

Detailed Prophecy of History Until the End

Welcome to Harvest Community Church

Series: The Book of Daniel

Text: Daniel 11:1-4

This chapter contains one of the most specifically fulfilled prophecies of the Bible, predicting history over some 375 years, and to the end, with amazing accuracy. The chapter is so **specific**, that many critics who deny supernatural revelation, have insisted that it is history, written after the fact, fraudulently claiming to be prophecy. Some claim that the author of Daniel was simply using an accepted literary form that showed historical events as prophetic events. That they did this to show that God determined the course of history. If this was true it would **undermine** the confidence of the entirety of not only the book of Daniel but all of the Bible.

Verse two speaks of the division of the Greek empire and of four future kings. Three more kings will arise in Persia; the angel told Daniel that there would be three more kings in Persia until a fourth arose. The fourth king would be strong, rich, and **oppose** the realm of Greece. This strong, rich fourth king was fulfilled in the Persian King **Xerxes**. (His Hebrew name was Ahasuerus who made Esther his queen.)

~“*The fourth shall be far richer*” – In fulfillment, there were actually four kings from the time Daniel spoke of until Xerxes, the one who did stir up all against the realm of Greece. Either the angel omitted the current king (Cyrus), looking only to the future, or he ignored King Smerdis of Persia (522-21 B.C.) because he ruled less than one year and was an imposter to the throne.

These visions and insights regarding the future of the Persian and Greek Empires were relevant because each empire **attempted** to wipe out the people of God at some time. The Persian Empire tried to wipe out the Jewish people during the reign of Xerxes, through the plot of Haman (as shown in the Book of Esther). His plot was discovered by Mordecai who persuaded Queen Esther to go to the king for favor knowing that God had raised her up for such a time as this. **Esther 4:14**

The Greek Empire tried to wipe out the Jewish people during the reign of Antiochus IV, when he attempted to kill every Jew who did not renounce their commitment to God and embrace Greek culture.

Remember that all of history revolves around God’s **promises** and covenant with the Jewish people and the nation of Israel. It should be obvious at this point in time and at this point in world history that no other nation has been as fortunate as Israel and that no other people have been as persecuted as the Jewish people. No other people group has ever tried to be completely eliminated by so many other nations throughout history like the Jewish people. The most recent being Nazi Germany during WWII. It has been called for as recently as this year by the nation of Iran (Persians) and the leaders of Hamas. This is a **spiritual** war, if Satan could destroy Israel, then he makes God out to be a liar.

Verses three and four speaks of a **mighty** king who would rise up. This is Alexander the Great. His kingdom would not last and would also be split into four pieces.

This prophecy does not mainly concern Alexander because he did no harm to Jerusalem, though he conquered the general area. The ancient historian Josephus records the interesting arrival of Alexander the Great to Jerusalem and how he was shown the Book of Daniel by the high priest (whom Alexander had previously seen in a vision). Alexander was so impressed that he spared Jerusalem and granted it religious toleration.

After the death of all Alexander's possible heirs, four generals controlled the Greek Empire. The rest of this prophecy focuses on two of the four inheritors of Alexander's realm, and the dynasties they established. Only two are focused on because they constantly fought over the Promised Land because it sat between their centers of power. Remember Cassander took Macedonia, Lysimachus took present day Turkey (Asia Minor), Nicator took Syria, and the remainder of the middle east and Ptolemy took Egypt. It is Nicator and Ptolemy that are focused on next.

Daniel 11:5-9

Remember that Israel is the focal point so the king of the south would be the **Pharaoh** of Egypt which would be Ptolemy I. He had a prince named Seleucus, who rose to power and took dominion over the region of Syria. He became more powerful than his former Egyptian ruler. The Seleucids are identified with the *Kings of the North*, and the Ptolemies were the *Kings of the South*.

Daniel prophesied that these two kings would join forces through an **arranged** marriage. This was fulfilled in the marriage between Antiochus II (of the Seleucids) and Berenice (daughter of Ptolemy II). There was peace for a time because of this marriage, but it was upset when Ptolemy II died.

~*"Shall not retain the power of her authority"* – Once Ptolemy II died, Antiochus II put away Berenice and took back his former wife, Laodice.

~*"Neither he nor his authority shall stand"* – Laodice didn't trust her husband Antiochus II, so she had him poisoned.

