

Daniel's Detailed Prophecy Daniel 11

I. Daniel foretells of four Persian kings (11:2).

- A. Cyrus (539-529 BC)
- B. Cambyses (529-522 BC)
- C. Darius Hystaspes (529-522 BC)
- D. Xerxes (486-465 BC) - cf. Ahauerus (Esther 1:1-12)

II. Daniel foretells of a mighty Grecian king & his successors (11:3-4).

- A. Alexander the Great (336-323 BC)
- B. Four Generals (cf. Daniel 7:6; 8:21-22)
 - 1. Cassander – Macedonia & Greece
 - 2. Lysimachus – Thrace and much of Asia Minor
 - 3. Seleucus – Syria and a vast region in the east
 - 4. Ptolemy – Egypt

III. Daniel foretells of various kings of the south and north (11:5-20).

- A. Verse 5 – Seleucus I Nicator of Syria (312-281 BC) is the “prince” who broke away from the “king of the south,” Ptolemy I Soter of Egypt (323-285 BC). These two men began the Ptolemy and Seleucid dynasties.
- B. Verse 6 – Berenice, Ptolemy I Soter’s granddaughter, married Antiochus II Theos, Seleucus I Nicator’s grandson. Within three years, Berenice and her attendants were murdered. A former jealous wife murdered Antiochus II Theos and placed her son, Seleucus Callinicus (246-227 BC), upon the throne of Syria.
- C. Verses 7-9 – Ptolemy III Euergetes (246-221 BC), Berenice’s brother, was the “branch,” who attacked and defeated Seleucus Callinicus and returned to Egypt with his booty.
- D. Verses 10 – Seleucus III Ceraunus (227-223 BC) and Antiochus III the Great (223-187 BC) were the “sons” of Seleucus Callinicus. Ceraunus was killed on a mission in Asia Minor, but Antiochus the Great pushed backed Egypt through Palestine and later returned to his fortress, Raphia.
- E. Verses 11-12 – Ptolemy V Philopator (221-204 BC), the son of Ptolemy Euergetes, was the “king of the south” who retaliated. This time the Egyptian ruler won. Because of his victory he became very proud and retreated to live in luxury.
- F. Verses 13-16 – Some fourteen years later, Antiochus the Great attacked Egypt. Shortly after this, Ptolemy V Epiphanes (203-181 BC), a four-year-old son of Ptolemy V Philopator was made king. The “robbers of thy people” were apostate Jews who helped Antiochus gain possession of the glorious land, Palestine.
- G. Verse 17 – Antiochus the Great attempted to gain control of Egypt by marrying his daughter, Cleopatra, to Ptolemy V Epiphanes. Although the agreement was made in 197 BC, the marriage did not take place until 193 BC, because Epiphanes was only ten years old. Although Antiochus thought his daughter would betray her Egyptian husband, she did not do so. So the plan failed.
- H. Verses 18-19 – From there, Antiochus the Great sought to take the “isles” of the Aegean by taking Greece, but Rome intervened, preventing his victory and sending him home in defeat. Shortly after his return, he died in obscurity.

IV. Daniel foretells of Antiochus IV Epiphanes (11:21-35).

- A. Verse 21 – The kingdom actually belonged to Demetrius Soter who was imprisoned in Rome. Antiochus Epiphanes took advantage of his imprisonment and seized the kingdom using flattery.
- B. Verses 22-24 – Antiochus was successful militarily. He replaced Onias III, the Jewish high priest with Onias' brother, Joshua, who took the name Jason and was sympathetic to Grecian ideas. Later Menelaus replaced Jason and killed Onias III (“the prince of the covenant”). Antiochus continued to rise to power through deceit. He took from the rich (“the fattest places”) and gave to the poor in order to gain their favor.
- C. Verses 25-30 – Antiochus sought to defeat the king of the south, Ptolemy Philometor (181-145 BC). Philometor was one of two sons of Cleopatra, the daughter of Antiochus the Great. Because Cleopatra and Antiochus Epiphanes were siblings, Philometor was his nephew. The “devices” were Philometor's people who betrayed him. Antiochus defeated Philometor at Pelusium, just east of the Nile. Upon Philometor's defeat the Egyptian people at Alexandria made Ptolemy Euergetes king, Philometor's brother. So, Antiochus developed a friendship with Philometor in order to defeat Euergetes. But in reality, both Antiochus and Philometor were deceitful with each other. Once Antiochus was defeated, he returned through Palestine, mistreating the Jews (v. 28). The Jews disliked Antiochus because of the death of Onias III. Antiochus also sought to take out his frustration over Egypt upon God's people, the Jews. He seized various temple objects and stopped the ceremonial offerings, etc. Later (around 168 BC), Antiochus sought to defeat Egypt, but the Romans (“ships of Chittim”) stopped him. Once again, Antiochus returned through Palestine, taking his frustration out upon God's people. The “intelligence” (v. 30) refers to apostate Jews who sought to replace the worship of Jehovah with Grecian religion.
- D. Verses 31-35 – Antiochus stopped the daily sacrifice, polluting the altar through offering a sow upon it and setting up an idol to Zeus. Although some Jews became corrupted by the deceit of Antiochus, others resisted his wickedness and did great exploits. The “little help” probably refers to Mattathias Maccabeus and his five sons who led the Maccabean Revolt against Antiochus. Though many died, the Maccabean Revolt did limit the efforts of Antiochus Epiphanes.

V. Daniel foretells of the Antichrist (11:36-45).

- A. Verses 36-39 - There is a possible time gap between verses 35 and 36. The king in verse 36 is the Antichrist (cf. Verse 40). He is self-willed, arrogant, and blasphemous. Some expositors believe he will be a Jew (“the God of his fathers”). There are various interpretations of the phrase “desire of women.” Some see it referring to the qualities of women (mercy, gentleness, kindness), some see an implied reference to homosexuality, and others see it as a reference to Messianic hope (the desire of all Jewish women to give birth to the Messiah). Clearly, he exalts himself above God (cf. 2 Thess. 2:3-10). “The god of forces” speaks of war. He will honor this god with silver, gold, etc. He will conquer the “strong holds” (powerful, wealthy areas), allowing the rulers to lead under his direction.
- B. Verses 40-45 – The “king of the south” may refer to an Egyptian-led army coming against the Antichrist. The “king of the north” most writers see as an army including Syria and the former Russia. The Antichrist will defeat these attackers. He then will attack the “glorious land” (Israel), breaking his former covenant with Israel. He will not continue conquering toward the southeast (Edom, Moab, and Ammon) but conquer farther south (Egypt, Libya, Ethiopia, etc.). The “tidings out of the east and . . . north” most Bible expositors see as a great eastern army (cf. Rev. 9:13-21; 16:12). The Antichrist succeeds and sets up his headquarters at Jerusalem between the Mediterranean and Dead Seas. Yet, his rule shall come to an end at God's appointed time (cf. Rev. 19:17-21).