

Prophecies of the Persian and Grecian Wars 530 - 163 B.C.

Our study is going to have many details. If you think our past studies have had many details, chapter 11 will make everything that we have done so far look simple. When we are done, you are probably going to ask yourself, “What am I supposed to learn from this chapter?” The message of the chapter will be left to the next study. The question that I would like you to ask yourself is, “Why did God give us this chapter? As we get into it, you are going to see there are a lot of unbelievable details. In fact, there are so many details that I cannot remember them all after I get through teaching them. Yet, God gave us this chapter for a reason. So one of the questions will be why did God give us this chapter?”

I would like to begin by asking an obvious question, “When we pray, what do you expect to have happen?” When I pray, I never know how God is going to answer my prayer. I do not think you know how God is going to answer your prayers either. Sometimes the answer is delayed. We saw that in our last study. Daniel prayed, and how long did it take him to get his answer? The angel took twenty-one days to get to him. I know that Daniel was eager and waiting because he was fasting the whole time until he got his answer. It took twenty-one days for the answer to come. Sometimes we get impatient if

God does not answer the next day, or the day afterwards. One of the points we made in the last study is that maybe

God has responded, but we just have no idea about all the conditions that are delaying the answer to our request.

Sometimes God just says no. On some occasions the answer is packed with wonderful blessings. We have had that happen to us. We prayed for something. We had no idea exactly how God was going to answer. Then when He did answer, it was a big surprise. On other occasions when He answers, it is very unexpected. Sometimes God indirectly answers our requests—you did not expect how the answer was going to come. When it comes, you finally understand how it all fits together. It is very unexpected.

We learned in our last study that the answer finally came to Daniel in a vision. In Daniel 10:7, the angel arrived and told Daniel that he was going to give him the answer to his prayer.

Introduction to Daniel 11:2-35. The explanation starts in Daniel 11:2. The explanation is more information about Daniel 9:27. We are going to read about hundreds of pieces of information, or hundreds of pieces of individual

prophecies. The critics over the years have claimed that the only way Daniel 11 could be so accurate is that it is recorded history. Even the critics admit that what is described here in Daniel 11:2-35 actually occurred. The details we are going to read

are real. They are so unbelievable the critics say they are recorded history, written after the facts occurred.



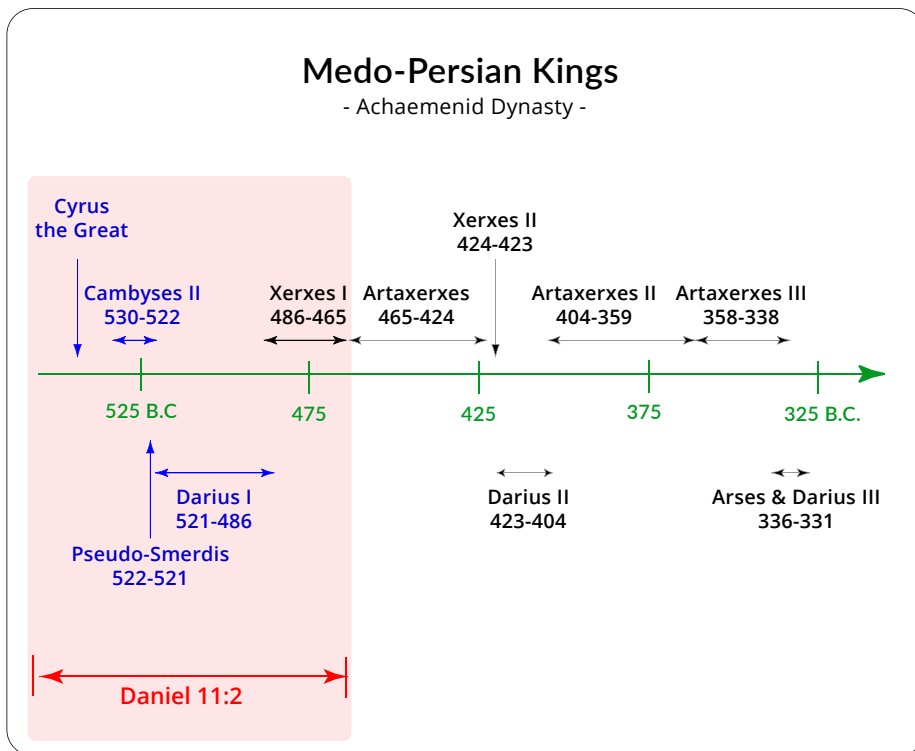
That should reveal Daniel 11 is extremely accurate.

