

The Kingdoms of this World and the Spirit of Antichrist

Daniel 11

By way of review, we have seen that Daniel chapters 1-6 narrate the events of Daniel's life (b. 625 BC – d. 535 BC), and then Daniel chapters 7-12 narrate visions of the world's future as revealed by YHWH. We come to one of the most comprehensive and complete visions of the future of the world (from Daniel's perspective), from 535 BC to the birth of Jesus Christ. These events, prophesied in Daniel 11 are fulfilled beautifully and completely, just as Daniel foresaw. Kingdoms rise and fall, but the King of kings reigns! Trust your Bible! Read it. Study it. Don't leave it on the shelf. It is the foundation of your strong faith.

Daniel 11:2 prophesies the four next Persian kings: Cambyses II (530-522 BC), Gaumata (522 BC), Darius (522-486 BC), and Xerxes (486-465 BC). Other Persian kings followed, but Greece takes the stage.

Daniel 11:2 prophesies that the fourth Persian king, Xerxes, would use his vast resources to arouse Greece. *"He will arouse the whole empire against the realm of Greece"* (v. 2). History records for us that Persian King Xerxes (486-465 BC) took his armies to battle Greece. On **September 28, 480 BC**, in the Battle of Salamis, the united Grecian city states defeated Xerxes and his vast Persian armies.

Daniel 11:3-4 prophesies the rise and fall of Alexander the Great (Greece) and the subsequent division of Alexander's kingdom into four regions. *"And a mighty king will arise, and he will rule with great authority, and do as he pleases. But as soon as he has arisen, his kingdom will be broken up and parceled out toward the four points of the compass, though not to his own descendants"* (vv. 3-4).

History records for us that the Grecian Emperor Alexander the Great (b. 356 BC – d. 323 BC) conquered and ruled the world. Upon his sudden death at the age of 32, there were no heirs to take his throne, so the Grecian kingdom divided into four regions: West (Greece) - General Cassander; East (Asia Minor) - General Lysimachus; **North** (Syria/Babylon), General Seleucus; **South** (Egypt), General Ptolemy. After several decades of internal fighting for control, by 281 BC the East and West Grecian kingdoms had been absorbed into the North and South kingdoms, and so the world was dominated by two Grecian (Hellenistic) Kingdoms - **the North and the South**. For the rest of Daniel 11 (from verse 5 to the end of the chapter), the **"king of the North"** (Seleucid empire) fought **"king of the South"** (Ptolemaic empire).

Daniel 11:5-20 prophesies conflict between the North and the South, a proposed peace treaty between the Seleucids (the Northern kingdom) and the Ptolemies (the Southern kingdom) involving the daughter of the King of the South (a woman named Berenice) to marry Antiochus II Theos. This plan had a flaw: Antiochus II was already married. From 250 BC to 170 BC, there's war between the North and the South, with eventually the North dominating. In 170 BC, a king of the North, Antiochus IV, comes to power.

Daniel 11:2 – *"In his place shall arise a vile person (Antiochus IV)."* The Bible says that this great-grandson of Seleucid desires to "Hellenize" Jerusalem and the Jews. He demands to be called **Antiochus IV Epiphanes** ("God manifest") and places a statue of Zeus in the Temple of Jerusalem.

Daniel 11:22-26 – Antiochus IV makes a move to conquer Egypt (Ptolemy). Judea was in the middle of the kingdom of the North (Seleucid) and the kingdom of the South (Ptolemy).

Daniel 11:27 – *"Both these kings' hearts shall be bent on evil, and they shall speak lies at the same table; but it shall not prosper, for the end will still be at the appointed time."* (The end of the Old Covenant).

Daniel 11:28-30 – “While returning to his land with great riches, **his heart shall be moved against the holy covenant**; so he shall do damage and return to his own land.” Daniel 11:29-30 describes how Antiochus IV Epiphanes marched against Ptolemy, but the Romans (“ships of Kittim”) which came to protect Ptolemy stopped Antiochus with General Gaius Popilius Laenas drawing a circle around Antiochus, telling Epiphanes, “If you step outside this circle toward Alexandria, Rome is your enemy.”

Daniel 11:31 – “And forces shall be mustered by him, and they shall defile the sanctuary fortress; then they shall take away the daily sacrifices, and place there **the abomination of desolation**.” To punish the Jews for idolatry, on his way back to Syria, Antiochus Epiphanes places a statue of Zeus in the Temple. This abomination of desolation of the Temple occurred in December, 167 BC.

Daniel 11:32-35 – “Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong and carry out great exploits.” These four verses describe the battle of the Maccabees against the Greeks. The Maccabees cleansed the Temple in 164 BC and reigned as High Priests and Kings (one Queen) of Israel until Herod the Great removed Antigonus in 37 BC.

Daniel 11:36-45 (Next week) – Is a prophecy of Herod the Great (b. 73 BC – d. 3 BC).

Many people see Daniel 11 discussing the rise of the Antichrist during the last days of this world. In our study of Daniel, I have shown you that “the times of the end” are the days of the end of Israel’s national covenant with God (the Old Covenant) and the inauguration of YHWH’S New Covenant with the world. That said, however, there are similar characteristics in all world leaders and peoples of all nations who rebel against the Creator. There is the “spirit of antichrist” present throughout all the ages of this world.

“And every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world” (I John 4:3).

1. Anti-Christ means “against Christ” Gk. Ἀντίχριστος – Not so much false Christ as against Christ.
2. The word is used 5 times, only in John’s letters: 1 John 2:18 (used twice); 2:22; 4:3; 2 John 1:7.
3. Associated w/ Christological heresy: denying Jesus Christ (either His humanity or His deity).
4. There is future anticipation of antichrist: “You have heard that antichrist is coming” (I John 4:3).
5. There is a present aspect of antichrist: “and now it is already in the world” (I John 4:3).

Summary: *Antichrist is primarily a general spirit of opposition to Jesus Christ and His teachings.*

In light of the truth that all ages face “the spirit of antichrist,” including ours, how should we live?

1. Recognizing the spirit of antichrist, rather than on speculating who THE antichrist might be.
2. Prepare yourself for opposition when you follow Christ and His teachings.
3. Let’s teach our children to live with “the sword in one hand and the trowel in the other.”
4. Always be ready to give an answer to the question “Why do you have hope within you?”

“If I profess with the loudest voice and clearest exposition every portion of the truth of God except precisely that little point which the world and the devil are at that moment attacking, I am not confessing Christ, however boldly I may be professing Christ. Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved, and to be steady on all the battlefields besides, is merely flight and disgrace if he flinches at that point” –**Martin Luther**.