the king of the North.... That would be “Seleucus II Callinicus Pogon, he was the fourth ruler of the Seleucid Empire. *Callinicus* means “gloriously triumphant.” *Pogon*, which was a nickname, means “the Bearded,” because he is pictured with a beard on some of his coins.

shall come to the kingdom of the king of the South, but shall return to his own land. “Historical documents make no mention of a corresponding Syrian invasion into Egypt.”⁴⁵ Recorded history does not tell us everything we would like to know.

The Aftermath

In 246 B.C., Seleucus Callinicus, the son of Laodice, now about 20-years old, assumed the Seleucid throne in Ephesus. His domineering mother, Laodice, asked to be named co-regent. Seleucus also had to immediately deal with the invasion of Ptolemy and **Third Syrian War**, which began in the wake of the murder of Ptolemy’s sister Berenice. After the short war ended in 241 B.C., Seleucus managed to regain most of his land possessions in Syria and Persia but was later challenged by his younger brother, Seleucus Heirax, who took part of Asia Minor and was supported by their mother, Laodice.

The rest of his reign was marked by turmoil and insurrections within the Seleucid territories. In 225 B.C., when he was about 40-years-old, Seleucus was killed by a fall from his horse while on a military campaign. He was succeeded by his oldest son, Seleucus III Soter (Ceraunus), and later by a younger son, Antiochus III, the Great.”⁴⁶

The Fourth Syrian War– (219–217 B.C.) Daniel 11:10-12

“Upon taking the Seleucid throne in 223 BC, Antiochus III the Great (241–187 BC) set himself the task of restoring the lost imperial possessions of Seleucus I Nicator, which extended from Greco-Bactrian Kingdom in the east, the Hellespont in the north, and Syria in the south. By 221 BC, he had re-established Seleucid control over Media and Persia, which had been in rebellion. The ambitious king turned his eyes toward Syria and Egypt. ...

“Egypt had been significantly weakened by court intrigue and public unrest. The rule of the newly inaugurated Ptolemy IV Philopator (reigned 221-204 BC) began with the murder of queen-mother Berenice II. The young king quickly fell under the absolute influence of imperial courtiers. His ministers used their absolute power in their own self-interest, to the people's great chagrin. ...

⁴⁵ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 288.

⁴⁶ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 388-389.

“Antiochus sought to take advantage of this chaotic situation. After an invasion in 221 BC failed to launch, he finally began the Fourth Syrian War in 219 BC. He recaptured Seleucia Pieria as well as cities in Phoenicia, amongst them Tyre. Rather than promptly invading Egypt, Antiochus waited in Phoenicia for over a year, consolidating his new territories and listening to diplomatic proposals from the Ptolemaic kingdom. ...

“Meanwhile, Ptolemy's minister Sosibius began recruiting and training an army. He recruited not only from the local Greek population, as Hellenistic armies generally were, but also from the native Egyptians, enrolling at least thirty thousand natives as phalangites. This innovation paid off, but it would eventually have dire consequences for Ptolemaic stability. In the summer of 217 BC, Ptolemy engaged and defeated the long-delayed Antiochus in the Battle of Raphia, also known as the Battle of Gaze, the largest battle since the Battle of Ipsus over eighty years earlier. ...



Battle of Raphia, also known as the Battle of Gaze

“Ptolemy's victory preserved his control over Coele-Syria, and the weak king declined to advance further into Antiochus' empire, even to retake Seleucia Pieria. The Ptolemaic kingdom would continue to weaken over the following years, suffering from economic problems and rebellion. Nationalist sentiment had developed among the native Egyptians who had fought at Raphia. Confident and well-trained, they broke from Ptolemy in what is known as the Egyptian Revolt, establishing their own kingdom in Upper Egypt which the Ptolemies finally reconquered around 185 BC.”⁴⁷

“The next nine verses are occupied with the deeds of Antiochus III [the Great] and cover about thirty years. His reign is considered significant for the text of Daniel because he is responsible for taking Palestine out of Ptolemaic control and incorporating it into the Seleucid kingdom, ending a century of Ptolemaic rule over Israel. This began in 218 when he successfully penetrated Galilee and Samaria.”⁴⁸

11:10 However his sons [the sons of Seleucus II, Seleucus III, and especially Antiochus III] **shall stir up strife, and assemble a multitude of great forces; and one shall certainly come and overwhelm and pass through** [Antiochus took control of Palestine]; **then he shall return to his fortress and stir up strife.**

his sons shall stir up strife, and assemble a multitude of great forces.... That is “the sons of the king of Syria (“the king of the north”).”⁴⁹ They were: Seleucus III Soter (also called Ceraunus) and Antiochus III the Great, were the sons of Seleucus II Callinicus.

“Seleucus III succeeded his father, but after three years was murdered while campaigning in Asia Minor in 223 B.C. His brother Antiochus III then came to the throne. After dealing with rebellions in Media and Asia Minor, he raised a large army and began to move against Ptolemy IV, who had come to the Egyptian throne. He advanced through southern Syria and Palestine, but Ptolemy met him with a large army at Raphia and defeated him in battle.”⁵⁰

one shall certainly come and overwhelm and pass through; then he shall return to his fortress and stir up strife. The “one” is Antiochus III.

“Antiochus the Great was the sixth ruler of the Seleucid Empire. From Daniel 11:11-19, the subject of the prophecy is Antiochus the Great with rival rulers and generals moving in and out of the picture. Antiochus and his ally, Philip V of Macedonia, engaged in intrigues and wars with the next two Egyptian rulers, Ptolemy Philopator and Ptolemy Epiphanes.

⁴⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syrian_Wars

⁴⁸ Victor Harold Matthews, Mark W. Chavalas, and John H. Walton, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), Da 11:10.

⁴⁹ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 288.

⁵⁰ John H Walton, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 562–563.

In the beginning of his reign, Antiochus soon became one of the most successful of the Seleucid rulers, taking back territories his forefathers had lost over the previous 100 years. He took back Coele-Syria – or what is known in modern times as “Levant,” the regions comprising the nations of Lebanon, Syria, and Israel – in the **Fourth Syrian War**. He was even regarded as a liberator by most Jews who were suffering under the murderous tyranny of Antiochus’ rival, Ptolemy IV Philopator of Egypt. He restored the Seleucid Empire for about 30 years. But in his last years, he extended himself too far, trying to take on the Romans. This set up a bad financial situation for the Seleucids, which led to the Maccabean revolt.”⁵¹

A literal rendering of these next phrases is:

- (a) he will come on to come on and
- (b) he will overflow and
- (c) he will pass along and
- (d) he will turn and
- (e) he will do battle⁵²

one shall certainly come and.... (he will come on to come on and).... “The duplication of the first verb, come on, serves as a kind of emphasis.”⁵³ Antiochus the Great is the “one,” that is, one of the sons of Callinicus, “shall certainly come,” that is, Antiochus fought with the Egyptian Ptolemaic kingdom in 219 B.C.”

overwhelm and.... (he will overflow and).... “The verb overflow gives a picture of flowing water that spills over the banks of its normal course.”⁵⁴

pass through.... (he will pass along and).... “The verb translated pass through can also mean “cross over” and possibly refers to crossing over the border into the other country....”⁵⁵

then he shall return.... (he will turn and).... “It may mean “carry on” or “turn back,” or simply again “press forward” or “carry on”....”⁵⁶

to his fortress.... “The reference here is probably to “the fortress of Gaza” which was the strongest fortification in southern Judea.”⁵⁷

⁵¹ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 390-391.

⁵² René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 289.

⁵³ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 289.

⁵⁴ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 289.

⁵⁵ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 289.

⁵⁶ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 289.

⁵⁷ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 289.

stir up strife. (he will do battle). “He will attack.”⁵⁸

11:11 “And the king of the South shall be moved with rage [Ptolemy IV assembled a great army as described above], **and go out and fight with him, with the king of the North** [at the Battle of Raphia], **who shall muster a great multitude** [Antiochus also had vast forces at the battle]; **but the multitude shall be given into the hand of his enemy** [Antiochus was defeated at Raphia].

the king of the South.... Ptolemy IV Philopator was the son of Ptolemy III Euergetes. *Philopator* means literally, “he who loves his father.” Ptolemy IV was only 25-years-old when his father died and he succeeded to the throne. His mother, Berenice II, served as coregent. He immediately came under the influence of a Greek court advisor named *Sosibius* and a mistress named *Agathoclia*. They suggested to Ptolemy that Berenice was plotting against him in favor of his younger brother, Magas. In response, Ptolemy had both his mother and his brother murdered. Antiochus the Great evidently saw that Ptolemy IV was an incompetent ruler and seized the opportunity to start the **Fourth Syrian War....** First, Antiochus took control of Syria and Palestine in 219 B.C. in 391 in order to move against Egypt.”⁵⁹

shall be moved with rage, and go out and fight with him, with the king of the North Ptolemy IV Philopator, son of Ptolemy III Euergetes raised a great army and came out to meet him in battle two years later.

who shall muster a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into the hand of his enemy. “The great multitude is, as in verse 10, a very large army.”⁶⁰

“The result was the battle of Raphia in 217 B.C.E. According to Polybius, Ptolemy had seventy thousand infantry, five thousand horses, and seventy-three elephants, whereas Antiochus had sixty-two thousand infantry, six thousand cavalry, and 102 elephants. Antiochus was defeated and lost some seventeen thousand men—the multitude given into the hand of Philopator.”⁶¹

11:12 When he [Ptolemy IV] **has taken away the multitude** [defeated Antiochus], **his heart will be lifted up; and he will cast down tens of thousands** [persecution of Jewish people in Jerusalem], **but he will not prevail.**

⁵⁸ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 289.

⁵⁹ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 391-392.

⁶⁰ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 290.

⁶¹ John Joseph Collins and Adela Yarbro Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, ed. Frank Moore Cross, *Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), 379.

When he has taken away the multitude.... Or, "...and when he has finished defeating this great army...."⁶²

his heart will be lifted up.... "...the essential element in this expression is the pride of the Egyptian king."⁶³

and he will cast down tens of thousands.... "...a reference to a very great (uncountable) number of enemy soldiers."⁶⁴ Or, thousands in Jerusalem he killed.

but he will not prevail.... "The Battle of Raphia in 217 B.C. was a major defeat for Antiochus, whose army was decimated, restoring Palestine and much of Syria to Ptolemaic control. However, Ptolemy IV did not capitalize any further on his victory. The status quo held until his death, in mysterious circumstances, in 203."⁶⁵

The Fifth Syrian War– 202-195 B.C.

Daniel 11:13-20

"The death of Ptolemy IV in 204 B.C. was followed by a bloody conflict over the regency as his heir, Ptolemy V, who was just a child. The conflict began with the murder of the dead king's wife and sister Arsinoë by the ministers *Agothocles* and *Sosibius*. The fate of Sosibius is unclear, but Agothocles seems to have held the regency for some time until he was lynched by the volatile Alexandrian mob. The regency was passed from one adviser to another, and the kingdom was in a state of near anarchy. ...

"Seeking to take advantage of this turmoil, Antiochus III [the Great] staged a second invasion of Coele-Syria. He convinced Philip V of Macedon to join the war and conquer the Ptolemies' territories in Asia Minor - actions which led to the Second Macedonian War between Macedon and the Romans. Antiochus [III the Great] quickly swept through the region. After a brief setback at Gaza, he delivered a crushing blow to the Ptolemies at the Battle of Panium near the head of the River Jordan, which earned him the important port of Sidon. ...

⁶² René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 291.

⁶³ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 291.

⁶⁴ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 291.

⁶⁵ John H Walton, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 563.