~*"She shall be given up, with those who brought her"* – After the murder of Antiochus II, Laodice had Berenice, her infant son, and her attendants killed. After this reign of terror, Laodice set her son (Seleucus II) on the throne of the Syrian dominion.

The angel told Daniel that a **branch** of her roots would come from the South and prevail over the kings of the North. This was fulfilled in the person of Ptolemy III, who was the brother of Berenice (the branch of her roots). Avenging the murder of his sister, Ptolemy III invaded Syria and humbled Seleucus II.

~*"He shall continue more years than the king of the North"* – Ptolemy III lived four years past Seleucus II.

In Verse 8 the angel says that he would make off with much treasure. History tells us that Ptolemy III took four thousand talents of gold, each would be worth \$800,000 today. And 40,000 talents of silver. It is uncanny the **specificity** with which this was prophesied.

Daniel 11:10-28

These next verses describe what would take place as various kings took power in the middle east. This is fascinating to history buffs but tedious to most. What is remarkable is the accuracy and detail given, all the way up to verse 36 which jumps **forward** in time to the antichrist.

Verses 21-35 recount the reign of Antiochus Epiphanies. Verse 21 calls him a **vile** person. The reason for bringing him up again just before the prophetic telling of the antichrist is because Antiochus Epiphanies is history's **prototype** of the last coming world leader.

~*"In his place shall arise a vile person"* – The angel told Daniel that after the brief reign of the former king of the North, the next king would be a vile person. He would not be recognized as royalty but shall take power by **intrigue** (another word for intrigue is conspiracy).

~*"In his place"* – This was fulfilled in the successor of Seleucis III, named Antiochus IV. He did not come to the throne legitimately because it was strongly suspected that he murdered his older brother, the previous king. The other potential heir (the son of Seleucus III) was imprisoned in Rome.

~*"He shall come in **peaceably**"* – Apart from the murder of his older brother, Antiochus IV didn't use terror to gain power. He used flattery, smooth promises and intrigue. He flattered Eumenes, king of Pergamos, and Attalus his brother, and got their assistance. He flattered the Romans and sent ambassadors to court their favor and pay them what was owed in back tribute. He flattered the Syrians and gained them as an ally.

Antiochus IV took the title 'Epiphanes', meaning 'illustrious' or 'God is **manifest**'. Others derisively called him 'Epimanes', meaning **madman**.

~*"He shall stir up his **power**"* – This was fulfilled when Antiochus Epiphanes carried on the feud between the dynasties but pretended friendship and alliance to catch them off guard. Despite massive efforts and epic battles, he did not stand, and his army was swept away. The defeat of Antiochus Epiphanes at his second campaign against Egypt was important because Egypt beat him with the help of **Rome**. At the end of it all, Antiochus Epiphanes and his kingdom were under the dominion of Rome. In a famous battle, the Roman Navy defeated the navy of Antiochus Epiphanes. After the battle, a Roman general drew a circle around Antiochus in the dirt and demanded to know if he would surrender and pay tribute to Rome – and demanded to know before he stepped out of the circle. From that point on there was no doubt - Antiochus Epiphanes took his orders from Rome and was under Roman dominion.

~*"Those who eat of the portion of his delicacies shall destroy him"* – This was fulfilled in the treachery against Antiochus IV by his own counselors.

Daniel 11:29-35

~*"His heart shall be moved against the holy covenant"* – When the vile person (Antiochus) returned to his land, he would attack the land, people, and the **Temple** of Israel. It will be a time of great courage and great treachery among the people of God.

Anytime that God's people experience persecution there are three responses:

- A) courage and standing up for what is right
- B) treachery in standing with the enemy against their own people. We saw this in WWII as people sold out the Jewish people to the Gestapo.
- C) **Indifference** - just go along to get along.

~“*So, he shall do damage and return to his own land*” – This was fulfilled when Antiochus Epiphanes returned from Egypt, bitter from defeat. He vented his **vented** against Jerusalem, which was already shaken because Antiochus sold the office of High Priest and persuaded the Jewish people to conform to Greek culture, forsaking the faith and **traditions** of their fathers.

~“*While returning to his land with great riches*” – Failing in his invasion of Egypt, Antiochus Epiphanes returned home with only great plunder to soothe his wounded pride.

~“*Ships from Cyprus shall come against him*” – This was naval assistance from the Romans, who helped the Egyptians turn back Antiochus Epiphanes.

