

Daniel 11:1 ...¹ In the first year of Darius the Mede, I arose to be an encouragement and a protection for him.

Remember that chapter and verse divisions were added later for ease of memorization. The angel that is delivering the vision to Daniel is still speaking. First question is ... who is the him? There are two views concerning who the him is ... either Michael or Darius. Since Darius is the nearest antecedent for “him,” Darius is most likely. Second, what is the meaning of “I arose to be an encouragement and a protection for him?” The Hebrew word rendered ‘encouragement’ in the NASB literally means “to fill with courage or strength of purpose.” ‘Protection’ signifies a stronghold or fortress, a protected place or place of safety. The imagery here is that this angel was involved in protecting and giving Darius strength of purpose. What could this mean? It is true that Darius (I think Cyrus) decreed that the Jews could return to Israel and the full cost of rebuilding was to be paid from the royal treasury. The spiritual realm must have been very active as Satan would still have in his purposes the destruction of the nation of Israel to prevent the Messiah from coming.

Outline of the Final Prophecy of Daniel (11:2 –12:13)

11:2	The Kings of Medo-Persia
11:3–4	The Kings of Greece
11:5–20	The Kings of the South (Egypt) and the North (Syria)
11:21–35	Antiochus IV Epiphanes (Nov. 26)
11:36–12:4	The King of the End Time (Dec. 10)
12:5 –12:13	Final Words to Daniel (Dec. 17) with a final summary on Dec. 31

Daniel 11:2 ...² 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.

Here we begin to see why liberal scholars are so hell-bent on discrediting the inspiration of Daniel as predictive prophecy; the words of the angelic interpreter have come true in history ... in remarkable fashion. It is estimated that 135 fulfilled prophecies are contained in Daniel 11.

“Three more kings will arise in Persia,” meaning three more after Cyrus the Great. Those kings were:

Cambyses II (530–522 BC) – He was the son and successor of Cyrus the Great and his mother was Cassandane
 Psuedo-Smerdis (522–521 BC) – was a son of Cyrus the Great and the younger brother of Cambyses II
 Darius I Hystaspes – Darius the Great (521–486 BC) – not Darius the Mede from Daniel 6:1; 11:1.

These are the three kings of Persia that followed Cyrus the Great. The fourth king, which the text implies would gain a tremendous amount of royal wealth, was no doubt Xerxes I (486–464 BC). The angel goes on to say that this fourth king would use those riches to wage war against the Greeks. Walvoord summarizes this well ...

“Xerxes I used his great riches and a period of some four years to gather a great army amounting to hundreds of thousands, one of the largest armies in the ancient world. The expedition that he launched in 480 BC against Greece was disastrous, however, and Xerxes never recovered.¹”

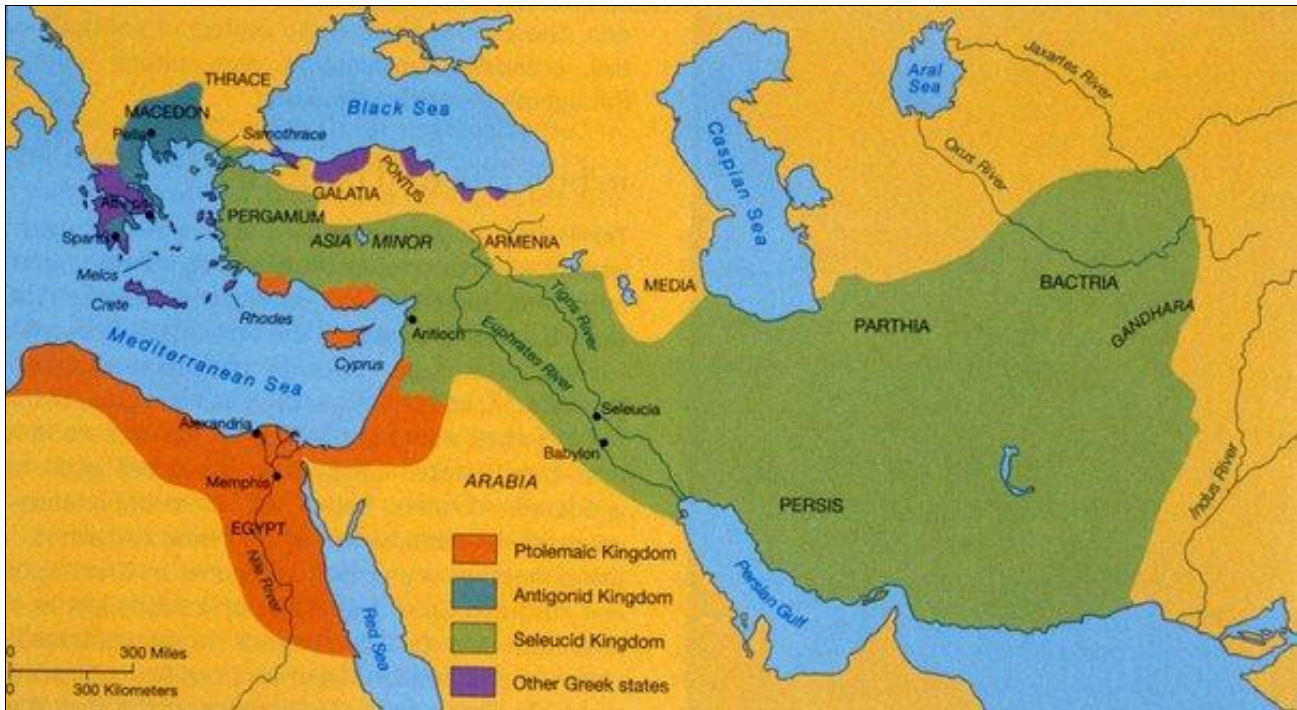
While history records there were several Persian kings after Xerxes, it is apparent that the angel concluded his summary of the Medo-Persian empire with Xerxes, perhaps because Xerxes disastrous military campaign against Greece would be the historical catalyst for the ruler in the next verse.