The book of Daniel is trustworthy because it was found among the Dead Sea Scrolls which is dated from 150 B.C. to just before Christ's birth. The book of Daniel is also included in the Septuagint(LXX) which is dated

from 270 B.C. to as late as 200 B.C. Flavius Josephus stated that the book of Daniel was shown to Alexander the Great when he approached the city of Jerusalem.¹ That occurred about 331 B.C. The Great Assembly included the book of Daniel in the Twelve (minor prophets) about 450 B.C.² This is significant because this means the book of Daniel existed in 450 B.C. before the prophecies in Daniel 11:3-35 were fulfilled between 331 B.C. to 164 B.C. But this does not silence the critics because they are not looking for truth. They are unbelievers seeking support for an apriori view that the book of Daniel was recorded after the events had already occurred. It is amazing that the events in Daniel 11:3-35 occurred in the intertestamental period, often called the silent years.

Cyrus the Great to Xerxes I (v 2). So let us get to the angel's answer to Daniel's prayer. Daniel 11:2 says,

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. Daniel 11:2 (NASB)

An angel is speaking. I believe it is the angel Gabriel. The first thing we are told is that there will be three

more kings in the Medo-Persian dynasty, and then there will be a fourth king. If we look at chapter 10, verse 1, we discover that when Daniel was praying it was the third year of Cyrus the King, so the date was roughly 530 B.C. So, the current king was Cyrus the Great. Therefore, the reigns of three more kings were prophesied. Cyrus the Great is the starting point.

The next king who was prophesied is Cambyres. He reigned from 530-522 B.C. He was followed by Pseudo Smerdis followed by Darius 1. Finally, Xerxes 1 ruled from 486-465 B.C.

Now Xerxes 1 was a rather significant king. He was the most powerful of the kings after Cyrus the Great. One of the reasons he was so powerful was that Darius 1 had imposed taxation on the kingdom and had amassed a great amount of wealth. Consequently, Xerxes 1 was able to hire an immense army. He continued the taxation and acquired more money. The middle of verse 2 says,

Then a fourth will gain far more riches than all of them; as soon as he becomes strong through his riches, ... Daniel 11:2b (NASB)

1. Flavius Josephus and William Whiston, The Works of Josephus: Complete and Unabridged (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1987), 307.

2. Bava Batra 15a

That is, Xerxes 1 amasses an army.

... he will arouse the whole empire against the realm of Greece. Daniel 11:2c (NASB)

The message is he tried to invade Greece in 480 B.C. He lost even though he had 100,000 infantrymen and 120 ships. He also had an elite squad of soldiers. History tells us that they were exotically and gorgeously dressed. Apparently they were something to see. Can you imagine soldiers who were stunningly dressed? He tried to invade Greece and was defeated. Greece never forgot what Xerxes 1 tried to do. Verse 2 is about the Persian Empire.

Alexander the Great & His Generals (v 3-4).

