

12 – THE FINAL VISION (DANIEL 11:2-35)

I. The Prophecy Concerning Persia (11:2)

A. Three kings (11:2a)

- The angel tells Daniel that the present king will be succeeded by three kings.

B. The fourth king (11:2b)

- A fourth king will arise who is greater in strength and riches.
- We know this fourth king is Xerxes or Ahasuerus (Esther 1:1).
- This king will make war against Greece.

II. The Prophecy Concerning Greece (11:3-35)

A. The mighty king (11:3)



- A great Grecian king will arise and establish a great empire.
- We know this king as Alexander the Great.

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B. The kingdom divided (11:4)

- This kingdom will be divided into four parts.



- It will not go to the children of this great king.
- We know that this kingdom was divided among Alexander's four generals.

C. The kings of the south and north (11:5-20)

- The prophecy in this section deals with two of the four kingdoms.
- Historically, we know these kingdoms as the Ptolemies and the Seleucids.

1. Their domain (11:5)

- The king of the south is given Egypt.
- The king of the north is given Syria and Babylon.

2. The alliance by marriage (11:6)

- An alliance is formed through a marriage between the two kingdoms.

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- The alliance is short lived as the bride loses her life.

The two kingdoms were bitter enemies. They entered into an alliance in about 250. This alliance was sealed by the marriage of Ptolemy II's daughter Berenice to Antiochus II. This marriage, however, did not last, for Laodice, whom Antiochus had divorced in order to marry Berenice, had Berenice killed (she was handed over). Laodice then poisoned Antiochus II and made her son, Seleucus II Callinicus, king (246-227).

3. The victory over the north (11:7-8)

- The brother of the bride will avenge his sister and defeat the king of the north.

The Bride's brother, Ptolemy III (246-221), succeeded his father and set out to avenge the death of his sister Berenice. He was victorious over the Syrian army (the king of the North), put Laodice to death, and returned to Egypt with many spoils.

4. Two sons from the north (11:9-10)

- The king of the north sought to invade Egypt, but was turned back.
- His two sons sought to restore the prestige of the kingdom of the north.

After this humiliating defeat, Seleucus II (the king of the North) sought to invade Egypt but was unsuccessful. After his death (by a fall from his horse) he was succeeded by his son, Seleucus II (227-223 B.C.), who was killed by conspirators while on a military campaign in Asia Minor. Seleucus III's brother, Antiochus III, became the ruler in 223 at 18 years of age and reigned for 36 years. The two sons (Seleucus III and Antiochus III) had sought to restore Syria's lost prestige by military conquest, the older son by invading Asia Minor and the younger son by attacking Egypt. Egypt had controlled all the territory north to the borders of Syria which included the land of Israel. Antiochus III succeeded in driving the Egyptians back to the southern borders of Israel in his campaign in 219-217.

5. The attack from the south (11:11-13)

- The king of the south attacked the king of the north and slaughtered his army.
- The king of the north returned with a greater army and defeated the king of the south.

Ptolemy IV came to meet Antiochus III at the southern borders of Israel. Ptolemy IV was initially successful in delaying the invasion of Antiochus (Ptolemy slaughtered many thousands). But after a brief interruption Antiochus returned with another army (much larger) and turned back the king of the South.

6. The struggle in Palestine (11:14-17)

- Jews will join the struggle against the King of the South for freedom, but they will fail.
- The king of the north shall lay siege to a fortified city and take it.

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- The king of the north will take control of Israel.
- He will give his daughter in marriage to the King of the South, but the alliance will fail.

Many Jews (your people) also joined Antiochus III against Egypt. Perhaps the Jews hoped to gain independence from both Egypt and Syria by joining the conflict, but their hopes were not realized. Antiochus III then sought to consolidate control over Israel from which he had expelled the Egyptians. The fortified city seems to refer to Sidon which Antiochus captured in 203 B.C. Antiochus III continued his occupation and by 199 had established himself in the Beautiful Land (Daniel 8:9; 11:41). Antiochus III sought to bring peace between Egypt and Syria by giving his daughter to marry Ptolemy V of Egypt. But this attempt to bring a peaceful alliance between the two nations did not succeed (v. 17).

7. The attack against Greece (11:18-19)

- The King of the North will seek to take Greece.
- He will be turned back by another ruler.
- He will die a year after his return to his own kingdom.

Antiochus III then turned his attention to Asia Minor in 197 B.C. and Greece in 192. However, Antiochus III did not succeed because Rome turned him back. Antiochus returned to his own country in 188 and died a year later.

8. The heavy taxation (11:20)

- A king of the north will come to power and place heavy taxes on Israel.
- He will be destroyed, but not by battle.

Antiochus III's son Seleucus IV heavily taxed his people to pay Rome, but he was poisoned by his treasurer.

D. The contemptible king (11:21-35)

1. A questionable ascension (11:21-22)

- A vile king of the north will take the throne by intrigue.
- This king removed the prince of the covenant or Jewish High Priest.