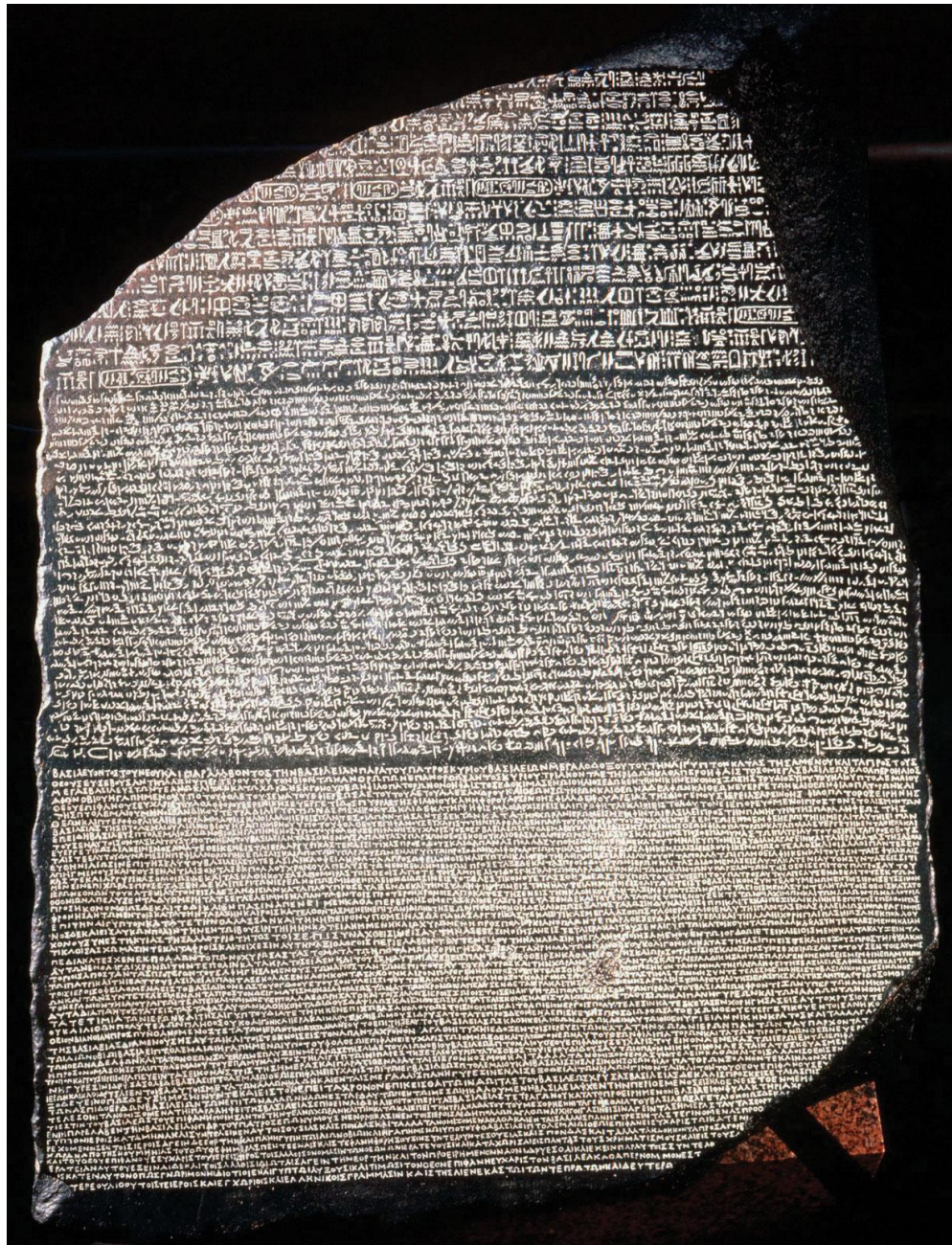


Battle of Panium

“In 200 B.C., Roman emissaries came to Philip and Antiochus demanding that they refrain from invading Egypt. The Romans would suffer no disruption of the import of grain from Egypt, key to supporting the massive population in Italy. As neither monarch had planned to invade Egypt itself, they willingly complied with Rome's demands. Antiochus III [the Great] completed the subjugation of Coele-Syria in 198 B.C. and went on to raid Ptolemy's remaining coastal strongholds in Caria and Cilicia. ...

“Problems at home led Ptolemy to seek a quick and disadvantageous conclusion. The nativist movement, which began before the war with the Egyptian Revolt and expanded with the support of Egyptian priests, created turmoil and sedition throughout the kingdom. Economic troubles led the Ptolemaic government to increase taxation, which in turn fed the nationalist fire. In order to focus on the home front, Ptolemy signed a conciliatory treaty with Antiochus in 195 B.C., leaving the Seleucid king in possession of Coele-Syria and agreeing to marry Antiochus' daughter Cleopatra I.”⁶⁶

⁶⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syrian_Wars



Rosetta Stone

“The **Rosetta Stone** is a granodiorite stele discovered in 1799 which is inscribed with three versions of a decree issued in Memphis, Egypt in 196 BC during the Ptolemaic dynasty on behalf of King Ptolemy V Epiphanes. The top and middle texts are in Ancient Egyptian using hieroglyphic and Demotic scripts respectively, while the bottom is in Ancient Greek. The decree has only minor differences among the three versions, so the Rosetta Stone became key to deciphering Egyptian hieroglyphs, thereby opening a window into ancient Egyptian history.”⁶⁷

⁶⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosetta_Stone

11:13 For the king of the North [Antiochus III] will return [after campaigns in north and east] and muster a multitude greater than the former [greater than the forces that fought at Raphia in 217], and shall certainly come at the end of some years [he returned in 202, about 14 years after his first conflict with Egypt] with a great army and much equipment.

the king of the North will return and muster a multitude greater than the former....

“Ptolemy V was only [four to] six years old when his father died. Antiochus [III the Great] took the opportunity of unrest in Egypt to move against it. After an initial defeat by the Egyptian general Scopas in the Battle of Gaza, he won a major victory at the Battle of Paneas/Banias near the sources of the Jordan in 200 B.C. This gave him control of Syria and Palestine, which the Seleucids held from then on.”⁶⁸

and shall certainly come at the end of some years with a great army and much equipment. “...after an indefinite and rather lengthy period of time.”⁶⁹

Antiochus III's [the Great] occupation of Palestine (Daniel 11:14-16)

“The Battle of Gaza in 201 gained Antiochus temporary control of Palestine, but he was pushed back again by Egyptian forces under the command of Scopas. In the next year, however, at the Battle of Panion (at one of the sources of the Jordan; the New Testament Caesarea Philippi, modern Banias), Antiochus defeated the Egyptians and took control of Palestine from them for the last time. At the same time, the Romans were getting a foothold in Greece in the Second Macedonian War.”⁷⁰

11:14 Now in those times many shall rise up against the king of the South [the young Ptolemy V was attacked by Antiochus, Philip, and their allies]. Also, violent men of your people shall exalt themselves in fulfillment of the vision, but they shall fall [some in Jerusalem unsuccessfully attempted to establish its independence fulfilling this misguided vision of Messianic autonomy].

“Now in those times many.... “Since the time of Jerome these opposers of the king of Egypt have been understood to have been “Philip V of Macedon, ally of Antiochus, and native insurrections within Egypt.”⁷¹

shall rise up against the king of the South. Or rebel against Egypt.

⁶⁸ John H Walton, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 563.

⁶⁹ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 291.

⁷⁰ Victor Harold Matthews, Mark W. Chavalas, and John H. Walton, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), Da 11:14–16.

⁷¹ Stephen R. Miller, *Daniel*, vol. 18, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), 295.

“Antiochus, Philip, and their allies attacked the “king of the south,” the child king Ptolemy V’s Egyptian armies. Antiochus began by taking Syria and Palestine. He then took Jerusalem, which had been an Egyptian territory for about 100 years. He had to put down a few minor rebellions, but most of the Jewish population welcomed Antiochus as a liberator.”⁷²

Also, violent men of your people.... “This verse is very obscure.”⁷³

“For the first time reference is made to the reaction of Jews, in whose land much of this military activity must necessarily take place. Some among them will side with the invader against the Egyptians, under whose control they would have been living. They are *the men of violence* (lit. ‘sons of violence’, ‘revolutionaries’)”⁷⁴

“Beginning in the time of Antiochus III the Great, two factions of Jews competed to dominate the culture of Jerusalem. One faction had become radicalized and believed that God would honor the violent overthrow of their pagan oppressors. The other faction was more liberal and believed that Jews ought to get along with the Hellenized culture of the Seleucids. Antiochus pandered to the second group by offering a three-year incentive in which all Jews were released from taxes and the priests were released indefinitely. He also sent money to support the Temple and allowed the Jews to govern themselves under their own laws.”⁷⁵

shall exalt themselves.... “...the verb here conveys essentially the same notion of resistance or rebellion as *rise up* against earlier in the verse.”⁷⁶

in fulfillment of the vision, but they shall fall. It appears that it is the Jewish revolutionaries that fall.

11:15 So the king of the North shall come and build a siege mound, and take a fortified city [Pan was taken after a lengthy siege]; **and the forces of the South shall not withstand him** [Egypt was routed]. **Even his choice troops shall have no strength to resist** [the Egyptians were unable to retain their Syrian holding].

the king of the North shall come and build a siege mound, and take a fortified city.... “...the noun used in Hebrew refers to a large mound or ramp of earth that an attacking army built up against the wall of a fortified city.”⁷⁷

⁷² Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 396.

⁷³ John Joseph Collins and Adela Yarbro Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, ed. Frank Moore Cross, Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), 379.

⁷⁴ Joyce G. Baldwin, *Daniel: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 23, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1978), 208.

⁷⁵ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 396.

⁷⁶ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 292.

⁷⁷ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 295.

“This probably refers to the capture of Sidon by Antiochus. Scopas and his army retreated there after their defeat at Paneas. They surrendered in 198 B.C. after a siege led to famine.”⁷⁸

the forces of the South shall not withstand him.... “The Egyptian armies were driven out of Palestine, but Antiochus III the Great did not advance into Egypt because of his alliance with Philip V of Macedonia who was at the time resisting Roman troops. Antiochus feared that if he attacked the child Ptolemy V in Egypt, he would end up fighting Roman forces in Egypt as well.”⁷⁹

11:16 But he who comes against him shall do according to his own will, and no one shall stand against him [Antiochus III became master of all of Syria and Palestine]. ***He shall stand in the Glorious Land with destruction in his power*** [he came to Jerusalem as the uncontested sovereign of the entire region].

But he who comes against him shall do according to his own will and no one shall stand against him. Antiochus III the Great fought against the king of the south, Ptolemy V Epiphanes, and took all the lands in Syria and Palestine.

He shall stand in the Glorious Land.... Or, in Judea. “The Egyptian surrender at Sidon sealed Antiochus III’s control of Syria and Palestine.”⁸⁰ “The taking of the fortress at Sidon by Antiochus III assured his total conquest of Judea. Thus, the land passed from Egyptian to Syrian domination.”⁸¹

Antiochus III’s defeat by Rome, Scipio (191-190)

Daniel 11:17-19

“The increasing Roman control in Greece was established by a peace accord in 196 BC. The Greeks, who were unhappy with this new state of affairs, made contact with Antiochus III, urging him to come to their aid. By this time, Antiochus, anticipating that he would need to neutralize Egypt, had entered a marriage alliance, sending his daughter, Cleopatra, to be Ptolemy V’s bride. He expected her to also be a useful spy, but in this, he was disappointed as her loyalties turned to her new husband. Nevertheless, he made his move toward Greece in 192. Constantly shifting alliances eventually worked against him, and he lost a large portion of his ten thousand troops at Thermopylae in 191. Antiochus then resorted to sea battle to try to keep the Romans out of Asia Minor but was again unsuccessful. By 190 the larger Seleucid army of seventy-thousand men had arrived to reinforce Antiochus’s positions. Roman troops under Scipio were only half this strength when the forces met at Magnesia (about fifty

⁷⁸ John H Walton, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 563.

⁷⁹ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 397.

⁸⁰ John H Walton, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 563.

⁸¹ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 295.

miles north of Ephesus). Yet due to lack of training and tactical errors on the part of the Seleucid army, Antiochus was defeated and much of his army slaughtered. The terms of surrender were humiliating, devastating and accepted without argument.”⁸²



Battle of Magnesia

11:17 *“He [Antiochus] shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and upright ones with him; thus shall he do [hoping to assert his influence and authority over Egypt]. And he shall give him the daughter of women to destroy it [giving Cleopatra to Ptolemy in marriage]; but she shall not stand with, or be for him [she did not remain loyal to Antiochus her father but to her new husband Ptolemy V].*

He shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom.... That is, Antiochus III the Great, hatched a plot to make Egypt subservient to Syria.

And he shall give him the daughter of women to destroy it.... “Faced with the growing power of the Romans, who had gained control of Greece, Antiochus [III the great] made an alliance with Egypt, giving his daughter **Cleopatra [I Syra]** as wife to Ptolemy V [Epiphanes]. He hoped that she would act as a spy and further his designs in the Egyptian court. However, she became staunchly loyal to her husband, even encouraging him to make an alliance with Rome against her father.”⁸³

⁸² Victor Harold Matthews, Mark W. Chavalas, and John H. Walton, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), Da 11:17–19.

⁸³ John H Walton, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 564.

“Cleopatra I Syra was the first of seven Egyptian queens by that name. The last one, **Cleopatra VII**, married Julius Caesar and had a son, Caesarion, who was later murdered by Marc Antony’s men after Caesar’s death.

but she shall not stand with him, or be for him. “Once married, Cleopatra did not remain loyal to her father, Antiochus the Great. Instead, she convinced her husband that they should align with Rome and not Syria.”⁸⁴

11:18 After this he shall turn his face to the coastlands [“coastlands” refers to his Greek campaign], ***and shall take many. But a ruler [Rome] shall bring the reproach against them [the Greeks] to an end; and with the reproach removed, he shall turn back on him*** [driving Antiochus from Greece and defeating him in Asia].

he shall turn his face to the coastlands.... “Despite his alliance with Ptolemy V, Antiochus III the Great took control of Egyptian-held areas of the coast of Asia Minor and advanced beyond the Hellespont to seize Macedonian possessions in Thrace.”⁸⁵ “Counseled by the Carthaginian general and archenemy of the Romans, Hannibal, Antiochus invaded Asia Minor in 197 B.C. Antiochus pressed on into Greece or the “coastlands” in Hebrew terminology. Antiochus hoped that by working in tandem with Philip V of Macedonia, he could cut off Rome’s influence in both Asia Minor and Greece. Eventually, he believed that he could unite with the Carthaginian general Hannibal who was fighting Rome in the west. However, the Macedonian campaign against Roman forces went badly for Philip and he was forced to surrender in the same year that Syria entered the war.”⁸⁶

But a ruler shall bring the reproach against them to an end.... “Despite warnings from Rome not to attack Greece, Antiochus invaded it in 192 B.C. The Romans [Lucius Scipio Asiaticus] defeated him at Thermopylae in 191 and then crushed him at the Battle of Magnesia in 190. This forced him back east across the Taurus Mountains. ... By the Treaty of Apmea in 189, Antiochus became a vassal of Rome, had to send twenty hostages to Rome, and paid a huge indemnity. This left him humiliated and short of funds.”⁸⁷

and with the reproach removed, he shall turn back on him.

