

Daniel

"A Remarkable Prophecy"

(Daniel 11:1-35)

The Last Prophecy Given to Daniel: The prophecy given in Chapters 11-12 is long and complex. The first 35 verses of Daniel 11 were prophecy in Daniel's day but are now history. They deal with important but, for the most part, forgotten historical characters with difficult names and complicated relationships. These prophecies fill in the details of previous prophecies the Lord had given to Daniel and were the Answer to his prayer for greater understanding of God's plans for Israel. The focus is on Israel in the last days. (Warren Wiersbe, *Be Resolute*, p157)

The Outline:

Prophecies already fulfilled about:

- A. Persia (11:1-2)
- B. Greece (11:3-4)
- C. Egypt & Syria (11:5-20)
- D. Antiochus Epiphanes & Syria (11:21-35)

2nd Peter 1:19-21:

And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, ²⁰ knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. ²¹ For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Context: Fulfilled prophecy is one of the proofs of the inspiration of the Bible, for only an omniscient God can know future events accurately and direct his servants to write them down. "He reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with him" (Daniel 2:22). It is no surprise, then, that the radical critics have attacked the book of Daniel and especially these chapters, because they claim that nobody could write in advance so many details about so many people and events. Their "scientific conclusion" is that the book of Daniel is a fraud; it was written centuries after these events, and therefore is not a book of prophecy at all. These critics cannot deny the historicity of the events because the records are in the annals of ancient history for all to read and cannot be denied. Therefore, to maintain their "scientific theories," they must deny the reality of prophecy. Those of us who believe in a great God have no problem accepting "the word of prophecy" (2nd Peter 1:19-21). (Warren Wiersbe, *Be Resolute*, p159)

Prophecy about Persia: Gabriel & Michael strengthened Darius the Mede. He had no idea that Satan was trying to control him. The Persian rulers were considerate to the Jews compared to the Babylonians and Satan did not want this to happen. He is the father of antisemitism wherever it exists. Michael and Gabriel saw to it that they won the battle. Gabriel spoke of four subsequent Persian Kings: (1) Cambyses, (2) Pseudo-Smerdis, (3) Darius Hystapes and (4) Xerxes (Ahasuerus) who led an unsuccessful revolt against Greece in 480 BC. Although there were several more Medo-Persian Kings after Xerxes, the prophecy only established the bases for Alexander the Great's attack of Medo-Persia 150 years later. The rise of the Persian empire enabled God to bring his people back into their land (God's Sovereign Plan).

Prophecy about Greece: Alexander the Great rose up to defeat the Persians in 332 BC. Alexander died in 323 BC and his Kingdom went to his four Generals: (1) Ptolemy (South), (2) Seleucus (North), (3) Lysimachus (Western Asia Minor) and (4) Cassander (Macedonia). The rise of the Grecian empire enabled God to bring his Messiah and assist in the spreading of the Gospel message (God's Sovereign Plan).

Prophecy about Egypt & Syria: The nations involved in this prophecy are Syria in the north under the Selucian Dynasty and Egypt in the south under the Ptolemies. The nation of Israel was located between these two warring factions and clearly, they were affected by the conflicts between them. The revelation that Daniel received was prophecy to him but is detailed history to us.

Daniel 11 Verse	Seleucid King (North)	Ptolemy King (South)
5	Seleucus I Nicator	Ptolemy I Soter
6	Antiochus II Theos	Ptolemy II Philadelphus
7-9	Seleucus II Callinicus	Ptolemy III Euergetes
10-19	Antiochus II the Great	Ptolemy IV Philopater

As we review the history of the relationship between Egypt and Syria, and the family relationships among the Seleucids, one can't help seeing that human nature hasn't changed throughout history. The ancient world had just as much intrigue, deception, violence, greed, and war as we do today. The lust for power and wealth drove men and women to violate human rights, break divine laws, and go to any length necessary to get what they wanted. They slaughtered thousands of innocent people, plundered the helpless, and killed their own relatives just to sit on a throne or wear a crown of gold. (Warren Wiersbe, *Be Resolute*, p161-164)

Prophecy about Antiochus Epiphanes & Syria: Antiochus Epiphanes was a wicked man who in his character and activities presented a picture of Antichrist. He was the Little Horn that grew from one of the four horns that replaced the broken horn on the He-Goat (Greece) that attacked the Ram (Medo-Persia) in Daniel's vision of chapter 8. He gave himself the name "Epiphanes," which means glorious one, but Gabriel refers to him as a contemptible, or despicable, person. He was not the rightful heir to the throne but achieved it through guile and intrigue. He was highly successful in his military endeavors and knew how to combine deceptive strategy with brute force. (Warren Wiersbe, *Be Resolute*, p165-166)

Antiochus & The Jews: He waged war and sat down at the negotiating table with Egypt, but he was always motivated by self-gain and never to be trusted. After a particularly difficult battle, in 170 BC he returned to Syria from Egypt and took out his frustration on Israel (Daniel 11:28). On December 14, 168 BC, Antiochus desecrated the temple by erecting an altar to Zeus and offering a pig as a sacrifice. Gabriel refers to this as "The abomination that makes desolate." The future Antichrist will put his own image in the Jewish temple when he breaks his covenant with the Jews in the middle of the 70th week. Antiochus was doing his best to not only exterminate the Jews but also to eliminate the Jewish religion from the earth. He made alliances with Jews who were lackadaisical to the covenant, and they promised to serve him for self-gain. This was a time of testing for the Jews, and they needed to decide who they were going to serve, God or man. There was a small group of Jews who remained faithful to God and stood in opposition to Antiochus and God enabled them to fight back. A Jewish Priest named Mattathias and his five sons led a counterattack and the Jews once again took control of the temple. The temple was purified, and the altar dedicated. The Jews continue to celebrate this event to this today as the annual Feast of Lights (Hanukkah).

Conclusion: Although Gabriel had spoken about leaders who would appear after the fall of Persia, Daniel could see in these events some of the things that would happen at the end of the days. Daniel knew that his people would endure great suffering for their faith, and that some would even fall away from the faith. However, no matter how difficult the times, God always has a faithful remnant, and he will keep his covenant with his people to the very end.

Next Week: "A Remarkable Prophecy – Part 2 (Daniel 11:36-12:13)"