

The Book of Daniel / Chapter Eleven (Part Four)

Lesson 44 -Daniel's Apokalypsis

I. REVIEW FROM LAST WEEK

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.

II. THE PROPHETIC FRAMEWORK

Following Alexander the Great, his empire was divided among his generals. The two primary powers relevant to the prophecy in Daniel 11 are:

- **King of the North:** Initially ruled by **Seleucus I**, controlling the eastern territories.
- **King of the South:** Initially ruled by **Ptolemy I**, controlling Egypt and the southern region.

III. ANALYSIS OF DANIEL 11:10-12: THE FOURTH SYRIAN WAR

PROPHECY OF THE NORTHERN INVASION (Daniel 11:10-11): *"...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. 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..."*

The text describes the sons of the "king of the North" mobilizing "a multitude of great forces." One son will "overflow and pass through" to wage war against the South. In response, the enraged "king of the South" will fight the North, and the North's "great multitude will be given into the hand of the former."

HISTORICAL CORRELATION:

- **The Sons of the North:** The prophecy refers to the sons of Seleucus II Callinicus: Seleucus III and Antiochus III. After Seleucus III was assassinated in 223 BC, his brother Antiochus III took the throne.
- **Antiochus III's Campaign:** In 219 BC, Antiochus III initiated the Fourth Syrian War (219-216 BC). He successfully gained control of significant territories, including Mediterranean seaports in Turkey, Tyre, Ptolemais, and by 218 BC, Lebanon, Israel, and Phoenicia.
- **The Battle of Raphia:** In 217 BC, the "king of the South," Ptolemy IV, engaged Antiochus III's army. Ptolemy IV's force of 68,000 soldiers confronted Antiochus III's larger army of 75,000. Despite being outnumbered, Ptolemy IV defeated Antiochus III's army, which was almost entirely lost. Antiochus III nearly faced capture and subsequently brokered a peace deal, ceding all his conquered land except for the ports in Turkey.

PROPHECY OF THE KING'S HUBRIS (Daniel 11:12): *"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."*

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HISTORICAL CORRELATION:

- **Ptolemy IV's Character:** After his victory at Raphia in 217 BC, Ptolemy IV is described as having an "incredibly corrupt and debauched" perspective on his rule.
- **Internal Strife and Brutality:** His reign was marked by extreme violence. It is believed he orchestrated the murders of his mother, uncle, and brother to maintain power. After the war, the Egyptian soldiers he had trained for battle grew tired of his poor administration and rose up in the "Great Revolt," a period of guerrilla warfare that lasted from 205 BC to 186 BC and resulted in a great loss of life.
- **Failure to Prevail:** Ptolemy IV's personal life was also tumultuous; he married his sister, Arsinoe III, who bore his successor Ptolemy V in 210 BC. Ptolemy IV died in November 205 BC, but his death was concealed for a full year. About a year later, his wife/sister Arsinoe was murdered, and his young son ascended to a destabilized throne. This internal decay demonstrates how his victory did not lead to lasting success or stability for his empire.

IV. ANALYSIS OF DANIEL 11:13-14: RENEWED CONFLICT AND ISRAEL'S UPRISING

PROPHECY OF THE NORTH'S RETURN (DANIEL 11:13-14): *"...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. 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..."*

The "king of the North" is prophesied to return "after an interval of some years" with a "greater multitude" and "much equipment." During this time, "many will rise up against the king of the South," including "the violent ones among your people," who will act "in order to fulfill the vision, but they will fall down."

HISTORICAL CORRELATION:

- **Antiochus III's Alliance:** Around 203-202 BC, Antiochus III conspired with **Philip V of Macedonia** (reigned 221-179 BC) to invade and plunder the Ptolemaic empire, which was then ruled by the young child-king, Ptolemy V. This represents the North's return with a greater, allied force.
- **Israel's Involvement:** During this period of Ptolemaic weakness, a faction of Jews in Jerusalem, referred to as "Jerusalemmites," joined forces with Antiochus III and Philip V. They were reportedly encouraged by God's promises and believed they were playing an active role in fulfilling divine prophecy.
- **An Unsuccessful Uprising:** As prophesied, this alliance and the uprising of the "Jerusalemmites" were ultimately unsuccessful.

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KEY PROPHETIC TERMINOLOGY

Hebrew Term	Transliteration	Meaning & Context
בֶּן	<i>ben</i>	Literally "sons" or "human being." In this context, it refers to a person's physical lineage or progeny. Used to describe the "violent ones."
חֶזוֹן	<i>chazon</i>	"Vision." This word appears 12 times in the book of Daniel and is mostly used to describe supernatural revelations from God.
כָּשַׁל	<i>kasal/kashawl</i>	"Fall" or "stumble." It can describe a physical fall or be used figuratively to mean being slain or being unsuccessful.

VI. CONCLUSION

The analysis of Daniel Chapter 11 presents a detailed correlation between biblical prophecy and the historical power struggles of the Hellenistic period. The conflict between the Seleucid "king of the North" and the Ptolemaic "king of the South" serves as the backdrop for a series of specific events, from the campaigns of Antiochus III to the internal corruption of Ptolemy IV's reign. Significantly, the prophecy and its corresponding history show Israel transitioning from a passive territory between empires to an active, though unsuccessful, participant in the regional conflict. The provided material concludes at this point, indicating that the analysis is part of an ongoing study.

To Be Continued...