Daniel 11:3–4 ...³ And a mighty king will arise, and he will rule with great authority and do as he pleases. ⁴ But as soon as he has arisen, his kingdom will be broken up and parceled out toward the four points of the compass, though not to his own

¹ Walvoord, John F., *Daniel*, Moody Publishers, 2012, pp. 329.

descendants, nor according to his authority which he wielded, for his sovereignty will be uprooted and given to others besides them.

This mighty king, the first king of the Greek empire, was Alexander the Great (331–323 BC). Alexander was a military and administrative genius who began to conquer the known world around 334 BC. He was able to subdue a vast territory for his empire. But no sooner did he become ruler of that vast empire that he died at the young age of thirty-two (in 323 BC). Both of Alexander the Great's sons were murdered and did not succeed him. Over time, four of Alexander's generals divided the kingdom into four parts; but none of these rulers ever achieved that same authority and stature as did Alexander the Great.



The four generals who divided up the Greek empire were covered in chapter 7. They were Ptolemy, who took Egypt; Seleucus took Syria, Babylon, and much of the old Medo-Persian empire; Lysimachus took Thrace and western Asia Minor; and Cassander ruled Macedonia and Greece proper. In the above map, notice that Israel is in the Ptolemy section of the split Greek empire. Over the years the Ptolemy and Seleucus kingdoms waged war with each other and Israel was in the middle of those wars and was controlled by these kingdoms at different times. Since the other kingdoms had no relationship to Israel over the next years, they are not mentioned. Daniel 11:5–20 depicts the history (~150 years) of the ongoing conflicts between the two divisions of the Greek empire, the Seleucus empire (Syria) and the Ptolemy empire (Egypt). The rulers of those factions are called the king of the North (Syria) and the king of the South (Egypt).

Daniel 11:5–20 The Kings of the South (Egypt) and the North (Syria)

Daniel 11:5 ... ⁵ Then the king of the South will grow strong, along with *one* of his princes who will gain ascendancy over him and obtain dominion; his domain *will be* a great dominion *indeed*

The king of the south (vs. 5) was Ptolemy I Soter and he ruled Egypt from 323 BC to 285 BC (38 years). During that same time, in 306 BC, Seleucus I Nicator (312–281 BC) was fleeing from Antigonius of Babylon. He formed a temporary alliance with Ptolemy to defeat Antigonius. Seleucus I Nicator went on to gain control of Syria, southern Asia Minor, and much of the defunct Medo-Persian empire; thus, he became more powerful than Ptolemy I.

Daniel 11:6 ... ⁶ After some years they will form an alliance, and the daughter of the king of the South will come to the king of the North to carry out a peaceful arrangement. But she will not retain her position of power, nor will he remain with his power, but she will be given up, along with those who brought her in and the one who sired her as well as he who supported her in *those* times.

Several years later, the two new kings of Egypt and Syria, namely, Ptolemy II Philadelphus and Antiochus II Theos, formed a peace alliance. To help ensure this peace would last, Ptolemy's gave his daughter Berenice to Antiochus. One of the stipulations

was that Antiochus would have to divorce his wife Laodice and marry Berenice, which he did. When Ptolemy passed away a few years later, Antiochus abandoned Berenice and took back his first wife Laodice. However, all was not well in the Antiochus family as Laodice was so bitter over her divorce that she had Antiochus (her husband), Berenice (his wife), Berenice's infant son, and all the Egyptians who came with Berenice assassinated.

