

Deciphering Daniel 11
Key to the Hanukkah Story

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Published by Hungry Hearts Ministries
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First Ed—Dec. 2016

Introduction

The Prophet Daniel lived from the late 600s to mid-500s BC. The prophecies he received are preached around the world every week. One particular prophecy, Daniel chapter 11, is so accurate that it is actually a proof of the Bible's authenticity. It is a proof of God's existence. It is considered the most detailed chapter in Bible prophecy.

In this power-packed chapter, we learn the history of powerful kingdoms from the 500s AD all the way until 164 BC. The fulfillment of this chapter is the basis of the celebration of Hanukkah.

After you have read this booklet, you will have a greater understanding of what Hanukkah is and why we celebrate it. This chapter even foretells of events that have yet to happen! These events will unfold as we approach the return of Jesus Christ.

In John 10:22-35, Jesus actually kept Hanukkah. We know He only did that which He saw the Father do (John 5:17-19). This means that this celebration has significance for us today and for the future!

In this booklet, we will examine how the most detailed prophetic chapter in the Bible unfurled in history and explain the future fulfillment that has yet to take place!

Chart 1: Order of Kingdoms Assyria to Medo-Persia

Assyrian Kingdom

626 BC – Assyrian Kingdom begins rapid decline after the death of King Assurbanipal

Babylonian Empire

606 BC - Nabopolassar, King of Babylon, completely conquers Assyria by destroying Nineveh. Nabopolassars son, Nebuchadnezzar, serves in the army.

605 BC – Nebuchadnezzar leads the Babylonian army and drives Pharaoh Neco from the Euphrates all the way back to Egypt.

605/604 BC - Captives are taken from Jerusalem to Babylon.
Daniel is among them.

604 BC – Nabopolassar dies and Nebuchadnezzar becomes king

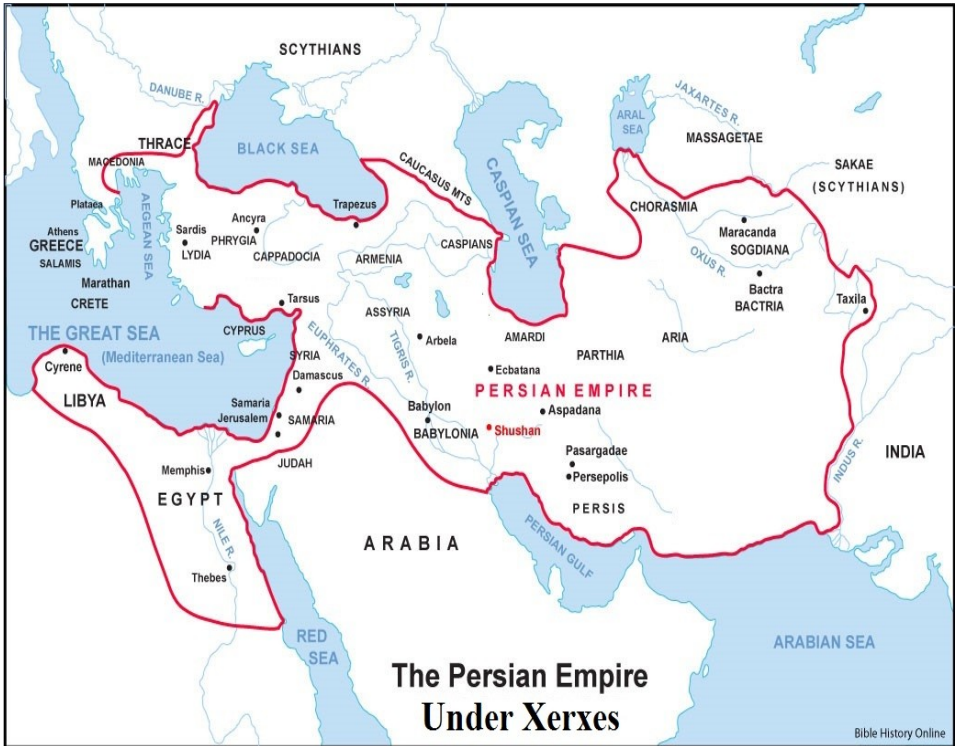
586 BC - Nebuchadnezzar completely destroys Jerusalem and the Temple of God