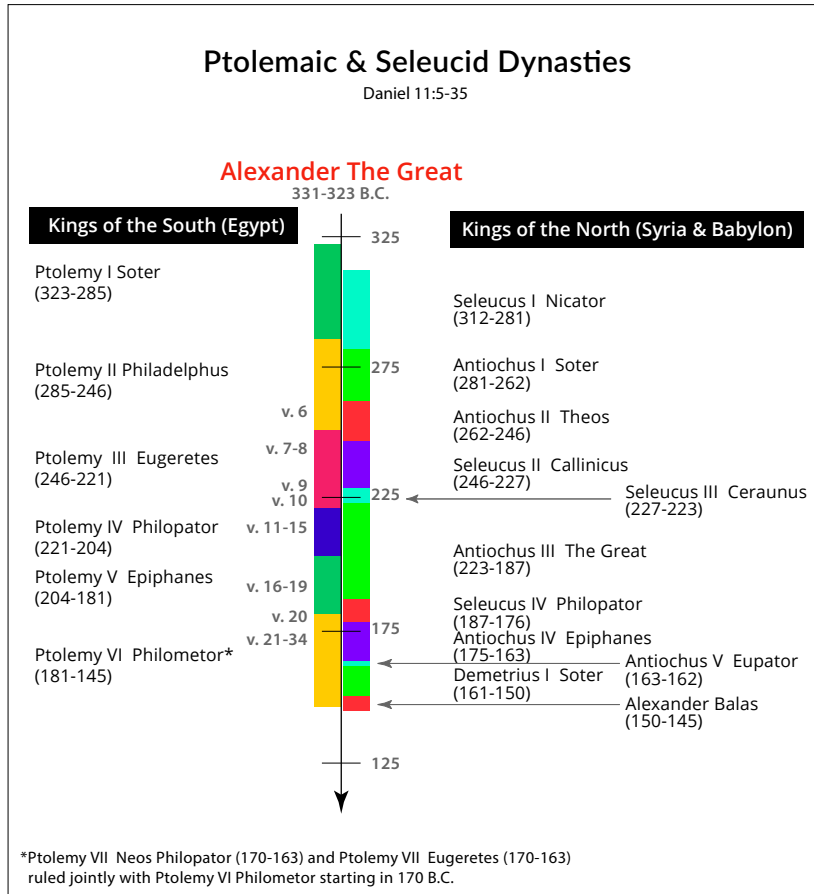
There is a gap of 130 years between verses 2 and 3. Verse 3 says,

And a mighty king will arise, and he will rule with great authority and do as he pleases. Daniel 11:3 (NASB)

This king is Alexander the Great. He was a mighty king. We know from history that he greatly expanded the territory of the empire of Greece in the years of 336-323 B.C. from Greece all the way into India.

Verse 4 gives us the clue that this king was Alexander the Great because it tells us,

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. Daniel 11:4 (NASB)

We are told here that his kingdom was divided into the four points of the compass. That is, it was divided among four generals.

Lysimachus took Thrace. Cassander took Macedonia. Seleucus took Syria which we refer to as Babylonia, and Ptolemy took Egypt and Palestine. It is important to know that various kings from the Seleucid dynasty will be referred to in the rest of this chapter as the king of the North, and the various kings from the Ptolemaic dynasty will be called the king of the South.

Now notice we are told in verse 4 that his descendants will not have control of the kingdom. It says, "though not of his own descendants." In other words, his descendants will not have any control of the kingdom. History says that his four generals assassinated his sons. So, the four generals assassinated Alexander the Great's sons, and seized control of the empire, dividing it up into four parts.

From 4 through verse 35, the kings of the North and the kings of the South are from the Ptolemaic and the Seleucid dynasties.. It is a long list of kings. So, when you read the king of the North you should think the king of Syria. When you hear about the king of the South you should think about a king from Egypt. At the end of the chapter, the

verses are about the tribulation period, and that is of interest to our study.

Ptolemy I and Seleucus I (v 5). In verse 5, we are told:

Then the king of the South will grow strong, along with one of his princes who will gain ascendancy over him and obtain dominion; times. Daniel 11:5 (NASB)

“After some years” in verse 6, refers to seventy-two years. It is important to remember that there are time gaps in Daniel 9. Also, we are going to see many time gaps in this chapter. This is a seventy-two-year time gap. We are not told that Ptolemy I and Seleucus I are dead. Nor are we told that Seleucus I was succeeded by Antiochus I and he is now dead. So seventy-two years have elapsed.

The two kings that are in play in this verse are Ptolemy II, who became king in 285 B.C. in Egypt, and Antiochus II, who became king in 262 B.C. in Syria. We are told that they made an alliance. The alliance occurred in 250 B.C. It was a peace treaty between the two kingdoms of Egypt and Syria. The agreement had two key parts. Antiochus II had to agree to marry Ptolemy’s daughter, Bernice, but Antiochus already had a wife. Therefore Antiochus II divorced his wife named Laodice. She was powerful and very influential, as we will soon discover. Another important point is that Bernice would have a son. That son would become the heir who should have succeeded Antiochus II. But Laodice, Antiochus II’s first wife, did not like this. Consequently, four years later when Ptolemy II died, Laodice murdered her husband, Bernice, and the child. So, the two kings who originally made the agreement are dead, Bernice is dead, their child or heir is dead, and Laodice takes over the kingdom of Syria. She does this on behalf of her son.