Daniel 11:7–8 ... ⁷ But one of the descendants of her line will arise in his place, and he will come against *their* army and enter the fortress of the king of the North, and he will deal with them and display *great* strength. ⁸ Also their gods with their metal images *and* their precious vessels of silver and gold he will take into captivity to Egypt, and he on his part will refrain from *attacking* the king of the North for *some* years."

Berenice's brother, Ptolemy III Euergetes, became king of Egypt in place of his father Ptolemy II. Ptolemy then marched against Syria in revenge for his sister Berenice's murder. Ptolemy III defeated the Syrian army, had Laodice put to death, and took large areas of the Syrian empire. He returned to Egypt with the spoils of war that he had secured. For the next 20 years, the two nations were at peace.

Daniel 11:9 ... ⁹ Then the latter will enter the realm of the king of the South, but will return to his *own* land.

After years of peace, the new king of Syria, Seleucus II, tried to retake part of his kingdom from Ptolemy III but was unsuccessful.

Daniel 11:10 ... ¹⁰ His sons will mobilize and assemble a multitude of great forces; and one of them will keep on coming and overflow and pass through, that he may again wage war up to his *very* fortress."

After Seleucus II Callinicus' failure, his sons, Seleucus III Ceraunus and Antiochus III (The Great) make rapid conquests of Syrian territory that was captured by Ptolemy III, ***including the land of Israel***. He conquered the Egyptian forces all the way to Raphia (south of Israel).

Daniel 11:11–12 ... ¹¹ The king of the South will be enraged and go forth and fight with the king of the North. Then the latter will raise a great multitude, but *that* multitude will be given into the hand of the *former*. ¹² When the multitude is carried away, his heart will be lifted up, and he will cause tens of thousands to fall; yet he will not prevail."

The king of Egypt, now Ptolemy IV Philopater, became angry at Antiochus' advances. He assembled a large army and defeated the forces of Antiochus III at Raphia (just south of Israel) in 217 BC. According to Polybius (Greek historian), Antiochus lost 10,000 soldiers and another 4,000 were captured.

Daniel 11:13–16 ... ¹³ For the king of the North will again raise a greater multitude than the former, and after an interval of some years he will press on with a great army and much equipment. ¹⁴ Now in those times many will rise up against the king of the South; the violent ones among your people will also lift themselves up in order to fulfill the vision, but they will fall down. ¹⁵ Then the king of the North will come, cast up a siege ramp and capture a well-fortified city; and the forces of the South will not stand *their ground*, not even their choicest troops, for there will be no strength to make a stand. ¹⁶ But he who comes against him will do as he pleases, and no one will *be able to* withstand him; he will also stay *for a time* in the Beautiful Land, with destruction in his hand."

In 203 BC Ptolemy IV died and their son, Ptolemy V Epiphanes became king of the south; however, Ptolemy V was only four years old! Antiochus the Great saw this as a great time to strike Egypt, however he did not do this alone. He made an alliance with Philip V of Macedonia, Egyptian rebels who opposed the infant king, and disgruntled Jews who believed Antiochus would be beneficial to the nation of Israel. In 198 BC, Antiochus's forces defeated the forces of Ptolemy V at the battle of Paneas and captured the city of Sidon (modern day Lebanon). Antiochus and the Seleucid empire would now control the Promised Land from here on, setting the stage for the despicable events during the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes.

Daniel 11:17 ... ¹⁷ He will set his face to come with the power of his whole kingdom, bringing with him a proposal of peace which he will put into effect; he will also give him the daughter of women to ruin it. But she will not take a stand *for him* or be on his side."

Antiochus the Great had no desire to wage war against Egypt again. His solution was to offer his daughter Cleopatra (in 197 BC) to the Egyptian king Ptolemy Epiphanes (who was now 10 years old lol). Apparently, Antiochus assumed that his daughter

would work on his behalf against the Egyptians to ruin the southern empire so he could control it eventually. Unfortunately, Cleopatra loved her husband and never supported her father's schemes to weaken Egypt.

