

12. The kings of north and south and the antichrist

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I believe that the studies of the Book of Daniel have been eye opening and reassuring us God's fulfillment of His prophecies. The more I study the prophecies of God, the more I realize that God is real and His Word is beyond incredible.

As I have said before it is a typical style of Hebrew writings that gives a summary of the story first and go over more in details. Chapter 11 is another case in point. Author Daniel is revisiting Antiochus Epiphanes and the antichrist, but this time he gives us more detailed information about the kingdoms around Israel for the expansion of 375 years, between the end of the OT and the beginning of the NT, with amazing accuracy.

The prophecy of this chapter is so detailed and so accurate that the liberal critic will not accept the fact that it was written before it happened. Obviously, this chapter before us is one of the most remarkable passages of prewritten history in the Word of God, and the Greek version of the OT, the Septuagint is the proof against their stupidity.

A. THE DIVISION OF THE GREEK EMPIRE

Daniel 11:2-4 And now I will tell you the truth: Behold, three more kings will arise in Persia, and the fourth shall be far richer than them all; by his strength, through his riches, he shall stir up all against the realm of Greece. 3 Then a mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. 4 And when he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken up and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not among his posterity nor according to his dominion with which he ruled; for his kingdom shall be uprooted, even for others besides these.

Some of you are thinking, "Not this again. We already went over this a few times." Yes, we did. But we need to know about this a little more to understand what is going to happen next.

After the death of Alexander the Great, his kingdom was divided among four of his generals, since Alexander's descendent couldn't take the throne.

Cassander had control over Macedonia and Greece, Lysimachus over Thrace and parts of Asia Minor, Ptolemy over Egypt and Palestine and Seleucus over northern Syria and Mesopotamia. Out of these four empires, we are interested in two: Ptolemy who became the king of the South and Seleucus the king of North.

B. THE KING OF THE SOUTH AND THE KING OF THE NORTH

Daniel 11:5-6 "Also the king of the South shall become strong, as well as one of his princes; and he shall gain power over him and have dominion. His dominion shall be a great dominion. 6 And at the end of some years they shall join forces, for the daughter of the king of the South shall go to the king of the North to make an agreement; but she shall not retain the power of her authority, and neither he nor his authority shall stand; but she shall be given up, with those who brought her, and with him who begot her, and with him who strengthened her in those times.

This chapter 11 can be very confusing in the references of the kings of the South and North. Using the same reference, the king of the South or the king of the North, but they are actually many different kings throughout 375 years period and the one to come. So, stay close with me in this study.

To form an alliance between these two warring families, Ptolemy Philadelphus of Egypt gave his daughter Berenice in marriage to Antiochus Theos of Syria. Antiochus was already married to Laodice, whom he divorced. After two years Ptolemy Philadelphus died, so Antiochus Theos put away Berenice with her son and took back his first wife, Laodice. She, in turn, poisoned Antiochus Theos and ordered the death of Berenice and her son. Then Laodice put her own son, Seleucus Callinicus, on the throne.

C. ONE VENGEANCE LEADS TO ANOTHER

Daniel 11:7-9 But from a branch of her roots one shall arise in his place, who shall come with an army, enter the fortress of the king of the North, and deal with them and prevail. 8 And he shall also carry their gods captive to Egypt, with their princes and their precious articles of silver and gold; and he shall continue more years than the king of the North. 9 Also the king of the North shall come to the kingdom of the king of the South, but shall return to his own land.

Avenging the murder of his sister, Ptolemy III invaded Syria and humbled Seleucus II.

Daniel 11:10-13 However his sons shall stir up strife, and assemble a multitude of great forces; and one shall certainly come and overwhelm and pass through; then he shall return to his fortress and stir up strife. 11 "And the king of the South shall be moved with rage, and go out and fight with him, with the king of the North, who shall muster a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into the hand of his enemy. 12 When he has taken away the multitude, his heart will be lifted up; and he will cast down tens of thousands, but he will not prevail. 13 For the king of the North will return and muster a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come at the end of some years with a great army and much equipment.

There was continual warfare between Egypt and Syria. During this period Israel seemed repeatedly to make the wrong choice and found herself being made captive first by one, then by the other. Israel was located right in the middle of corridor of these two warring empires, so they couldn't have any peace during this time.

Daniel 11:14-17 "Now in those times many shall rise up against the king of the South. Also, violent men of your people shall exalt themselves in fulfillment of the vision, but they shall fall. 15 So the king of the North shall come and build a siege mound, and take a fortified city; and the forces of the South shall not withstand him. Even his choice troops shall have no strength to resist. 16 But he who comes against him shall do according to his own will, and no one shall stand against him. He shall stand in the Glorious Land with destruction in his power. 17 He shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and upright ones with him; thus shall he do. And he shall give him the daughter of women to destroy it; but she shall not stand with him, or be for him.