“Scipio is here called a prince [ruler] who shall cause the reproach because he overthrew Antiochus and made him submit to very dishonorable terms before he would end the war. He caused the reproach on the Romans to cease and turned it back on Antiochus III.”⁸⁸

⁸⁴ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 398.

⁸⁵ John H Walton, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 564.

⁸⁶ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 399.

⁸⁷ John H Walton, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 564.

⁸⁸ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 74.

11:19 Then he shall turn his face toward the fortress of his own land; but he shall stumble and fall, and not be found.

Then he shall turn his face toward the fortress of his own land.... Antiochus III returns to Syria, his own land.

but he shall stumble and fall.... Antiochus III “was slain by his own people who were aroused to fury by the burdensome taxes exacted to defray the expenses of his unsuccessful war and the resulting tribute laid upon him by the Romans.”⁸⁹

11:20 “There shall arise in his place [in the place of Antiochus III] one who imposes taxes [Seleucus IV] on the glorious kingdom [Jerusalem]; but within a few days he shall be destroyed, but not in anger or in battle [by assassination].

There shall arise in his place one who imposes taxes on the glorious kingdom.... “Antiochus III left two sons. One, Antiochus, was a hostage in Rome. The other succeeded him as Seleucus IV, who had to pay off the great debts he inherited. Second Maccabees 3 tells a dramatic story of what happened when he sent his prime minister, Heliodorus, to seize the funds in the temple treasury in Jerusalem. He is said to have been prevented from doing this by a divine apparition that nearly deprived him of his life. Seleucus was assassinated in 175 B.C. in a plot by Heliodorus. Antiochus, who was on his way home from Rome at the time, may also have been involved.”⁹⁰

but within a few days he shall be destroyed, but not in anger or in battle. Seleucus IV, was unsuccessful in his attempt to obtain treasure in Jerusalem, and later he was assassinated.

The Sixth Syrian War—170-168 B.C.

Antiochus IV Epiphanes
Daniel 11:21-30

11:21 And in his place [in the place of Seleucus IV] shall arise a vile person [Antiochus IV the most despicable of the Syrian rulers], to whom they will not give the honor of royalty [he was a usurper to the crown]; but he shall come in peaceably [his attack on Antioch subtle and not by war], and seize the kingdom by intrigue [he originally claimed he was merely securing the kingdom for the benefit of his nephew, Demetrius—the lawful king].

And in his place shall arise.... In place of Seleucus IV of Syria.

a vile person, to whom they will not give the honor of royalty.... Antiochus IV Epiphanes, the son of Antiochus the Great, dethroned Heliodorus without bloodshed.

⁸⁹ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 74.

⁹⁰ John H Walton, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 564.

However, Antiochus was at first not received as king as he had no legitimate claim to the throne.

“Just before his death, Seleucus IV sent the legal heir to the throne, Demetrius, to Rome as a hostage in place of Antiochus. When Seleucus was murdered, Heliodorus seized the throne, ostensibly on behalf of Seleucus’ younger son.... He fled when Antiochus IV arrived with an army. Antiochus assumed the throne, nominally as regent on behalf of his nephew in Rome....”⁹¹

but he shall come in peaceably.... “At the death of Antiochus the Great in 187 B.C., his oldest son, Seleucus IV Philopator reigned for 12 years and was then assassinated by Heliodorus. Although Heliodorus tried to assume power, Antiochus IV Epiphanes deposed him using men loyal to Seleucids. In doing so, Antiochus usurped the throne from his nephew, Demetrius, but came in “peaceably,” meaning without war, in 175 B.C. ...

At first, Antiochus was not received as king, but as a regent who was ruling in the place of Seleucus’ son, Demetrius, the oldest son of Seleucus IV, the rightful heir to the throne. According to the treaty between Antiochus the Great and the Romans, the Peace of Apameia, Seleucids had to change hostages and replace them with new ones every three years. Seleucus had arranged for a prisoner exchange, his son and heir, Demetrius I Soter, for his brother, Antiochus IV.

When Demetrius was sent to Rome during the reign of his father as collateral for the Seleucid’s war debt, Antiochus IV was released, but did not return to any of the Seleucid provinces. He lived for a number of years in Athens where he absorbed a love for Greek culture. When Seleucus was assassinated by his finance minister, Heliodorus, Antiochus IV Epiphanes had him killed using his agents within Syria, but then he usurped the throne himself. Antiochus IV returned to Syria as a “regent” and freely mixed the conventions of both Roman and Greek culture. He appeared to his own countrymen to have become affected, pretentious and eccentric, if not insane.”⁹²

and seize the kingdom by intrigue. “Although Antiochus claimed to be reigning in Demetrius’ place as regent, he intended to keep the throne for himself.

The Oniads and Tobiads

In a parallel development to Antiochus’ love of riches and Greco-Roman culture were the events taking place in Judea at this time. The Oniads were the pious Jews who resisted Hellenization, while the Tobiads were the party who welcomed change. A man named Jason, who was the brother of the High Priest Onias III, felt Judea would be better off as a Hellenized culture. Antiochus IV Epiphanes’ love of Roman and Athenian culture was well known. Jason communicated to Antiochus that if he would remove

⁹¹ John H Walton, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 564.

⁹² Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 405-406.

Onias as High Priest and allow Jason to replace him that he would thoroughly Hellenize Jerusalem and all of Judea. With Onias out of the way, he would also raise more tax revenue for Antiochus. The Syrians believed that there was great treasure stored in the Temple and hoped to gain revenue from it.

Three years later, a man named Menelaus, who may not have even been part of the priestly caste, offered Antiochus an even bigger bribe and convinced him to replace Jason with him as he promised to raise even more revenue. The outcome of this turn of events was catastrophic for the Jews. 1 Maccabees chapter 1 gives a short summary of the years 175 to 167 B.C.

At that time there appeared in the land of Israel a group of traitorous Jews who had no regard for the Law and who had a bad influence on many of our people. They said, "Let's come to terms with the Gentiles, for our refusal to associate with them has brought us nothing but trouble." This proposal appealed to many people, and some of them became so enthusiastic about it that they went to the king and received from him permission to follow Gentile customs. They built in Jerusalem a stadium [gymnasium] like those in the Greek cities. They had surgery performed to hide their circumcision, abandoned the holy covenant, started associating with Gentiles, and did all sorts of other evil things (1 Maccabees 1:10-15 GNT).

2 Maccabees 4 relates the same story in a different style and a few more details, explaining that even the priests serving in the Temple would hear the signal for the games at the nearby gymnasium and would rush off to observe and join in the athletic competition while neglecting their duties.

They did not care about anything their ancestors had valued; they prized only Greek honors. And this turned out to be the source of all their troubles, for the very people whose ways they admired and whose customs they tried to imitate became their enemies and oppressed them.

The persecutions the Jews suffered under Antiochus IV Epiphanes during this period:

1. When Menelaus became the High Priest, the priesthood among the Jews became illegitimate as Menelaus was not a Levite. The Law of Moses commanded that only the descendants of Levi serve as priests. Ever since King David's time, even through the time of the Babylonian Captivity, the line had remained unbroken through Zadok, David's High Priest.
2. When the deposed Onias III confronted Menelaus' illegitimate priesthood, he was slain.
3. As 1 Maccabees 1 relates, one of the great affronts to the Jews was in building a gymnasium in sight of the Temple. The Greek custom for students at the gymnasium was to attend philosophy classes in the morning and then the students would strip off their clothes for athletic training and contests in the afternoon. The Greek *gymnasium* is derived from the word, *gymnos*, which means "nude."

4. Not only did many of the Jews compete in the nude in the gymnasium, but they also sewed false foreskins on themselves in order to appear more Greek. Antiochus also forbade the practice of circumcision.
5. Antiochus built up a fortress in sight of the Temple, a place where he thought to ward off a future attack from Ptolemy VI of Egypt.
6. Antiochus' men also forced the Jews to worship Zeus and sacrifice ceremonially unclean pigs in the Temple rather than clean animals such as sheep and cattle.

Antiochus Epiphanes is the “vile person” ... “speaking blasphemous things” in Daniel’s Fifth and Third Visions. Before moving on to the next parts of Daniel 11, it is helpful to gain a broad overview of the importance of this time of crisis for the Jews.

Daniel 11:21-30 deals with the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes in which he was constantly embroiled in military conflicts with the Egyptian Ptolemies and finally the Romans, leading up to the time of the Maccabean revolt in Daniel 11:31-35.

Under Antiochus Epiphanes’ father, Antiochus the Great, the Romans had begun their incursions into Asia. At first, the Romans had a diplomatic motivation to prevent war between Syria and Egypt. Since the majority of Rome’s grain came from North Africa and actually fed most of the city of Rome, Egypt was an important trade partner. The Romans wanted the Seleucids to cease from wars with Egypt in order to create a peaceful, stable situation. Later emperors used free or greatly subsidized grain to keep the populace fed. As a result, the Romans eventually supported the autonomy of the Jews, who provided a buffer between Egypt and Syria. This independence led to civil wars within Judea and finally the establishment of Judea as a client kingdom of Rome.

The year **168 B.C.** marked the time of the “abomination of desolation” (Daniel 11:31) when the Temple was desecrated by Antiochus Epiphanes. In Matthew 24:15-16, Jesus seems to be quoting **Daniel 11:31** directly. *However*, Jesus is referring a desecration of the Temple that had not yet occurred in his own generation. Jesus was speaking of the “abomination” that is predicted in **Daniel 9:27** that occurred after the end of the “seventy weeks” or 490 years. There is yet another “abomination of desolation” mentioned in **Daniel 12:11**. Both **Daniel 9 and 12** refer to this final desecration of the Temple that occurred in AD 70 when the Roman legions destroyed the Temple. *The desecration of the Temple by Antiochus is a separate event. A “desecration” of the Temple of some type occurred several times in Jewish history.*

The overthrow and death of Antiochus IV Epiphanes marks the end of the Third Kingdom’s, Greek, dominance over the land of Judea. The Jews then entered into a time of semi-autonomy under the Hasmonean Dynasty, though not without conflicts and internal strife. Although the Seleucid Empire, as the last vestige of Alexander the Great’s empire, lasted until 64 B.C. when the Romans took control of the region, the Jews overthrew Seleucid rule in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes.⁹³

⁹³ Jay Rogers, In the Days of These Kings, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 406-409.

"In 170, Eulaeus and Lenaeus, the two regents of the young king of Egypt Ptolemy VI Philometor, declared war on the Seleucid ruler Antiochus IV Epiphanes. In the same year, Ptolemy's younger siblings Ptolemy VIII Physcon and Cleopatra II were declared co-rulers in order to bolster the unity of Egypt. Military operations did not begin until 169 when Antiochus quickly gained the upper hand, seizing the important strategic town of Pelusium.



Pelusium (Sin)

The Egyptians realized their folly in starting the war, Eulaeus and Lenaeus were overthrown and replaced by two new regents, Comanus and Cineas, and envoys were sent to negotiate a peace treaty with Antiochus. Antiochus took Ptolemy VI (who was his nephew) under his guardianship, giving him effective control of Egypt. However, this was unacceptable to the people of Alexandria who responded by proclaiming Ptolemy Physcon as sole king. Antiochus besieged Alexandria but he was unable to cut communications to the city so, at the end of 169, he withdrew his army. In his absence, Ptolemy VI and his brother were reconciled. Antiochus, angered at his loss of control over the king, invaded again. The Egyptians sent to Rome asking for help and the Senate despatched Gaius Popilius Laenas to Alexandria. Meanwhile, Antiochus had seized Cyprus and Memphis and was marching on Alexandria. At Eleusis, on the outskirts of the capital, he met Popilius Laenas, with whom he had been friends during his stay in Rome. But instead of a friendly welcome, Popilius offered the king an ultimatum from the Senate: he must evacuate Egypt and Cyprus immediately. Antiochus begged to have time to consider but Popilius drew a circle round him in the sand with his cane and told him to decide before he stepped outside it. Antiochus

chose to obey the Roman ultimatum. The "Day of Eleusis" ended the Sixth Syrian War and Antiochus' hopes of conquering Egyptian territory."⁹⁴

Ptolemy VI Philometor (reign: c. 180 to 145 B.C.)

