

“GOD’S PRECISE PROPHETIC PLAN”

Daniel 11:1-35

Introduction

This chapter contains some of the most precise prophecies in the whole Bible. Keep in mind that Daniel wrote this powerful book around 500+ years before the Lord Jesus was incarnated. Amazingly, he recorded prophetic events that would stretch out for 375 years all the way to the end of the world. The accuracy of these prophecies is overwhelming. In fact, many people who reject the divine inspiration of the Bible have rejected the authorship of Daniel as a result. Let me say this clearly. . .

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God’s revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

If you will remember from our last meeting, we noted that Daniel received 4 visions. Daniel 10–12 is the fourth and final vision of this remarkable book of prophecy.

- **Chapter 10 provides the context.**
- **Chapter 11 contains the content.**
- **Chapter 12 is the conclusion.¹**

¹ Daniel L. Akin, [*Exalting Jesus in Daniel*](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2017), 137.

Tonight, I want to start with the beginning of this chapter so that we have continuity without confusion. This chapter is a legitimate prophecy of future events. God inspired it, the angel revealed it, Daniel wrote it, and we get to read and interpret it and apply it.

Daniel 11:1–2... *"In the first year of Darius the Mede, I arose to be an encouragement and a protection for him. 2 "And now I will tell you the truth. Behold, three more kings are going to arise in Persia. Then a fourth will gain far more riches than all of them; as soon as he becomes strong through his riches, he will arouse the whole empire against the realm of Greece.*

As we read and study this chapter, the nation of Israel is always the backdrop and primary interest of Daniel.

In relation to Israel, four great empires were described in Daniel 2 and 7: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. In Daniel 8 the vision narrows the focus to two: Medo-Persia and Greece. Those same two empires are the interest of the angel in Daniel 11:1–4.

Following King Darius, "three more kings will arise in Persia. Then a fourth will gain far more riches than all of them...." History records that these four kings were . . .

- **Cambyses (530–522 BC)**
- **Smerdis (522 BC)**
- **Darius I Hystapes (522–486 BC)**
- **Xerxes I (486–465 BC)**

This strong, rich fourth king was fulfilled in the Persian King Xerxes.

Persia & Greece—These visions and insights regarding the future of the Persian (Haman) and Greek Empires (Antiochus IV) were relevant because each empire attempted to exterminate the Jewish people.

Daniel 11:3-4... **"And a mighty king will arise, and he will rule with great authority and do as he pleases. 4 "But as soon as he has arisen, his kingdom will be broken up and parceled out toward the four points of the compass, though not to his own descendants, nor according to his authority which he wielded, for his sovereignty will be uprooted and given to others besides them.**

This was fulfilled in Alexander the Great. The ancient historian Josephus records about the arrival of Alexander the Great to Jerusalem, and how the high priest showed him the Book of Daniel. Alexander was so impressed that he spared Jerusalem and granted it religious toleration.

Alexander's sons were murdered, and no part of his vast empire went to his descendants. Following his death, four of his generals divided up his kingdom into four parts: Cassander took Macedonia and Greece. Lysimachus took Thrace and portions of Asia Minor. Ptolemy took Egypt and Israel. Seleucus took Syria and Mesopotamia. So, the sovereign God plucked Alexander's kingdom up, divided it into four pieces, and gave to others as He saw fit. And with that the great and heroic Alexander was finished.

Daniel 11:5–13 ... **"Then the king of the South will grow strong, along with one of his princes who will gain ascendancy over him and obtain dominion; his domain will be a great dominion indeed. 6 "After some years they will form an alliance, and the daughter of the king of the South will come to the king of the North to carry out a peaceful arrangement. But she will not retain her position of power, nor will he remain with his power, but she will be given up, along with those who brought her in and the one who sired her as well as he who supported her in those times. 7 "But one of the descendants of her line will arise in his place, and he will come against their army and enter the fortress of the king of the North, and he will deal with them and display great strength. 8 "Also their gods with their metal images and their precious vessels of silver and gold he will take into captivity to Egypt, and he on his part will refrain from attacking the king of the North for some years. 9 "Then the latter will enter the realm of the king of the South, but will return to his own land. 10 "His sons will mobilize and assemble a multitude of great forces; and one of them will keep on coming and overflow and pass through, that he may again wage war up to his very**

fortress. 11 The king of the South will be enraged and go forth and fight with the king of the North. Then the later will raise a great multitude, but that multitude will be given into the hand of the former. 12 “When the multitude is carried away, his heart will be lifted up, and he will cause tens of thousands to fall; yet he will not prevail. 13 For the king of the North will again raise a greater multitude than the former, and after an interval of some years he will press on with a great army and much equipment.

