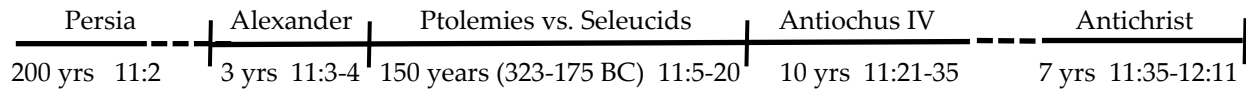


Daniel's Remarkable Prophecies of the Ptolemies and Seleucids

Daniel 11 contains a detailed and yet focused survey of history, told to Daniel before it happens. The relative space given to each show the focus is rushing toward Antiochus IV and then jumps ahead to another king, like Antiochus IV only worse, who arises later at the "time of the end" (11:35-12:11).



⁴ *And as soon as he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken. His kingdom shall be divided toward the four winds...* As soon as Alexander the Great conquers Persia he dies and his empire is divided among four main generals: Cassander takes Greece & Macedonia, Lysimachus takes Asia Minor (Turkey), Seleucis takes the area from Antioch to India and Ptolemy takes Egypt and Mediterranean coastlands. Seleucis and Ptolemy are the kings to the north and south of Israel.

⁶ *the daughter of the king of the south shall come to the king of the north... but she shall be given up.* Ptolemy II gives his daughter Berenice to Antiochus II in marriage, but Antiochus' first wife, Laodice, murders Berenice and her child.

⁷ *"And from a branch from her roots one shall arise...and he shall deal with them and shall prevail...take their gods..."* In 246 BC Berenice's brother, Ptolemy III attacks Syria and kills Laodice. He captures much treasure including Egyptian idols taken from Egypt centuries earlier by the Persians.

⁹ *Then (the king of the north) shall come into the realm of the king of the south but shall return to his own land.* In 242 BC Laodice's son, Seleucus II, attacks Egypt but is unsuccessful.

¹⁰ *His sons shall wage war and assemble a multitude of great forces, which shall keep coming and overflow and pass through...* ¹¹ *Then the king of the south, moved with rage, shall come out and fight against the king of the north.* In 219-217 BC Seleucus' son, Antiochus III, attacks Egypt's forces in Israel and Lebanon with a large army of 62,000 soldiers, 6,000 horseman and 102 elephants. Antiochus takes back all of the land as far south as the Sinai. But, Ptolemy IV is enraged by his garrisons' humiliation and raises an army that, although smaller, surprisingly defeats Antiochus III.

¹³ *the king of the north shall again raise a multitude, greater than the first...* ¹⁴ *In those times many shall rise against the king of the south, and the violent among your own people shall lift themselves up in order to fulfill the vision, but they shall fail.* ¹⁵ *Then the king of the north shall come and throw up siege works and take a well-fortified city. And the forces of the south shall not stand.* Antiochus III attacks Egypt again in 203 BC after Ptolemy IV dies and his heir, Ptolemy V, is only 4 years old. Syria is helped by Macedonia and some Israelites join in, thinking Antiochus will deliver them from being ruled by Egypt. It is this Israelite attempt to achieve deliverance through political alliance where Daniel's own people fail, just as they did centuries earlier. Antiochus ultimately succeeds, with Egypt's army trapped in the fortified city of Sidon where they are captured.

¹⁷ *and he shall bring terms of an agreement and perform them. He shall give him the daughter of women to destroy the kingdom, but it shall not stand or be to his advantage.* Antiochus III makes a treaty with Ptolemy V, and seals it with his daughter in marriage (once Ptolemy is old enough). However, this daughter, an earlier Cleopatra, is more loyal to her husband, Ptolemy V, than to her father and does not help Antiochus advance his interests in Egypt.

¹⁸ *Afterward he shall turn his face to the coastlands and shall capture many of them, but a commander shall put an end to his insolence.* Antiochus III captures many Greek Islands and plans to invade Greece but is stopped by Rome, whose legions defeat him and imposes tribute taxes upon Syria.

