

**DOMINION**  
**The Predictable Hopelessness of Earthly Kingdoms!**  
**Daniel 11**

**Introduction:** Today we are going to go through Daniel 11. It is a continuation of the conversation in chapter 10 which occurred in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Cyrus the Great when an Angel met Daniel on the banks of the Tigris River.

Daniel 11 is one of the most specific prophecies you will ever read concerning the Kingdoms of this world. It is so specific, and so accurate that liberal scholars refuse to believe Daniel wrote it. They conclude it must have been written after the events occurred! However, for those of us who believe in the all-knowing, all-powerful God who is sovereignly working out His redemptive plan throughout all of world history; we don't feel the need to run from God's demonstration of His glory, but rather run to it! As King Nebuchadnezzar put it,

**34 At the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored him who lives forever, for his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom endures from generation to generation; 35 all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, "What have you done?" (Daniel 4:34-35)**

But, as we saw last week, the true encouragement of this chapter is not seen in what the Angel revealed to Daniel, but rather by the Light of Jesus. As a matter of fact, apart from the Good News of Christ, Daniel 11 might be seen as one of the most depressing passages in all the Bible. It's a prophecy of corruption and depravity. It's a prophecy that should leave you with no confidence or trust in the Kingdoms of this world, regardless of who runs them! There is literally no hope whatsoever in them!

So, without further introduction let me share what I feel is the best interpretation of the prophetic Word given to Daniel in chapter 11, and then, like last week, I want to let the Gospel of Christ open our eyes to the more important and much more certain truth it ultimately should point us to!

**Proposition: There are four distinct prophecies in Daniel 11.**

**The first distinct prophecy is**

- (1) A prophecy of the climax of the Medo-Persian Empire and its defeat in the rise and fall of Alexander the Great - 538 BC to 323 BC. (11:1-4)**
  - A. 1 "And as for me, in the first year of Darius the Mede, I stood up to confirm and strengthen him. 2 "And now I will show you the truth. Behold, three more kings shall arise in Persia, and a fourth shall be far richer than all of**

**them. And when he has become strong through his riches, he shall stir up all against the kingdom of Greece. 3 Then a mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion and do as he wills. 4 And as soon as he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not to his posterity, nor according to the authority with which he ruled, for his kingdom shall be plucked up and go to others besides these.**

- B. “The angel first announced that three more kings would arise in Persia. Since the prophecy was given in the days of Cyrus, the reference must be to Cambyses (530–522 b.c.), Smerdis (522), and Darius the Great (521–486 b.c.). “Then a fourth king” would amass enormous wealth and with it launch an invasion against “the realm of Greece.” The reference is to Xerxes (486–465 b.c.) who is also known in the Bible as Ahasuerus. In 480 b.c. Xerxes attempted to avenge the Persian defeat at the battle of Marathon (490 b.c.) when his predecessor invaded Greek territory. Xerxes was delayed by the Trojans at Thermopylae and finally defeated at the battles of Salamis and Plataea. The invasion of the Hellenistic homelands was the pretext of Alexander’s invasion of the Persian empire in the fourth century.”<sup>1</sup>
- C. “The portrait of a *mighty king* whose empire would be fragmented (3–4) rather than passed on to heirs was fulfilled in Alexander the Great (Daniel already knew that the ascendancy would pass to Greece; 10:20), whose two sons were assassinated. He became a broken horn (8:22).”<sup>2</sup>
- D. Ironically Alexander the Great died an unexpected death while living in the palace of Nebuchadnezzar II which was in Babylon. His Kingdom was then divided between four of his generals.

### The second distinct prophecy is

#### (2) A prophecy of the battles between the Ptolemies (Greek run region of Egypt) and the Seleucids (Greek run region of Syria) - 323 BC to 175 BC. (11:5-20)

- A. 5 “Then the king of the south shall be strong, **(Ptolemy I Soter (323–285 b.c.), ruler of Egypt, who had been one of Alexander’s four generals)**<sup>3</sup> but one of his princes shall be stronger than he and shall rule, and his authority shall be a great authority. **(Seleucus I began to govern Babylon after Alexander’s death but was forced out by Antigonus, another one of**

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<sup>1</sup> Smith, J. E. (1992). *The Major Prophets* (p. 619). Joplin, MO: College Press.

<sup>2</sup> Ferguson, S. B. (1994). *Daniel*. In D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer, & G. J. Wenham (Eds.), *New Bible commentary: 21st century edition* (4th ed., p. 761). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press.

<sup>3</sup> Storms, S. (2016). *Daniel* (Da 11:5). Edmond, OK: Sam Storms.

**Alexander's generals. He later regained control of Babylon and expanded his empire to include Syria and Media.)<sup>4</sup>**

- B. 6 After some years they shall make an alliance, and the daughter of the king of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement. But she shall not retain the strength of her arm, and he and his arm shall not endure, but she shall be given up, and her attendants, he who fathered her, and he who supported her in those times.**

**Note:** "Seleucus' grandson, Antiochus II, married Ptolemy's granddaughter, Bernice. Unfortunately, Antiochus II was already married. **she will not retain her position of power** Antiochus II and Bernice had a child, but Antiochus reconciled with his former wife, Laodice. She poisoned him and was also responsible for the deaths of Bernice, her child, and her entourage."<sup>5</sup>

- C. 7 "And from a branch from her roots one shall arise in his place. (Ptolemy III Euergetes (246–221 b.c.), Berenice's brother)<sup>6</sup> He shall come against the army (in retaliation for the murder of his sister)<sup>7</sup> and enter the fortress of the king of the north, and he shall deal with them and shall prevail. 8 He shall also carry off to Egypt their gods with their metal images and their precious vessels of silver and gold, and for some years he shall refrain from attacking the king of the north. (for two years, to be exact)<sup>8</sup>**
- D. 9 Then the latter (The King of the north) shall come into the realm of the king of the south but shall return to his own land. 10 "His sons shall wage war and assemble a multitude of great forces, which shall keep coming and overflow and pass through, and again shall carry the war as far as his fortress. (Seleucus III Ceraunus (226–223 b.c.) and Antiochus III (the "Great", 223–187 b.c.)<sup>9</sup> 11 Then the king of the south (Ptolemy IV Philopator (221–203 b.c.)<sup>10</sup>, moved with rage, shall come out and fight against the king of the north. And he shall raise a great multitude, but it shall be given into his hand. (Ptolemy IV countered Antiochus III and defeated him at Raphia in 217 bc.)<sup>11</sup>**

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<sup>4</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Da 11:5). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

<sup>5</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Da 11:6). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

<sup>6</sup> Storms, S. (2016). [Daniel](#) (Da 11:7). Edmond, OK: Sam Storms.

<sup>7</sup> Storms, S. (2016). [Daniel](#) (Da 11:7). Edmond, OK: Sam Storms.

<sup>8</sup> Storms, S. (2016). [Daniel](#) (Da 11:8). Edmond, OK: Sam Storms.