Notice that the verse says that there was an agreement, and then it says “but she will not retain her position.” The “her” was Bernice. The statement “Nor will he remain with his power, but she will be given up” refers to her death. “Along with those who brought her in” refers to some servants who came with her. So, Laodice cleaned house. She got rid of everybody. At this point we have read twenty-four

prophecies.

Ptolemy III & Seleucus II (v 7-8). Verse 7 continues with,

But one of the descendants of her line will arise in his place . . . Daniel 11:7a (NASB)

Now the question is who is “one of the descendants of her line”? The “her” is Bernice. Who was her father? Her father was Ptolemy II. “One of the descendants of her line” refers to her brother.

. . . and he will come against their army . . . Daniel 11:7b (NASB)

That is, against the army of the North.

. . . and enter the fortress of the king of the North, and he will deal with them and display great strength. Also their gods with their metal images and their precious vessels of silver and gold he will take into captivity to Egypt . . . Daniel 11:7c - 8a (NASB)

That is, he plundered Syria. He took their vessels and their gods back down to Egypt.

. . . and he on his part will refrain from attacking the king of the North for some years. Daniel 11:8b (NASB)

Now, how do we understand these two verses? Here is the story. The descendant of her line was her brother Ptolemy III. He was incensed that his sister was murdered by Laodice, so he raised an army. History tells us he attacked Syria. The battle lasted for five years. After five years he was finally successful. Then he murdered Laodice and cleaned house. He stole their wealth and the idols of their Syrian gods.

Antiochus the Great (v 9-19). Verses 9 and 10 introduce us to another revenge event. Verse 9 starts with,

Then the latter will enter the realm of the king of the

South . . . Daniel 11:9a (NASB)

We are told the king of the North comes down to Egypt. He planned to retrieve their gods and the stolen wealth. Can you believe that?! He planned to attack another country to get their gods back. That is just unbelievable. So, he raised an army. The king of the North was Seleucus II. He attacked Egypt, suffered a humiliating defeat, and died in 227 B.C. The last part of verse 9 says,

. . . but will return to his own land. Daniel 11:9b (NASB)

Seleucus II is succeeded by Seleucus III in 227 B.C. That finishes verse 9. When we come to verse 10, we are told,

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. Daniel 11:10 (NASB)

We are told that Seleucus II had some sons, and one of his sons was Seleucus III. The other son was Antiochus III. Seleucus tried to muster an army to attack Egypt again. They were still trying to get their gods and wealth back. But Seleucus III died after four years.

So Antiochus III—also known as Antiochus the Great—became king in 223 B.C. He mobilized an army that is referred to as the multitude of great forces in verse 10. The army was enormous. It was composed of 62,000 infantrymen, 6,000 cavalry, and 102 elephants. When we are told they “keep on coming,” it was Antiochus III who was finally successful. He attacked Egypt. In the process, Ptolemy III died in 221 B.C. So Antiochus III ended up waging war against Ptolemy IV. That battle occurred at Raphia.

Next, a counterattack occurred. It is described in verse 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. Daniel 11:11 (NASB)

These prophecies are describing a series of battles between Egypt and Syria or Ptolemy and Seleucus, one battle after another battle, after another battle. Ptolemy IV launched a counterattack with a huge army, and he defeated Antiochus III. Verse 12 says,

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. Daniel 11:12 (NASB)

The message is that Ptolemy became proud since he was very successful. His army had 70,000 infantrymen, 5,000 cavalry, and 73 elephants. They loved their elephants back in those days! Verse 13 says,

For the king of the North will again raise a greater multitude than the former . . . Daniel 11:13a (NASB)

He then raised another army that was even greater in size.

. . . and after an interval of some years he will press on with a great army and much equipment. Daniel 11:13b (NASB)

The message is that after an interval of about fifteen years, Antiochus III raised this large army.

