

TEXTUAL ISSUES DANIEL 11:1-13

Post-Darius Prospects. During the Persian Darius first year of reigning, I supported and protected him by telling him the truth—

Three more kings will succeed Darius, and then a fourth, the richest and most powerful of all.³¹ He will use his wealth and power to stir up everyone against Greece. But then a mighty king of Greece [Alexander the Great (336-323)] will appear and rule as he sees fit over Persia. After his passing, the empire will be distributed into four parts— eventually, it will not go to his progeny, but to others. His empire will be uprooted.

Ptolemy I Soter (323-285 B.C.) of Egypt, king of the South had a commander named Seleucus I Nicator (311-280BC) who became even stronger.³² Eventually, they'll become allies through the daughter of Ptolemy I. She won't keep her power, and his power won't last as well. She and her father and escorts and supporters will be handed over.³³

A family member (Berenice's brother, Ptolemy III Euergetes [246-221BC] of Egypt, who did away with Laodice) will take over; he'll attack the king of the North³⁴ and

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And in the first year of Darius the Mede, I took my stand to support and protect him.

2 "Now then, I tell you the truth: Three more kings will appear in Persia, and then a fourth, who will be far richer than all the others. When he has gained power by his wealth, he will stir up everyone against the kingdom of Greece. 3 Then a mighty king will appear, who will rule with great power and do as he pleases. 4 After he has appeared, his empire will be broken up and parceled out toward the four winds of heaven. It will not go to his descendants, nor will it have the power he exercised, because his empire will be uprooted and given to others.

5 "The king of the South will become strong, but one of his commanders will become even stronger than he and will rule his own kingdom with great power. 6 After some years, they will become allies. The daughter of the king of the South will go to the king of the North to make an alliance, but she will not retain her power, and he and his power [or *power*] will not last. In those days she will be handed over, together with her royal escort and her father [or *child*; see Vulgate & Syriac mss.] and the one who supported her.

7 "One from her family line will arise to take her place. He will attack the forces of the king of the North and enter his fortress [Either Seleucia (see Acts 13:4), which was the port of Antioch, or perhaps Antioch itself]; he will fight against them and be victorious. 8 He will also seize their gods, their metal images and their valuable articles of silver and gold and carry them off to Egypt. For some years he will leave the king of the North alone. 9 Then the king of the North will invade the realm of the king of the South but will retreat to his own country. 10 His sons will prepare for war and assemble a great army, which will sweep on like an irresistible flood and carry the battle as far as his fortress.

11 "Then the king of the South will march out in a rage and fight against the king of the North, who will raise a large army, but it will be defeated. 12 When the army is carried off, the king of the South will be filled with pride and will slaughter many thousands, yet he will not remain triumphant. 13 For the king of the North will muster another army, larger than the first; and after several years, he will advance with a huge army fully equipped.

³¹ Cambyses (530-522BC), Pseudo-Smerdis or Gaumata (522) and Darius I (522-486). *fourth*. Xerxes I (486-465), who attempted to conquer Greece in 480BC (see Esther 1:1).

³² Initially Babylonia, to which he then added extensive territories both east and west.

³³ Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285-246 B.C.) of Egypt. *king of the North*. Antiochus II Theos (261-246) of Syria. A treaty was cemented by the marriage of Berenice to Antiochus. Antiochus's former wife, Laodice, conspired to have Berenice and Antiochus put to death. Berenice's father Ptolemy died at about the same time.

³⁴ Seleucus II Callinicus (246-226BC) of Syria.

win. He'll seize their gods,³⁵ metal images, and silver & gold, and take it all to Egypt. The king of the North will attack the South, but retreat into his own country. A mighty army will be assembled by his sons³⁶ and sweep out like an irresistible flood, carrying the battle to the fortress itself.

Then Ptolemy IV Philopator [221-203BC of Egypt], king of the South, will march out, full of rage and defeat Antiochus III, king of the North, even with Antiochus III's great army. Even with thousands slaughtered,³⁷ the Ptolemy IV will not remain victorious. Antiochus III, king of the North mustered another army, and will advance an even larger army, fully equipped.