Antiochus IV is introduced as a contemptible person. He took to himself the name Epiphanies which means "the Illustrious One." But he was considered so untrustworthy that he was nicknamed Epimanes which means "the Madman." Antiochus IV Epiphanes seized the throne and had himself proclaimed king. Thus he did not come to the throne by rightful succession; he seized it through intrigue. He was accepted as ruler because he was able to turn aside an

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invading army, perhaps the Egyptians. He also deposed Jewish high priest, called here a prince of the covenant.

2. Rise to power (11:23-24)

- He will acquire great strength and power with help of a few people.
- He will seek peace in his kingdom by dispersing the spoils of his victories to his followers.

3. The war against the south (11:25-27)

- This king will attack the king of south and defeat him.
- The victor and the defeated will eat at the same table in friendship.
- However, both kings will be deceptive with each other.

4. The desecration of the Temple (11:28)

- While returning home, he will do damage to the Temple.

5. The second war against the south (11:29-30a)

- The king of the north will attack the king of the South again.
- He will not have the same victory as he is hindered by ships from Cyprus.

Antiochus IV 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. The Romans took to Antiochus IV a letter forbidding him to engage in war with Egypt. When Antiochus asked for time to consider, the emissary drew a circle in the sand around Antiochus IV and demanded that he give his answer before he stepped out of the circle. Antiochus IV submitted to Rome's demands. If he resisted, he would declare war on Rome. This was a humiliating defeat for Antiochus IV Epiphanes (he will lose heart) but he had no alternative but to return to his own land.

6. The abomination of desolation (11:30b-32)

- In his anger, the king poured out his wrath on Israel.
- He favored rebellious Jews who had forsaken the holy covenant.
- He attacked the Temple and stopped the daily sacrifices.
- He placed the abomination of desolation there.
- Jews who forsook the covenant will give into the king's flattery.

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- However, there will be a group of Jews who stand strong and do great things.

For a second time Antiochus IV took out his frustration on the Jews, the city of Jerusalem, and their temple. He vented his fury against the holy covenant, the entire Mosaic system, favoring any renegade Jews who turned to help him. He desecrated the temple and abolished the daily sacrifice. Antiochus IV sent his general Apollonius with 22,000 soldiers into Jerusalem on what was purported to be a peace mission. But they attacked Jerusalem on the Sabbath, killed many people, took many women and children as slaves, and plundered and burned the city. In seeking to exterminate Judaism and make the Jews become Greek, he forbade the Jews to follow their religious practices (including their festivals and circumcision), and commanded that copies of the Law be burned. Then he set up the abomination that causes desolation. In this culminating act he erected on December 16, 167 B.C. an altar to Zeus on the altar of burnt offering outside the temple, and had a pig offered on the altar. The Jews were compelled to offer a pig on the 25th of each month to celebrate Antiochus IV Epiphanes' birthday. Antiochus IV promised apostate Jews 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 (flattery) and worshiped the false god. However, a small remnant remained faithful to God, refusing to engage in those abominable practices. Antiochus IV died insane in Persia in 163 B.C.

7. The persecution of Israel (11:33-35)

- Those who stand strong will endure great persecution and many will be lost.
- Those that stand against the king will be joined by others with various motives.
- Some will suffer and die, but the struggle will only be for an appointed time.

The Jews who refused to submit to Antiochus IV's false religious system were persecuted and martyred for their faith. The word "fall" refers to severe suffering on the part of many and death for others. This has in view the rise of the Maccabean revolt. Mattathias, a priest, was the father of five sons. (One of them, Judas, became well known for refurbishing and restoring the temple in late 164 B.C. He was called Judas Maccabeus, "the Hammerer.") 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. At first only a few Jews joined them. But as their movement became popular, many joined them, some out of sincere motives and some from false motives. The suffering that the faithful endured served to refine and purify them. This time of persecution was of short duration. 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.

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The Kings of the North and the South Daniel 11:5-35

The Kings of the South - Egypt The Ptolemies

Ptolemy I (323-285 B.C)

Ptolemy II (285-246 B.C)

Ptolemy III (246-221 B.C)

Ptolemy IV (221-204 B.C.)

Ptolemy V (204-181 B.C.)

Ptolemy VI (181-145 B.C.)

Daniel 11:5

Daniel 11:6

Daniel 11:7-8

Daniel 11:7-9

Daniel 11:10-11,
13, 15-19

Daniel 11:11-12, 14-15

Daniel 11:17

Daniel 11:20

Daniel 11:25

Daniel 11:21-32

The Kings of the North - Syria The Seleucids

Seleucus I (312-281 B.C.)
Antiochus I (281-262 B.C)

Antiochus II (262-246 B.C)

Seleucus II (227-223 B.C.)

Antiochus III (223-187 B.C.)

Seleucus IV (187-176 B.C.)

Antiochus IV (175-163 B.C.)
Epiphanes