

The Book of Daniel

"The Ungodly Will Perish"

Chapter 11

Introduction

In this chapter, Gabriel explains to Daniel how the overthrow of Babylon occurred two years earlier. In Chapter 10, we learned that the Archangel Michael stood with Gabriel to confirm and strengthen him since it was Michael's responsibility to overthrow the satanic prince of Babylon so that the prince of Persia might come. Chapter 11 contains one of the most specifically fulfilled prophecies of the Bible. It accurately predicts history for the next 375 years and then to the end of time. The chapter is so specific that critics who deny supernatural revelation have insisted that it is history, written after the fact, fraudulently claiming to be prophecy.

Verse 2 tells us about the future Persian Kings and the coming Greek Empire. "And now I will tell you the truth: Behold, three more kings will arise in Persia, 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." ([Daniel 11:2 NKJV](#))

These visions of the future of the Persian and Greek Empires are relevant because each empire attempted to wipe out the Jews. This strong, wealthy fourth king was fulfilled in the Persian King Xerxes, who stirred up the Persians against the realm of Greece. The Persian Empire tried to wipe out the Jewish people during the reign of Xerxes through the plot of Haman (recorded in the Book of Esther).

The Greek Empire tried to wipe out the Jewish people during the reign of Antiochus IV when he attempted to kill every Jew who didn't renounce their commitment to God and embrace Greek culture.

Verse 3 says, "Then a mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. And when he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken up and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not among his posterity nor according to his dominion with which he ruled; for his kingdom shall be uprooted, even for others besides these." ([Daniel 11:3-4 NKJV](#))

The angel told Daniel of a mighty king with a kingdom that would not endure but be divided after the mighty king's death. It was fulfilled by Alexander the Great, the mighty king who died suddenly of a fever at 32 years of age. His four generals would later divide the Greek Empire among themselves.

The rest of the prophecy focuses on two of the four generals because they continuously fought over the Promised Land, caught between their centers of power. The angel calls them the kings of the North (Seleucid Kingdom) and the kings of the South (Ptolemaic Kingdom). Verse 5 says, "Also the king of the South shall become strong, as well as *one* of his princes; and he shall gain power over him and have dominion. His dominion *shall be* a great dominion." ([Daniel 11:5 NKJV](#))

The Seleucids were the Kings of the North, and the Ptolemies were the Kings of the South. These two dynasties fought for 130 years, and the stronger of the two always ruled over the Holy Land.

Verse 6 says, "And at the end of *some* years they shall join forces, for the daughter of the king of the South shall go to the king of the North to make an agreement; but she shall not retain the power of her authority, and neither he nor his authority shall stand; but she shall be given up, with those who brought her, and with him who begot her, and with him who strengthened her in *those* times." (Daniel 11:6 NKJV)

When the kings of the North and South are joined by marriage, they become allies for a while, but the arrangement doesn't last. The marriage between Antiochus II (of the Seleucids) and Berenice (daughter of Ptolemy II) brought peace, but it ended when Ptolemy II died. Antiochus II exiled Berenice and took back his former wife, Laodice. But Laodice didn't trust her husband, Antiochus II, so she poisoned him. After the murder of Antiochus II, Laodice had Berenice, her attendants, and Berenice's infant son killed. Laodice then set her son (Seleucus II) on the throne of the Syrian kingdom.

But the army from the South defeats the kingdom of the North. Verse 7 tells us about it. "But from a branch of her roots *one* shall arise in his place, who shall come with an army, enter the fortress of the king of the North, and deal with them and prevail. 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. "Also *the king of the North* shall come to the kingdom of the king of the South, but shall return to his own land." (Daniel 11:7-9 NKJV)

Ptolemy III was the brother of Berenice, who avenged the murder of his sister by invading Syria and humbling Seleucus II. Ptolemy III lived four years past Seleucus II.

But in verse 10, the sons of the king of the North experience victory. "However his sons shall stir up strife, and assemble a multitude of great forces; and *one* shall certainly come and overwhelm and pass through; then he shall return to his fortress and stir up strife." (Daniel 11:10 NKJV)

Seleucus III and Antiochus III were the two sons of Seleucus II. Both were victorious generals, but Seleucus III ruled only briefly and was succeeded by his brother, Antiochus III. In a furious battle, Antiochus III took back the Holy Land from the dominion of the Ptolemies.

In verse 11, the king of the South gains the upper hand over the king of the North. "And the king of the South shall be moved with rage, and go out and fight with him, with the king of the North, who shall muster a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into the hand of his *enemy*. When he has taken away the multitude, his heart will be lifted up; and he will cast down tens of thousands, but he will not prevail." (Daniel 11:11-12 NKJV)

The angel tells Daniel that the king of the South will attack and face a great multitude of soldiers from the king of the North. But the king of the North will lose the battle, and his army will be defeated. Antiochus III was defeated at the battle of Raphia and forced to give back dominion over the Holy Land to Ptolemy IV.