Medo-Persian Empire

539 BC - Cyrus the Mede conquers Babylon

539/538 BC – Daniel prophesies Daniel 11

Map 1—Medo-Persian Empire Under King Xerxes



Chapter 1

Background to Daniel 11

To understand Daniel chapter 11, we must first understand Daniel's life in general and Daniel Chapter 10.

“1 In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. 2 And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god. 3 And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes; 4 Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans. 5 And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king. 6 Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah...” (Daniel 1:1-6a)

The righteous king Josiah was killed in battle against Pharaoh Neco in the year 609 BC. His son Jehoahaz was taken and placed on the throne in place of his father. After a short reign of only three months, Pharaoh Neco put him in chains and took him to Egypt. He then placed a different son of Josiah, Eliakim, on the throne of Judah. He also changed Eliakim's name to Jehoiakim. This occurred around 609/608 BC.

Three years into Jehoiakim's reign, Nebuchadnezzar defeated Pharaoh Neco in battle. He drove him all the way back into Egypt. He also attacked Jerusalem and took treasures and people back to Babylon. Among the people he took was a young man named Daniel.

Daniel was taken captive around 605 BC. He was taken to Babylon and trained in every kind of learning. He was a man of wisdom who had the tongue of the learned. Daniel's captivity was turned into an opportunity to exalt God of Israel time and time again.

Before we can get into Daniel 11, we must first understand Daniel chapter 10.

Daniel 10:1, 18-20 and Daniel 11:1

"In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, a revelation was given to Daniel (who was called Belteshazzar). Its message was true and it concerned a great war. The understanding of the message came to him in a vision....¹⁸ Again the one who looked like a man touched me and gave me strength. ¹⁹ "Do not be afraid, you who are highly esteemed," he said. "Peace! Be strong now; be strong." When he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, "Speak, my lord, since you have given me strength." ²⁰ So he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? Soon I will return to fight against the prince of Persia, and when I go, the prince of Greece will come; ²¹ but first I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. (No one supports me against them except Michael, your prince. 11:1 And in the first year of Darius the Mede, I took my stand to support and protect him.)

Cyrus conquered the Babylonians in 539 BC. This means Daniel receives this prophecy 3 years later in 536 BC. While Persia was the main ruling power at this time, we learn from Daniel 10 that the prince of Greece was coming. Greece's prominence among world powers was not far away. This transition will be seen early in Daniel 11.

One apologetic issue that must be resolved is in Daniel 11:1. This verse tells us that the angel who God sent to reveal this to Daniel started opposing the Prince of Persia in the first year of Darius the Mede. Some skeptics will say that Darius was not king until 522 BC, which is many years after this event.

However, we must realize that the Aramaic word for Darius is *dareyavesh*. It is a Persian word which means “lord.” It was also a throne name for the kings of Persia. Therefore, it can be used as a title or as a specific name. Daniel 11:1 refers to Cyrus, who was definitely a Mede by descent, whereas many of the other later kings were Persian.

Now that we have laid a foundation of understanding, we can transition to Daniel 11!

