

The Book of Daniel / Chapter Eleven (Part Six)

Lesson 46-Daniel's Apokalypsis

I. REVIEW FROM LAST WEEK

The historical narrative of this period is dominated by the relentless conflict between the Seleucid "king of the North" and the Ptolemaic "king of the South." The reign of Antiochus III the Great represents the apex of this struggle. His ambitious campaigns marked the high point of Seleucid power, while his ultimate and decisive defeat at the hands of Rome initiated its irreversible decline. The protracted Seleucid-Ptolemaic rivalry became the crucible that forged the conditions for Roman hegemony in the East. These events irrevocably shifted the regional balance of power, diminishing the great Hellenistic empires and paving the way for the inexorable ascendancy of a new superpower that would soon become the ultimate authority in the known world.

II. HISTORICAL AND PROPHETIC CONTEXT

Daniel 11 situates the prophecies within the historical turmoil following the death of Alexander the Great (323 BC). His empire was divided among his generals, establishing rival dynasties. The central conflict explored is that between the "King of the North" (the Seleucid Empire, ruling from Syria) and the "King of the South" (the Ptolemaic Kingdom, ruling from Egypt). The analysis provides a chronology of these rulers, correlating them with specific verses in Daniel 11.

Key Rulers of the North and South

Seleucid Rulers (King of the North)	Corresponding Verse	Ptolemaic Rulers (King of the South)	Corresponding Verse
Seleucus I Nicator (305-281 BC)	Daniel 11:5	Ptolemy I Soter (383-282 BC)	Daniel 11:5
Antiochus I Soter (281-262 BC)	Daniel 11:5	Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285-246 BC)	Daniel 11:6
Antiochus II Theos (261-246 BC)	Daniel 11:6	Ptolemy III Euergetes (246-222 BC)	Daniel 11:7-8
Seleucus II Callinicus (246-225 BC)	Daniel 11:7-9	Ptolemy IV Philopator (222/1-205/4 BC)	Daniel 11:11-12, 14
Seleucus III Soter (225-223 BC)	Daniel 11:10	Ptolemy V Epiphanes (205/4-180 BC)	Daniel 11:17
Antiochus III The Great (223-187 BC)	Daniel 11:10-19	Ptolemy VI Philometor (180-145 BC)	Daniel 11:23
Seleucus IV Philopator (187-175 BC)	Daniel 11:20		
Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-164 BC)	Daniel 11:21-24		

III. THE REIGN OF SELEUCUS IV PHILOPATOR (DANIEL 11:20)

Prophetic Text (Daniel 11:20 NASB95): "...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..."

Hebrew Term	Transliteration	Meaning & Context	Occurrences
אָמַד (amad)	amad/awmad	"Arise," "stand," "raise up." In context, one who appears on the scene.	521x in Scripture, 46x in Daniel

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נָגַשׁ (<i>nagas</i>)	<i>nagas/nawgas</i>	"Oppressor," "taskmaster." A person who demands and places undue pressure.	23x in Scripture, 1x in Daniel
הֶדֶר (<i>heder</i>)	<i>heder/hehder</i>	"Jewel," "glory," "splendor." Refers to the most precious or valuable part of the kingdom.	This phrase occurs only once.

Historical Fulfillment

The reign of Seleucus IV is presented as a direct fulfillment of this prophecy:

- **Rise to Power:** He succeeded his father, Antiochus III, as ruler of a kingdom that included Syria, Cilicia, Israel, Mesopotamia, and Persia.
- **The "Oppressor":** His rule was marked by significant financial difficulties stemming from a treaty his father made with the Roman Empire. To raise funds for this debt, Seleucus IV sent his officer, Heliodorus, to Jerusalem.
- **The "Jewel of his Kingdom":** Heliodorus's mission was to confiscate treasures from the Temple in Jerusalem, which is identified as the "Jewel" of the kingdom. This action was reportedly prompted by a temple high priest who had denounced the Jews before Apollonius, a Syrian army commander.
- **Failure and End:** Historical accounts (cited as ii Maccabees 3:7–40) indicate that Heliodorus was unsuccessful in his mission. Ultimately, Seleucus IV was assassinated in 176/5 BC by the very official he had sent, Heliodorus. This event fulfills the prophecy that he would be "shattered, though not in anger nor in battle."