Verse 14 adds,

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. Daniel 11:14 (NASB)

Verse 14 tells us that many will rise up against the king of the South. The many included some Jews and Phillip V of Macedonia. The Jews failed in their revolt, but Phillip V of Macedonia did not join them.

Verse 15 includes Philip V and Antiochus III,

Then the king of the North will come, cast up a siege ramp and capture a well-fortified city . . . Daniel 11:15a (NASB)

That is Sidon.

. . . and the forces of the South will not stand their ground, not even their choicest troops . . . Daniel 11:15b (NASB)

That is the elite troops of Egypt.

. . . for there will be no strength to make a stand. Daniel 11:15c (NASB)

Phillip V joined Antiochus II and they engaged Egypt in battle. The battle occurred at Pnias, which

is North of the Dead Sea. Egypt's elite forces, who were led by Scopas were defeated. Egypt's army made a quick retreat to Sidon. Then Antiochus III's army chased them to Sidon and defeated them. It was a crushing defeat.

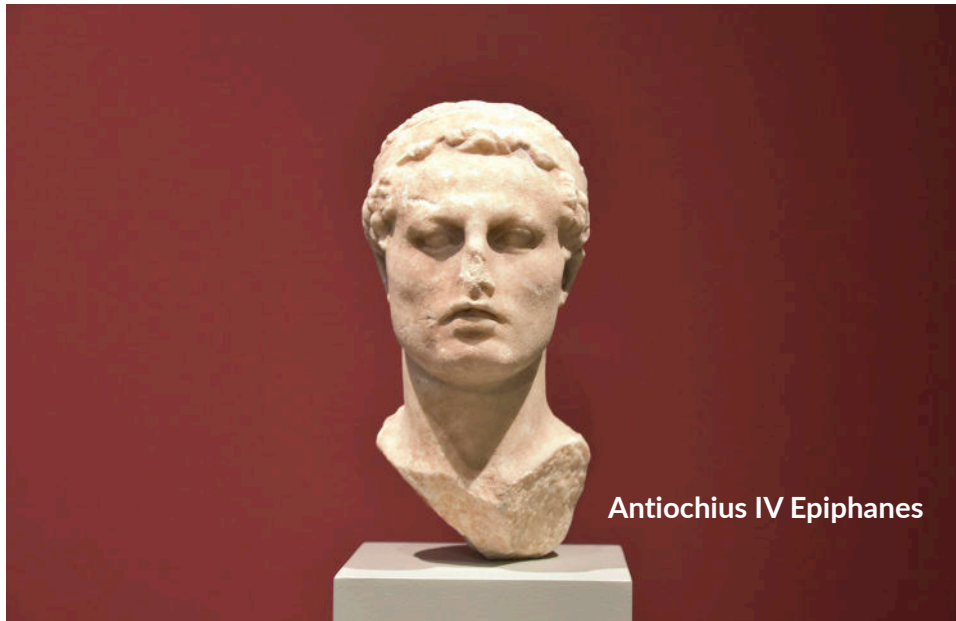
Verses 16 and 17 are still about Ptolemy V and Antiochus III. We are told,

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. 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. Daniel 11:16-17 (NASB)

Verse 16 tells us Antiochus III was successful and defeated Ptolemy V. Verse 17 tells us that he imposed a peace treaty in 193 B.C. The conditions of the peace treaty was that he offered his daughter, Cleopatra, as a wife to Ptolemy V. Ptolemy V was ten years old. By the way, this Cleopatra was not the Cleopatra of history with whom we are familiar, she was Julius Caesar's Cleopatra. Ptolemy V had to wait

about four years to get his wife. Interestingly enough, Antiochus III thought that Cleopatra would influence her husband to help her father gain control of Egypt. Antiochus III wanted control of Egypt and Syria. He believed that, if



Antiochus IV Epiphanes

Richard Mortel from Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, CC BY 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons

