

The Book of Daniel / Chapter Eleven (Part Three)

Lesson 43 -Daniel's Apokalypsis

I. REVIEW FROM LAST WEEK

This document provides a detailed analysis of the prophecies outlined in Daniel Chapter 11, focusing on the succession of empires from Persia to Greece and the subsequent division of the Hellenistic world. The source material interprets Daniel 11:2 as a precise prediction of four Persian kings following Cyrus the Great: Cambyses II, Darius I, and culminating in the wealthy and powerful Xerxes I, who would campaign against Greece.

II. THE PROPHETIC FRAMEWORK: NORTH VS. SOUTH

The analysis focuses on a prophecy conveyed to Daniel by a figure described as "the 'one' man." This revelation outlines the future division of Alexander the Great's empire and zeroes in on the subsequent and persistent conflict between two of its successor kingdoms: the northern empire (the Seleucids) and the southern empire (the Ptolemies). A critical element of this prophecy is the position of Israel, which is located directly between these two rival powers and thus caught in the crossfire of their influence and military campaigns.

The Division of Alexander's Empire

Following the reign of Alexander the Great (336-323 BC), his empire was divided among his generals. The analysis identifies the two primary kingdoms relevant to the prophecy in Daniel 11 as:

- **King of the North:** The Seleucid Empire, initially ruled by Seleucus I.
- **King of the South:** The Ptolemaic Empire, initially ruled by Ptolemy I.

III. ANALYSIS OF DANIEL 11:6: A FAILED ALLIANCE

This "mighty king" is identified as Alexander the Great (336-323 B.C.). His life and reign align with the prophetic description:

"...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..." (Daniel 11:6 NASB95).

Historical Interpretation and Fulfillment

The source material maps this prophecy to the events surrounding the end of the Second Syrian War between Ptolemy II Philadelphus (South) and Antiochus II Theos (North).

- **The Alliance:** To secure peace, Ptolemy II offered his daughter, **Berenice**, in marriage to Antiochus II. Antiochus II agreed, divorcing his first wife, **Laodice**, to facilitate the union.
- **The Peaceful Arrangement:** This marriage was intended to be an "equal pact or plan" to unite the two warring kingdoms.

The Failure of the Alliance

- Berenice gave birth to a son for Antiochus II. However, Antiochus II soon abandoned her and their child, returning to his first wife, Laodice, in Ephesus.
- This fulfills the prophecy that "she will not retain her position of power, nor will he remain with his power."

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- The prophecy that she, her attendants, her father ("the one who sired her"), and her supporters would be "given up" is interpreted as pointing to their eventual deaths and the collapse of the political arrangement.

It is noted that Antiochus II held a favorable disposition toward Israel and the Jewish people during his reign.

IV. ANALYSIS OF DANIEL 11:7: RETALIATION AND THE THIRD SYRIAN WAR

This verse is presented as a direct continuation of the narrative, describing the southern kingdom's response to the failed alliance and the murder of its princess.

"...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. 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. Then the latter will enter the realm of the king of the South, but will return to his own land..." (Daniel 11:7 NASB95)

Historical Interpretation and Fulfillment

This prophecy is historically correlated with the actions of Ptolemy III Euergetes and the events of the Third Syrian War.

- **The Descendant Arises:** After Ptolemy II died in 246 BC, Berenice's brother, **Ptolemy III Euergetes**, ascended the throne in Egypt. He is identified as the "descendant of her line."
- **The Catalyst for War:** Antiochus II died suddenly in August 246 BC. His first wife, Laodice, moved swiftly to secure power, proclaiming her son, **Seleucus II Callinicus**, as the new "king of the North." Crucially, Laodice had Berenice and her infant son murdered in Antioch before Ptolemy III could rescue them.
- **Invasion and Great Strength:** In response to his sister's murder, Ptolemy III invaded the Seleucid Empire, initiating the **Third Syrian War**. He successfully swept across Asia Minor, taking control of significant territory, including much of the Israeli land and the Anatolian coast. This fulfilled the prophecy that he would "come against their army" and "display great strength."
- **Spoils of War:** The prophecy's mention of taking "precious vessels of silver and gold" into captivity to Egypt is linked to Ptolemy III's successful campaign.
- **A Failed Counter-Attack:** The final statement—"Then the latter will enter the realm of the king of the South, but will return to his own land"—is interpreted as Seleucus II's subsequent, unsuccessful attempt to invade Ptolemaic lands, which ended in his retreat.

V. KEY HISTORICAL FIGURES AND DYNASTIES

The analysis is grounded in the genealogies and succession of the two primary Hellenistic dynasties.

The Seleucid Dynasty (Kings of the North)	The Ptolemaic Dynasty (Kings of the South)
Seleucus I Nicator (359-281 BC)	Ptolemy I Soter (323-285 BC)
Antiochus I Soter (281-262 BC)	Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285-246 BC)

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Antiochus II Theos (261-246 BC)	Ptolemy III Euergetes (246-222 BC)
Seleucus II Callinicus (246-225 BC)	

Key Figures in the Conflict:

- **Antiochus II Theos:** Third Seleucid king, who married and later abandoned Berenice.
- **Laodice:** First wife of Antiochus II and mother of Seleucus II. Orchestrated the murder of Berenice.
- **Ptolemy II Philadelphus:** Second Ptolemaic king, father of Berenice.
- **Berenice:** Daughter of Ptolemy II, whose marriage and murder were central to the conflict.
- **Ptolemy III Euergetes:** Brother of Berenice, who avenged her death by launching the Third Syrian War.
- **Seleucus II Callinicus:** Son of Antiochus II and Laodice; his reign began with the invasion by Ptolemy III.

VI. LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF KEY PROPHETIC TERMS

Hebrew Word	Transliteration	Meaning	Contextual Significance in Daniel 11
חֵבֶר	ḥāḇar	"Couple," "join," "join together"	Used to describe the political alliance between the North and South, binding them for a common objective.
מִישָׁר	mêšār	"Evenness," "uprightness," "equity"	Describes the peaceful arrangement as an equal pact or plan agreed upon by both parties.
יָלַד	yālad	"Beget," "bear," "born"	Refers to the father of Berenice ("the one who sired her"), emphasizing physical progeny.
מַלְכוּת	malkut	"Kingdom," "reign," "royal"	Speaks of the realm or territory over which a king has influence, specifically the target of Seleucus II's failed invasion.

VI. CONCLUSION

The analysis concludes that the prophecy in Daniel 11 intricately details the back-and-forth conflict between the Seleucid "king of the North" and the Ptolemaic "king of the South." The specific events of the failed marriage alliance between Antiochus II and Berenice, followed by the retaliatory Third Syrian War led by Ptolemy III, are presented as a direct and precise fulfillment of the prophetic text. Throughout this dynastic struggle, Israel remained positioned at the geographic and strategic center, subject to the influence and power of these two great Hellenistic kingdoms.

To Be Continued...