The rest of this prophecy focuses on two of the generals who inherited pieces of Alexander's kingdom. They were the KINGS OF THE NORTH and the KINGS OF THE SOUTH. They constantly fought over the Promised Land (Israel) because it sat between their centers of power. The dynasties of the Seleucids and the Ptolemies fought for some 130 years. The stronger of the two always held dominion over the Holy Land. These two kingdoms played political ping-pong with the nation of Israel for almost 175 years until the evil, *antichrist*-type figure Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175–163 BC) came on the scene.

Daniel 11:14–20... **“Now in those times many will rise up against the king of the South; the violent ones among your people will also lift themselves up in order to fulfill the vision, but they will fall down. 15 “Then the king of the North will come, cast up a siege ramp and capture a well-fortified city; and the forces of the South will not stand *their ground*, not even their choicest troops, for there will be no strength to make a stand. 16 “But he who comes against him will do as he pleases, and no one will *be able to* withstand him; he will also stay *for a time* in the Beautiful Land, with destruction in his hand. 17 “He will set his face to come with the power of his whole kingdom, bringing with him a proposal of peace which he will put into effect; he will also give him the daughter of women to ruin it. But she will not take a stand *for him* or be on his side. 18 “Then he will turn his face to the coastlands and capture many. But a commander will put a stop to his scorn against him; moreover, he will repay him for his scorn. 19 “So he will turn his face toward the fortresses of his own land, but he will stumble and fall and be found no more. 20 “Then in his place one will arise who will send an oppressor through the Jewel of his kingdom; yet within a few days he will be shattered, though not in anger nor in battle.**

These verses prophesy Antiochus III's defeat and ignominious end. The son and successor of Antiochus III was Seleucus IV Philopator (187–175 BC). He sent a “tax collector” (Heliodorus) to collect money to pay the 1000 talent indemnity demanded annually by the Romans. Seleucus IV reigned only a few years and was poisoned by Heliodorus, his tax collector and prime minister.²

Prophecies Concerning Antiochus IV Epiphanes

Daniel 11:21–27... “In his place a desppicable person will arise, on whom the honor of kingship has not been conferred, but he will come in a time of tranquility and seize the kingdom by intrigue. 22 “The overflowing forces will be flooded away before him and shattered, and also the prince of the covenant. 23 “After an alliance is made with him he will practice deception, and he will go up and gain power with a small *force of people*. 24 “In a time of tranquility he will enter the richest *parts of the realm*, and he will accomplish what his fathers never did, nor his ancestors; he will distribute plunder, booty and possessions among them, and he will devise his schemes against strongholds, but *only for a time*.

The angelic messenger revealed to Daniel that the next king would be a despicable person. Antiochus IV severely persecuted the Jews, massacring thousands, and represented one of the greatest threats to Yahweh worship in all of Israel's history. He would come to power in a time of false security or that he would come “unawares.”³ He utilized flattery, smooth promises, and intrigue to win the support for his government. The key figures of Syria were promised attractive rewards if they cooperated with him.⁴

Verse 22— The Egyptian Ptolemy VI Philometor (181–146 BC) attacked Antiochus with a large army, but he was soundly defeated and taken captive.

² Daniel L. Akin, *Exalting Jesus in Daniel* (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2017), 144.

³ Stephen R. Miller, *Daniel*, vol. 18, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), 298.

⁴ Stephen R. Miller, *Daniel*, vol. 18, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), 299.

Antiochus also deposed Onias III, the rightful high priest in Jerusalem. Here he is called the “covenant prince.” Onias was assassinated in 171 BC.⁵

Verse 23-24— These verses summarize Antiochus’s consolidation of power as he continued to use his political savvy and sinful deception. He negotiated an alliance with Egypt that he had no intention of honoring. With a peace agreement intact, he invaded “the richest parts of the province” (including Egypt and Judea) and did “what his fathers and predecessors never did” (v. 24). He built his kingdom to greater heights by “lavishing plunder, loot, and wealth on his followers.” He knew how to buy allegiance.⁶