11:22 *With the force of a flood they shall be swept away from before him and be broken* [any resistance to the rule of Antiochus in Syria was swept away], *and also the prince of the covenant* [possibly referring to the legitimate high priest in Jerusalem, Onias III, who was also deposed by Antiochus and later murdered].

they shall be swept away from before him and be broken.... Egypt, under the reign of the boy king Ptolemy VI Philometor, was attacked by Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Ptolemy VI had succeeded his father Ptolemy V, who had died young. Around 180 B.C. at about the age of six, he ruled jointly with his mother, Cleopatra I Syra, until her death in 176 B.C. At age 13, he married his sister, Cleopatra II.⁹⁵

and also the prince of the covenant. "This is a difficult title to interpret.

"Onias III was detained by Antiochus, and in the interim Jason, his brother, conspired to usurp his position. He paid a considerable sum to Antiochus and offered to be cooperative in the Hellenization of Judea (promotion of Greek culture at the expense of Jewish practices). Three years later Menelaus, with the probable support of the Tobiads, paid a larger sum and, the precedent having been established, was awarded the office over Jason. According to 2 Maccabees, Onias was murdered about 171. Many identify him as the prince of the covenant referred to in this verse, but others attach that title to Ptolemy VI. The over-whelming army in some way represents the opponents to Antiochus's reign. This could include internal political opponents, Jewish antagonists or foreign opposition such as that which develops in Egypt."⁹⁶

"So, some interpreters believe that the "prince of the covenant" applies to Onias III the High Priest, or even to the Messiah himself, arguing that this is the only place where the "king of the south" would not be referred to as a king, but as a "prince." Further, the word "covenant" appears again three times in Daniel 11:28 and 30 in relation to Antiochus' offences against "the holy covenant," which in this context means the people of Judea."⁹⁷

11:23 *And after the league* [alliance] *is made with him* [with Ptolemy VI Philometor] *he shall act deceitfully* [invade Egypt], *for he shall come up and become strong with a small number of people* [taking control of Egypt with a relatively small force].

⁹⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syrian_Wars

⁹⁵ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 409.

⁹⁶ Victor Harold Matthews, Mark W. Chavalas, and John H. Walton, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), Da 11:22.

⁹⁷ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 409-410.

And after the league is made with him he shall act deceitfully.... First making a treaty with Ptolemy VI Philometor of Egypt, he will then attack Egypt and make Ptolemy his prisoner.

for he shall come up and become strong with a small number of people.
Antiochus IV now consolidates his power in Egypt.

11:24 He shall enter peaceably [as a friend seeking to restore Ptolemy VI Philometor to the throne], **even into the richest places of the province** [perhaps Goshen in Egypt]; **and he shall do what his fathers have not done, nor his forefathers: he shall disperse among them the plunder, spoil, and riches** [he will gain favor by giving gifts]; **and he shall devise his plans against the strongholds, but only for a time** [these statements are generally regarded as further descriptions of Antiochus's consolidation of power].

He shall enter peaceably, even into the richest places of the province.... Verse 24 repeats the meaning of verse 23.

he shall do what his fathers have not done.... “With most of the war debt to the Romans paid off by his older brother, Seleucus IV Philometor, prior to his assassination, Antiochus IV Epiphanes was now in the position to once again expand the Seleucid Empire.”⁹⁸

he shall disperse among them the plunder, spoil, and riches.... Antiochus's “was in turn rapacious and prodigal. His prodigality is well attested. According to Polybius 26.10, “in the sacrifices he furnished to cities and in the honors he paid to the gods he far surpassed all his predecessors.” This reputation is affirmed in Jewish sources.”⁹⁹

and he shall devise his plans against the strongholds, but only for a time.
“Antiochus began to fortify and prepare for a war in which Egypt would attempt to take back disputed territories in Coele-Syria now held by the Seleucids.

By 170 B.C., some Jews in Jerusalem began to petition Ptolemy VI to recover Coele-Syria and Jerusalem, territories that had been ceded to the Seleucid Empire in the Treaty of Raphia in 196 B.C. If the tyranny of Ptolemy V had been cruel and they had viewed Antiochus III as a liberator, the Oniads now saw the reign of Antiochus IV as intolerable. Ptolemy received the Jews' pleas, and apparently, even his anti-Syrian advisors agreed that it was time to take action. Ptolemy VI immediately sent a communique to his uncle demanding that these lands be returned to Egypt citing the mistreatment of the Jews.”¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 410-411.

⁹⁹ John Joseph Collins and Adela Yarbro Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, ed. Frank Moore Cross, Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), 382.

¹⁰⁰ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 411.

First Egyptian War, 169

“Antiochus’s dreams of adding Egypt to his kingdom were finally acted on in 169. His invasion was prompted by Egypt’s growing animosity and may even have been in response to Egypt’s military action, since the first encounter (November 170) was between Pelusium and Gaza. Nonetheless, Antiochus succeeded in capturing the city of Memphis and securing the surrender of Ptolemy VI.”¹⁰¹

Verses 25 and 26 are probably a reference to the conflict that pitted Antiochus IV against his nephew, Ptolemy VI (son of his sister Cleopatra; compare verse 17). In the course of the conflict, Ptolemy VI was betrayed by certain of his generals.¹⁰²

11:25 “He [Antiochus] shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the South with a great army [the military force of Antiochus was much larger and more powerful than Ptolemy had anticipated]. **And the king of the South shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army; but he shall not stand, for they shall devise plans against him** [the betrayal of Ptolemy into the hands of Antiochus assured Syrian victory].

He shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the South.... The king of the South was Ptolemy VI Philometor, the king of Egypt. This verse foretells this ruler’s military expedition against Egypt. 2 Maccabees 5 gives a full account of this campaign, which occurred in 170 B.C.

“In 170 B.C., Antiochus sent his forces into Coele-Syria, launching the first campaign of the Sixth Syrian War. This was, in part, a preemptive reaction to the knowledge that Egypt was preparing to invade Coele-Syria. At the same time, Antiochus sent an envoy to Rome asking them to arbitrate the dispute since both Egypt and Syria were bound by treaty as allies to Rome.”¹⁰³

And the king of the South.... Ptolemy VI Philometor, the king of Egypt.

shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army.... “This foretells of Ptolemy VI Philometor’s counterattack against Antiochus’ military build-up in Coele-Syria. The Egyptian ruler sent troops with the intent to take back the territory all the way north to Jerusalem. Antiochus IV responded with a vicious attack on Egypt, seizing the island of Cyprus and taking all of Egypt west to Memphis except for the city of Alexandria in the north.”¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ Victor Harold Matthews, Mark W. Chavalas, and John H. Walton, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), Da 11:25.

¹⁰² René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 305.

¹⁰³ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 411.

¹⁰⁴ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 412.

but he shall not stand, for they shall devise plans against him. “The king of the South’s great army did not make him invincible because “of the plots devised against him” by Antiochus and his agents in Egypt.”¹⁰⁵

**Ptolemy VI Philometor (181–146)
Daniel 11:26-28**

“Ptolemy VI was young when he came to the throne and was aided by two officials, Eulaeus and Leneaus, who stirred up antagonism against Syria. The humiliation of Ptolemy in the First Egyptian War is thought to have been the result of bad advice given by his two advisors with the intention of undermining him.”¹⁰⁶

11:26 Yes, those who eat of the portion of his delicacies shall destroy him [Ptolemy was misled and possibly betrayed by some of his closest advisors, those who ate “the portion of his delicacies”]; **his army shall be swept away, and many shall fall down slain.**

those who eat of the portion of his delicacies shall destroy him.... “This king is Ptolemy VI. When his mother, who had been regent, died, he was still quite young. Real power lay with two courtiers, Eulaeus and Leneaus. They seem to have encouraged him to try to recover Palestine, and this may have provoked Antiochus IV’s attack. After the invasion, they encouraged him to flee to Samothrace, but as he tried to make his escape he was captured by Antiochus. Leading courtiers in Alexandria then declared Ptolemy VI’s younger brother king, as Ptolemy VII.”¹⁰⁷

his army shall be swept away, and many shall fall down slain. “Ptolemy VI Philometor was easily defeated. 1 Maccabees also speaks of this event. Ptolemy was afraid of him [Antiochus] and fled, and many were wounded to death (1 Maccabees 1:18).

“Perhaps because he [Antiochus] thought it would avoid war with Rome, Antiochus forced Ptolemy to sit as a client king. Antiochus marched on to Memphis, claiming that he meant only to advise his young, inexperienced nephew ruler. In reality, Antiochus IV, the usurper of the Seleucid throne and persecutor of the Jews, was now the pharaoh of most of Egypt except for Alexandria.”¹⁰⁸

**Ptolemy VIII Euergetes (169 to 164 B.C.)
Together with Ptolemy VI and Cleopatra II**

¹⁰⁵ Gleason L. Archer Jr., “Daniel,” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Daniel and the Minor Prophets*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 7 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986), 137–138.

¹⁰⁶ Victor Harold Matthews, Mark W. Chavalas, and John H. Walton, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), Da 11:26–28.

¹⁰⁷ John H Walton, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 565.

¹⁰⁸ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 412-413.

“Ptolemy Euergetes (Benefactor) or **Physcon** (meaning “Potbelly” in reference to his obesity) was the younger brother of Ptolemy VI. Ptolemy VIII declared himself the pharaoh of Egypt. Antiochus IV responded by sailing down the Nile toward Alexandria to take the city. Vastly outnumbered, the Egyptians surrendered, however, Antiochus withdrew and waited for the Romans to arrive. Antiochus hoped he could convince the Romans that he supported Ptolemy VI, who would remain as the pharaoh of Egypt under the more experienced Seleucid king’s tutelage.”¹⁰⁹

11:27 Both these kings’ hearts shall be bent on evil, and they shall speak lies at the same table [Antiochus IV and Ptolemy IV now shared a common interest, the defeat of Euergetes. They “spoke lies at the same table,” agreeing over a peace table while at the same time plotting to betray the other]; **but it shall not prosper, for the end will still be at the appointed time** [in spite of their plotting, their designs would have little success].

Both these kings’ hearts shall be bent on evil.... “During the course of his military campaign, Antiochus IV took his nephew (Ptolemy VI) prisoner but apparently treated him well (receiving him at his own table) in order to scheme and seek ways of seizing political power in Egypt.”¹¹⁰

“Both Antiochus IV and Ptolemy VI now had a common enemy in the younger brother, Ptolemy VIII Physcon. They made a truce agreeing that Ptolemy VI Philometor would sit as pharaoh under Seleucid rule. But they included an agreement that they would work together oust Physcon once they gained the support of the Romans.”¹¹¹

“Antiochus made an alliance with Ptolemy VI, pretending to support his claim to the throne. He set him up as king in Memphis, left a garrison in Pelusium, and returned to Syria. Any plans he had to control Egypt through Ptolemy VI vanished when the two brothers were reconciled through the efforts of their sister, Cleopatra, and they became joint rulers of Egypt.”¹¹²

they shall speak lies at the same table.... “Although they agreed in word to an alliance to oust “Physcon,” in reality, they each hoped to eliminate each other once the Romans withdrew from the picture. The Greek historian Polybius relates that Ptolemy VI Philometor sent advisors to counsel with Antiochus.”¹¹³

but it shall not prosper, for the end will still be at the appointed time. “The sense here is that although kings may plot and scheme, God’s plan for history is predetermined. The overarching theme of Daniel is God’s promise to bring the Messiah and the kingdom of God on the whole earth. Men may plot to conquer the world, but

¹⁰⁹ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 413.

¹¹⁰ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 306.

¹¹¹ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 413.

¹¹² John H Walton, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 565.

¹¹³ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 413-414.

God works through the schemes of these wicked rulers. He causes kingdoms to rise and fall to bring about His will.

Action Against the Holy Covenant

1 Maccabees 1:20-28 and 2 Maccabees 5:1-10 give accounts of the unrest that took place in the city of Jerusalem during Antiochus' absence in the second campaign of the **Sixth Syrian War** in 169 B.C.

“Roman, Greek and Jewish sources differ with regards to the details at this point. There is no question that on his return from Egypt, Antiochus raided the temple treasury, most likely to secure additional funds for his continuing military activities. The sources disagree about whether this incident took place after the First Egyptian War (September 169) or after the Second.”¹¹⁴

11:28 While returning to his [Antiochus IV] land [to Syria] with great riches, his heart shall be moved against the holy covenant [the Jews]; so he shall do damage [to the people and the Temple] and return to his own land.

While returning to his land with great riches.... “While Antiochus IV Epiphanes was negotiating with Ptolemy VI Philometor, he was greeted with then news of the revolt in Judea. The sense here points to the looting of the Temple, “he shall do exploits ... against the holy covenant,” not the spoils of the Egyptians.”¹¹⁵

his heart shall be moved against the holy covenant; so he shall do damage....

