

The Book of Daniel / Chapter Eleven (Part Five)

Lesson 45 -Daniel's Apokalypsis

I. REVIEW FROM LAST WEEK

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.

II. THE PROPHETIC FRAMEWORK: KINGS OF THE NORTH AND SOUTH

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:** The Seleucid Empire, ruling from Syria.
- **King of the South:** The Ptolemaic Kingdom, ruling from Egypt.

Israel, referred to as the "Beautiful Land," is positioned in the center of this power struggle, frequently caught in the crossfire of their competing ambitions for influence and territory. The prophecies in Daniel 11 are interpreted as a detailed account of this back-and-forth conflict, focusing on three specific monarchs: Ptolemy IV and Ptolemy V of the southern dynasty, and Antiochus III of the northern dynasty.

THE REIGN OF ANTIOCHUS ("THE GREAT"): Antiochus III (223-187 BC) is the central figure in the analysis of Daniel 11:15-19. His actions are presented as a direct fulfillment of the prophecies concerning the "king of the North."

CAMPAIGNS AND ALLIANCES (DANIEL 11:15-16): The text of Daniel 11:15-16 states: *"...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... 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."*

This prophecy is linked to the following historical events:

1. **Treaty with Philip V:** After the death of Ptolemy IV in 204 BC, Antiochus III formed a treaty with Philip V of Macedon (Greece). Their goal was to conquer the Ptolemaic empire and divide its territories. Antiochus III was to claim southern Syria, Lycia, Cilicia, and Cyprus.
2. **Conquest of Sidon:** Antiochus III invaded Coele Syria and defeated the Ptolemaic general Scopas at Panion. In 200 BC, he gained control of the "well-fortified city" of Sidon, a historically significant coastal city in Lebanon known for its purple dyes and glassware. This capture is seen as the fulfillment of the "king of the North" capturing a city with excellent protection.
3. **Control of Israel:** During this period, Antiochus III also gained control of Israel, fulfilling the prophecy that he would "stay for a time in the Beautiful Land."

The Book of Daniel / Chapter Eleven (Part Five)

Lesson 45 -Daniel's Apokalypsis

4. **Second Macedonian War:** While Antiochus was securing these territories, Philip V became engaged in the Second Macedonian War (200-196 BC) against Rome. When Philip V sought aid, Antiochus III refused, choosing instead to march against the Ptolemaic empire in Egypt.

THE DIPLOMATIC GAMBIT AND ITS FAILURE (DANIEL 11:17): *Daniel 11:17 continues: "...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..."*

This verse is explained through the following events:

1. **The Peace Treaty (195 AD):** A peace treaty was established, leaving Antiochus III in possession of southern Syria, a region contested for over 100 years. This is viewed as the "proposal of peace."
2. **The Marriage of Cleopatra:** As part of the treaty, Antiochus III gave his daughter, Cleopatra I Syra, in marriage to Ptolemy V of Egypt around 193 BC. The strategic goal was to "ruin" the Ptolemaic kingdom by using his daughter to exert control over the empire. Egypt effectively became a protector state of the Seleucid Empire.
3. **Cleopatra's Defiance:** The prophecy that "she will not take a stand for him" was fulfilled after the death of her husband Ptolemy V in 180 BC. Cleopatra became the regent for her young son, Ptolemy VI. Instead of siding with her Seleucid family, she actively worked with the Roman Empire, a move that protected Egypt from Roman invasion but defied her father's strategic interests.

CONFLICT WITH ROME AND DOWNFALL (DANIEL 11:18-19): The final verses concerning Antiochus III state: *"...Then he will turn his face to the coastlands and capture many. But a commander will put a stop to his scorn against him... So he will turn his face toward the fortresses of his own land, but he will stumble and fall and be found no more..."*

This passage is mapped to Antiochus III's disastrous conflict with Rome:

1. **Expansion to the Aegean:** Antiochus turned his attention to the Aegean coast with the objective of conquering Asia Minor and Greece. His actions put him in direct conflict with Rome, which had declared the Greek regions as free and independent.
2. **The Roman Commander:** At the city of Larissa in 191 BC, a Roman Commander named Claudius put a stop to his advance. Claudius deceived Antiochus by embellishing the number of his troops, building numerous campfires that caused Antiochus to retreat, thinking he was outnumbered. This corresponds to the "commander" who would "put a stop to his scorn."
3. **Decisive Defeats:** Antiochus III's forces suffered a major loss at the Battle of Thermopylae, forcing him to flee to Asia Minor. His naval fleet was subsequently destroyed by an alliance of Rome, Rhodes, and Pergamum. The final blow came at the Battle of Magnesia, where he was definitively defeated.

The Book of Daniel / Chapter Eleven (Part Five)

Lesson 45 -Daniel's Apokalypsis

4. **The Treaty of Apamea (188 BC):** Eager for peace, Antiochus III was forced to accept a humiliating treaty. The terms were severe:
 - Evacuate all soldiers from the Taurus Mountains in Southern Turkey.
 - Surrender his elephants and his entire fleet.
 - Provide hostages to Rome, including his own son, Antiochus IV.
 - Pay a tribute of 15,000 talents (estimated at \$9 million) over 12 years.
5. **Fall from Power:** The treaty reduced his once-massive kingdom to only Syria, Mesopotamia, and Western Iran. In 187 BC, while attempting to collect tribute from a Baal temple near Susa to pay his debt to Rome, he was murdered. This fulfills the prophecy that he would "stumble and fall and be found no more."

The profound impact of Antiochus III's actions and his ultimate defeat set the stage for the subsequent events involving the Seleucid kingdom and the known world.

HISTORICAL TIMELINES AND RULERS

EARLY PROPHETIC AND HISTORICAL TIMELINE

King of the North (Seleucid)	Reign / Verse	King of the South (Ptolemaic)	Reign / Verse
Seleucus I Nicator	Dan 11:5	Ptolemy I Soter	Dan. 11:5
Antiochus I Soter	281-262 BC (Dan. 11:5)	Ptolemy II Philadelphus	285-246 BC (Dan. 11:6)
Antiochus II Theos	261-246 BC (Dan. 11:6)	Ptolemy III Euergetes	246-222 BC (Dan. 11:7-8)
Seleucus II Callinicus	246-225 BC (Dan. 11:7-9)	Ptolemy IV Philopator	222/1-205/4 BC (Dan. 11:11-12, 14)
Seleucus III Soter	225-223 BC (Dan. 11:10)	Ptolemy V Epiphanes	205/4-180 BC (Dan. 11:17)
Antiochus III The Great	223-187 BC (Dan. 11:10-11, 13, 15-19)		

III. CONCLUSION

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.

To Be Continued...