This was fulfilled when Antiochus the Great gave his daughter Cleopatra to Ptolemy V of Egypt. He did this hoping to gain permanent influence and eventually control in Egypt. To the great disappointment of Antiochus the Great, the plan did not succeed

because Cleopatra wasn't faithful to her Egyptian husband at all. By the way this was not the Cleopatra most famous from ancient history.

Daniel 11:18-20 After this he shall turn his face to the coastlands, and shall take many. But a ruler shall bring the reproach against them to an end; and with the reproach removed, he shall turn back on him. 19 Then he shall turn his face toward the fortress of his own land; but he shall stumble and fall, and not be found. 20 "There shall arise in his place one who imposes taxes on the glorious kingdom; but within a few days he shall be destroyed, but not in anger or in battle.

This was fulfilled when Antiochus the Great turned his attention towards the areas of Asia Minor and Greece. He was helped by Hannibal, the famous general from Carthage. But a Roman General defeated Antiochus in Greece. He returned to his former regions, having lost all that he gained and died shortly after.

D. A VILE PERSON - ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES

Daniel 11:21-27 And in his place shall arise a vile person, to whom they will not give the honor of royalty; but he shall come in peaceably, and seize the kingdom by intrigue. 22 With the force of a flood they shall be swept away from before him and be broken, and also the prince of the covenant. 23 And after the league is made with him he shall act deceitfully, for he shall come up and become strong with a small number of people. 24 He shall enter peaceably, even into the richest places of the province; and he shall do what his fathers have not done, nor his forefathers: he shall disperse among them the plunder, spoil, and riches; and he shall devise his plans against the strongholds, but only for a time. 25 He shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the South with a great army. And the king of the South shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army; but he shall not stand, for they shall devise plans against him. 26 Yes, those who eat of the portion of his delicacies shall destroy him; his army shall be swept away, and many shall fall down slain. 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.

Apart from the murder of his older brother, Antiochus IV didn't use terror to gain power. Rather, he used flattery, smooth promises and intrigue. Antiochus IV took the title "Epiphanes," meaning "illustrious." The Jewish people called him "Epimanes," meaning "madman."

This prophecy is concerned with Antiochus Epiphanes. He is a type of the antichrist, the Man of Sin who is yet to come.

Daniel 11:28-35 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. 29 At the appointed time he shall return and go toward the south; but it shall not be like the former or the latter. 30 For ships from Cyprus shall come against him; therefore he shall be grieved, and return in rage against the holy covenant, and do damage. So he shall return and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant. 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. 32 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. 33 And those of the people who understand shall instruct many; yet for many days

they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering. 34 Now when they fall, they shall be aided with a little help; but many shall join with them by intrigue. 35 And some of those of understanding shall fall, to refine them, purify them, and make them white, until the time of the end; because it is still for the appointed time.

During one of his invasions of Egypt, he was defeated by a Roman general who was helping Egypt. This humiliation so angered Antiochus that he vented his rage on Jerusalem by storming the city and massacring 80,000 men, women and children. In 168 B.C., he returned to Jerusalem and desecrated the sanctuary by sacrificing pigs on the altar and erecting a statue of the Olympian god Zeus.

E. THE ANTICHRIST AND THE WARS IN THE FUTURE

Daniel 11:36 "Then the king shall do according to his own will: he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished; for what has been determined shall be done.

At this point history ends and prophecy begins. Many of you wonder why the Bible allocated so much space for this weasel Antiochus Epiphanes. Because he is important, but mostly as a historical preview of the real antichrist.

The antichrist will do much damage, but he is on a short leash and will only work into God's plan. God's purpose will be accomplished.

I asked you to underline two sentences. They describe the character of the antichrist. He is opposite of Jesus Christ who followed the will of the Father and glorified the Father in heaven. One religion for one world will be his motto, and he is that religion.

Daniel 11:37-39 He shall regard neither the God of his fathers nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall exalt himself above them all. 38 But in their place he shall honor a god of fortresses; and a god which his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and pleasant things. 39 Thus he shall act against the strongest fortresses with a foreign god, which he shall acknowledge, and advance its glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and divide the land for gain.

Based on this, some Bible scholars believe that the antichrist will be of Jewish descent and a homosexual. Could be. But it also can refer to a Protestant, a Roman Catholic, or even a heathen.

Daniel 11:40-45 "At the time of the end the king of the South shall attack him; and the king of the North shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter the countries, overwhelm them, and pass through. 41 He shall also enter the Glorious Land, and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall escape from his hand: Edom, Moab, and the prominent people of Ammon. 42 He shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape. 43 He shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; also the Libyans and Ethiopians shall follow at his heels. 44 But news from the east and the north shall trouble him; therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many. 45 And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and no one will help him.