<sup>9</sup> Storms, S. (2016). [Daniel](#) (Da 11:10). Edmond, OK: Sam Storms.

<sup>10</sup> Storms, S. (2016). [Daniel](#) (Da 11:11). Edmond, OK: Sam Storms.

<sup>11</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Da 11:11). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

- E. 12 And when the multitude is taken away, his heart shall be exalted, and he shall cast down tens of thousands, but he shall not prevail. 13 For the king of the north (**Antiochus III**) shall again raise a multitude, greater than the first. And after some years (**in 202 b.c**) he shall come on with a great army and abundant supplies. (**From 212–205 bc, Antiochus III conducted many successful campaigns. He eventually gained full control of Judaea in 200 bc at the Battle of Paneas (the city called Caesarea Philippi in the New Testament).**)<sup>12</sup>
- F. 14 "In those times many shall rise against the king of the south, (**Antiochus III, Philip V of Macedon and other insurrectionists in Egypt**)<sup>13</sup> and the violent among your own people shall lift themselves up in order to fulfill the vision, but they shall fail. (**May refer to Jewish supporters of the Seleucids. When Judaea slipped back into Ptolemaic control due to the efforts of general Scopas (prior to the battle at Paneas), the Seleucid sympathizers' vision failed. However, Antiochus III would ultimately win at Paneas.**)<sup>14</sup>
- G. 15 Then the king of the north shall come and throw up siegeworks and take a well-fortified city. (**Sidon, an Egyptian fortified city**)<sup>15</sup> And the forces of the south shall not stand, or even his best troops, for there shall be no strength to stand. 16 But he (**Antiochus III**) who comes against him shall do as he wills, and none shall stand before him. And he shall stand in the glorious land, with destruction in his hand. (**The Promise Land that God gave the Jewish people**) 17 He shall set his face to come with the strength of his whole kingdom, and he shall bring terms of an agreement and perform them. He shall give him (**Ptolemy V**) the daughter of women (**Cleopatra; not the one who lived in the time of Julius Caesar and Mark Antony (69–30 b.c.)**)<sup>16</sup> to destroy the kingdom, but it shall not stand or be to his advantage. (**Antiochus III had hoped that he could manipulate Cleopatra I and use her to bring down the Ptolemaic house. She was, however, loyal to her husband and influential in the Egyptian court.**)<sup>17</sup>
- H. 18 Afterward he shall turn his face to the coastlands (**Refers to Greece. Rome warned Antiochus III to leave Greece alone, but he did not listen.**)<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Da 11:13). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

<sup>13</sup> Storms, S. (2016). [Daniel](#) (Da 11:14). Edmond, OK: Sam Storms.

<sup>14</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Da 11:14). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

<sup>15</sup> Storms, S. (2016). [Daniel](#) (Da 11:15). Edmond, OK: Sam Storms.

<sup>16</sup> Storms, S. (2016). [Daniel](#) (Da 11:17). Edmond, OK: Sam Storms.

<sup>17</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Da 11:17). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

<sup>18</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Da 11:18). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

and shall capture many of them, but a commander **(Lucius Cornelius Scipio, a Roman general, in cooperation with their Greek allies)**<sup>19</sup> shall put an end to his insolence. Indeed, he shall turn his insolence back upon him. 19 Then he shall turn his face back toward the fortresses of his own land, but he shall stumble and fall, and shall not be found. **(having suffered a humiliating defeat, Antiochus returned to his country where he was murdered by an angry mob in 187 b.c. His son, Antiochus IV Epiphanes was taken to Rome as a hostage)**<sup>20</sup> 20"Then shall arise in his place **(i.e., Seleucus IV Philopator (187–175 b.c.))**<sup>21</sup> one who shall send an exactor of tribute for the glory of the kingdom. But within a few days he shall be broken, neither in anger nor in battle.

**Note:** Concerning “exactor of tribute” – “Heliodorus attempted to pillage the treasury of the Jerusalem temple to help Seleucus make payments to Rome in fulfillment of a debt incurred by the latter’s father, Antiochus III].”<sup>22</sup> “Seleucus IV was killed in 175 bc as a result of a plot hatched by Heliodorus.”<sup>23</sup>

### The third distinct prophecy is

#### (3) A prophecy on the rise and fall of Antiochus Epiphanes as the ruler of the Seleucid Empire - 175 BC to 164 BC. (11:21-39)

- A. **21 In his place shall arise a contemptible person to whom royal majesty has not been given. He shall come in without warning and obtain the kingdom by flatteries. 22 Armies shall be utterly swept away before him and broken, even the prince of the covenant.**

**Note:** “Antiochus Epiphanes was not born to the throne. He took advantage of political and military confusion to carve out for himself a power base. In those troublous times the “prince of the covenant,” i.e., the high priest, would be murdered. The prediction points to the death of Onias III, the last godly high priest of the Mosaic system (11:22).”<sup>24</sup>

- B. **23 And from the time that an alliance is made with him he shall act deceitfully, and he shall become strong with a small people.**

**Note:** “By means of a covenant Antiochus lulled his rivals into a false sense of security. After some time with only a small number of partisans he was able to gain control of the Syrian government. He then took advantage of the tranquility

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<sup>19</sup> Storms, S. (2016). *Daniel* (Da 11:18). Edmond, OK: Sam Storms.

<sup>20</sup> Storms, S. (2016). *Daniel* (Da 11:19). Edmond, OK: Sam Storms.

<sup>21</sup> Storms, S. (2016). *Daniel* (Da 11:20). Edmond, OK: Sam Storms.

<sup>22</sup> Storms, S. (2016). *Daniel* (Da 11:20). Edmond, OK: Sam Storms.

<sup>23</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). *Faithlife Study Bible* (Da 11:20). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

<sup>24</sup> Smith, J. E. (1992). *The Major Prophets* (p. 622). Joplin, MO: College Press.

of the area to seize personal and national wealth to finance his extravagant life style (11:23f.).”<sup>25</sup>

**C. 24 Without warning he shall come into the richest parts of the province, and he shall do what neither his fathers nor his fathers' fathers have done, scattering among them plunder, spoil, and goods. He shall devise plans against strongholds, but only for a time. 25 And he shall stir up his power and his heart against the king of the south with a great army. And the king of the south shall wage war with an exceedingly great and mighty army, but he shall not stand, for plots shall be devised against him. 26 Even those who eat his food shall break him. His army shall be swept away, and many shall fall down slain. 27 And as for the two kings, their hearts shall be bent on doing evil. They shall speak lies at the same table, but to no avail, for the end is yet to be at the time appointed.**