“...in verse 22, the “prince of the covenant” referred to the leader of the Jewish religion, the High Priest. The expression used here refers to the religion itself or the people who adhere to that religion. It involves the agreement between God and his people about their relationship.”¹¹⁶

“There is some disagreement in the sources with regard to the aftermath of Antiochus IV's two invasions of Egypt. It is clear that on the way back from Egypt, Antiochus raided the temple treasury in Jerusalem. First Maccabees 1:20–28 puts this after the first invasion and then refers to a second attack on Jerusalem “two years later” (1:29–40). Second Maccabees 5 puts both of these after Antiochus's second invasion of Egypt, probably conflating the two different events.”¹¹⁷

2 Maccabees goes on to describe how the news reached Antiochus of the revolt of the Oniads, who were hopeful of Judea being restored to Ptolemaic rule.

¹¹⁴ Victor Harold Matthews, Mark W. Chavalas, and John H. Walton, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), Da 11:28.

¹¹⁵ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 415.

¹¹⁶ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 307.

¹¹⁷ John H Walton, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 565.

When the news of what had happened in Jerusalem reached Antiochus, he thought the whole country of Judea was in revolt, and he became as furious as a wild animal. So, he left Egypt and took Jerusalem by storm, giving his men orders to cut down without mercy everyone they met and to slaughter anyone they found hiding in the houses. They murdered everyone – men and women, boys and girls; even babies were butchered. Three days later, Jerusalem had lost 80,000 people: 40,000 killed in the attack, and at least that many were taken away to be sold as slaves. But Antiochus was still not satisfied. He even dared to enter the holiest Temple in all the world, guided by Menelaus, who had become a traitor both to his religion and to his people. With his filthy and unholy hands, Antiochus swept away the sacred objects of worship and gifts which other kings had given to increase the glory and honor of the Temple (2 Maccabees 5:11-16).¹¹⁸

and return to his own land. “Not satisfied with the riches he had plundered in Egypt, Antiochus looted the Temple. Menelaus, who had fought off a coup attempt by the former High Priest Jason, assisted him. Then he returned to Syria.

Antiochus took 135,000 pounds of silver from the Temple and hurried off to Antioch. Two years later [169 to 167 B.C.], Antiochus sent a large army from Mysia against the towns of Judea (1 Maccabees 1:29).

This second attack on Judea occurred after the campaign against Egypt in 168 B.C.”

Second Egyptian War, 168

“In the spring of 168, Antiochus again had to besiege Memphis, and he did so successfully, taking control of lower Egypt. As he again prepared to lay siege against a weakened Alexandria, he actually had himself crowned king of Egypt. But there was a difference this time. Egypt had appealed to Rome for help, and their ships arrived as he approached Alexandria. Roman consul Gaius Popillius Laenas met him by the walls of Alexandria and commanded Antiochus to leave Egypt. When Antiochus replied that he had to consult with his advisors, the Roman consul drew a circle in the dirt around the king and insisted that he give his answer before stepping out of the circle. A humiliated Antiochus conceded to Roman authority and straggled toward home, looking for a way to vent his misery. This was probably in July 168.”¹¹⁹

^{11:29} **“At the appointed time he [Antiochus IV] shall return and go toward the south [toward Egypt], but it shall not be like the former or the latter [the second campaign was a failure].**

At the appointed time he shall return and go toward the south.... “This is now a new cycle and represents the second invasion of Egypt in 168 B.C. after Antiochus IV Epiphanes’ treaty with Ptolemy VI Philometor. In 169 B.C., the question of who would

¹¹⁸ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 415.

¹¹⁹ Victor Harold Matthews, Mark W. Chavalas, and John H. Walton, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), Da 11:29–30.

rule Egypt was still unsettled with Ptolemy VIII Physcon ruling in Alexandria in the north and Ptolemy VI as a puppet ruler under Syria. Since neither Ptolemy would back down, the sister-wife of Ptolemy VI Philometor, Cleopatra II, negotiated a truce between her brothers. In 169 B.C., the three Ptolemies agreed to rule Egypt jointly instead of fighting a civil war. The truce between the brothers lasted until 164 B.C. A year later in 168 B.C., Antiochus IV Epiphanes was angered that the Ptolemies had made a truce. He sent his naval fleet to Cyprus and his troops to Egypt to besiege Alexandria.”¹²⁰

but it shall not be like the former or the latter. This incursion “refers to the first incursion into Egypt (verses 25–28), while this time speaks of the second campaign. The expression as a whole indicates a fundamental difference in the two expeditions. The first was a success and the second ended in failure.”¹²¹

““The former” here describes Antiochus IV Epiphanes’ successful former conquest of Egypt in the **Sixth Syrian War**. The term “the latter” is more problematic. It cannot refer to yet another attack on Egypt because Antiochus never returned for a “seventh” Syrian War. This is pointing to the atrocities committed on the Jews and the tens of thousands killed through the second wave of warfare on Judea begun in 168 B.C. after Antiochus was rebuffed by the Romans. The concern of Daniel’s Fifth Vision is how the Temple at Jerusalem would be affected by foreign invasions. The “former” and the “latter” refer to the times Judea was pillaged when Seleucid troops passed through the land. The focus is not necessarily the conflict between Syria and Egypt, but the Temple.

In early 168 B.C., Antiochus IV Epiphanes launched a fleet to take the island of Cyprus from Egypt. The two Ptolemies and Cleopatra, their sister, sent ambassadors to Rome to ask the Senate to send assistance to them. Since Rome was an ally of both Egypt and Syria, the Ptolemies hoped that they would persuade Antiochus to withdraw. Antiochus hoped that the Romans would cede all the territories he had taken in Egypt and side with Ptolemy VI Philometor against his younger brother Ptolemy VIII Physcon.

Antiochus IV Epiphanes then marched from Pelusium on the eastern Nile River Delta to Eleusis, a town within four miles of Alexandria in the western delta. Antiochus demanded that Cyprus and Pelusium be ceded to him. Although Antiochus had built up his navy and armed forces, He waited for the Roman ambassadors to arrive.”¹²²

“Hearing of the reconciliation between the two Ptolemies, Antiochus IV invaded Egypt in 168 B.C., intending to besiege Alexandria.”¹²³

¹²⁰ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 417.

¹²¹ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 308.

¹²² Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 417-418.

¹²³ John H Walton, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 565.

“The second campaign of Antiochus IV against Egypt took place in 168 B.C. It did not go well for him because the Romans intervened and forced him to leave the country (see verse 30).”¹²⁴

Fury Against the Holy Covenant

“There was a rumor in Jerusalem that Antiochus had been killed in battle. Jason, who had been ousted as high priest, took the opportunity to lead a rebellion against Menelaus, who at this time was high priest (see comment on 11:22). When Antiochus heard of trouble, he may have come himself to Jerusalem to put down the rebellion. In the process, tens of thousands of Jews were massacred, and the temple was looted (Menelaus apparently cooperating in the plundering).”¹²⁵

Rome, Syria, Egypt, and the Maccabees

By this point, we have four players in our story, Syria, Egypt, Rome, and the Maccabees. As the story unfolds, we will face the challenge of determining which of these are being addressed.

11:30 For ships from Cyprus shall come against him [the “ships from Cyprus” refer to the Roman ships, that came from the direction of Cyprus, and demanded release of that island]; **therefore he shall be grieved, and return in rage against the holy covenant, and do damage.** [In his anger, he returned to Jerusalem and launched his infamous assault on its culture and religion.] **“So he shall return and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant** [Antiochus only supported those who would renounce the traditional faith of Israel].

ships from Cyprus.... Cyprus or Kittim, “this was intended as a reference to the Romans. The Qumran writers used the term Kittim consistently to refer to the Romans. And the ancient Greek translation of Daniel renders it thus.”¹²⁶

shall come against him; therefore he shall be grieved.... The “**him**” is Antiochus IV Epiphanes.

“Egypt had appealed to Rome for help. A delegation from Rome, under Gaius Popillius Laenas, confronted Antiochus near Alexandria and ordered him to leave Egypt. When he tried to play for time, the Roman envoy drew a circle around him in the sand and

B.C Before Christ

¹²⁴ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 308.

¹²⁵ Victor Harold Matthews, Mark W. Chavalas, and John H. Walton, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), Da 11:30.

¹²⁶ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 309.

insisted on an answer before he stepped out of it. Humiliated, he withdrew from Egypt.”¹²⁷

So he shall return and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant.

“...the text speaks of giving attention to those who have abandoned the Jewish religion to follow the pagan practices of Antiochus IV.”¹²⁸

“A rumor that Antiochus IV had been killed in Egypt prompted Jason to attack Jerusalem in an attempt to oust Menelaus as high priest. Jason killed many in the city, but he failed to take full control of it and fled to Ammon. When Antiochus heard of the trouble in Jerusalem, he assumed that the city was in revolt and moved to deal with it. The exact course of events is unclear. A Syrian force entered the city, perhaps by subterfuge, and slaughtered many. It was probably at this time that a citadel, called the Akra, of Syrian troops was established near the temple mount to protect the pro-Hellenists in the city.”¹²⁹

The Maccabean Period – 167-165 B.C.

Daniel 11:31-35

“According to the book of Maccabees, an individual named Geron was sent by Antiochus to dismantle Jewish religious practice. ... In December 167, a systematic program of instituting Greek religious practices at the expense of Jewish ones began in earnest. The sacrificial system and the Sabbath and festival observances were halted. Worship sites were set up around the country, and circumcision was forbidden. The temple was consecrated to Zeus and became a center of polytheism and prostitution.”¹³⁰

11:31 And forces shall be mustered by him, and they shall defile the sanctuary fortress [the temple]; ***then they shall take away the daily sacrifices*** [the sacrifices offered at the temple were forbidden], ***and place there the abomination of desolation*** [the artifacts of pagan worship].

And forces shall be mustered by him.... Daniel 11:31 refers to the desecration of the Temple by Antiochus IV Epiphanes in 167 B.C..¹³¹

“Antiochus took military control of Jerusalem after being rebuffed by the Roman senator Popilius Laenas. Antiochus sent Apollonius, a governor charged with the collection of his tribute, with an army of 22,000 into all the cities of Judea. This was in the summer

¹²⁷ John H Walton, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 565.

¹²⁸ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 309.

¹²⁹ John H Walton, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 565–566.

¹³⁰ Victor Harold Matthews, Mark W. Chavalas, and John H. Walton, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), Da 11:31.

¹³¹ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 120.

of 168 B.C. over a year after he had first plundered the Temple. They were ordered to kill all the mature young men and sell the women and young ones.”¹³²

and they shall defile the sanctuary fortress; then they shall take away the daily sacrifices.... “...this verb **defile** has to do with “destroying the sacred character” of something previously considered especially for God. The entry of foreigners (enemy soldiers) into the Temple of Jerusalem [**the sanctuary fortress**] deprived the building of its character as a building reserved exclusively for the service of God.”¹³³

“Antiochus IV made an edict proscribing the traditional Jewish religious practices on pain of death. The regular sacrifices in the temple were stopped. Observance of the Sabbath and other festivals, circumcision, and the food laws were banned. Copies of the Torah were searched for and destroyed.”¹³⁴

and place there the abomination of desolation. “Antiochus ordered the idol of Jupiter Olympus to be set up and slaughtered a pig in the sanctuary of the Temple. “First Maccabees 1:54 says that on the 15th of Chislev, 167, “they erected a desolating sacrilege upon the altar of burnt offering.” This is usually taken to be an idol of Olympian Zeus.”¹³⁵

“From the time that Antiochus IV Epiphanes first took away Jewish semi-autonomy that had been granted by his father, Antiochus III the Great, he continually tried to outlaw Jewish ceremonial practices and force Hellenistic pagan practices on the Jews.

According to 1 Maccabees 6:8-17 and 2 Maccabees 9:1-29, Antiochus IV Epiphanes was on a military campaign trying to retake Armenia in the north and parts of Persia in the east when he heard of the successful Maccabean revolt. At first, he planned to retaliate. However, he soon became ill with a severe intestinal infection. According to 1 and 2 Maccabees, he repented and wrote the Jews a letter granting them autonomy. He died a short time later in 164 B.C.

11:32 Those who do wickedly against the covenant [who abandon their faith] **he shall corrupt with flattery** [the Hellenizing party among the Jews (proto-Sadducees) embraced pagan worship, acting “wickedly against the covenant,” and siding with Menelaus, they were favored by the Syrians]; **but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits** [the Hasidim, or faithful Jews (proto-Pharisees), heroically opposed the forces of paganism, and often demonstrated great courage and heroic faith, as described in I Maccabees].

¹³² Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 420.

¹³³ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 310.

¹³⁴ John H Walton, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 566.

¹³⁵ John H Walton, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 566.