Q Why did Daniel report the post-kingdoms of Darius to him? How was this a sign or indication of "support and protection?"

Q To what extent is this valuable information for us, today's readers of Scripture?

TEXTUAL ISSUES DANIEL 11:14-19

The South Fails, Miserably. Ptolemy V Epiphanes [203-181BC] of Egypt had lots of "your own people"³⁸ rebelling, presumably contradicting the vision—but not really. Then, the Ptolemaic general Scopas crushed the rebellion in 200. Antiochus will invade, build siege ramps, and capture the Mediterranean port of Sidon.³⁹

Antiochus will do as he pleases—no one can resist his power. He will take over the Promised Land, even having the power to destroy it. Giving his daughter Cleopatra I in marriage to Ptolemy V [in 197BC], Antiochus formed an alliance with the king of the South, Ptolemy V. Then, turning his attention to Asia Minor [and perhaps Greece as well], Antiochus found a commander⁴⁰ Roman consul Lucius Cornelius Scipio Asiaticus to be a worthy foe; Antiochus was defeated [at Magnesia Asia Minor, 190BC]. He went back to his own country, but was never more to be seen.⁴¹

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"In those times many will rise against the king of the South. The violent men among your own people will rebel in fulfillment of the vision, but without success. 15Then the king of the North will come and build up siege ramps and will capture a fortified city. The forces of the South will be powerless to resist; even their best troops will not have the strength to stand. 16The invader will do as he pleases; no one will be able to stand against him. He will establish himself in the Beautiful Land and will have the power to destroy it. 17He will determine to come with the might of his entire kingdom and will make an alliance with the king of the South. And he will give him a daughter in marriage in order to overthrow the kingdom, but his plans [or *but she*] will not succeed or help him. 18Then he will turn his attention to the coastlands and will take many of them, but a commander will put an end to his insolence and will turn his insolence back upon him. 19After this, he will turn back toward the fortresses of his own country but will stumble and fall, to be seen no more.

³⁵Images of Syrian deities, and also of Egyptian gods that the Persian Cambyses had carried off after conquering Egypt in 525BC.

³⁶Seleucus III Ceraunus (226-223 B.C.) and Antiochus III (the Great) (223-187), sons of Seleucus II. *his fortress.* Ptolemy's fortress at Raphia in southern Palestine.

³⁷The historian Polybius records Antiochus lost nearly 10,000 infantrymen at Raphia.

³⁸Jews who joined the forces of Antiochus.

³⁹Antiochus Epiphanes IV gained control of Palestine by 197BC.

⁴⁰Roman consul Lucius Cornelius Scipio Asiaticus to be a worthy foe; Antiochus was defeated by the Roman consul at Magnesia Asia Minor, 190BC.

⁴¹He died in 187BC while attempting to plunder a temple in Elymais, a province.

Q What do we learn about this account of North & South and “commanders” fighting among and within rebellions (see verse 14)?

Q Again, why did Daniel report about wars far after Darius? How was this a sign or indication of “support and protection?”

TEXTUAL ISSUES DANIEL 11:20-28

The Taxman Cometh. Antiochus the Great’s successor, Seleucus IV Philopator (187-175BC), send out his finance minister, Heliodorus, to maintain the splendor of the North kingdom. It was of little avail for he was destroyed,⁴² and not by anger or battle.

Then it will get worse, Seleucus’ younger brother, Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-164BC), will succeed him by invasion during a “secure” time (in Syria-Palestine), and overcome by intrigue.⁴³ An overwhelming army will be overcome, to say nothing of the prince of the covenant⁴⁴ will be destroyed.

Antiochus through intrigue invades the provinces and distributes the resultant plunder among his supporters. Of course the king of the South (Ptolemy VI) is not happy and goes to war, but plots against Ptolemy creates a stalemate. At the bargaining table, the evil of both kings, Antiochus Epiphanes of the North, and Ptolemy VI of the South, lie to each other, their hearts bent on evil. An end will come, however, at its own appointed time. The

king of the North (Antiochus Epiphanes) will return to his kingdom with great wealth, but a heart bent on defying the Holy Covenant. Taking action against it, he then will return to his own country.