1. “Antiochus Epiphanes moved on Egypt in 170 B.C. The regents of Ptolemy VI Philometor (180–146 B.C.) could not withstand him. Ptolemy’s advisors treacherously had the boy king flee Alexandria by sea. He was intercepted by Antiochus. The citizens of Alexandria Egypt proclaimed his younger brother king under the title Euergetes II. Antiochus pretended to back Philometor against his brother. With Egypt divided between two rival bothers, Antiochus seemed to be in a position to annex Egypt. Yet his plans would not succeed “for the end is still to come at the appointed time.” God had another destiny in store for Antiochus, one which he would fulfill in frustration over his failures in Egypt (11:25–27).”<sup>26</sup>
2. “Antiochus prevented an Egyptian invasion of Palestine by himself invading Egypt, now ruled by Ptolemy VI, succeeding partly by intrigue (according to vs 24–25). But full success eluded him (27), and when disorder emerged in Palestine, he returned to Syria.”<sup>27</sup>

**D. 28 And he shall return to his land with great wealth, but his heart shall be set against the holy covenant. And he shall work his will and return to his own land.**

**Note:** “On his way back to Syria, he attacked Jerusalem, the metropolis of Jehovah’s covenant-people, slew eighty thousand, took forty thousand prisoners, and sold forty thousand as slaves (2 Maccabees 5:5–14).”<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Smith, J. E. (1992). *The Major Prophets* (p. 622). Joplin, MO: College Press.

<sup>26</sup> Smith, J. E. (1992). *The Major Prophets* (pp. 622–623). Joplin, MO: College Press.

<sup>27</sup> Ferguson, S. B. (1994). *Daniel*. In D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer, & G. J. Wenham (Eds.), *New Bible commentary: 21st century edition* (4th ed., p. 761). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press.

<sup>28</sup> Jamieson, R., Fausset, A. R., & Brown, D. (1997). *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible* (Vol. 1, p. 645). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

- E. **29 "At the time appointed he shall return and come into the south, but it shall not be this time as it was before. 30 For ships of Kittim shall come against him, and he shall be afraid and withdraw, and shall turn back and be enraged and take action against the holy covenant. He shall turn back and pay attention to those who forsake the holy covenant.**

**Note:** "11:29 he will return Antiochus IV invaded Egypt for a second time in 168 BC. 11:30 the ships of Kittim A Roman envoy. The Roman consul Popillius Laenas stipulated that Antiochus IV must withdraw from Egypt or face the Roman army. He allegedly drew a circle in the sand around Antiochus, and he was not allowed to leave the circle until he responded. Knowing that he could not defeat Rome, Antiochus complied. Humiliated and enraged, he headed home seeking an outlet for his wrath."<sup>29</sup>

- F. **31 Forces from him shall appear and profane the temple and fortress, and shall take away the regular burnt offering. And they shall set up the abomination that makes desolate. 32 He shall seduce with flattery those who violate the covenant, but the people who know their God shall stand firm and take action. 33 And the wise among the people shall make many understand, though for some days they shall stumble by sword and flame, by captivity and plunder. 34 When they stumble, they shall receive a little help. And many shall join themselves to them with flattery, 35 and some of the wise shall stumble, so that they may be refined, purified, and made white, until the time of the end, for it still awaits the appointed time.**

**Note:** "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 holy covenant**, the entire Mosaic system (cf. v. 28), favoring any renegade Jews who turned to help him (cf. v. 32). He desecrated **the temple** and abolished **the daily sacrifice**. Antiochus 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 to Hellenize the Jews, 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 Epiphanes' birthday. 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 (**flattery**) and worshiped the false god. However, a small remnant

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<sup>29</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Da 11:29-30). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

remained faithful to **God**, refusing to engage in those abominable practices. Antiochus IV died insane in Persia in 163 B.C. (Cf. comments on this Antiochus in 8:23–25.) 11:33–35. The Jews who refused to submit to Antiochus’ false religious system were persecuted and martyred for their faith. The word **fall** (vv. 33–34), literally “stumble” (*kāšal*), 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. It had previously been revealed to Daniel that the temple would be desecrated for 1,150 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.**<sup>30</sup>

**G. 36 "And the king shall do as he wills. He shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak astonishing things against the God of gods. He shall prosper till the indignation is accomplished; for what is decreed shall be done. 37 He shall pay no attention to the gods of his fathers, or to the one beloved by women. He shall not pay attention to any other god, for he shall magnify himself above all. 38 He shall honor the god of fortresses instead of these. A god whom his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly gifts. 39 He shall deal with the strongest fortresses with the help of a foreign god. Those who acknowledge him he shall load with honor. He shall make them rulers over many and shall divide the land for a price.**

1. “Antiochus’ surname (“Epiphanes”) means “manifest.” He considered himself to be a god in the flesh.”<sup>31</sup>
2. “MAURER refers it to Antiochus’ attack on the temple of *the Syrian Venus, worshipped by women* (1 Maccabees 6:1, &c.; 2 Maccabees 1:13). NEWTON refers it to Rome’s “forbidding to marry.” ELLIOTT rightly makes the antitypical reference be to *Messiah*. Jewish women desired to be mothers with a view to Him, the promised seed of the woman (Ge 30:23; Lu 1:25, 28).”<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Pentecost, J. D. (1985). [Daniel](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 1370). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

<sup>31</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Da 11:37). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

<sup>32</sup> Jamieson, R., Fausset, A. R., & Brown, D. (1997). [Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible](#) (Vol. 1, p. 647). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

3. **“God of forces**—probably Jupiter Capitolinus, to whom Antiochus began to erect a temple at Antioch [LIVY, 41.20]. Translate, “He shall honor the god of fortresses on his basis,” that is, the base of the statue. NEWTON translates, “And the god ‘Mahuzzim’ (*guardians*, that is, saints adored as ‘*protectors*’ in the Greek and Roman churches) shall he honor.”<sup>33</sup>
4. “NEWTON translates, “*to be defenders of Mahuzzim* (the monks and priests who uphold saint worship), together with the strange god whom he shall acknowledge, he shall multiply honor.” *English Version* is better: He shall do (exploits) in the most strongholds (that is, shall succeed against them) with a strange god (under the auspices of a god which he worshipped not before, namely, Jupiter Capitolinus, whose Worship he imported into his empire from Rome). Antiochus succeeded against Jerusalem, Sidon, Pelusium, Memphis.”<sup>34</sup>
5. “A major point of dispute is the identity of the person described in vv. 36–45. Some believe these verses refer not to an individual but to Rome, the fourth empire (assuming one takes Rome, not Greece, to be the fourth empire). Others believe Herod the Great is in view, while some have pointed to Constantine of the early 4<sup>th</sup> century a.d. Many evangelical interpreters believe that at v. 36 the angel leaps forward several thousand years to the end of the age and begins describing the Antichrist, of whom Antiochus is the prototype, who will appear just preceding the coming of Jesus. Their primary argument is that we have no explicit evidence that the details given in vv. 36–45 correspond to anything in the life and career of Antiochus. Others insist that these verses are simply a continuation of the description of Antiochus Epiphanes in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century b.c. It must be admitted that there is no indication of a break or a change of subject. Vv. 36–45 appear to flow in continuation with the preceding paragraph. There is reference to the “king” and to the “king of the South” and “king of the North” without the slightest indication that the three are any different from those in the 4<sup>th</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> centuries b.c. who are described by the same names in the preceding verses. Although not without its difficulties, in my opinion, these verses continue the description of Antiochus.”<sup>35</sup>
6. **“11:38 the god of fortresses** If this refers to Antiochus IV, it may indicate his rededication of the Jerusalem temple to Olympian Zeus (2 Maccabees 6:2).”<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Jamieson, R., Fausset, A. R., & Brown, D. (1997). [\*Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible\*](#) (Vol. 1, p. 647). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

<sup>34</sup> Jamieson, R., Fausset, A. R., & Brown, D. (1997). [\*Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible\*](#) (Vol. 1, p. 647). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

<sup>35</sup> Storms, S. (2016). [\*Daniel\*](#) (Da 11:35). Edmond, OK: Sam Storms.