Daniel 11:25–28... “**He will stir up his strength and courage against the king of the South with a large army; so the king of the South will mobilize an extremely large and mighty army for war; but he will not stand, for schemes will be devised against him.** 26 “**Those who eat his choice food will destroy him, and his army will overflow, but many will fall down slain.** 27 “**As for both kings, their hearts will be *intent* on evil, and they will speak lies to each other at the same table; but it will not succeed, for the end is still to come at the appointed time.** 28 “**Then he will return to his land with much plunder; but his heart will be set against the holy covenant, and he will take action and then return to his own land.**

This section rehashes the political football that was being kicked back and forth between the King of the North (Antiochus IV) and the King of the South. After Antiochus consolidated his kingdom, he moved against Egypt and defeated them though they had a much larger army. The victor and the victim sat down to hammer out a peace deal, but both of them were practicing deception. They failed to accomplish their purpose.

Antiochus carried great wealth back to his homeland from his conquest. On his return he passed through the land of Israel. After his disappointment in Egypt (he had hoped to take all of Egypt but failed) he took out his

⁵ Daniel L. Akin, *Exalting Jesus in Daniel* (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2017), 149–150.

⁶ Daniel L. Akin, *Exalting Jesus in Daniel* (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2017), 150.

frustrations on the Jews by desecrating the temple in Jerusalem and by opposing the Mosaic covenant.

Daniel 11:29–30... “At the appointed time he will return and come into the South, but this last time it will not turn out the way it did before. 30 “For ships of Kittim will come against him; therefore he will be disheartened and will return and become enraged at the holy covenant and take action; so he will come back and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant.

Two years later (in 168) Antiochus moved against Egypt (the South) again. As he moved into Egypt, he was opposed by the Romans who had come to Egypt in ships from the western coastlands. After this humiliating defeat, he had no alternative but to return to his own land.⁷

Daniel 11:30b–32... “For ships of Kittim will come against him; therefore he will be disheartened and will return and become enraged at the holy covenant and take action; so he will come back and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant. 31 “Forces from him will arise, desecrate the sanctuary fortress, and do away with the regular sacrifice. And they will set up the abomination of desolation. 32 “By smooth words he will turn to godlessness those who act wickedly toward the covenant, but the people who know their God will display strength and take action.

For a second time (cf. v. 28) Antiochus took out his frustration on the Jews, the city of Jerusalem, and their temple. He vented his fury against the entire Mosaic system (cf. v. 28), favoring any renegade Jews who turned to help him (cf. v. 32).

- **He desecrated the temple.**
- **He abolished the daily sacrifice.**
- **He killed many Jews.**
- **He took many women and children as slaves.**

⁷ J. Dwight Pentecost, “Daniel,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 1370.

■ **He plundered and burned the city.**

This despicable madman erected an altar to Zeus on the altar of burnt offering on December 16, 167 b.c. Get this. He had a pig offered on the altar and the Jews were compelled to offer a pig on the 25th of each month to celebrate his birthday.⁸

Antiochus promised apostate Jews (**those who violated the covenant**; cf. v. 30) great reward if they would set aside the God of Israel and worship Zeus, the god of Greece. Many in Israel were persuaded by his promises and worshiped the false god. However, a small remnant remained faithful to God, refusing to engage in those abominable practices.⁹

They were those who knew their God, who displayed strength, and took action!

Daniel 11:33–35 ... “**Those who have insight among the people will give understanding to the many; yet they will fall by sword and by flame, by captivity and by plunder for many days.** 34 “**Now when they fall they will be granted a little help, and many will join with them in hypocrisy.** 35 “**Some of those who have insight will fall, in order to refine, purge and make them pure until the end time; because it is still to come at the appointed time.**

Mattathias, a priest, was the father of five sons. In 166, Mattathias refused to submit to this false religious system. He and his sons fled from Jerusalem to the mountains and began the Maccabean revolt. One of his sons, Judas Maccabeus, became the leader of the revolt. He was known as “The

⁸ J. Dwight Pentecost, [“Daniel,”](#) in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 1370.

⁹ J. Dwight Pentecost, [“Daniel,”](#) in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 1370.

Hammer.” He defeated the enemy and cleansed and restored the temple in 164 BC.

The suffering that the faithful endured served to refine and purify them. This time of persecution was of short duration. It had previously been revealed to Daniel that the temple would be desecrated for 2300 days (8:14; see comments on 8:23–25). Here Daniel was assured that this persecution would run its course and then be lifted, for its end will still come at the appointed time.¹⁰

¹⁰ J. Dwight Pentecost, “[Daniel](#),” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 1370.