Those who do wickedly against the covenant.... “this expression represents a Hebrew participle used to describe people who act with treachery, and the noun for covenant or agreement. It has to do with those who do not honor their own word and do not respect agreements. In this case, it refers to Jewish people who no longer honored the agreement of their people with God.”¹³⁶

he shall corrupt with flattery.... corrupt.... “this verb may be translated literally “make hypocrites of”.... The idea is one of winning them over to the evil side.”¹³⁷

“There were many Jews who favored the Hellenization process and therefore, if promised personal benefit, would gladly side with the new policies. Foremost among these was Menelaus, the high priest, who was totally dependent on Antiochus for his lucrative office.”¹³⁸

but the people who know their God.... “...this is in contrast with the previously mentioned group, who have abandoned their relationship with God. The verb know emphasizes not merely an intellectual knowledge of a subject, but an intimate personal and positive relationship.”¹³⁹

shall be strong, and carry out great exploits. Or “Stand firm and take action: the first verb speaks of someone maintaining a position, while the second focuses on active resistance.”¹⁴⁰

“Many Jews at least acquiesced with Antiochus IV’s policies. Others refused to desert their religion. Opposition took various forms, from passive disobedience to armed revolt. The main organized rebellion was led by the Hasmonean family. When a Syrian envoy came to their town, Modein, to enforce Antiochus’s edict, the head of the family, a priest named Mattathias, killed him. The family fled and became the rallying point for other rebels. Judas, one of Matthias’s five sons, became the military commander and gained the nickname “Maccabeus” (“hammer”) because of the defeats he inflicted on the Syrian forces sent against the rebels. In December 164 B.C., about three years after the desecration of the temple, Judas regained control of Jerusalem, purified the temple, and resumed the sacrifices.”¹⁴¹

¹³⁶ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 311.

¹³⁷ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 310.

¹³⁸ Victor Harold Matthews, Mark W. Chavalas, and John H. Walton, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), Da 11:32.

¹³⁹ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 311.

¹⁴⁰ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 311.

¹⁴¹ John H Walton, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 566.

The remainder of the Fifth Vision of Daniel is notoriously difficult and commentators differ greatly in their interpretations. Liberals apply the remainder of the prophecy to Antiochus IV Epiphanes. It is supposedly a prediction of a future victory that did not come to pass by a pseudonymous “Daniel” writing in 164 B.C. The following description is typical among liberals.

The portrayal is expressed as prophecy about the future course of events, given by a seer in Babylonian captivity; however, the prevailing scholarly opinion is that this is mostly prophecy after the fact. Only from 11:39 onward does the historical survey cease accurately to reproduce the events known to have taken place in the latter years of the reign of Antiochus IV. The most obvious explanation for this shift is that the point of the writer’s own lifetime had been reached (Oxford Companion to the Bible, Daniel).

Nearly all conservative scholars agree that the remaining part of the Fifth Vision of Daniel 11 occurs *after the time of Antiochus IV Epiphanes*. Some Historicists see the remaining verses as extending into the medieval era. Futurists interpret these verses to apply to a future and distant Antichrist. However, in the context of the whole Book of Daniel and the historical timeline of chapter 11, both the futurist and historicist interpretations take too much of a leap. The remainder of the prophecy must pertain to the time after the Maccabean revolt when Judea was embroiled in wars and internal conflicts and finally subjugated to the Romans. This period culminated with the coming of the Messiah “in the days of these kings” (Daniel 2:44) and finally “a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time,” the destruction of the Temple in AD 70 (Daniel 12:1).

The Fifth Vision of Daniel proceeds in chronological order and naturally divides itself into two parts. The first part is the domination of Judea by the Ptolemaic and Seleucid kings. Then there is a shift in verse 32 when tyranny is thrown off by the valiant “exploits” of the Maccabean forces.

From the time the Maccabees came on the scene to the time Pompey conquered Syria in 64 B.C., the Jews were sifted for about one century.

11:33 *And those of the people who understand shall instruct many* [Godly teachers encouraged the righteous, though there were many martyrs]; ***yet for many days they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering*** [tens of thousands were martyred for their faithfulness to God].

And those of the people who understand.... “...by the very nature of the phrase, and also in light of the immediate context, this is to be understood as referring to “leaders” who are wise.”¹⁴²

¹⁴² René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 311.

shall instruct many.... "...the idea here is not one of forcing people to understand, but rather of helping others to understand."¹⁴³

they shall fall by sword and flame, "...the meaning is that some will die while engaged in war, and others will be burned to death."¹⁴⁴

by captivity and plundering. "The other two nouns speak of exile (or imprisonment) and theft as two other ways in which the wise...will suffer."¹⁴⁵

11:34 Now when they fall [the Jewish people who were "falling" or dying during the Syrian persecution], **they shall be aided with a little help** [the Maccabees started well]; **but many shall join with them by intrigue** [once the Maccabees were successful, many Jews allied with them hypocritically, especially in the days of John Hyrcanus].

they.... "**They** stands for "the people who know their God" in verse 32."¹⁴⁶

fall... "The verb fall very probably does not refer to mere stumbling but to falling in battle, and therefore refers to death."¹⁴⁷

they shall be aided with a little help.... "Many take it as a reference to the Maccabees, whose military actions are seen as less important than the more fundamental refusal to desert the Jewish religious practices. Because the Maccabees took action against apostate Jews, some may have joined them out of fear, not principle."¹⁴⁸

"...the Jews – would be helped in the time after Judas Maccabeus, but it would only be a "little help" resulting in a false covenant with the Romans to protect them. This would last only a short time, and then the Jews would be plagued by battles and wars with the Syrians until the time of Pompey in 64 B.C..¹⁴⁹

but many shall join with them by intrigue. "The persecution by Antiochus IV provoked the passive resistance of the Chasidim (the Pious Ones, or the Righteous Ones), who expected help only by the direct intervention of God ... and the active resistance of the Hasmonians, who distinguished themselves in the armed struggle of

¹⁴³ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 311.

¹⁴⁴ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 312.

¹⁴⁵ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 312.

¹⁴⁶ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 312.

¹⁴⁷ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 312.

¹⁴⁸ John H Walton, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 567.

¹⁴⁹ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 425.

the Maccabees.... The writer thinks that the successes of the active resistance do not constitute anything more than negligible help toward the final victory of Judaism. And in the eyes of the author, the efforts to unite the two kinds of resistance represented “hypocrisy.” The two forms of resistance were, in fact, impossible to reconcile as far as he was concerned, because the secret intention of the men of violence (verse 14) was to take control of the entire resistance movement.”¹⁵⁰

The Maccabean movement begins well but is eventually corrupted.

11:35 *And some of those of understanding shall fall* [some of the faithful were killed], *to refine them, purify them, and make them white, until the time of the end; because it is still for the appointed time* [“the end” and “the appointed time” probably refer to the coming of Jesus].

those of understanding.... “...referring to a part of the group of “wise leaders” introduced in verse 33.”¹⁵¹ “These people are no doubt Jews well-versed in the Hebrew Scriptures. There has been much inconclusive debate about whether they can be identified with any particular known group of Jews.”¹⁵²

shall fall.... “Given the immediate context, probably the idea of being killed is intended.”¹⁵³

to refine them, purify them, and make them white.... “The three terms have almost the same meaning and convey the idea of the purification of metals and the cleaning of articles of clothing.”¹⁵⁴ The Maccabean movement is purged in order to prepare a remnant for the time of the Messiah.

until the time of the end.... “This is not the “end times” in an eschatological sense. Rather, it is the end of the time indicated in Daniel’s prophecy. What comes at the end of the prophecy is the end of the “seventy weeks,” the coming of Messiah the Prince, and the final destruction of the Temple in AD 70 (Daniel 9:24-27; 12:1,11).”¹⁵⁵ See 11:40 where this phrase is used again.

because it is still for the appointed time. “...this is yet another reference to the fact that, in the mind of the writer, God has a definite foreordained plan into which all

¹⁵⁰ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 312.

¹⁵¹ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 313.

¹⁵² John H Walton, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 567.

¹⁵³ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 313.

¹⁵⁴ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 313.

¹⁵⁵ Jay Rogers, *In the Days of These Kings*, (Clermont, FL: Media House International, 2017), 426.

historical events must fit. Here it is specifically the end that is seen as being a set time.”¹⁵⁶

“It” – the coming of the Messiah, the hope of the Jews for deliverance – “is yet for a time appointed.”

It was during this period in Jewish history that eschatological expectations began to run at a fever pitch. The Jews looked for a Messiah, like the priestly military rulers, the Maccabees—to triumph by driving all Jerusalem’s enemies off the face of the earth. They expected their Savior to institute an earthly reign by driving out Israel’s enemies. During this period, many would-be prophets composed apocalyptic books that aped Daniel and Zechariah.

A time appointed.... The time of the coming of the Messiah is predestined. The Jews of the Maccabean revolt enjoyed a measure of success in carving out a space to live by God’s laws. Ironically, most of the Jews who profited from this militant fervor lost the broader cultural war, succumbing either to the ever-present blandishments of Hellenism on the one hand, or the stern, austere, Roman dogma of salvation by legalism. Very few recognized the “Prince of Peace” when he appeared.

The Roman Period (Daniel 11:36-45)

Throughout the Book of Daniel, we have been confronted with four kingdoms: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. When we came to chapter 11, our attention was on the Greek kingdoms of Egypt, the Ptolemies, and Syria, the Seleucids. However, in verses 11:36-39, we are confronted with an issue. From ancient times, it has been thought that at this point, there is a change of subject.

As discussed earlier, liberals do not believe that the Roman Empire is addressed in the Book of Daniel at all. They generally derive their four kingdoms by dividing Media and Persia into two kingdoms and, in this way, produce the four needed coming empires ending with the Greeks and Antiochus IV Epiphanes.

Evangelicals can be divided here into several camps. In the last 175 plus years, the Dispensationalists have been the major player on the prophetic scene. Still, theirs is a somewhat recent addition to the various eschatological camps. They came to prominence after their founder, John Nelson Darby, popularized a unique way of “rightly dividing” the Bible in 1830. This was a way of Bible interpretation unknown up to this point in Christian thought with much of the New Testament still believed to be a part of “Law.” Basically, only Paul’s epistles were considered to come under the category of “Grace.” But, since that time, this new way of “rightly dividing” the Bible, and the eschatology it has spawned, has taken the evangelical world by storm.

¹⁵⁶ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 313.

Before Darby, Preterism was a common way of viewing many prophecies and is still embraced by a significant minority today. At this point in Daniel 11, Preterists often go one of two directions in their interpretation of our material.

One, they see the king of 11:36 as an introduction of the Roman Empire, which addresses the king of Judah, Herod the Great.

Second, are those that see Roman emperors as the prime actors in Daniel 11 and 12. So....

- 1) Dispensationalists project a significant part of the fourth kingdom into the distant future. For them, the king of 11:36 that “*shall do according to his own will*” is a product of a revived Roman Empire at a time still in our future, and, at that time, this king will fulfill the prophecies of the verses that follow. However, there is no scripture to support this position anywhere in the Bible. It is taught as logically necessary and inserted as needed.
- 2) Preterists believe that Rome is spoken of here in one form or another.
- 3) Other evangelicals don't see a change of player at this point in Daniel, but simply, more information on the Seleucids.

We also might add that most evangelicals see in the following verses the antichrist or what Daniel calls in 7:8, the little-horn. The problem here is not that one camp believes in an antichrist, and another does not. The issue is who is this antichrist, and when does he appear in human history. For the Dispensationalists, this unknown one is yet in our future. For the Preterist, this one was Nero Caesar or, perhaps, King Herod, and he is now in our past.

Opening Questions

Who was the Willful King, and Who was the King of the North?

Many historians try to explain away the prophetic accuracy of the Book of Daniel by theorizing that this book must have been written during the second century B.C., a time in which most of Daniel's prophecies had been fulfilled. Daniel 11:2-35 lists a chronological sequence of events spanning 360 years from the sixth to the second century B.C.—without having made a single mistake. In these verses, Daniel describes the rise of the Greek Empire, its subsequent partition into four parts, followed by a mysteriously accurate description of the foreign relations between two of its divisions: the Seleucid and Ptolemaic Empires of Syria and Egypt respectively. In Daniel 11, the king of the Seleucids is labeled the king of the north, and the king of the Ptolemies is called the king of the south; the individual names of these kings are not given, although the information in Daniel is so precise, we can easily determine who they were.

In this chapter, Daniel describes a chronological series of wars, treaties, and marriages between these two warring empires. Highlighting significant aspects of the reign of each king, the prophet proceeds with his chronology often without specifying the death

of one king and the rise of another and often leaving gaps between the kings. Each king and his successor are simply called the king of the north or the king of the south. This lack of specificity has led to the notion that the willful king of vs. 36-43 is Antiochus Epiphanes, the king of the north, the same king described earlier in v. 32.

Is the Willful King Antiochus Epiphanes, the King of the North?

From 11:21-32, Daniel's description of Antiochus Epiphanes, the king of the north, is accurate by all accounts. However, from v. 36 to the end of the chapter, the king known as the willful king mentioned here does not fit what is known of the king of the north. This fact has led some historians to suggest that the Book of Daniel may have been written by an editor just prior to the death of Antiochus Epiphanes. According to this theory, the author of the Book of Daniel recorded history from vs. 1-35 accounting for the accuracy of this portion of the text. Then from v. 36 to the end of the chapter, the editor of the book attempted to accurately predict the fate of Antiochus Epiphanes and, as expected, failed.

However, this theory that the Book of Daniel recorded history up to 11:35 and then tried to accurately predict, or guess, the immediate future is an entirely untenable theory.

Daniel's description of the willful king in 11:37 indicates that he will not regard any god. But if an editor of Daniel intended to predict that *the willful king* was Antiochus Epiphanes, why would he make such an egregious error regarding Antiochus' religious beliefs? One might assume that perhaps the editor of Daniel did not know Antiochus Epiphanes' religious affiliation? However, this would be impossible since Antiochus Epiphanes tried to compel the Jews to worship Zeus, which was one of the major causes of the Maccabean Wars.