<sup>36</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [\*Faithlife Study Bible\*](#) (Da 11:38). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

## The fourth distinct prophecy is

### (4) A possible prophecy of the end of the terror of Antiochus Epiphanes (FaithLife Study Bible), Herod the Great (J.E. Smith), The Roman Empire (John Calvin) or a future Antichrist (James Boice). (11:40-45)

- A. "The events in vv. 40–45 cannot be correlated with actual historical events as those in vv. 21–39 can, thus leading many to conclude that this is the end-time Antichrist of whom Antiochus was the prototype."<sup>37</sup>
- B. Verses 1 through 35 are almost universally interpreted by Evangelical Conservative Scholars. The debates get started in verse 36. However, because there is still an easily sustainable argument that verses 36 through 39 are about Antiochus Epiphanes, and given there is nothing in the grammar and language of the text itself to distinguish those scriptures from what began in verse 20, I see no reason to entertain the idea that verses 36 through 39 take us to a different person.

**Note:** "It is difficult to reconcile the events of vv. 36–45 with the life and reign of Antiochus IV. On the other hand, the text presents no change in characters or leadership."<sup>38</sup>

- C. However, by time we get to verse 40 the number of scholars who abandon Antiochus Epiphanes as the interpretation of the passage is overwhelming and thus it's hard for me to feel overly confident about any interpretation. Let me read these verses to you and for those who want to get into the weeds of the various possibilities, be sure to go online and read my notes. I've put some very thorough commentary from authors who defend each one of the interpretations I mentioned in my outline.
- D. **40"At the time of the end, the king of the south shall attack him, but the king of the north shall rush upon him like a whirlwind, with chariots and horsemen, and with many ships. And he shall come into countries and shall overflow and pass through. 41 He shall come into the glorious land. And tens of thousands shall fall, but these shall be delivered out of his hand: Edom and Moab and the main part of the Ammonites. 42 He shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape. 43 He shall become ruler of the treasures of gold and of silver, and all the precious things of Egypt, and the Libyans and the Cushites shall follow in his train. 44 But news from the east and the north shall alarm him, and he shall go out with great fury to destroy and devote many to**

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<sup>37</sup> Storms, S. (2016). [Daniel](#) (Da 11:39). Edmond, OK: Sam Storms.

<sup>38</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Da 11:36). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

**destruction. 45 And he shall pitch his palatial tents between the sea and the glorious holy mountain. Yet he shall come to his end, with none to help him.**

- E. Now remember, this is not the end of the Word given to Daniel. The final chapter is next week, and I promise you don't want to miss it!
- F. **Interpretation of Antiochus Epiphanes:**

**Note:** “**11:40 at the time of the end** The conclusion of his reign, culminating in his death (see Dan 8:17 and note). **will storm against him** For similar battle imagery, see v. 10. **11:41 the beautiful land** Jerusalem (see Ezek 20:6, 15). **Edom and Moab and the best part of the Ammonites** Historical enemies of Israel. If they are Israel's enemies, then they are Antiochus' friends. **11:42 the land of Egypt** The land controlled by the Ptolemies—Egypt specifically and Israel secondarily—has been the central focus of the fighting since Dan 11:5. To end with the destruction of both is fitting. **11:43 the Libyans and the Cushites** They may be allies or part of his entourage. **11:44 will terrify him** Probably refers to rumors of treason. This was a common worry for kings fighting out of the country and, consequently, of any ruler attempting to bring peace to Palestine. **the east and from the north** Likely refers to reports received from elsewhere in the Seleucid Empire. If Antiochus IV was fighting in Egypt when these reports came (see v. 42), then most of his territory was located to the north and east of his location. **11:45 the tents of his palace** When campaigning, the army lived in tents. The king's tent would serve as his royal residence if he accompanied the army, and would be quite lavish. **between the sea and the beautiful holy mountain** Refers to Jerusalem. **and he will come to his end** Stationing himself in Palestine in v. 44 due to the “reports” does not necessarily mean that he died there. Daniel does not say where or how, just that his death would not be “by human power” (8:26). Antiochus did not die in Palestine but during a campaign in Persia in 164 bc (see 1 Maccabees 6:1–17; 2 Maccabees 1:14–16; 9:1–29). **there is no one helping him** Perhaps indicative of his death as divine retribution.”<sup>39</sup>

- G. **Interpretation of Herod the Great**

**Note:** “The identity of the king who does as he pleases in 11:36 is disputed. The two most popular views are (1) that this is a further description of the career of Antiochus Epiphanes; and (2) that he is the eschatological Antichrist who has yet to appear on the earth. The details here do not snugly fit what is known of the career of Antiochus. The view that this king is Antichrist is sheer imagination. A better interpretation is that this king represents that great king who ruled just prior to the birth of Christ, Herod the Great (40–4 b.c.). **A. The Pride of the**

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<sup>39</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Da 11:40–45). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

