

Daniel 11:1-20 — Prophecy and Historical Fulfillment Overview

Daniel Text	Historical Record / Fulfillment
v.1 – “In the first year of Darius the Mede... I arose to support and strengthen him.”	Likely angelic support for God’s purposes during the transition from Babylon to Medo-Persia. Marks the beginning of Persian rule (539 BC).
v.2 – “Three more kings... the fourth will be far richer... he will arouse the whole empire against Greece.”	Persian Kings: 1) Cambyses II, 2) Pseudo-Smerdis (Gaumata), 3) Darius I, 4) Xerxes I (the wealthy king who launched a massive invasion of Greece in 480 BC).
v.3 – “A mighty king will arise... rule with great authority.”	Alexander the Great (336–323 BC). Conquered Persia with unprecedented speed; ruled vast territory.
v.4 – “His kingdom will be broken... divided to the four winds... not to his descendants.”	After Alexander’s death, his empire split among four generals: Cassander, Lysimachus, Seleucus, and Ptolemy. His sons were assassinated and received nothing.
v.5 – “King of the South will grow strong... one of his princes will be stronger.”	Ptolemy I (South) controls Egypt; Seleucus I (North) becomes stronger, establishing the Seleucid Empire.
v.6 – “After some years they will form an alliance... the daughter of the king of the South... she will not retain her position.”	Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy II, marries Antiochus II to seal peace. Antiochus later returns to his first wife, Laodice, who murders him, Berenice, and her child. Alliance collapses.
v.7 – “One from her family line will arise... attack the fortress of the king of the North...”	Ptolemy III (Berenice’s brother) invades the Seleucid territory, defeating Laodice’s faction.
v.8 – “He will carry off their gods... and precious vessels... he will refrain from attacking.”	Ptolemy III returns to Egypt with stolen idols and treasures from Seleucid temples; enjoys years of peace afterward.
v.9 – “Then the king of the North will invade the kingdom of the South but return to his land.”	Seleucus II attempts retaliation but fails and retreats.
vv.10–11 – “His sons will prepare for war... the king of the South will be enraged and fight...”	Sons of Seleucus II (Seleucus III and Antiochus III ‘the Great’) attack Egypt. Egypt’s Ptolemy IV defeats Antiochus III at Raphia (217 BC).

v.12 – “His heart will be lifted up... but he will not remain triumphant.”	Ptolemy IV becomes proud after his victory and declines in power; fails to capitalize on the win.
v.13 – “The king of the North will muster another army after some years...”	Antiochus III later rebuilds his forces with massive strength (strengthened by alliances with Philip of Macedon).
v.14 – “Many will rise up... violent men among your people will rebel...”	Jewish factions in Judea support Antiochus III, hoping for relief from Egyptian rule. Their uprising fails.
v.15 – “King of the North will capture a fortified city... forces of the South will not stand.”	Antiochus III conquers Sidon (battle against Ptolemaic general Scopas). Ptolemy V is unable to resist.
v.16 – “He will stand in the Beautiful Land with destruction in his hand.”	Antiochus III gains control of the Beautiful Land (Israel) as part of his victory over Egypt.
v.17 – “He will set his face to come with the strength of his whole kingdom... give him a daughter... but she will not stand for him.”	Antiochus III tries to weaken Egypt by giving his daughter Cleopatra I to Ptolemy V in marriage. She sides with Egypt instead of her father.
v.18 – “He will turn to the coastlands... but a commander will put an end to his insolence.”	Antiochus III campaigns in Asia Minor but is defeated by the Romans under Lucius Scipio Asiaticus (Battle of Magnesia, 190 BC).
v.19 – “He will turn back toward the fortresses of his own land, but he will stumble and fall.”	Returning home in humiliation, Antiochus III is later killed while plundering a temple to pay Rome.
v.20 – “His successor will send an exactor of tribute... yet within a few days he will be destroyed, but not in anger or battle.”	Seleucus IV Philopator, heavily taxed by Rome, sends Heliodorus to collect temple tribute. Seleucus is soon assassinated mysteriously, not in war.

Daniel 11:21-35 — Prophecy and Historical Fulfillment Overview

Daniel Text	Historical Record / Fulfillment
v.21 – “A despicable person... they will not give him the honor of kingship... he will seize the kingdom through intrigue.”	Antiochus IV Epiphanes becomes king in 175 BC not by royal right but through manipulation after the assassination of Seleucus IV. He is considered illegitimate and “contemptible.”
v.22 – “Overflowing forces will be swept away... the prince of the covenant also will be broken.”	Antiochus removes opposition, including Onias III, the faithful high priest (“prince of the covenant”), who is murdered in 171 BC.
v.23 – “After an alliance is made with him he will practice deception... become strong with a small people.”	Antiochus makes alliances with various power groups, then betrays them. He consolidates power through flattery, bribes, and political deceit.
v.24 – “In a time of security he will enter the richest places... he will distribute plunder, booty, and possessions.”	Antiochus gains loyalty through wealth redistribution, seizing temple funds and lavishing gifts to secure political favor.
vv.25–26 – “He will stir up his power... against the king of the South... but the South will not stand.”	Antiochus invades Egypt (169 BC). Egyptian general Scopas is defeated. Egyptian supporters “fall,” matching the betrayal language.
v.27 – “Both kings will speak lies at the same table... but it will not succeed.”	After battle, Antiochus IV and Ptolemy VI negotiate peace while lying to each other, each planning to double-cross the other.
v.28 – “His heart will be set against the holy covenant... he will return to his land.”	On his return from Egypt, Antiochus attacks Jerusalem (169 BC), kills thousands, and plunders the temple. His rage focuses on the Jews.
v.29 – “At the appointed time he will return and go toward the South, but this time it will not turn out the same.”	Antiochus attempts a second invasion of Egypt (168 BC), but it fails; events shift dramatically from his expectations.
v.30 – “Ships of Kittim will come against him... he will become enraged... he will show regard for those who forsake the covenant.”	Rome (“Kittim”) sends Popilius Laenas, who draws the line in the sand demanding Antiochus retreat. Humiliated, Antiochus vents fury on the Jews and rewards apostate Jews who join him.

v.31 – “Forces from him will desecrate the sanctuary... set up the abomination of desolation.”

In 167 BC, Antiochus: erects an idol of Zeus in the temple, sacrifices a pig, forbids circumcision and Sabbath, burns Scriptures. This is the historical abomination of desolation.

v.32 – “He will corrupt with flattery... but the people who know their God will display strength and take action.”

Many Jews compromise for political gain, but faithful Jews resist. This includes the Maccabean revolt, a movement of courageous fidelity.

v.33 – “Those who have insight will give understanding... they will fall by sword, flame, captivity, and plunder.”

Faithful leaders (like the Hasideans, early Maccabees, and Torah teachers) instruct the people and suffer martyrdom under Antiochus's brutal persecution.

v.34 – “They will receive a little help... many will join them in hypocrisy.”

The Maccabean resistance gains some success (“little help”), but not all who join are sincere. Some join for political advantage.

v.35 – “Some of those who have insight will fall, to refine, purge, and make them pure until the end time.”

Ongoing persecution refines the faithful. The suffering of wise leaders strengthens and purifies Israel. This points beyond Antiochus toward the end-time pattern of persecution and refinement.