Chart 2: Medo-Persian Empire to Alexander

Medo-Persian Empire

530 BC – Cyrus dies, his son Cambyses comes to the throne

522 BC – Cambyses dies; Bardiya, a usurper, rules for 7 months

522/521 BC – Darius kills Bardiya and becomes king

486 BC – Darius dies and his son Xerxes becomes king

480/479 BC - Xerxes launches an invasion into Greece and is defeated

465 BC - Artaxerxes I becomes king

424 BC – Darius II becomes king

404 BC - Artaxerxes II becomes king

358 BC – Artaxerxes III becomes king

337 BC – Arses becomes king

335 BC – Darius III becomes king

Greco-Macedonian Empire

331/330 BC – Alexander the Great defeats the armies of Darius III

324 BC – Alexander the Great completes his conquest into the western parts of India

323 BC – Alexander the Great dies of illness

Chapter 2

Past Fulfillment: Daniel 11:2-35

²“Now then, I tell you the truth: Three more kings will arise in Persia, and then a fourth, who will be far richer than all the others. When he has gained power by his wealth, he will stir up everyone against the kingdom of Greece. ³Then a mighty king will arise, who will rule with great power and do as he pleases. ⁴After he has arisen, his empire will be broken up and parceled out toward the four winds of heaven. It will not go to his descendants, nor will it have the power he exercised, because his empire will be uprooted and given to others.

From Daniel 10, we learned that Cyrus was the king at the time Daniel received the vision. The prophecy tells us that from that time there would be three kings followed by a fourth king. This fourth king would have tremendous wealth and have the power to invade Greece. I have made the succession of kings below:

530 BC – Cyrus dies, his son **Cambyses** comes to the throne

522 BC – Cambyses dies; **Bardiya**, a usurper, rules for 7 months

522/521 BC – **Darius** kills Bardiya and comes to power

486 BC – Darius dies and his son **Xerxes** comes to power

The fourth king from Cyrus was Xerxes. He was among the mightiest the Persians ever had, ranking right beside Cyrus himself. One of his early acts as king was to no longer bear the title “King of Babel.” Instead, he called himself the “king of kings” or “king of countries.”

As God foretold, Xerxes invested a great deal of money and manpower preparing for an invasion of Greece. These preparations took place over a three year period (483-480 BC). He dug a canal through the isthmus of the peninsula of Mount Athos. He stored provisions in Thrace (mainland Greece) ahead of the invasion.

Furthermore, he built two bridges across the Hellenspont, which we call the Dardenelles today. It is the narrow strip of water that separates mainland Europe from Asia Minor (modern day Turkey).

He strengthened his hand further by allying himself with Carthage to prevent the Greeks from appealing to their superior naval assistance. He also allied himself with smaller Greek cities such as Thessaly, Thebes, and Argos. Men from all the provinces of the Medo-Persian Empire were summoned to be a part of this attack. Herodotus estimates his armies to be as large as 5 million men, but modern scholars have trimmed that down to around 370,000 (still a staggering number for ancient times). Between 700 and 800 vessels participated in this great expedition.

As you can see, he spared no expense. Xerxes stirred up everyone he could against Greece, going as far to hinder potential alliances the Greeks could make to bolster their efforts. This was foretold by God.

The expedition was launched in 480 BC. Xerxes had considerable success at first, defeating the Greeks. One of the early battles was at Thermopylae, in which as many as a thousand Greeks (300 Spartans with as many as 800 other Greeks) held off the vast army of Xerxes for a few days. The great city of Athens was conquered and subsequently pillaged. The Persians left a swath of destruction, even burning down Greek temples. The Greeks seemed to be on the verge of defeat.

In their darkest hour, the Greeks won a stunning victory at Salamis. This great naval victory saw a large portion of the Persian fleet destroyed in a storm. Xerxes was informed by an advisor not to sail into the storm, but he vainly ignored the warning. This defeat caused much of his army to retreat. Some forces were left behind, but later defeated in 479.

In verse 4, the Bible suddenly jumps to a man who is called a great king whose empire would be broken up into four sections.

This great king is Alexander the Great. Why this jump?

The answer is two fold. First of all, the Persian empire was never the same after this massive defeat suffered by Xerxes. The Persians would never again invade Greece.

Secondly, the damage caused by Xerxes was never forgotten by the Greeks. Alexander the Great used this as a motivating factor to topple the Persian Empire when he became king.

To illustrate the decline of Persia and how Greece became united under Alexander, we will look more into history. The great defeat of Xerxes in 480/479 financially crippled the empire. From this point forward, the power of the Greeks would increase. While the Persians showed strength at times, they would never be the same.