Q What lesson regarding political security can we learn from this description of the fall of Seleucus IV?

Q What do you suppose made the kings of the South and North fail in their peace deliberations?

Q What was the evil perpetrated⁴⁵ by the king of the North (Antiochus Epiphanes)? [No fair reading ahead. ;-)]

⁴² Seleucus was the victim of a conspiracy engineered by Heliodorus, his finance minister.

⁴³ Antiochus seized power while the rightful heir to the throne, the son of Seleucus (later to become Demetrius I), was still very young.

⁴⁴ Either the high priest Onias III, who was murdered in 170BC, or, if the Hebrew for this phrase is translated “confederate prince,” Ptolemy VI Philometor (181-146) of Egypt.

⁴⁵ In 169BC Antiochus plundered the temple in Jerusalem, set up a garrison there and massacred many believers in the city.

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“His successor will send out a tax collector to maintain the royal splendor. In a few years, however, he will be destroyed, yet not in anger or in battle.

21 “He will be succeeded by a contemptible person who has not been given the honor of royalty. He will invade the kingdom when its people feel secure, and he will seize it through intrigue. 22 Then an overwhelming army will be swept away before him; both it and a prince of the covenant will be destroyed. 23 After coming to an agreement with him, he will act deceitfully, and with only a few people he will rise to power. 24 When the richest provinces feel secure, he will invade them and will achieve what neither his fathers nor his forefathers did. He will distribute plunder, loot and wealth among his followers. He will plot the overthrow of fortresses—but only for a time.

25 “With a large army he will stir up his strength and courage against the king of the South. The king of the South will wage war with a large and very powerful army, but he will not be able to stand because of the plots devised against him. 26 Those who eat from the king’s provisions will try to destroy him; his army will be swept away, and many will fall in battle. 27 The two kings, with their hearts bent on evil, will sit at the same table and lie to each other, but to no avail, because an end will still come at the appointed time. 28 The king of the North will return to his own country with great wealth, but his heart will be set against the holy covenant. He will take action against it and then return to his own country.

Evil Flourishes; Believers Embrace Evil. Antiochus will invade the South again, but the outcome will differ. Ships⁴⁶ from Kittim will oppose him, and he'll lose heart, but then express his fury against the Holy Covenant. On his return, he will show favor to those who forsake the Holy Covenant.

Antiochus Epiphanes' army will desecrate the Temple, and abolish the daily sacrifice. Then they will set up the abomination that causes desolation. He will corrupt those who have violated the Covenant by flattering them. But the people who know their God? They will resist him, and firmly so.

The wise [aka the Hasidim] will instruct many, even though for a while they will be killed, burned, captured, or plundered. [See Hebrews 11:36-38.] When they fall, they will receive little help;⁴⁷ hypocrites will join them. Some of the wise will stumble.

The king of the North⁴⁸ will do as he pleases. He will trump his persona above every authority, above every god, and say unbelievable, unheard of things against the God of gods. Yes, he'll be successful until the time of wrath is completed—for what has been determined to happen, will happen. There will be no regard shown to the gods of his fathers, or the one desired by women,⁴⁹ nor any god. He will trump himself above them all.

Instead of them, he will honor a god of fortresses, a god unknown to his ancestors. Gold and silver, precious stones, and costly gifts will be commonplace to this god of fortresses, this god of power. He'll attack mighty fortresses with the help of a foreign god; he will greatly honor those who acknowledge him. He'll make them rulers over many people and will distribute the land at a price [or *land for a reward*].

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"At the appointed time he will invade the South again, but this time the outcome will be different from what it was before. 30 Ships of the western coastlands [Hebrew means "of Kittim"] will oppose him, and he will lose heart. Then he will turn back and vent his fury against the holy covenant. He will return and show favor to those who forsake the holy covenant.