Obviously the kingdom of the South is Egypt. The king of the North would be Russia. Russia will take the place of the Seleucidae dynasty, and I believe she is the one that mentioned as Gog in Ezekiel 38 and 39. From the very beginning of their invasion to Israel, the king of the North will be eliminated as God moves in judgment upon that nation.

Now some of you are wondering how this thing is going to play with what is happening now in the Middle East. Everything. According to the Book of Ezekiel, we don't find Iraq's involvement in the attack against Israel. That became obvious with the current situation with our troops in that area.

I need to give you a quick background reference to explain what is going on and how it is going to open up in the biblical prophecies for the future.

F. THE CURRENT CRISIS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

1) The players - The Sunni and Shiite Muslims

The Sunni Muslims believed that some kind of "election" or group consensus by Muslim leaders or elders was supposed to pick the right person to lead Islam into the next phase. Muhammad's father-in-law, Abu Bakr, came out the winner.

The Shiite Muslims believed that Muhammad had already picked his successor before he died – his cousin, Ali. "Shiite" means "Followers of Ali", or "the Party of Ali".

This occurred in 632 A.D. and they have been fighting with each others ever since. The Sunnis make up the largest group of Muslims. The Shiites are mostly concentrated in the relatively smaller regions of Iran, Syria, parts of Lebanon and Gaza.

Although they are the smaller group, the Shiites are strategically located to cause Israel and the world an awful lot of trouble. Both groups believe in the Koran and follow Muhammad. They are committed to the worldwide spread of Islam with the hope that eventually all nations would be subject to Islamic Law. Both hate Israel and the U.S.

Today there are 1.2 billion Muslims worldwide with the largest percentage 15% living in Indonesia and 12% in Pakistan.

2) The player - Hezbollah

Hezbollah, which means "Party of God," was founded in Lebanon in 1982, many say by the late Iranian leader Ayatollah Khomeini, as a response to Israel's invasion of Lebanon. They are naturally radical Shiite Muslims.

The group's aim is to destroy Israel and to create a fundamentalist Islamic state in Lebanon. The group is believed to be responsible for hundreds of attacks against Israel, and for organizing the 1983 bombing of the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut that resulted in the deaths of 241 Americans.

Hezbollah gets most of its arms through Syria, where it has a headquarters, and the group freely admits it gets much of its funding from Iran. Diplomatic sources say the funding includes \$20 million to \$40 million in money and weapons a month.

3) The players - Iran and Syria

Iran will be the key player in the coming war. They are literally at the verge of getting nuclear bombs and they support the majority of the terrorist activities around the world one form or another. Iran will be the one that becomes a comrade-in-arms with Russia for the future invasion to Israel.

For Iran, whether Hezbollah survives or not, it's only their first chapter in the play to come to a decisive advantage in the Muslim world. Their goals are that first is the battle against Israel and the United States, then against Sunni Islam.

Syria has made themselves a shuttle point for Hezbollah, both for the benefit of Iran, as well as fulfilling their own interests in the region of Lebanon.

Saddam Hussein planned to attack Israel with weapons of mass destruction and to avoid the international eyes, he hid these weapons by flying two 747 airplanes to Syria making a total of 56 trips under the false pretense of helping Syria during the time of their natural disaster when a dam broke near Damascus.

However, Syria will not be in a big role in the invasion to Israel during the Tribulation time according to Ezekiel 38 and 39.

4) The player - Israel

When Israel tried a cease fire for 48 hrs. recently, there came the largest barrage of missiles from Hezbollah since the conflict began. Israel has a right to not merely convince Hezbollah to stop launching the rockets, but to drive out the terrorist organization completely from southern Lebanon.

The UN has shown questionable strength and resolution up to this point in dealing with Hezbollah, Syria and Iran. So Israel has taken matters into their own hands.

Israel is fighting for her life. And there will be no lasting peace until the nations of Iran, Syria, Lebanon and the surrounding regions acknowledge Israel's right to exist.

Some of you are thinking, "I don't think I am gonna go on the Israel Tour next year." Relax, according to the Scripture, Israel will remain in their land, but others won't. Besides, this war will not happen until first the rapture happens and then nearly at the end of the seven years of the Tribulation.

5) The player - Russia

Russia has been keeping herself very low under the radar screen of the international media while many people are busy looking at Afghanistan, Iraq, terrorism around the world. She is building up her strength up again for an opportune time.

So, are we on the verge of WWIII? No, France hasn't given up yet. I don't believe we will enter into WWIII without the rapture for the born-again Christians.

F. APPLICATIONS

- 1) The antichrist will do much damage, but he is on a short leash and will only work into God's plan. God's purpose will be accomplished.
- 2) Realizing that the end is approaching fast, we should consistently strive to live godly lives.
- 3) Knowing that God's judgment is coming , we should diligently seek to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ to others.