In 465, Xerxes was assassinated. Disorder immediately erupted in the Empire. The border with India was lost. Small battles took place on the outskirts of the empire. From 465 to 330s BC, Egypt revolted 4 or 5 times. There were continual revolts in Syria and Asia Minor (both areas had significant Greek populations). The court was moved to Ecbatana, but they had to pay for safe passage.

Despite this decline, the Greeks still sought the favor of Persian kings for over 100 years after Xerxes. In the Peloponnesian war (431-403 BC), Sparta allied with Persia to defeat the Athenian alliance. Persia and Sparta disagreed about the spoils of this war, and so they went to war against each other. Persia then joined the other Greek city-states to decisively defeat Sparta.

During the time from Xerxes to 336 BC, Persia had suzerainty over Greece. It was not that Persia was so strong, but that Greece was so divided. Artaxerxes III mustered enough strength to re-establish the old boundaries of the Empire as they had under Xerxes. However, the power of Persia was still just a façade.

The Persians often used Greek soldiers in their armies as mercenaries. Without Greek assistance, the Persians were powerless.

The rulers of Persia during this period kept Greece under dominion not by the threat of arms, but with policy. They kept the Greeks divided against each other and were able to maneuver the Greeks into taking action that best suited the interest of the Medo-Persian Empire.

In the 330s BC, Philip, King of Macedon, decided to expand his empire. Artaxerxes III tried to ally with Greek towns to oppose his expansion, but it did not work. In 338, Artaxerxes III died. Philip was able to form the league of Corinth, which united all of Greece together with Maceodnia. In 336, he dispatched his army to Asia Minor to begin an invasion of the Medo-Persian Empire. He was assassinated not long after beginning this venture.

His son, Alexander, took over the army (he would later become known as Alexander the Great). This young man was personally tutored by Aristotle. He was thoroughly trained in the Greek culture and he sought to spread it as far as possible. He commenced a tremendous campaign to overthrow the Medo-Persian Empire. After five years and many victories, he overthrew the last ruler of this empire, Darius III. The Greco-Macedonian Empire was firmly established in 330/331 BC.

One memory that drove him and other Macedonian/Greek soldiers was the terrible invasion of Xerxes over 100 years before. Remembering how the Persians burned the city of Athens and Greek temples, Alexander burned the Persian palace at Persepolis. By 324, he had conquered all the way into India. His military successes are among the greatest in history, often fighting against larger armies. He had an empire that stretched from Macedonia down into Egypt and all the way across the Middle East into India. Along the way, he planted some 70 or more Greek colonies. In 323 he died.

Daniel 11:4

⁴After he has arisen, his empire will be broken up and parceled out toward the four winds of heaven. It will not go to his descendants, nor will it have the power he exercised, because

his empire will be uprooted and given to others.

As God told us ahead of time, his empire was not given to any of his children. From his death in 323 there was continual warfare for control of the empire. There was a slight break in the fighting in 301 AD when four of his generals conquered Antigonus to gain control of the entire territory Alexander conquered. They divided it amongst themselves.

These four generals were: Cassander, Lysimachus, Ptolemy, and Seleucus. Cassander ruled the European portion of the empire, which encompassed Macedonia and Greece. Lysimachus controlled mostly Asia Minor (modern day turkey). Ptolemy controlled Egypt and Palestine. Seleucus controlled the rest of the Empire out to India. There is a map below illustrating this. (Map

Map 2—4 divisions of Alexander the Great's Empire (301 BC)



2)

As we transition into the rest of the chapter, we find that God only deals with the King of the South and the King of the North. Why is this?

The partition between the four generals did not last long. Around 294 BC, Demetrius (son of Antigonus) killed the son of Cassander. He took over the Macedonian throne.

In 288 BC, Lysimachus drove Demetrius out of Macedonia, thus controlling the European part of the empire. This only left three of the original generals in power. In 281 BC, Seleucus defeated Lysimachus and thus controlled his portion. Not long after this, Seleucus was assassinated by Ptolemy Ceraunus and lost the throne of Macedonia. Seleucus' son, Antiochus I, ruled the remaining portion of the empire that stretched from Asia Minor to India.