²⁰ *Then shall arise in his place one who shall send an exactor of tribute for the glory of the kingdom. But within a few days he shall be broken, neither in anger nor in battle.* ²¹ *In his place shall arise a contemptible person to whom royal majesty has not been given. He shall come in without warning and obtain the kingdom by flatteries.* Antiochus III dies in 187 BC, leaving his son, Seleucus IV with an empty treasury and owing tribute to Rome. He is assassinated in 176 BC. Since his son and heir is held hostage by Rome, his brother, the boy's uncle Antiochus IV, is able to rush from Athens back to Syria and make himself king. Antiochus IV uses his networking, deceit and politically posturing and promises to gain support in his claim to the throne.

²³ *And from the time that an alliance is made with him he shall act deceitfully...* ²⁴ *Without warning he shall come into the richest parts of the province, and he shall do what neither his fathers nor his fathers' fathers have done, scattering among them plunder, spoil, and goods.* Antiochus IV will make and break treaties, even with Egypt which is now ruled by the son of his sister Cleopatra. He will conquer and plunder and redistribute wealth among the poor in order to increase his popular support.

²⁹ *At the time appointed he shall return and come into the south, but it shall not be this time as it was before.* ³⁰ *For ships of Kittim (Cyprus) shall come against him, and he shall be afraid and withdraw, and shall turn back and be enraged and take action against the holy covenant. He shall turn back and pay attention to those who forsake the holy covenant.* Attacking Egypt again in 168 BC, Antiochus IV is met by a Roman envoy, demanding he turn back. He is forced to accept Rome's terms before stepping over a line in the sand drawn around his feet! Infuriated at his humiliation by the Romans, Antiochus IV returns north and takes his rage out on Jerusalem.

³¹ *Forces from him shall appear and profane the temple and fortress, and shall take away the regular burnt offering. And they shall set up the abomination that makes desolate.* ³² *He shall seduce with flattery those who violate the covenant, but the people who know their God shall stand firm and take action.* ³³ *And the wise among the people shall make many understand, though for some days they shall stumble by sword and flame, by captivity and plunder.* Antiochus IV (Antiochus Epiphanes) stops the temple sacrifices and forces priests to offer unclean swine sacrifices at the temple and in every town and village. He sets a statue of Zeus in the Temple, and forces Jews to worship it. These abominable acts defile or make desolate the temple. His name Epiphanes means "God manifest" and he seems to consider himself an incarnation of Zeus. He rewards those who go along and brutalizes those who don't. His defiling acts lead to the Maccabean revolt against Syrian oppressors and their Jewish collaborators. In December 164 BC the decrees are rescinded and the Temple is cleansed. But, this era of harsh tribulation created divisions among the Jewish people and the schisms between traditionalist Pharisees, collaborating Hellenists and political Sadducees which continue into New Testament times.

³⁵ *and some of the wise shall stumble, so that they may be refined, purified, and made white, until the time of the end, for it still awaits the appointed time.* ³⁶ *"And the king shall do as he wills. He shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak astonishing things against the God of gods. He shall prosper till the indignation is accomplished; for what is decreed shall be done.* ³⁷ *He shall pay no attention to the gods of his fathers, or to the one beloved by women. He shall not pay attention to any other god, for he shall magnify himself above all.* Some believe this last section (11:36-12:11) to also refer to Antiochus Epiphanes, but the historical details no longer match up (for instance Antiochus honored Zeus, a god of his fathers). Most conservative scholars see a jump from Antiochus to Antichrist, in the same way that the chapter began by jumping from four Persian kings to Alexander, while skipping many Persian kings in between. This jump ahead in time is signaled by *the time of the end* in 11:35 and 11:40. These details do fit the biblical descriptions of the tribulation period, and the Antichrist's evil antics in the last 3 ½ years of the tribulation before Christ's return.