~“*They shall take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the abomination of desolation*” – Antiochus Epiphanes set up an image of Zeus (Jupiter) at the temple altar. He demanded sacrifice to this image, and later desecrated the temple by sacrificing a pig on it. It was in truth an abomination, which brought a **desolate** condition to the Temple, for now no one would come to worship at all. It is interesting that people had no desire to worship there. Not the Jewish people and not those who said they were loyal to Antiochus.

~“*Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong and do great exploits*” – When Antiochus Epiphanes turned on Jerusalem, the Jewish people were divided. Some forsook their covenant with God and embraced Greek culture. Those who knew their God made a stand for righteousness in the face of incredible persecution. During the end of days, just as in these times, there will be those who turn to wickedness and those who will forsake their covenant with God. There will also be those who know God and serve God and they will not forsake the righteous **word** of God and He will use them to instruct and teach others and do amazing things in the name of Jesus.

Daniel 11:32-33a

~“*For many days they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering*” – In his attack on Jerusalem, Antiochus IV is said to have killed 80,000 Jews, taken 40,000 more as prisoners, and sold another 40,000 as slaves. He also plundered the temple, robbing it of approximately one billion dollars by modern calculations.

~“*Until the time of the end; because it is still for the appointed time*” – This terror could only last for as long as God had **appointed**. God had a purpose even for such persecution and blasphemy. Just as with Antiochus, Nebuchadnezzar, and Hitler the persecution of the Jewish people had a **set** time. This is important as we near talking about the antichrist. God has a certain set time that he will be allowed to rule. These seasons may feel like forever while they are happening, but they are limited to God’s timetable. The time of these horrible rulers always comes to an end.

Daniel 11:36-45

In **dispensational** interpretation the view moves forward at this point to a **revised** Roman Empire. The “**little** horn” of Daniel chapter seven, the antichrist. This passage predicts his end where no one will help him, and Christ will destroy him.

~“*He shall exalt and magnify himself above every god*” – The angel explained to Daniel that this king would blaspheme God and exalt himself until the wrath has been accomplished and what has been determined shall be done.

~“*Above every god*” – Here we shift from what was fulfilled in the Ptolemies and the Selucids to what will be fulfilled in the antichrist, the final world dictator. Daniel was told that this revelation pertained to the latter-day Daniel 10:14 and Daniel 11:36 begins to look more towards this final world dictator, who is sort of a “last days Antiochus Epiphanes.”

We know that everything about this prophecy was not fulfilled during the career of Antiochus Epiphanes. Jesus specifically said the *real* abomination of desolation was still in the future. Matthew 24:15 The Apostle Paul paraphrased Daniel 11:36 in reference to the coming antichrist. 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 Antiochus Epiphanes is important, but mostly as a historical preview of the antichrist. This is why so much space is given to describing the career of one evil man – because he prefigures the ultimate evil man. One of the things that they will have in common is that they will both claim to be God.

~“*He shall regard neither the God of his fathers nor the desire of women*” – Based on this, some Bible scholars believe that the antichrist will be of Jewish descent, and perhaps will also be a homosexual. These things may not be popularly known about the man, but they may be true, nonetheless. It is interesting to note the indoctrination of the homosexual lifestyle that is being taught in our schools from grade school through college. It is also forcefully becoming a part of our entertainment to bring about the acceptance of the normalcy of this and other unnatural so-called life-style choices.

Verses 40-45 describe a final world war against the antichrist who thinks he is ruling the world from Jerusalem.

~“*At the time of the end*” – The angel described to Daniel a confederation of kings coming against this great leader, with a battle in and near the Holy Land. This is the battle of Armageddon.

~“*The King of the South shall attack him; and the king of the North shall come against him like a whirlwind*” – Prophetically speaking, a precise identification of peoples mentioned is difficult. The king of the South may be Egypt or represent the Arab community.

~“*News from the east and the north will trouble him*” – Many describe this as a combined coalition of China and Russia. It is interesting to note that China and Russia have recently held war games together and that both are becoming strategic partners economically and militarily. While the European Union is trying to reassert itself as a “revived” Roman Empire even desiring to build its own standing joint army. Russia and China are doing their best to dominate the world.

The precise points may be cloudy, but the general idea is clear. The end will be marked by great conflict, culminating in the world’s armies gathering in the Promised Land to do final battle.

~“*Yet he shall come to his end, and no one will help him*” – In the end there is no hope for the antichrist or for any of his followers.