IV. THE RISE OF ANTIOCHUS IV EPIPHANES (DANIEL 11:21-24)

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A. The Illegitimate Accession (Daniel 11:21)

Prophetic Text (Daniel 11:21 NASB95): *"...In his place a despicable person will arise, on whom the honor of kingship has not been conferred, but he will come in a time of tranquility and seize the kingdom by intrigue..."*

• Key Terminology:

- **בָּזָא (*baza*):** "Despicable," "contemptible." Underscores a vile, disgusting person whose character is revealed through actions.

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- **שָׁלוֹן (*salva*):** "Tranquility," "peaceably." A state of peace and calmness.
- **הִלְקִיקוֹת (*hălaqlaqqôṭ*):** "Intrigue." From a root meaning "to divide," it signifies flattery and smooth talk used for personal gain.

Historical Fulfillment:

- After Seleucus IV's assassination, Heliodorus attempted to seize power. Antiochus IV ousted him and took the Seleucid throne for himself.
- This fulfilled the prophecy of one "on whom the honor of kingship has not been conferred," as the throne rightfully belonged to his nephew, Demetrius, who was being held hostage in Rome.
- In a display of self-aggrandizement, he adopted the name "Theos Epiphanes," meaning "god appearing."

B. Consolidation of Power (Daniel 11:22)

Prophetic Text (Daniel 11:22 NASB95): *"...The overflowing forces will be flooded away before him and shattered, and also the prince of the covenant...."*

• Key Terminology:

- **בְּרִית (*berit*):** "Covenant." In this context, it refers to the Mosaic Covenant, and the "prince of the covenant" is interpreted as its custodian or ruler (i.e., the Jewish high priest).

Historical Fulfillment:

- By 173 BC, Antiochus IV had paid the kingdom's debt to Rome in full, likely through heavy taxation.
- To assert dominance over the region of Israel, he conquered and "broke" the Jewish high priest, Onias III, around 172 BC, fulfilling the prophecy of shattering the "prince of the covenant."

C. Deception & Alliance (Daniel 11:23)

Prophetic Text (Daniel 11:23 NASB95): *"...After an alliance is made with him he will practice deception, and he will go up and gain power with a small force of people..."*

Historical Fulfillment:

- In 170 BC, the protectors of the young Egyptian king, Ptolemy VI, demanded the return of Coele-Syria.
- Antiochus IV responded by defeating the Egyptian army. He captured Ptolemy VI but, in an act of "deception," allowed him to remain a figurehead ruler. This move

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E. Unprecedented Strategy (Daniel 11:24)

Prophetic Text (Daniel 11:24 NASB95): *"...In a time of tranquility he will enter the richest parts of the realm, and he will accomplish what his fathers never did, nor his ancestors; he will distribute plunder, booty and possessions among them, and he will devise his schemes against strongholds, but only for a time..."*

Historical Fulfillment:

- During the period of peace following his campaign against Egypt, Antiochus IV began to pillage the wealthy parts of his own kingdom, creating hostility with his subjects.
- He accomplished "what his fathers never did" by fundamentally changing the use of this wealth. Instead of hoarding riches to consolidate his own influence, he distributed the plunder as bribes to influence other leaders.
- This was part of a larger scheme to expand his power base with the ultimate objective of taking complete control of Egypt.

V. CONCLUSION

The analysis concludes by summarizing the deceptive rise of Antiochus IV ("King of the North") as a fulfillment of Daniel 11:21-24. The detailed examination connects specific prophetic statements with historical events, from his illegitimate seizure of the throne to his unique political and military strategies. The source indicates that this narrative is set to continue, focusing on the ensuing back-and-forth conflict between Antiochus IV and Ptolemy VI of Egypt.

To Be Continued...