**King (11:36–39)** In some respects this king would repeat the indignation visited upon Israel by Antiochus Epiphanes. His arrogance would be manifested in five ways. (1) He would do as he pleased. (2) He would exalt himself over every god. (3) He would speak “monstrous things against the God of gods.” (4) He would reject the traditional religion of his fathers. (5) He would have no regard for “the desire of women.” This last phrase has been interpreted in various ways. Some think that the phrase means he would have no desire for women, i.e., he would be homosexual or perhaps celibate. Others think the reference is to his disregard of those desired by women, i.e., children in general, or the Messiah in particular (11:36f.). If the king here is Herod, the slaughter of the Bethlehem infants might be in view. The king (Herod) would prosper “until the indignation is finished.” The period of wrath against national Israel which began with Antiochus Epiphanes would continue under the new dynasty. This king’s only god would be war, and he would build fortresses for his temples. With the support of his allies, the Romans, Herod undertook the most daring military adventures. He used bribery to raise up a host of fanatics loyal to his cause (11:38f.). **B. The Demise of the King (11:40–45)** At the “end time,” i.e., the last period before the appearance of Messiah, this king would become allies with “the king of the south.” The famous Cleopatra was the representative of the old Ptolemaic dynasty in Egypt. She, Mark Antony and Herod joined together to capture the Roman province of Syria. This was the beginning of the Actian War. The “king of the north,” the Romans who now controlled Syria, would retaliate by a full-blown attack against Herod and surrounding lands (11:40). En route to Egypt, the king of the north (the Roman Augustus) would enter the Beautiful Land, i.e., Judah. History records that Herod saved his crown at this time by switching allegiance and aiding Augustus. According to Josephus, Pliny and others, the Roman sent an unsuccessful expedition against Edom and Moab at this time. Other lands, however, did not escape. Augustus took possession of the wealth of North Africa. Libya and Ethiopia submitted to his authority (11:41–43). After the brief parenthesis describing the movements of the “king of the north,” the attention is again focused on Herod. That arrogant king would be troubled by “reports from the east” which troubled Herod was probably the news brought by the Magi (Matt 2:1–3). To protect his throne Herod ordered the slaughter of the Bethlehem innocents. The “reports from the north” came in a letter from his son in Rome. The letter reported that Herod’s other two sons and heirs apparent had written a slanderous letter to Rome about their father (11:44). Herod had those sons killed. The king would “pitch his royal tents between the seas at the beautiful holy mountain” (NIV). The *seas* here are probably the Mediterranean and the Dead seas. The beautiful holy mountain would be Mt. Zion or Jerusalem. Herod had two palaces in Jerusalem, one in the temple area, and one in the upper city. Though he would be successful for a time in dominating the Holy Land, he would “come to his end, and no one will help him.” Josephus describes the terrible end of Herod. He literally rotted away and suffered convulsions. Herod ordered that Jewish leaders should be executed

upon news of his death in order that there be mourning at the time of his funeral.”<sup>40</sup>

## H. Interpretation of The Roman Empire:

Note: “As to the time here mentioned, it is a certain or predetermined period: the kings of the south and the north we have already shewn to refer to Egypt and Syria, such being their position with respect to Judea. The word **נגח**, *negech*, *confliget*, is literally he shall “push with the horns,” while the word translated, “he shall rush as a whirlwind,” is deduced from **שער**, *segner*, “to be stormy.” The angel here predicts the numerous victories by means of which the Romans should extend their empire far and wide, although not without great difficulties and dangers. He states, *The king of the south should carry on war with the Romans for a definite period*. I dare not fix the precise time intended by the angel. So great was the power of Egypt, that had the kings of that country relied upon their native resources, they might have summoned courage to make war upon the Romans. Gabinius the proconsul led his army there for the sake of restoring Ptolemy. He expelled Archelaus without much trouble, and then like a mercenary he risked his life and his fame there, as well as his army. Cæsar was in danger there, after vanquishing Pompey; then Antony next made war upon Augustus, assisted by the forces of Cleopatra; then Egypt put forth all her strength, and at his failure was reduced herself to a province of Rome. The angel did not propose to mark a continued series of times, but only briefly to admonish the faithful to stand firm amidst those most grievous concussions which were then at hand. Whatever be the precise meaning, the angel doubtless signified the difficult nature of the struggle between the Romans and the Egyptians. I have already stated the witness of history to the fact, that the Egyptians never made war against the Romans in their own name; sometimes events were so confused that the Egyptians coalesced with the Syrians, and then we must read the words conjointly—thus the king of the south, assisted by the king of the north, should carry on war with the Romans. The angel thus shews us how the king of Syria should furnish greater forces and supplies than the Egyptian monarch, and this really happened at the beginning of the triumvirate. He states next, *The king of the south should come with chariots and horses and many ships*. Nor is it necessary here to indicate the precise period, since the Romans carried on many wars in the east, during which they occupied Asia, while a part of Lybia fell to them by the will of its king without arms or force of any kind. With reference to these two kingdoms which have been so frequently mentioned, many chiefs ruled over Syria within a short period. First one of the natives was raised to the throne and then another, till the people grew tired of them, and transferred the sovereignty to strangers. Then Alexander rose gradually to power, and ultimately acquired very great fame: he was not of noble birth, for his father was of unknown origin. This man sprang from an obscure family, and at one period possessed neither authority nor resources. He was made king of Syria, because

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<sup>40</sup> Smith, J. E. (1992). [\*The Major Prophets\*](#) (pp. 624–626). Joplin, MO: College Press.

he pretended to be the son of Seleucus, and was slain immediately, while his immediate successor reigned for but a short period. Thus Syria passed over to the Romans on the death of this Seleucus. Tigranes the king of Armenia was then sent for, and he was made ruler over Syria till Lucullus conquered him, and Syria was reduced to a province. The vilest of men reigned over Egypt. Physcon, who was restrained by the Romans when attempting to wrest Syria from the power of its sovereign, was exceedingly depraved both in body and mind: and hence he obtained this disgraceful appellation. For the word is a Greek one, equivalent to the French *andouille*; for *physce* means that thicker intestine into which the others are usually inserted. This deformity gave rise to his usual name, signifying “pot-bellied,” implying both bodily deformity and likeness to the brutes, while he was not endowed with either intellect or ingenuity. The last king who made the Romans his son’s guardians, received the name of Auletes, and Cicero uses this epithet of “flute-player,” because he was immoderately fond of this musical instrument. In each kingdom then there was horrible deformity, since those who exercised the royal authority were more like dogs or swine than mankind. Tigranes, it is well known, gave the Romans much trouble. On the other side, Mithridates occupied their attention for a very long period, and with various and opposite success. The Romans throughout all Asia were at one period put to the sword, and when a close engagement was fought, Mithridates was often superior, and he afterwards united his forces with those of Tigranes, his father-in-law. When Tigranes held Armenia, he was a king of other kings, and afterwards added to his dominions a portion of Syria. At length when the last Antiochus was set over the kingdom of Syria by Lucullus, he was removed from his command by the orders of Pompey, and then, as we have stated, Syria became a province of Rome. Pompey crossed the sea, and subdued the whole of Judea as well as Syria: he afterwards entered the Temple, and took away some part of its possessions, but spared the sacred treasures. Crassus succeeded him—an insatiable whirlpool, who longed for this province for no other reason than his unbounded eagerness for wealth. He despoiled the Temple at Jerusalem; and lastly, after Cleopatra was conquered, Egypt lost its royal race, and passed into a Roman province. If the Romans had conquered a hundred other provinces, the angel would not have mentioned them here; for I have previously noticed his special regard to the chosen people. Therefore he dwells only on those slaughters which had more or less relation to the wretched Jews. First of all he predicts the great contest which should arise between the kings of Egypt and Syria, *who should come on like a whirlwind*, while the Romans *should rush upon the lands like a deluge, and pass over them*. He compares the king of Syria to a whirlwind, for at first he should rush on impetuously, filling both land and sea with his forces. Thus he should possess a well-manned fleet, and thus excite fresh terrors, and yet vanish away rapidly like a whirlwind. But the Romans are compared to a deluge. The new king of whom he had spoken *should come*, says he, *and overflow*, burying all the forces of both Egypt and Syria; implying the whole foundations of both realms should be swept away when the Romans passed over them. *He shall pass over*, he says; meaning, wherever they come, the way shall be open for them and nothing closed against them. He will repeat this