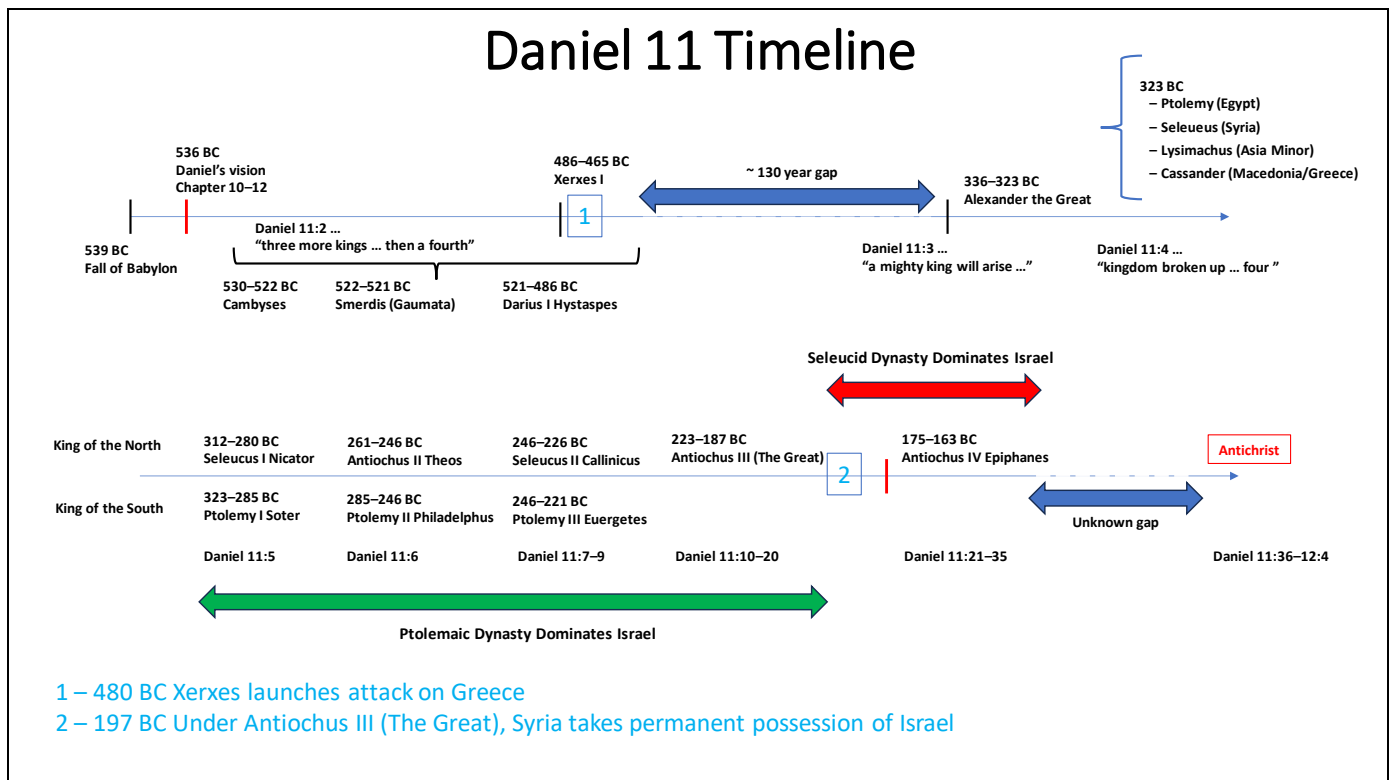
Daniel 11:18–19 ... ¹⁸ Then he will turn his face to the coastlands and capture many. But a commander will put a stop to his scorn against him; moreover, he will repay him for his scorn. ¹⁹ So he will turn his face toward the fortresses of his own land, but he will stumble and fall and be found no more.

One of the interesting things that happened during the reign of Antiochus the Great was his campaigns against the rising power of the Romans to the west. Rome was annoyed at the Syrian expansion into Europe and as he attacked territories in Asia Minor. The Romans intervened and defeated him at Thermopylae and later at Magnesia forcing Antiochus the Great to abandon his quest for more territory and returned home to Syria.

Daniel 11:20 ... ²⁰ Then in his place one will arise who will send an oppressor through the Jewel of his kingdom; yet within a few days he will be shattered, though not in anger nor in battle.

Antiochus eventually died and was replaced by his son, Seleucus IV Philopator. During his reign, the rising kingdom of Rome conquered much of Asia Minor. As part of this submission to Rome, Seleucus IV was required to pay a 1,000-talent tribute to Rome each year. This forced him to levy heavy taxes on his subjects. In order to make this payment easier, he went to Jerusalem and raided the Temple treasury. Shortly after this, he died mysteriously; possibly (probably) by poisoning. This gave opportunity for the next ruler of the Seleucus empire to emerge, Antiochus IV Epiphanes.

Timeline of Daniel 11



For those of you that require more detail concerning these prophecies and events, please consult

1. Walvoord, John F., *Daniel*, Moody Publishers, 2012.
2. Showers, Renald E., *The Most High God, A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, 1982.
3. Miller, Stephen, R., *Daniel*, in *The New American Commentary*, B&H Publishing Group, 1994.
4. https://www.preceptaustin.org/daniel_11_commentary1