But verse 13 says the king of the North will return and defeat the king of the South and retake occupation of the Glorious Land. "For the king of the North will return and muster a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come at the end of some years with a great army and much equipment. "Now in those times many shall rise up against the king of the South. Also, violent men of your people shall exalt themselves in fulfillment of the vision, but they shall fall. So the king of the North shall come and build a siege mound, and take a fortified city; and the forces of the South shall not withstand *him*. Even his choice troops *shall have* no strength to resist. But he who comes against him shall do according to his own will, and no one shall stand against him. He shall stand in the Glorious Land with destruction in his power."[\(Daniel 11:13-16 NKJV\)](#)

This victory gives the king of the North dominion over Israel. When Antiochus III invaded Egypt, he gained final control over the armies of Ptolemy V and the Holy Land. Jews living in the Holy Land helped Antiochus III defeat the king of the South because they resented the rule of the Egyptian Ptolemies.

But their decision proved to be unwise when he turned his destruction upon Israel. Verse 17 says, "He shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and upright ones with him; thus shall he do. And he shall give him the daughter of women to destroy it; but she shall not stand *with him*, or be for him."[\(Daniel 11:17 NKJV\)](#)

Antiochus III gave his daughter Cleopatra to Ptolemy V of Egypt, hoping to gain permanent influence and eventually control all of Egypt. This Cleopatra was the ancestor of the famous Cleopatra of history.

Verse 18 says, "After this, he shall turn his face to the coastlands, and shall take many. But a ruler shall bring the reproach against them to an end; and with the reproach removed, he shall turn back on him. Then he shall turn his face toward the fortress of his own land; but he shall stumble and fall, and not be found."[\(Daniel 11:18-19 NKJV\)](#)

Antiochus III turned his attention towards Asia Minor and Greece and was joined by Hannibal, the famous general from Carthage. But a Roman General, Lucius Cornelius Scipio, defeated Antiochus in Greece. Antiochus returned home, having lost all he had gained. Needing money, Antiochus pillaged a Babylonian temple but was killed by the enraged local citizens.

Verse 20 says, "There shall arise in his place one who imposes taxes *on* the glorious kingdom; but within a few days he shall be destroyed, but not in anger or in battle."[\(Daniel 11:20 NKJV\)](#)

Seleucus III, the oldest son of Antiochus III, began to increase taxes to increase revenues. His plan to pillage the Jerusalem temple was abandoned when his ambassador had an angelic vision of warning. Seleucus III was then assassinated, probably by his brother Antiochus IV.

The second part of the prophecy begins in verse 21. Verse 21 says, "And in his place shall arise a vile person, to whom they will not give the honor of royalty; but he shall come in peaceably, and seize the kingdom by intrigue." (Daniel 11:21 NKJV)

When Antiochus IV took power, he became known as Antiochus Epiphanes. The angel says he would be a vile person. Antiochus IV didn't use terror to gain power. He used flattery, smooth promises, and intrigue. Antiochus IV reigned from 175-163 B.C., and all of verses 21-34 refer to him.

But several details apply to the activities of the last Syrian king, the Antichrist. He will do some things even more thoroughly than Antiochus IV. The Antichrist is given the crown according to Revelation 6:1-2. He is also given power to rule (Rev. 13:1-5). Antiochus the IV was forced back to his own land according to verses 28-30 but the Antichrist will do according to "his own will (36) until Christ returns.

Antiochus Epiphanes led two invasions of Egypt (25-31), but the Antichrist will lead only one invasion against Egypt (36). In verse 22, Antiochus IV fails to conquer the king of the South.

"With the force of a flood, they shall be swept away from before him and be broken, and also the prince of the covenant. And after the league *is made* with him he shall act deceitfully, for he shall come up and become strong with a small *number of* people. He shall enter peaceably, even into the richest places of the province; and he shall do *what* his fathers have not done, nor his forefathers: he shall disperse among them the plunder, spoil, and riches; and he shall devise his plans against the strongholds, but *only* for a time. "He shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the South with a great army. 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. Yes, those who eat of the portion of his delicacies shall destroy him; his army shall be swept away, and many shall fall down slain. Both these kings' hearts *shall be* bent on evil, and they shall speak lies at the same table; but it shall not prosper, for the end *will* still *be* at the appointed time." (Daniel 11:22-27 NKJV)

Antiochus Epiphanes carried on the feud between the dynasties but pretended friendship and alliance to catch them off guard. Despite massive efforts and epic battles, Antiochus Epiphanes was defeated in his second campaign against Egypt. Egypt beat Antiochus with the help of Rome, and at the end of it all, Antiochus Epiphanes and his kingdom came under the dominion of Rome.