idea in another form. He does not speak now of one region only, but says, *they should come over the lands*, implying a wide-spread desolation, while no one should dare to oppose them by resisting their fury. The land of Judea is called the pleasant or desirable land, because God thought it worthy of his peculiar favour. He chose it for his dwelling-place, called it his resting-place, and caused his blessing to remain in it. In this verse also, regions are treated, and not merely cities, as the regions of Edom and of Moab. After the angel had briefly predicted the occurrence of the most grievous wars with the Romans, he now adds what he had briefly commenced in the last verse,—namely, their becoming conquerors of all nations. *They shall come*, he says, *into the desirable land*. This is the reason why the angel prophesies of the Roman empire, for he was not sent to explain to Daniel the history of the whole world, but to retain the faithful in their allegiance, and to persuade them under the most harassing convulsions to remain under the protection and guardianship of God. For this reason he states,—*they shall come into the desirable land*. This would be a dreadful temptation, and might overthrow all feelings of piety, as the Jews would be harassed on all sides, first by the Syrians and then by the Egyptians. And we know with what cruelty Antiochus endeavoured not only to oppress but utterly to blot out the whole nation. Neither the Syrians nor the Egyptians spared them. The Romans came almost from the other side of the globe; at first they made an alliance with these states, and then entered Judea as enemies. Who would have supposed that region under God's protection, when it was so exposed to all attacks of robbery and oppression? Hence it was necessary to admonish the faithful not to fall away through this utter confusion. *They shall come*, then, *into the desirable land, and many regions shall fall*; meaning, no hope should remain for the Jews after the arrival of the Romans, as victory was already prepared to their hand. The angel's setting before the faithful this material for despair was not likely to induce confidence and comfort, but as they were aware of these divine predictions, they knew also that the remedy was prepared by the same God who had admonished them by means of the angel. It was in his power to save his Church from a hundred deaths. This prophecy became an inestimable treasury, inspiring the faithful with the hope of the promised deliverance. The angel will afterwards add the promise intended to support and strengthen and revive their drooping spirits. But he here announces that God's aid should not immediately appear, because he would give the Romans full permission to exercise a cruel sway, tyranny, and robbery, throughout the whole of Asia and the East. He says, *The lands of Edom, Moab, and a portion of Ammon should escape from their slaughter*. This trial would in no slight degree affect the minds of the pious: What does he mean? He suffers the land that he promised should be at rest, to be now seized and laid waste by its enemies! The land of Moab is at peace and enjoys the greatest tranquillity, and the condition of the sons of Ammon is prosperous! We should here bear in mind what the prophets say of these lands: Esau was banished into the rugged mountains, and God assigned to the Moabites a territory beyond the borders of the land of blessings. (Malachi 1:3.) The Jews alone had any peculiar right and privilege to claim that territory in which the Lord had promised them perfect repose. Now, when Judea is laid waste and their

foes according to their pleasure not only seize upon everything valuable in the city and the country, but seem to have a special permission to ravage the land at their will, what could the Jews conjecture? The angel therefore meets this objection, and alleviates these feelings of anxiety to which the faithful could be subject from such slaughters. He states that the territories of *Edom* and *Moab*, and of the *children of Ammon*, should be tranquil and safe from those calamities. By the expression, *to the beginning of the children of Ammon*, he most probably refers to that retreat whence the Ammonites originated. For doubtless the Romans would not have spared the Ammonites unless they had been concealed among the mountains, for every district in the neighbourhood of Judea was subject to the same distress. Those who interpret this passage of Antichrist, suppose safety to be extended only to that portion of the faithful who shall escape from the world and take refuge in the deserts. But there is no reason in this opinion, and it is sufficient to retain the sense already proposed as the genuine one. He afterwards adds, *The Romans should send their army into the land, and even in the land of Egypt, they should not escape*. The angel without doubt here treats of the numerous victories which the Romans should obtain in a short time. They carried on war with Mithridates for a long period, and then Asia was almost lost; but they soon afterwards began to extend their power, first over all Asia Minor, and then over Syria; Armenia was next added to their sway, and Egypt after that: meanwhile this was but a moderate addition, till at length they ruled over the Persians, and thus their power became formidable. Wherefore this prophecy was fulfilled by *their extending their power over many regions, and by the land of Egypt becoming a portion of their booty*. It follows: I have previously stated that though the language applies to a single king, yet a kingdom is to be understood, and our former observations are here confirmed. Although many nations should endeavour to resist the Romans, they should yet be completely victorious, and finally acquire immense booty. Their avarice and covetousness were perfectly astonishing; for he says, *they should acquire dominion over the treasures of gold and silver, and should draw to themselves all the precious things of Egypt, Lybia, and Ethiopia; and that, too, in their footsteps*. In these words he more clearly explains our previous remarks upon the emblem of the deluge. All lands should be laid open to them; although the cities were fortified, and would thus resist them by their closed gates, yet the way should be open to them, and none should hinder them from bursting forth over the whole east, and subduing at the same time cities, towns, and villages. This we know to have been actually accomplished. Hence there is nothing forced in the whole of this context, and the prophecy is fairly interpreted by the history. He afterwards adds,—The angel's narrative seems here to differ somewhat from the preceding one, as the Romans should not succeed so completely as to avoid being arrested in the midst of their victorious course. He says, *they shall be frightened by rumours*, and the events suit this case, for although the Romans subdued the whole east with scarcely any trouble, and in a few years, yet they were afterwards checked by adversity. For Crassus perished miserably after spoiling the temple, and destroyed himself and the flower of the Roman army; he was conquered at Carræ, near Babylon, in an important engagement, through