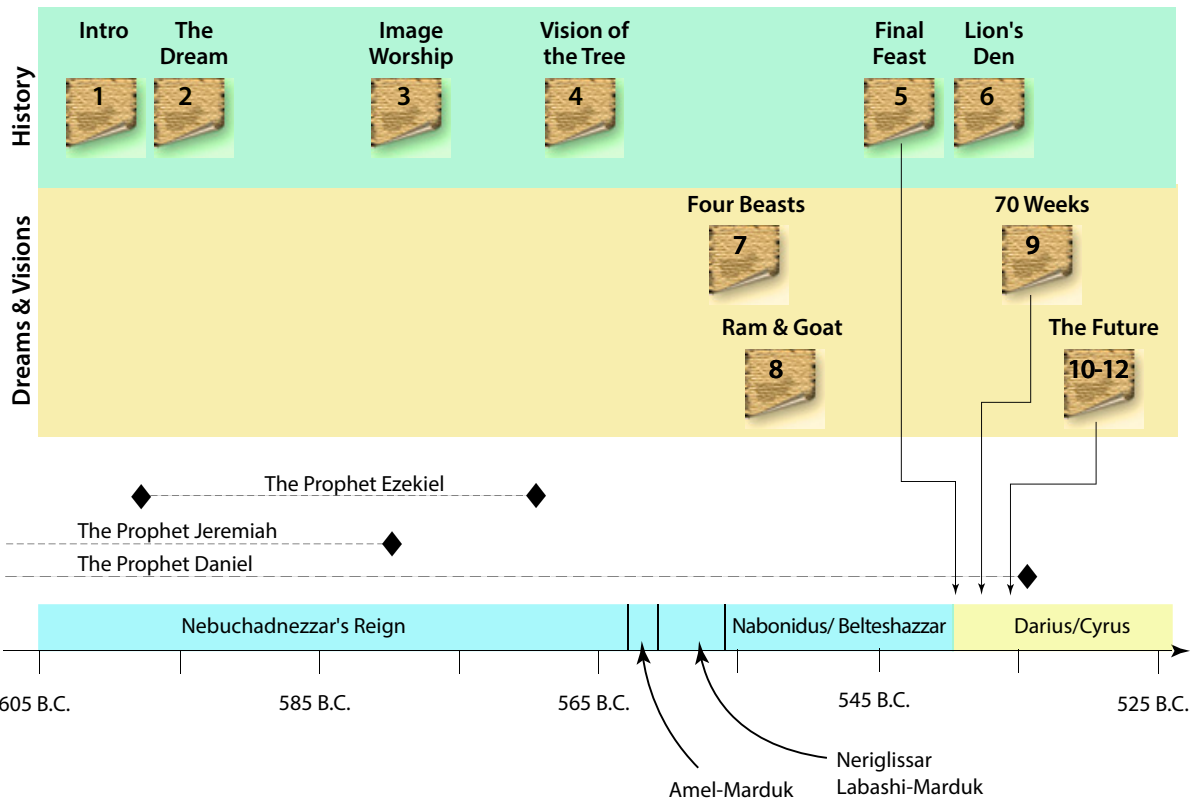
his daughter would marry this fourteen-year-old boy, she would help her father gain control of Egypt. It turns out that Cleopatra was not faithful to her father. She turned against him and helped her husband.

So verse 18 says,

Then he will turn his face to the coastlands . . . Daniel 11:18a (NASB)

After the wedding of Ptolemy V and Cleopatra, Antiochus III set his face against the Roman empire. He tried to make war with Rome.

Outline of Daniel



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... and capture many. But a commander will put a stop to his scorn against him; moreover, he will repay him for his scorn. So he will turn his face toward the fortresses of his own land, but he will stumble and fall and be found no more. Daniel 11:18b-19 (NASB)

Then in his place one will arise who will send an oppressor through the Jewel of his kingdom ... Daniel 11:20a (NASB)

The Jewel of his kingdom was Israel.

The Roman Empire was gaining strength. Antiochus III was defeated in 191 B.C. There is a very interesting story that says the Roman commander, Lucius Cornelius Scipio demanded that Antiochus III pay Rome for the expense of defeating him. Antiochus III fled rather than paying him because he did not have the money. Also, history states that he tried to steal money to pay off the Roman commander. In the process of trying to steal the money, he was killed.