If the author of Daniel intended to predict the future after having accurately recorded the past, why would he include an inaccurate description of Antiochus Epiphanes' most well-known attribute from the perspective of a second-century Jewish perspective? Essentially, every adult living in Israel in the second century B.C. would have known that Antiochus Epiphanes was strongly devoted to Zeus. They would have all known this because Antiochus Epiphanes forced this belief on the Jews which was one of the primary causes of Israel's war with Greece! How could someone who knew without making a single historical error the obscure historical details concerning the foreign relations between the Seleucids and the Ptolemies fail to know arguably the most well-known attribute of the Seleucid king who was currently at war with his people especially when it was the unavoidably obvious trigger of the "current" war with Greece?¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁷ Critical scholars sometimes argue that vs. 36-39 may be aptly applied to Antiochus Epiphanes since coins were minted during his reign in which "Antiochus God Manifest" was engraved under Antiochus' image. (John S. Evans, *The Four Kingdoms of Daniel: A Defense of the "Roman" Sequence with AD 70 Fulfillment*, (USA: Xulon Press, 2004), 206.) However, this does not mean that he magnified himself above every god. It just implies that he magnified himself above other men. The many temples Antiochus built for the Greek gods and the fact that he forced the Jews to also worship these gods clearly shows that Antiochus did not magnify himself above the gods of his fathers. (Allan A. MacRae, *The Prophecies of Daniel* (Interdisciplinary Biblical Research Institute, 2013), 240 cited in John S. Evans, *The Four*

Thus the Book of Daniel could not have been written in the second century B.C. during the Maccabean Wars. And the willful king cannot be Antiochus Epiphanies. If the willful king is not Antiochus Epiphanies, then who was he? In 11:35 the prophet writes: *Some of the wise will stumble, so that they may be refined, purified and made spotless until the time of the end, for it will still come at the appointed time.*

The reference to the time of the end in 11:35 implies a shift from Antiochus Epiphanes and the Greek empire to Rome, the final empire of Daniel's visions.

An Overview¹⁵⁸

Liberal scholars do not believe in miracles. Therefore, the books of the Bible are often dated after all the alleged predictions have already come to pass. The criteria by which liberals date the books are simply "have the prophecies been fulfilled?" If so, then we can date the book at that point and thereby define it as history instead of miraculous prophecy. This is not possible with the Book of Daniel. Daniel was indisputably written long before the fulfillment of the prophecies at the end of this chapter.

Throughout Daniel 11, the king of the Seleucids is the king of the north; the king of the Ptolemies is the king of the south. But Rome increasingly made its presence felt in the area, and as such, we will find in our study that the willful king of 11:36 is Caesar or the current ruler of Rome. Caesar and Rome began to be worshipped in the imperial cult after the death of Jules Caesar in fulfillment of Daniel 11:36: "*He will exalt and magnify himself above every god....*"

By the time we come to Daniel 11:36-45, through his many wars, the king of the north is Mark Anthony, and the king of the south is Cleopatra VII. Anthony, the king of the north, and Cleopatra, the king of the south, united to fight the willful king, Caesar Augustus, with "*chariots and cavalry and a great fleet of ships*" in the Battle of Actium in fulfillment of Daniel 11:40.

After the Battle of Actium, Edom, Moab, and the leaders of Ammon were delivered from Caesar Augustus' hand, fulfilling Daniel 11:41: "*Many countries will fall, but Edom, Moab and the leaders of Ammon will be delivered from his hand.*" However, Caesar Augustus, the willful king, did subjugate Egypt and Libya and captured and enslaved the Nubians of Napata while bringing the wealth of Egypt to Rome in fulfillment of Daniel 11:42-43: "*Then he will stretch out his hand against other countries, and the land of Egypt will not escape. But he will gain control over the hidden treasures of gold and silver and over all the precious things of Egypt, and Libyans and Nubians will follow at his heels.*"

Kingdoms of Daniel: A Defense of the "Roman" Sequence with AD 70 Fulfillment, (USA: Xulon Press, 2004), 207.)

¹⁵⁸ The material in 11:36-45 has been adapted from: <https://revelationrevolution.org/daniel-chapter-11-35-45-commentary-every-prophecy-miraculously-fulfilled/>

Years later, in fulfillment of v. 44, both Israel to the east and Gaul to the north revolted against Rome. Enraged, Caesar, the willful king, dispatched the Roman Legions. As the Roman Army pitched its tents outside of Jerusalem, the beautiful holy mountain, back in Rome, Nero Caesar, *the willful king*, was declared an enemy of the state and died with “*no one [to] help him*” in fulfillment of Daniel 11:44.

Verse 11:36 seems to imply a transition. In Daniel 2 and Daniel 7, Daniel predicts four Gentile Empires that would rule Israel before the establishment of the kingdom of God. Antiochus Epiphanes was a Greek king and thus ruled during the third empire in Daniel’s visions. The reference to the time of the end in the above verse implies a shift in focus away from the Greek Empire to Rome, the fourth and final Gentile Empire of Daniel’s visions. Because Rome was the last kingdom to rule over Israel before the establishment of the kingdom of God, the rise of the Roman Empire is labeled “*the time of the end.*” The NRSV says that the wise shall fall and be purified “*until the time of the end, for there is still an interval until the time appointed.*” This translation indicates that there will be an interval between 11:35 and 11:36. There are approximately 130 years between the war with Antiochus IV Epiphanes and the rise of Rome.¹⁵⁹ During this time, Rome replaced Greece as the dominant world power. This large gap between these verses is not without precedent. There is a similar 130-year interval between 11:2 and 3. Interestingly, this 130-year interval between 11:2 and 3 also marks another shift between empires: this time from Medo-Persia to Greece; that corresponds with our change here to Rome.

Throughout chapter 11, Daniel describes the life of a specific king and seamlessly moves on to that of his successor, usually without ever having specified to his reader the passage of the crown. Thus it is not surprising that no explicit indication of a change in authority is made between 11:35 and 36. Though no definite shift in power is specified in these two verses, there does seem to be an implicit transition in 11:35. It is also interesting to note that nowhere throughout the remainder of the chapter is the willful king of 11:36 unambiguously called the king of the north. But if this king was not Antiochus Epiphanes, then who was the willful king of v. 36? In the next verse, Daniel begins to describe this king:

The Character of the Willful King (11:36-39)

11:36 Then the king shall do according to his own will: he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished; for what has been determined shall be done.

¹⁵⁹ Antiochus Epiphanes, the king of the north, died in 164 B.C., and the rise of the Roman Empire is marked by the Battle of Actium in 31 B.C.

The king who “**shall do according to his own will**” or “the Willful King,” as he is sometimes called, is Rome or Caesar. He is the king of Kittim¹⁶⁰ (Rome) mentioned previously in 11:30.

As is discussed in Revelation 13, the beast is a symbol of Rome and its Caesars. There was a legend circulating throughout Rome that Augustus’ mother, after having fallen asleep in the temple of Apollo, had a dream of a serpent entering her womb. Nine months after this vision, she gave birth to Augustus. Years after Augustus’ “divine conception,” Roman coins were minted with an inscription etched around an image of Caesar reading, “Son of God.”¹⁶¹ And like Christ, the Caesars were also given many of the same accolades including “Divine,” “Son of God,” “God,” “God from God,” “Redeemer,” “Liberator,” “Lord,” and “Savior of the World.” They even had a cult dedicated to their divine worship.¹⁶²

“...he [the willful king] shall exalt and magnify himself above every god....” 11:36

In A.D. 70, while the temple in Jerusalem burned, the Roman army, under Caesar Titus’ authority, brought the Roman ensigns into the Temple and worshiped them there.

On his voyage back to Rome after destroying Jerusalem and its temple, Caesar Titus is recorded to have issued the following blasphemous challenge to the God of Israel according to Gittin 56b of the Babylonian Talmud: “If he [the God of Israel] is really mighty, let him come up on the dry land and fight with me.”¹⁶³ In these blasphemous and arrogant words, one can see how Caesar Titus fulfills Daniel 11:36: “*He will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will say unheard-of things against the God of gods.*”



¹⁶⁰ In its limited usage *Kittim* is Cyprus. In its broader sense, *Kittim* is the western islands of the Mediterranean including coastal Greece, Rome and Spain (Josephus *The Antiquities of the Jews* 1.6.1; Jeremiah 2:10; Ezekiel 27:6; 1 Maccabees 1:1). In other words, *Kittim* denotes the extent of the first-century Roman Empire which completely encompassed the Mediterranean.

¹⁶¹ John Dominic Crossan, *God and Empire: Jesus Against Rome, Then and Now* (San Francisco: Harper Collins Publishers, 2007), 117.

¹⁶² Steven J. Friesen, *Imperial Cults and the Apocalypse of John: Reading Revelation in the Ruins* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 26, 32.

¹⁶³ http://www.come-and-hear.com/gittin/gittin_56.html#PARTb

The Burning of Jerusalem and its Temple in A.D. 70

11:37 *He shall regard neither the God of his fathers nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall exalt himself above them all.*

The sixth head of the beast, Nero, found all religions contemptible: “He despised all religious cults except that of the Syrian [non-Roman] Goddess, and showed one day, that he had changed his mind even about her, by urinating on the divine image. He had come, instead, to rest a superstitious belief—the only one, as a matter of fact, to which he remained faithful—in the statuette of a girl sent him by an anonymous commoner as a charm against conspiracies.”¹⁶⁴

“...nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall exalt himself above them all.” 11:37

The features of Caesar Augustus or his family members were often superimposed on those of the Roman gods, in Roman money and marble statues. For example, Jupiter, the king of the gods, was crafted in the image of Augustus, the willful king. As the second Caesar, Caesar Augustus was the second head of the seven-headed beast of Revelation.

Caesar Gaius, the fourth Caesar and thus the fourth head of the beast, even went so far as to have the heads of various temple statues of gods removed and replaced with his own.¹⁶⁵ Often appearing in public dressed as the Olympian gods, Caesar Gaius often referred to himself as a god when meeting with politicians and was called Jupiter, the king of the gods, in assorted public documents.¹⁶⁶

Gaius' successor, Claudius, the fifth head of the beast, is depicted in a statue in the Vatican Museum as Jupiter, the king of the gods. The fact that the Caesars often blasphemously depicted themselves in the image and likeness of the Roman gods shows how the Caesars showed no regard for the gods of their fathers or for any god but rather exalted themselves above them all fulfilling v. 37.

11:38 *“But in their place he [the willful king] shall honor a god of fortresses; and a god which his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and pleasant things.”*

Caesar, the Willful King, and Rome began to be worshipped in the Imperial Cult after the death of the First Caesar—Julius. Furthermore, the Romans believed themselves to be the descendants of the God of War, Rome's founding deity.

In 11:38, Daniel predicts that the willful king, Caesar Augustus, will “*honor a god of fortresses; a god unknown to his fathers.*” Who was this god? Augustus' predecessor,

¹⁶⁴ Suetonius *Lives of the Twelve Caesars* 6:56.

¹⁶⁵ Michael Farquhar, *A Treasure of Royal Scandals* (New York: Penguin Books, 2001), 209.

¹⁶⁶ Philo of Alexandria *On the Embassy to Gaius* 11-15; Cassius Dio *Roman History* 59.26-28.

Julius, the first Caesar, was formally deified after his death. He was the first ruler of Rome believed by his people to be a god.¹⁶⁷ Rome adopted the practice of emperor worship from the Greeks. When Augustus became emperor, the Greek provinces requested permission to worship Augustus as a living god. Augustus agreed but stipulated that they could only do so in conjunction with the worship of the goddess Roma.

Mars was the Roman god of war. Interestingly, Mars, the god of war, was the founding deity of Rome.¹⁶⁸ And the Romans believed themselves to be Mars' descendants. Here one can see how deified Rome, an empire believed to be descendants of the god of war, is a god of fortresses.¹⁶⁹

11:39 *“Thus he shall act against the strongest fortresses with a foreign god, which he shall acknowledge, and advance its glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and divide the land for gain.”*

Julius Caesar was succeeded by Caesar Augustus, the second head of the beast. In order to legitimize his claim to the throne, Augustus promoted the deification of his predecessor and fought a series of battles in order to bring his father's murderers to justice. After slaying these assassins, Augustus divided the responsibilities of government among his allies, and the veterans of Augustus' army were settled in municipal lands after having evicted the previous landowners in fulfillment of 11:39: *“[He] shall cause them to rule over many, and divide the land for gain.”*

Verses 38-39 both seem to be fulfilled in the establishment of the imperial cult when Augustus was worshipped alongside the Goddess Roma. The creation and reconfiguring of temples to the worship of Caesar and Rome required money, from here on, we can see how Augustus honored this god of fortresses with “gold and silver, with precious stones and costly gifts (Daniel 11:38).” In his military campaigns, Caesar Augustus attacked the mightiest fortresses with the help of this new foreign god, Rome.