betrayal by a spy in whom he had placed too much confidence. Antony, again, after dividing the world into three parts between himself, and Octavius, and Lepidus, suffered miserably in the same neighbourhood against the Parthians. We are not surprised at the angel's saying, *The Romans should be frightened from the east and the north*, as this really came to pass. Then he adds, *they should come in great wrath*; meaning, although they should lose many troops, yet this severe massacre should not depress their spirits. When their circumstances were desperate, they were excited to fury like savage beasts of prey, until they rushed upon their own destruction. This came to pass more especially under the reign of Augustus; for a short period he contended successfully with the Parthians, and compelled them to surrender. He then imposed upon them conditions of peace; and as the Roman eagles had been carried into Persia, much to their disgrace, he compelled this people to return them. By this compulsion he blotted out the disgrace which they had suffered under Antony. We see, then, how exceedingly well this suits the context,—*the Romans shall come with great wrath to destroy many*; as the Parthians expected to enjoy tranquillity for many ages, and to be perfectly free from any future attempt or attack from the Romans. It now follows,—The angel at length concludes with the settled sway of the Romans in Asia Minor and the regions of the east, as well as in Syria, Judea, and Persia. We have already shewn how everything here predicted is related by profane historians, and each event is well known to all who are moderately versed in the knowledge of those times. We must now notice the phrase, *The Roman king should fix the tents of his palace*. This expression signifies not only the carrying on of the war by the Romans in the east, but their being lords of the whole of that region. When he had said they should fix their tents according to the usual practice of warfare, he might have been content with the usual method of speech, but he contrasts the word "palace" with frequent migrations, and signifies their not measuring their camp according to the usage of warfare, but their occupying a fixed station for a permanence. Why then does he speak of tents? Because Asia was not the seat of their empire; for they were careful in not attributing more dignity to any place than was expedient for themselves. For this reason the proconsuls took with them numerous attendants, to avoid the necessity of any fixed palace: they had their own tents, and often remained in such temporary dwellings as they found on their road. This language of the angel—*they shall fix the tents of their palace*—will suit the Romans exceedingly well, because they reigned there in tranquillity after the east was subdued; and yet they had no fixed habitation, because they did not wish any place to become strong enough to rebel against them. When he says, *between the seas*, some think the Dead Sea intended, and the Lake of Asphalt, as opposed to the Mediterranean Sea. I do not hesitate to think the Persian Sea is intended by the angel. He does not say the Romans should become masters of all the lands lying between the two seas, but he only says *they should fix the tents of their palace between the seas*; and we know this to have been done when they held the dominion between the Euxine and the Persian Gulf. The extent of the sway of Mithridates is well known, for historians record twenty-two nations as subject to his power. Afterwards, on one side stood Asia Minor, which consisted of many nations,

according to our statement elsewhere, and Armenia became theirs after Tigranes was conquered, while Cilicia, though only a part of a province, was a very extensive and wealthy region. It had many deserts and many stony and uncultivated mountains, while there were in Cilicia many rich cities, though it did not form a single province, like Syria and Judea, so that it is not surprising when the angel says the Romans *should fix their tents between the seas*, for their habitation was beyond the Mediterranean Sea. They first passed over into Sicily and then into Spain; thirdly, they began to extend their power into Greece and Asia Minor against Antiochus, and then they seized upon the whole east. On the one shore was Asia Minor and many other nations; and on the other side was the Syrian Sea, including Judea as far as the Egyptian Sea. We observe, then, the tranquillity of the Roman empire *between the seas*, and yet it had no permanent seat there, because the proconsuls spent their time as foreigners in the midst of a strange country. At length he adds, *They should come to the mountain of the desire of holiness*. I have already expressed the reason why this prophecy was uttered; it was to prevent the novelty of these events from disturbing the minds of the pious, when they saw so barbarous and distant a nation trampling upon them, and ruling with pride, insolence, and cruelty. When, therefore, so sorrowful a spectacle was set before the eyes of the pious, they required no ordinary supports lest they should yield to the pressure of despair. The angel therefore predicts future events, to produce the acknowledgment of nothing really happening by chance; and next, to shew how all these turbulent motions throughout the world are governed by a divine power. The consolation follows, *they shall come at length to their end, and no one shall bring them help*. This was not fulfilled immediately, for after Crassus had despoiled the temple, and had suffered in an adverse engagement against the Parthians, the Romans did not fail all at once, but their monarchy flourished even more and more under Augustus. The city was then razed to the ground by Titus, and the very name and existence of the Jewish nation all but annihilated. Then, after this, the Romans suffered disgraceful defeats; they were cast out of nearly the whole east, and compelled to treat with the Parthians, the Persians, and other nations, till their empire was entirely ruined. If we study the history of the next hundred years no nation will be found to have suffered such severe punishments as the Romans, and no monarchy was ever overthrown with greater disgrace. God then poured such fury upon that nation as to render them the gazing-stock of the world. The angel's words are not in vain, *their own end should soon come*; after they had devastated and depopulated all lands, and penetrated and pervaded everywhere, and all the world had given themselves up to their power, then the Romans became utterly ruined and swept away. *They should have none to help them*. Without doubt this prophecy may be here extended to the promulgation of the gospel; for although Christ was born about one age before the preaching of the gospel, yet he truly shone forth to the world by means of that promulgation. The angel therefore brought up his prophecy to that point of time."<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Calvin, J., & Myers, T. (2010). [\*Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Daniel\*](#) (Vol. 2, pp. 357–367). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

## I. Interpretation of the Antichrist:

**Note:** “But we still have the final section of this chapter and the verses in Daniel chapter 12 that go with it. These are difficult, as every scholar or commentator acknowledges, and there are many views. Do they relate to history or to events that have not yet occurred? Are they literal or symbolic? The answers to these questions result in quite different approaches, and since there have been great minds arrayed on all sides, it is wise to proceed carefully and with humility. In my opinion, the fact that there are divergent interpretations is the best evidence for concluding that the events referred to are still future. If the section were referring to past events, there is no reason it should not be as clear in talking about them as the earlier portions of the chapter have been in talking about the history of the ancient Near East from the time of Cyrus to Antiochus Epiphanes. If it were dealing with the past, commentators would agree. If this is the case, then our procedure in studying them must be different. Instead of looking to history to see what happened and then matching those events to the prophecy, we need to study the prophecy itself and see what it seems to be saying about what is yet to come. Second, I would argue that the verses must be taken as literally as what has gone before. The earlier part of the chapter has spoken of kings and alliances and battles. We have been able to give specific names and dates to these predictions. The same thing should be true for this section, even though we have not yet witnessed the rise or observed the careers of those prophesied. We have no warrant suddenly to substitute a symbolic understanding of the words for a literal one. Earlier I mentioned that there are three chief approaches to this section. The first is that it is continuing to speak of the career of Antiochus Epiphanes. The best argument for this is that there is no obvious break between verses 35 and 36. So when verse 36 begins, “The king will do as he pleases,” it is natural to identify this king as the last-mentioned king of the previous section, Antiochus. The difficulty is that what is said in this section does not fit Antiochus’s known career. Calvin in particular notices this, and so do other scholars. It is possible that Antiochus Epiphanes may be a type of a greater evil character prophesied for the last days—I believe that is the case—but if these verses refer to either, it must be the later character and not Antiochus himself whose career is highlighted. The second view is that these verses prophesy part of the history of the early Roman Empire. This was Calvin’s view and he went at it with great thoroughness. No one can easily discount Calvin, of course. But it is significant that Calvin was not entirely satisfied with his own interpretation, at least as I read him. For one thing, he refers to the “king” whose career is described in these verses, not to a specific individual, but to the “kingdom” of the Romans as a whole. He defends this at some length. But if this is right, it is out of step with the way kings are referred to in the first part of the chapter. There “king” refers to a known individual. It should be the same here, in my judgment. Moreover, Calvin has difficulty fixing the details of each prophecy, which is the chief reason I have for saying that the prophesied events must be future. The third view is that these verses refer to the Antichrist who is