In verse 28, Antiochus turns his rage upon Israel. "While returning to his land with great riches, his heart shall be *moved* against the holy covenant; so he shall do *damage* and return to his own land. "At the appointed time he shall return and go toward the south; but it shall not be like the former or the latter. For ships from Cyprus shall come against him; therefore he shall be grieved, and return in rage against the holy covenant, and do *damage*. "So he shall return and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant. And forces shall be mustered by him, and they shall defile the sanctuary fortress; then they shall take away the daily *sacrifices*, and place *there* the abomination of desolation. Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out *great exploits*. And those of the people who understand shall instruct many; yet *for many* days they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering. Now when they fall, they shall be aided with a little help; but many shall join with them by intrigue. And *some* of those of understanding shall fall, to refine them, purify *them*, and make *them* white, *until* the time of the end; because *it is* still for the appointed time.
(Daniel 11:28-35 NKJV)

Antiochus Euphianes' attempted to reduce Egypt to slavery, but the Roman Navy defeated Antiochus Epiphanes in a famous battle. Antiochus was told that the Roman Senate had sent word that he was to cease his wars. Antiochus wanted time to consult with his advisors, but the Roman legate drew a circle around Antiochus in the dirt and demanded to know if he would surrender and pay tribute to Rome before he stepped out of the circle. From then on, there was no doubt: Antiochus Epiphanes took his orders from Rome and was under Roman dominion.

When Antiochus Epiphanes returned from Egypt, he was bitter from defeat. According to some sources, the people of Jerusalem were celebrating because they had heard that Antiochus Epiphanes was dead. When Antiochus heard of their celebration, he turned his wrath on the Jews.

Antiochus Epiphanes set up an image of Zeus at the temple altar. He demanded sacrifice to this image and later desecrated the temple by sacrificing a pig on it. "It was in truth an abomination, which brought a desolate condition to the Temple, for now, no one would come to worship at all." (Wood)

When Antiochus Epiphanes turned on Jerusalem, the Jewish people were divided. Some forsook their covenant with God and embraced Greek culture. Those who knew God made a stand for righteousness in the face of incredible persecution. His attack on Jerusalem killed 80,000 Jews and took 40,000 more as prisoners. He sold another 40,000 as slaves and also plundered the temple, robbing it of approximately \$1 billion.

But his terror could only last for as long as God had appointed it, and God had a purpose even for such persecution and blasphemy. The underlying theme of this chapter is that humanity that is in rebellion against God will actually fulfill the plan designed by God long before time began.

In our history lesson today, we see how God reveals to Daniel events that will occur up to 375 years in the future with pinpoint accuracy. This, in itself, should be enough to convince us that God knows the past, present, and future.

Next week we'll start with verse 36, which takes us to the end of time and the events involving man's final attempt to rule the world, and ending with Christ's coming and the Antichrist's removal.

One of the insights we gain from these first verses of Chapter 11 is that Israel is God's treasured possession.

I. God Loves Israel

Deuteronomy 7 says about Israel, "For you *are* a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth. The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; but because the LORD loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers, the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. "Therefore know that the LORD your God, He *is* God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments;" (Deuteronomy 7:6-9 NKJV)

God declared Israel holy, not because of their superior behavior or righteous activities, but because He set them apart for himself. Jews couldn't make themselves holy; they could only walk in the reality of God's holiness and work out the practical implications of what it means to be holy. God chose Israel for only one reason; He loved them.

- He didn't choose them because they were more in number than other peoples. (They were actually fewest of peoples.)
- He didn't choose them because they were wealthy, skilled, or more intelligent.
- He didn't choose them because they were more spiritual or devout than others.

God chose Israel for one reason alone; He loved them.

Out of all the peoples of the earth, God chose Israel to be His special treasure. God could have chosen any nation or people, but He chose Israel. And God chose Israel so that He could treasure them.

II. God Loves You

But God doesn't stop there. God's love includes you. 1 John 3 says, "See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!

God's love for us is not conditional on anything commendable in us. Romans 5 says, "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only *that*, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation."
(Romans 5:8-11 NKJV)

Because of Christ, God chooses us to be His special treasure. I Peter 2:9 says, "But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;" (1 Peter 2:9 NKJV)

Impure motives sometimes corrupt our best actions; we often have selfish hearts and empty worship, yet God loves us! He is always faithful, loyal, and unchanging. He never wavers in His love for you. You are God's treasured possession. You are precious to Him.

Why does God care for us? Why does He watch over us and protect us? – Because He loves us!

Conclusion

Prophecy reveals the ungodly will perish. Those who refuse to believe and receive God's love will be removed from His world. But God sent Jesus to show His love for us. Because of God's love for us, Jesus paid the price for all of our sins.

Because of Jesus, you can be forgiven, no matter what you've done. No matter how many mistakes you've made or how unworthy you feel, God continues to love you and wants you to know that!

Whenever we come to God, we experience His love through His forgiveness, His healing touch upon us, and the wisdom and guidance He imparts to us. Maybe you need to know God loves you today. Jesus is here to extend God's love to you. Will you accept it?