31 "His armed forces will rise up to desecrate the temple fortress and will abolish the daily sacrifice. Then they will set up the abomination that causes desolation. 32 With flattery he will corrupt those who have violated the covenant, but the people who know their God will firmly resist him.

33 "Those who are wise will instruct many, though for a time they will fall by the sword or be burned or captured or plundered. 34 When they fall, they will receive a little help, and many who are not sincere will join them. 35 Some of the wise will stumble, so that they may be refined, purified and made spotless until the time of the end, for it will still come at the appointed time.

36 "The king will do as he pleases. He will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will say unheard-of things against the God of gods. He will be successful until the time of wrath is completed, for what has been determined must take place. 37 He will show no regard for the gods of his fathers or for the one desired by women, nor will he regard any god, but will exalt himself above them all. 38 Instead of them, he will honor a god of fortresses; a god unknown to his fathers he will honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly gifts. 39 He will attack the mightiest fortresses with the help of a foreign god and will greatly honor those who acknowledge him. He will make them rulers over many people and will distribute the land at a price [or *land for a reward*].

⁴⁶ Roman vessels under the command of Popilius Laenas.

⁴⁷ The early successes of the guerrilla uprising (168BC) that originated in Modein, 17 miles northwest of Jerusalem, under the leadership of Mattathias and his son Judas Maccabeus. Three years later, in December of 165BC, the altar of the Temple was rededicated.

⁴⁸ From here to the end of chapter 11 the antichrist (see 7:8; 9:27) is in view. Why the antichrist? The details of this section do not fit what is known of Antiochus Epiphanes. See 2Thessalonians 2:4; also, cf., Revelation 13:5-8.

⁴⁹ Usually interpreted as either Tammuz (see Ezekiel 8:14) or the Messiah.

- Q What could believers have done to defuse/defeat Antiochus Epiphanes' violation and desecration of the Temple and the Holy Covenant?
- Q What was so horrible about the events described in verse 31?
- Q How was Antiochus Epiphanes' approach to other beliefs different than his ancestor, Alexander the Great? So what?

TEXTUAL ISSUES DANIEL 11:40-45

Justice Delayed, but Not Overlooked. The king of the North [no longer speaking about Antiochus Epiphanes] will be attacked by the king of the South. Nonetheless, he will invade many countries, sweeping through them like a flood. He will invade the Promised Land—many countries will fall, but Edom, Moab, and the leaders of Ammon will be spared. He will control many countries—even Egypt will not escape. All their gold and silver and other riches will be controlled by him, with Libyan and Nubians in submission.

But intelligence from the east and west will alarm him; he will set out in a rage to destroy and annihilate many. He will pitch his royal tents between the sea and the Holy Mountain. Yet, he will come to his end⁵⁰—and no one will help him.

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"At the time of the end the king of the South will engage him in battle, and the king of the North will storm out against him with chariots and cavalry and a great fleet of ships. He will invade many countries and sweep through them like a flood. 41He will also invade the Beautiful Land. Many countries will fall, but Edom, Moab and the leaders of Ammon will be delivered from his hand. 42He will extend his power over many countries; Egypt will not escape. 43He will gain control of the treasures of gold and silver and all the riches of Egypt, with the Libyans and Nubians in submission. 44But reports from the east and the north will alarm him, and he will set out in a great rage to destroy and annihilate many. 45He will pitch his royal tents between the seas at [or *the sea and*] the beautiful holy mountain. Yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him.

- Q Who are the folks of Edom, Moab and the leaders of Ammon? Why won't Egypt escape?
- Q Who are in the east and west which could alarm him so much? Why would that put him "in a great rage?"
- Q What is significant about "pitching his tents" between the sea and the "beautiful holy mountain?"
- Q Why would the Lord God retain this record for us?

⁵⁰"The beautiful holy mountain," Jerusalem's temple mount, probably in connection with the battle of Armageddon (see Revelation 16:13-16).