said elsewhere to appear at the end of all things—just before the return of Jesus Christ. There are a number of additional reasons for seeing the verses this way. In verse 40 the angel speaks of “the time of the end,” which is neither the time of Antiochus Epiphanes or the time of the early Roman Empire. It refers to the end of the world immediately before the final judgment. Since the events of verse 40 are picking up from the verses that have gone before, the phrase “the time of the end” fixes the time frame of this section. Again, the first verse of chapter 12 begins, “At that time,” which means “at the time just described.” But what is introduced in chapter 12 is (1) a great persecution, (2) a general resurrection, (3) a final judgment, and (4) the final, eternal blessedness of the saints. The Lord himself took these verses as applying to the last days in his discourse recorded in Matthew 24 and 25. He said, “There will be great distress, unequaled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again” (Matt. 24:21). That is not a reference to the Maccabees but to the time of persecution immediately preceding his return. At this point I want to be particularly cautious. But if what I have said thus far is correct, then it would seem best to regard these verses as a prophecy of the career of the Antichrist and of the final great battle of Armageddon that is described elsewhere in Scripture. I think in particular of Ezekiel 38 and of Revelation 16 and 19. How we handle Daniel 11:36–12:4 will depend in some measure, then, on what we think of the chapters in Ezekiel and Revelation. But taking them together, I find that they refer to a great world war immediately prior to the Lord’s return. Daniel refers to a great battle between the kings of the North and the South. He mentions Egypt particularly as well as Libya and Nubia. Ezekiel also mentions a group of southern nations, and he speaks of a great northern power in terms that made me think of Russia. These engage in a war, which in Revelation is called Armageddon. At the end of this period of great international turmoil, the Lord Jesus Christ returns, subdues his and our enemies, and ushers in a kingdom that shall never be overturned or destroyed. If this is the way these verses are to be taken, then they deal with the same events prophesied at the conclusion of the dream given to Daniel as recorded in chapter 7. There the Antichrist is overthrown, and all “authority, glory and sovereign power” are given to the Son of Man. The text says, “His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed” (Dan. 7:14). **“What Shall the Righteous Do?”** I realize that the interpretation of Daniel 11:36–12:4 that I have given here may be wrong and that some will disagree with it. But in a sense, it does not matter a great deal who these factions are or how this great final battle will turn out—if there is a final battle. I say that because in one sense all we have here is a description of an intensifying of that distress and persecution that Christians have known in all ages and that they have been called upon to endure for the sake of their love for and commitment to Jesus Christ. Even Calvin approaches the passage like this at one point, saying that the church is to be “subject to most numerous and grievous calamities until the advent of Christ, but yet it should feel God’s propitious disposition, enduring its own safety under his aid and protection.” The bearing of these things on our lives is that we are to live for the Lord Jesus Christ and honor him regardless of

the circumstances. Years ago someone preached a sermon on Psalm 11:3, which asks the probing question: “When the foundations are being destroyed, what can the righteous do?” The preacher asked the question and then answered, “Why, go on being righteous, of course.” That is what Daniel is saying in the middle of this chapter in one of my favorite Bible verses, though I prefer it in the King James Version. “The people who know their God will firmly resist him” (Dan. 11:32). Or as the King James Version has it, “The people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.” Daniel is saying that there is always going to be wickedness in this world. There will always be wars and rumors of wars, famine, trouble, persecutions, and distress. He had them in his day. We have them in ours, and they will be present even at the end of this age. Nevertheless, those who know God are to stand firm, live righteous lives, resist evil, and do exploits, as God prospers them.”<sup>42</sup>

### **Conclusion:**

In Daniel 11, the kings of the north and south are fighting for power, pleasure, land and money and it’s a never-ending struggle! Did you notice how the pendulum just went back and forth?

To no surprise, a basic survey of human history will lead you to the same conclusion about the Kingdoms of this world. Mankind is always fighting over power, pleasure, land and money. To that end, this prophecy really tells us nothing new. There is no point in history where humans are not trying to gain at least one, but most of the time the effort is to attain all four, because they are the true gods of this world; that is what’s most valuable in this world! Therefore, whether its governments, corporations or individuals, you can guarantee what’s driving the engine is a pursuit of power, pleasure, land and money; and there are no moral nor ethical guardrails to those pursuits!

Now, here’s the problem, the moment you and I repent and surrender our lives to Christ, we are no longer of this world; that is, we no longer align with the values, priorities and pursuits of this world because we have been redeemed out it! But sadly, just as the Angel told Daniel what the Jewish people would do; we also often find our values, priorities and pursuits aligning with the Kingdoms of this world rather than the Kingdom of Christ.

So let me summarize the difference, that is, four fundamental differences between the values, priorities and pursuits of the Kingdoms of this world and the Kingdom of Christ!

### **The first fundamental difference between the Kingdoms of this world and the Kingdom of Christ is that ...**

- (1) The Kingdom of Christ has no concern with political power, money or territory but rather the proclamation of the Gospel and the salvation of souls! (John 18:36-37)**

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<sup>42</sup> Boice, J. M. (2003). [\*Daniel: an expositional commentary\*](#) (pp. 114–117). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

**Note: 36 Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world."37 Then Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world--to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice. (John 18:36-37)**

### **The second fundamental difference between the Kingdoms of this world and the Kingdom of Christ is that ...**

- (2) The Kingdom of Christ is not concerned with religious rules and rituals but an actual relationship with God that frees us from the curse of sin. (Romans 14:17, John 4:21-24)**
  - A. 17 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. (Romans 14:17)**
  - B. 21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. 22 You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. 23 But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. 24 God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." (John 4:21-24)**

### **The third fundamental difference between the Kingdoms of this world and the Kingdom of Christ is that ...**

- (3) The Kingdom of Christ values submission over dominance, serving over being served, giving over getting, and loving over being loved. (Matthew 5:2-12)**

**Note: 2 And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying: 3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. 5 "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. 6 "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. 7 "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. 8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. 9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. 10 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. (Matthew 5:2-12)**

**The fourth fundamental difference between the Kingdoms of this world and the Kingdom of Christ is that ...**

- (4) The Kingdom of Christ is neither unified nor energized by ethnicity, race, nationality or personal achievements; but by its total allegiance to its King – Jesus!**
- A. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 3:28)**
  - B. 19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, (Ephesians 2:19)**
  - C. 9 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:9-10)**
  - D. 18 For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. 19 Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. 20 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself. (Philippians 3:18-21)**

**Challenge: Which Kingdom do your values, priorities and pursuits say you align with; a Kingdom of this world or the Kingdom of Christ?**

**“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.”  
(Matthew 13:44)**