

Bible Study – Daniel

Week 13 – Chapter 11a

I. Daniel 11:1-4

“In the first year of Darius the Mede, I arose to be an encouragement and a protection for him. “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. ³“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.

- A. The four kings that ruled after Cyrus were: Cambyes (530-522BC), Smerdis (522BC), Darius I Hystapes (522-486BC), Xerxes I (486-465BC)
- B. Xerxes I is the fourth king that is mentioned, he had great wealth and an expedition against Greece.
- C. No kings are mentioned after Xerxes I likely because Alexander counterattacked and destroyed the Persian Empire.
 - a. Alexander’s attack began in 334 BC and was completed by 331BC
- D. The “mighty king” is generally assumed to be Alexander
- E. Alexander died in 323 in Babylon of a fever and his kingdom was divided among his 4 generals.
- F. The four rulers were referred to as the “Diadochi” – successors
- G. Alexander’s sons were murdered so they did not inherit anything.

II. Daniel 11:5-8

⁵“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.

- A. Versus 5-20 describe on going conflicts between two portions of the Greek Empire, Ptolemaic (Egypt) and Seleucid (Syrian). The prophecy is likely focused here because Palestine was located between these two divisions and constantly in the middle of the conflict.
- B. The King of the South is a reference to Ptolemy, ruler of Egypt
- C. Seleucus was “one of his princes” or “commanders”. While originally living in Babylon, Seleucus fled to serve Ptolemy when another general, Antigonus, took over that area. After Antigonus was defeated, Seleucus returned and his empire became the largest of the divisions in the Greek Empire.
- D. Vs. 6 – Ptolemy I died in 285
- E. Ptolemy II Philadelphus made a peace agreement with Antichus II Theos (grandson of Seleucus) in 250BC.
- F. Ptolemy II is generally credited with commissioning the Hebrew Bible to be translated into Greek (Septuagint).
- G. Bernice (Ptolemy II’s daughter) was to marry Antiochus (King of the North) and their son was supposed to succeed the Seleucid throne. However, Antiochus was already married to Laodice. Laodice murdered Antiochus, Bernice, and her son (“power” did “not last” and then ruled as Queen Regent until her own son was old enough.
- H. Vs. 7 – Ptolemy III Euergetes, Bernice’s brother and Philadelphus’s son, took over for Ptolemy. He attacked Syria in retribution. The war was from 246-241BC. He was able to plunder the Seleucid capital of Antioch and put Laodice to death.
- I. Vs. 8 – Ptolemy III captured the “Syrian gods” and returned to Egypt some of their sacred idols that were taken by a Persian king named “Cambyes” in 524BC. He was given the title of “Euergetes [Benefactor]”.
- J. Ptolemy III then made a peace treaty with Seleucid II in 240 so he could go to war elsewhere.

III. Daniel 11:9-13

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 latter 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.

- A. “the latter” refers to “The King of the North”
- B. No historical record exists to support this campaign, so it may have been a short war with a quick retreat.

- C. Antiochus III was important because he capture Palestine and placed it under Seleucid control, setting the stage for the ruler described in 21-35.
- D. Vs. 10 - The Seleucid and Ptolemy empires continued to war with one another
- E. Vs. 11 – Ptolemy IV Philopator (221-203BC) counterattacked Antiochus III and defeated him.
- F. Vs. 12,13 – Despite winning the initial conflict, the Ptolemy empire was not dominant moving forward. The Seleucid empire held supremacy.

IV. Daniel 11:14-17

¹⁴“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. 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.”¹

- A. Vs. 14 – “violent ones among your people” – This probably included Philip V of Macedon, ally of Antiochus and Jews who wanted the independence of Judah from Egypt. They were defeated though.
- B. Vs. 15 - Battle of Panium – General Scopas engaged Syrian forces near Banias in 199BC. He retreated to Sidon and was pursued by Antiochus. Scopas surrendered in 198BC.
- C. Antiochus III now had captured Palestine, The Beautiful Land”. This sets up the persecution by Antiochus IV.
- D. The Jews welcomed Antiochus III as their deliverer from Egypt.
- E. Vs. 17 – As part of a peace treaty, Antiochus III offered his daughter, Cleopatra to Ptolemy V. This was done to help the Seleucid Empire gain more control over Egypt. Cleopatra loved Ptolemy V however and sided with him.

V. Daniel 11:18-20

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.

¹ New American Standard Bible : 1995 Update (LaHabra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995), Da 11:20.

- A. Vs. 18-19 – After defeating Egypt, Antiochus III began attacking islands and countries in the Mediterranean. After moderate success, Lucius Cornelius Scipio (Asiaticus) was sent after Antiochus III by the Roman Government.
- B. In 191, fighting along other Greek allies, the Romans defeated the Syrians at Thermopylae and forced them to withdraw.
- C. Thirty thousand Roman troops then pursued him and defeated the 70,000 Greek army at the Battle of Magnesia in 190BC.
- D. In 188BC, the Romans forced Antiochus to sign the Treaty of Apamea. The Syrian king was ordered to surrender territory, much of his military force, twenty hostages (one of whom was Antiochus IV), and pay a heavy indemnity to Rome.
- E. Antiochus III returned home and was killed by a mob in 187BC.
- F. Vs. 20 - The successor of Antiochus III was Seleucus IV Philopator (187-175BC). He was killed by his “tax collector” and Prime Minister, Heliodorus in an attempt to gain the throne for himself.