... yet within a few days he will be shattered, though not in anger nor in battle. Daniel 11:20b (NASB)

The person who took the place of Antiochus III was Antiochus IV. The oppressor who was sent throughout the land was a tax collector. The taxation of Israel was designed to obtain money to pay Rome for the expenses Rome spent to defeat Antiochus III.

Antiochus IV Epiphanes (v 20-31). Then verse 20 picks up the story ten years later, and we are told,

Verse 21 now introduces us to another king.

In his place a despicable 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. Daniel 11:21 (NASB)

Who was the despicable person? He was Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Epiphanes means “magnificent one” or “illustrious one.” When we are told “a despicable person will arise on whom the honor of kingship has not been conferred,” this refers to the fact that he was not of the royal line. He did not deserve the title of king. The rightful heir to the throne was Demetrius Soter in Rome. He was being held as a hostage for payment. So Antiochus decided to seize the throne. He got some help to do that and obtained control of the kingdom. Verse 22 states,

The overflowing forces will be flooded away before him and shattered, and also the prince of the covenant. Daniel 11:22 (NASB)

Now there are many little details here that we are not going to cover. But in summary, Antiochus IV defeated some invading armies and struck at Egypt. In addition, he killed the Jewish priest Onias III.

Verse 23 adds,

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. Daniel 11:23 (NASB)

Basically what is being described here is that Antiochus IV made an alliance with Ptolemy VI. Then he violated the alliance or a peace treaty.

Verse 24 states,

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. Daniel 11:24 (NASB)

The prophecy here refers to Antiochus IV’s invasion of Syria and Israel to collect money to raise a very large army in order to invade Egypt and defeat Ptolemy VI.

Then verses 25-28 states,

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. Those who eat his choice food will destroy him, and his army will overflow, but many will fall down slain. 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. 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. Daniel 11:25-28 (NASB)

The next prophecy says that Antiochus IV went down to Egypt and defeated the nation. Then he made a peace treaty, and the two leaders both spoke lies during the negotiations. They sound like politicians today! They both wanted control of the other king’s territory. The king of the North wanted control of Egypt. The king of the South wanted control of Syria. So, they made a treaty. They lied to one another about would occur. Antiochus IV left and learned that there was trouble in Judea. That is what verse 28, is about. It says,

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 . . . Daniel 11:28 (NASB)

Because he heard there was a rebellion in Judah, a rebellion in Jerusalem, he returned and squashed it.

Verse 29 continues with,

At the appointed time he will return . . . Daniel 11:29a (NASB)

So Antiochus I returned to Egypt.

... and come into the South, but this last time it will not turn out the way it did before. Daniel 11:29b (NASB)

Now verse 30 is really terrific. You might have heard about this one from history. It says,

For ships of Kittim . . . Daniel 11:30a (NASB)

Kittim refers to the Roman Empire.

... 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. Daniel 11:30b (NASB)

When we are told “ships of Kittim will come against him,” it turns out that after suppressing the rebellion in Jerusalem, Antiochus IV tried to return and defeat Egypt. But a Roman commander met him and handed him a letter from the Roman Senate. The Roman commander, Popilius Laenas, told him that the Roman senate forbade him to enter Egypt in an effort to defeat Egypt. Popilius Laenas drew a circle around Antiochus IV and told him that before he stepped out of the circle, he had to say what he was going to do. Was he going to invade Egypt or not? Antiochus knew he could not defeat Egypt if Rome was going to join Egypt.

Verse 30 says that Antiochus IV retreated in anger. He was enraged . . .

... at the holy covenant ...

What is meant by the holy covenant? Jerusalem. Consequently, he . . .

... will come back and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant. 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. Daniel 11:30b-31 (NASB)

That is, Antiochus IV would favor those who rejected the Mosaic Covenant. History tells us that is what he did. 1 Maccabees 1:54, 59 tells us that Antiochus Epiphanes desecrated the temple in Jerusalem and set up the abomination of desolation.