At the beginning of Augustus' reign, the empire was divided into three parts led by Augustus, then known as Octavian, Mark Anthony, and Lepidus. Eventually, conflict arose between Mark Anthony and Augustus resulted in a major naval battle. After defeating Anthony and Cleopatra in the Battle of Actium, Augustus honored the god of the sea, Neptune, and the god of war, Mars, with loot taken from Anthony's fleet.¹⁷⁰ This plunder, no doubt, also included gold, jewels, and silver as indicated in 11:38. Augustus, the willful king, also built a grand temple to Mars, the founding deity of Rome,¹⁷¹ in addition to beautifying ruined temples with gold, pearls and precious

¹⁶⁷ Suetonius *Lives of the Twelve Caesars* 1.88.

¹⁶⁸ Venus was also considered a founding deity of Rome.

¹⁶⁹ The identity of this “god of fortresses” is uncertain. In Joel 3:16, God is described as a fortress.

¹⁷⁰ Suetonius *Lives of the Twelve Caesars* 2.18.

¹⁷¹ Suetonius *Lives of the Twelve Caesars* 2.29.

stones.¹⁷² This battle was said to occur “*at the time of the end*” because its outcome marked the rise of the Roman Empire, the fourth and final kingdom of Daniel’s visions.

Augustus was a title often appended to the name of gods, including Mars. Intended to honor the god, this title also seemed to infer that the deity and the emperor were one. In Spain, many dedications to Mars Augustus were presented by members of the priesthood called *Augustales*. These vows were often fulfilled within a temple dedicated to the worship of the emperor or in a temple dedicated to Mars. The Caesars were also frequently depicted in the form of Greek deities in statues and Roman currency. The presentation of the Greek gods in the image of the emperor might be seen as a kind of foreign god, “a god unknown to his fathers.”

It is also worth noting that the ancient Romans worshiped spiritual forces and powers. Rome did not begin to worship a pantheon of anthropomorphic deities until it came into contact with Greek culture in the sixth century B.C. After its first exposure to Greece, Rome slowly began to adopt and modify the Greek gods. Interestingly the seeds of this transition began to be planted at approximately the same time in which Daniel had this vision. As the Roman Empire expanded, it adopted the religions of the people it subjugated. In addition to adopting the Greek gods, Rome later adopted the Greek practice of emperor worship. In addition, Rome also adopted astrology from Babylon as well as several mystery religions including Mithraism from Persia. The replacement of ancient Roman spirituality with foreign religions had taken firm hold before and during Augustus’ reign.

Consequently, Augustus would have probably been entirely unfamiliar with the gods of his ancestors, those deities worshiped in Rome during Daniel’s composition. So in this way, Augustus had shown “no regard for the gods of his fathers.” In verse 37, the willful king is also said to have shown no regard for *any* god. It would seem that the author of the Book of Daniel probably never intended to convey the idea that this king was truly atheistic since in the following verse, this king is said to have honored a god of fortresses.

¹⁷² Suetonius *Lives of the Twelve Caesars* 2.30. One such donation to Jupiter included 16,000 pounds of gold in addition to pearls and precious stones worth 500,000 gold pieces.



Map of the Donations of Alexandria in 34 B.C.

The Behavior of the Willful King (11:39-45)

11:40 *“At the time of the end the king of the South shall attack him; and the king of the North shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter the countries, overwhelm them, and pass through.”*

As is the case throughout Daniel 11, the king of the south is the king of Egypt and the king of the north, the king of Syria. The ruler of Egypt, Cleopatra, is the king of the south. And functionally, but without title, Marcus Antonius Creticus, commonly known as Mark Anthony, is the king of Syria or the north. Drawn together by love and mutual political ambition, the king of the north and south united to fight Augustus, *the willful king*, on the Aegean Sea near Actium. Anthony’s impressive army of chariots and horsemen mentioned in 11:40 stood by the shore while Augustus, *the willful king*, drew his enemies out to sea, rendering Anthony’s superior ground force largely ineffectual. *“And with many ships [11:40],”* Augustus defeated his enemies’ armada.¹⁷³

Shortly after that, Anthony, the king of the north, and Cleopatra, the king of the south, took their own lives consolidating Augustus’ power. With this decisive victory, Augustus became the first emperor of Rome. And upon his rise to power, Roman democracy died. Thus began *“the time of the end.”* In this landmark battle which marked the beginning of the end of the age, one can appreciate the complete fulfillment of Daniel 11:40: *“At the time of the end the king of the South [Cleopatra] will engage him in battle*

¹⁷³ Plutarch *Plutarch’s Lives of the Noble Greeks and Romans* Marcus Antonius 61-62.

[Augustus, the willful king], and the king of the North [Anthony] will storm out against him [Augustus, the willful king] with chariots and cavalry and a great fleet of ships."

It seems that the Qumran community may have understood the willful king to be the king of Kittim (Rome),¹⁷⁴ and it is he who attacks the king of the north (Syria) and the king of the south (Egypt) in Daniel 11:40. The War Scroll is a prophetic scroll found in the Dead Sea explicitly stated to concern events at the end of the age. Column 1 of the War Scroll is often thought to have been inspired by Daniel 11:40-12:3.¹⁷⁵ In column 1 of the War Scroll the king of Kittim, Rome, is said to enter or invade Egypt, the king of the south, and Syria, the king of the north: "[The king] of Kittim [shall enter] into Egypt, and in his time he shall set out in great wrath to wage war against the kings of the north[.]"¹⁷⁶ If this end-time prophecy in column 1 of the War Scroll was inspired by Daniel 11:40 as many Biblical scholars believe, then this belief among the Jews of the Dead Sea adds credence to our notes here.

11:41 "He shall also enter the Glorious Land, and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall escape from his hand: Edom, Moab, and the prominent people of Ammon."

After Augustus, the willful king, defeated Cleopatra, the king of the south, at the Battle of Actium, the young emperor seized all her kingdom. As a result, Augustus, the willful king, acquired full control over Israel, **the Glorious Land**. With Israel conquered, Augustus never raised his mighty arm against Israel's neighbors.

During the time of this prophecy, the kingdoms of **Edom, Moab, and the prominent people of Ammon** were at the east and southeast borders of Israel. However, after the Babylonian conquest, many Edomites migrated north. These people settled in southern Judea south of Hebron having been driven out of their ancestral territory to the south and east by the Nabateans. The Nabateans also occupied the land of Moab; thus, ancient Edom and Moab became Nabatea. During Augustus' reign, Nabatea remained a sovereign nation. It had not become part of the Roman Empire until the reign of Trajan. In 63 B.C., the former territory of Ammon, then called the Decapolis, was a group of ten cities that welcomed the Romans as their liberators from the oppression of the Jewish Hasmonean kingdom. The Romans allowed these ten cities of the Decapolis some degree of political independence within the protective sphere of Rome. Thus Daniel was right: The ancient territories of Edom and Moab had escaped the rule of the willful king while the leaders of Ammon had, in fact, retained their right to rule unmolested by Rome.

¹⁷⁴ Kittim is Rome. Kittim (Rome) may be called Assyria in the War Scroll. However, it is a bit unclear as a distinction between Kittim and Assyria appears to be made in 4Q492. If Kittim is likened to Assyria in the War Scroll than this epithet appears to mirror the fact that Kittim is called Babylon, a similar symbolic label, in 1QpHab of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

¹⁷⁵ *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, trans. Geza Vermes, rev. ed. (London: Penguin Books, 2004), 164.

¹⁷⁶ 1QM Col. 1:3-4.

11:42-43 ***“He shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape. He shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; also the Libyans and Ethiopians shall follow at his heels.”***

After his victory at the Battle of Actium, Augustus, the willful king, extended his dominion over the land of his two conquered enemies. Thus in fulfillment of vs. 42-43, the *willful king* acquired Israel, Egypt, and Libya from Cleopatra, the king of the south, while at the same time confiscating Greece and Syria from Anthony, the king of the north.

With Cleopatra defeated, the riches of Egypt were brought to Rome. Regarding this transfer of wealth, Suetonius writes, “When he [Augustus, the willful king] brought the treasures of the Ptolemies [Egyptians] to Rome at his Alexandrian triumph, so much cash passed into private hands that the interest rate on loans dropped sharply, while real estate values soared.”¹⁷⁷ Here one can see how Augustus gained “*control of the treasures of gold and silver and all the riches of Egypt* (Daniel 11:43).”

Furthermore, with control over Egypt, Augustus dispatched the Roman General Petronius to Nubia. Under his leadership, the Romans captured Napata.¹⁷⁸ With the city captured and the people of Napata enslaved, Nubia was also forced into submission in fulfillment of 11:43.

Jerusalem and Gaul

11:44-45 ***“But news from the east and the north shall trouble him; therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many. And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and no one will help him.”***

From 11:36 to the end of the chapter, Daniel describes Rome and its emperor, *the willful king*. In these two verses, Daniel turns his attention away from Augustus to another Caesar and willful king—the last in the Caesar family line. Such an abrupt switch has repeated precedence; throughout chapter 11, Daniel traces hundreds of years of foreign relations between the kings of Syria, the king of the north, and Egypt, the king of the south. Throughout this chronology, Daniel describes the actions of one king and immediately transitions to those of his successor, often without ever indicating the death of one king and the rise of the next. Each king is simply identified as the king of the north or the king of the south. A similar transition is found here. In the preceding verses, Daniel describes the events surrounding the rise of the Roman Empire and its first emperor, Caesar Augustus; then, in 11:44, Daniel begins to describe the most infamous Caesar [or willful king] of all—*Nero*.

¹⁷⁷ Suetonius *Lives of the Twelve Caesars* 2.41.

¹⁷⁸ The Nubians and Romans ultimately signed a peace treaty which remained in effect for three hundred years.

The reign of Caesar Nero, *the willful king*, was dominated by tyranny and injustice. Thus it was only a matter of time before the people revolted. Just before Nero's death, there were two significant revolts: Israel in the east and Gaul in the north in fulfillment of 11:44: "*But news from the east and the north shall trouble him; therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many.*" (Daniel 11:44, NKJV).¹⁷⁹ Enraged, Nero attacked Israel, the Beautiful land, destroying and annihilating many fulfilling the last part of 11:44 "*he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many.*" During this war, a dispatch was brought to the willful king during dinner, informing him that additional armies had joined the revolt in Gaul. Tearing up the message, he pushed over the dinner table in anger.¹⁸⁰ Recording Nero's murderous rage upon hearing of this treachery, Suetonius writes: "Thus, he [Nero] intended to depose all army commanders and provincial governors and to execute them on a charge that they were all involved in a single conspiracy; and to dispatch all exiles everywhere, for fear they might join the rebels; and all Gallic residents at Rome, because they might be implicated in the rising. He further considered giving the army free permission to pillage Gaul, poisoning the entire Senate at a banquet, setting fire to the city again, but letting wild beasts loose in the streets to hinder the citizens from saving themselves."¹⁸¹

While all this was happening, Rome was in the middle of its war with Israel. The "beautiful holy mountain" in 11:45 in which the willful king is said to set his tents is Jerusalem. Jerusalem is often called God's holy mountain (Isaiah 2:2; Joel 2:1-2; 3:17; Zechariah 8:3). The Roman army set up tents outside of Jerusalem, the beautiful holy mountain, around the time of Nero's death.

When the Roman army set-up camp during the war with Israel, Josephus says that the middle of the camp was "set apart for tents ... [with] the tents of the commanders in the middle, but in the very midst of all is the general's own tent, in the nature of a temple...."¹⁸² As predicted in 11:45, while a large segment of the Roman army encamped outside the city awaiting Vespasian's arrival from Caesarea so that they could begin their assault on Jerusalem, "the beautiful holy mountain," news reached the army that the infamous emperor died in fulfillment of 11:45: "*He will pitch his royal tents between the seas at the beautiful holy mountain [Jerusalem]. Yet he will come to his end....*"¹⁸³

Declared an enemy of the state by a vote of the senate, Nero, the willful king, "had been abandoned by everybody,"¹⁸⁴ and preparations were made for his arrest. His subjects now his enemies, Nero committed suicide, having stabbed himself in the throat. Thus the willful king had "***come to his end, and no one will help him.***"

¹⁷⁹ Cassius Dio *Roman Histor* 63.22.

¹⁸⁰ Suetonius *Lives of the Twelve Caesars* 6.47.

¹⁸¹ Suetonius *Lives of the Twelve Caesars* 6.43.

¹⁸² Josephus *The Wars of the Jews* 3.5.2.

¹⁸³ Josephus *The Wars of the Jews* 4.9.1.490.

¹⁸⁴ Cassius Dio *Roman History* 63.26; Suetonius *Lives of the Twelve Caesars* 6.47-49.

In the last year of Nero's reign, a bolt of lightning "struck the Temple of the Caesars, decapitating all the statues at a stroke and dashed Augustus's scepter from his hands." Shortly after that, the Caesar family line had come to an end. But this was not the only miraculous sign witnessed toward the end of Nero's reign. In the next chapter, Daniel describes the rise of the Archangel Michael, corresponding with perhaps the most unlikely event in Roman history.