Now the fifteenth day of the month Casleu, in the hundred forty and fifth year [173 B.C.], they set up the abomination of desolation upon the altar, and builded idol altars throughout the cities of Juda on every side;

Now the five and twentieth day of the month they did sacrifice upon the idol altar, which was upon the altar of God.³

1 Maccabees 1:54, 59 state that the abomination of desolation was something that was upon the altar. Since 1 Maccabees does not describe the abomination of desolation, various ideas have been proposed such as a pig, an idol to Zeus, sacred stones, and others. Antiochus IV Epiphanes caused one form of the abomination of desolation to occur. The antichrist will be the abomination of desolation in the tribulation (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4).

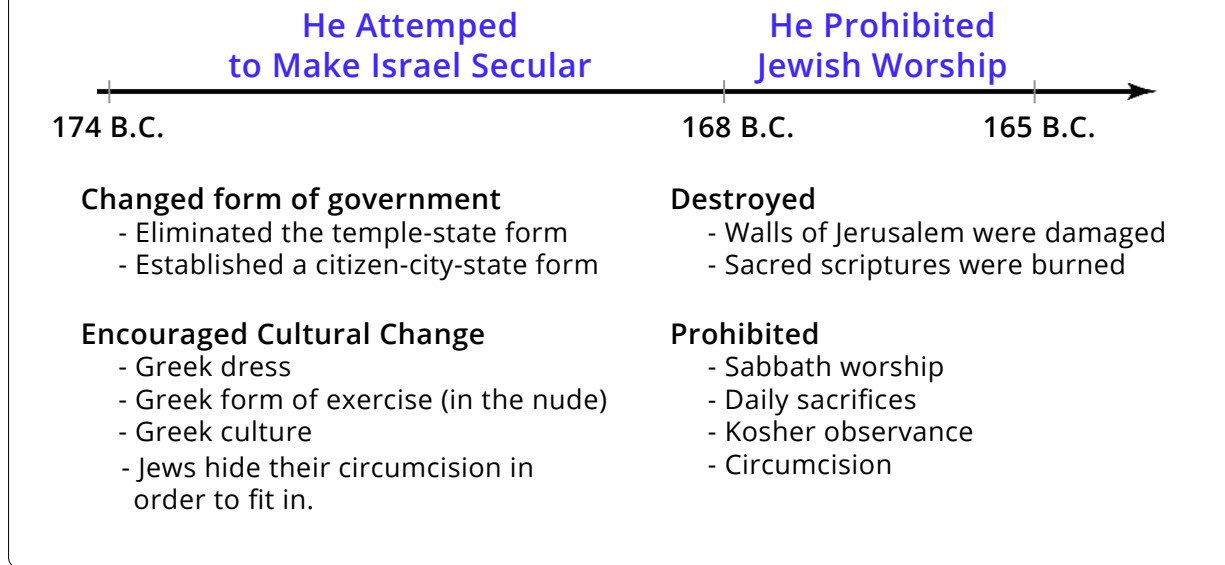
The abomination of desolation occurs four times in Scripture (Daniel 9:27; 11:31; 12:11; Matthew 24:15). The Hebrew text is identical in the book of Daniel, except that abomination in Daniel 9:27 is plural.

Daniel 11:32 adds,

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. 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

3. The Apocrypha: King James Version (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1995), 1 Mac 1:54.

Antiochus Against The Jews



days. Daniel 11:32-33 (NASB)

The people who knew their God and took action apparently included Matthias Maccabeus and his five sons who fled to the mountains. Others joined them in the Maccabean Revolt. Antiochus attacked the Jews and killed many (1 Maccabees 2:31-38; 7:1-23).

When verse 33 says “those who have insight,” it is talking about those who believed in God. Verse 34:

Now when they fall they will be granted a little help,
and many will join with them in hypocrisy. 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. Daniel 11:34-35
(NASB)

What happened? Why did this happen? What happened is that Antiochus desecrated the temple, killed many Jews, and took many Jews into captivity. The reason all of this happened, verse 35 says, was to refine, purge, and make them pure until the end time. So that was the purpose.

Conclusion. We have studied many of the details of this prophecy. Now why did we study Daniel 11:1-35? The answer is because it is here in Scripture. Then we must ask the next question, “Why is this vision recorded for us?” I will give you a couple of answers. First, Daniel wanted to know about the future and God granted his prayer request. The second reason the vision is recorded, is so we can know God wrote it. The third reason this chapter was given to us is so that we can know God is Yahweh.