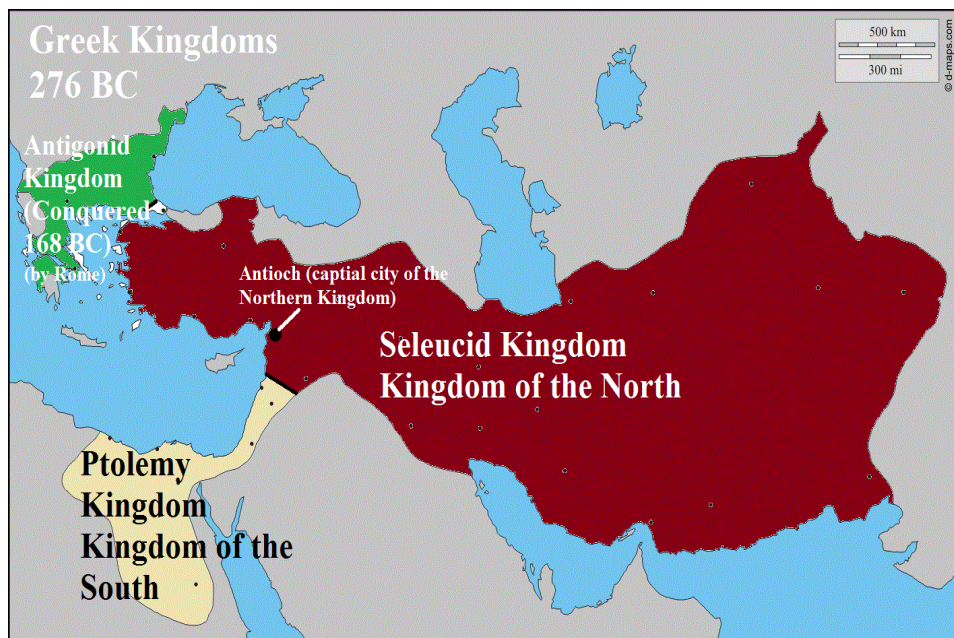
In 279 BC, the Gauls invaded the Balkans and Ptolemy Ceraunus was killed in action. By 276, Antigonus Gonatas (son of Demetrius, the son of the first Antigonus) won Macedonia back.

In the span of 20 years from the original partition of the empire, 3 major powers remained: the Macedonian/Greek portion (which became known as the Antigonid empire), the Egyptian portion (which became known as the Ptolamaic empire), and the final portion which runs from near Greece all the way to India (known as the Seleucid empire). There is a map on the previous page showing this (Map 3).

The rest of Daniel 11 addresses the interaction between two of these empires: the Seleucid empire (in the north) and the Ptolemy empire (in the south). Why does the action focus on these two nations?

Wedge between them is the Promised Land that God gave to the descendants of Abraham. All nations in the Bible are only mentioned as they come into contact with the children of Israel and

Map 3—3 Greek Kingdoms (276 BC)



Judah. Both empires claimed this special land, and both would fight for it. The rest of Daniel 11 addresses their interactions with each other as it relates to this special land.

The Jewish people had been released to return to the Promised Land under Persian rule, so the fighting between these two kingdoms would affect them greatly.

Now that we have laid the foundation properly, things will flow much faster for the rest of this chapter. Now, let's continue to verse 5!

Daniel 11:5

“5 The king of the South will become strong, but one of his commanders will become even stronger than he and will rule his own kingdom with great power.”

To understand this verse, we have to backtrack a little bit. In 321 BC, a partition was given whereby Seleucus was given the prov-

ince of Babylonia. Antigonus made himself master of all the eastern provinces. Seleucus was threatened by this and fled to Egypt under the protection of Ptolemy. Here Seleucus served in the army of the Ptolemy, commanding the troops in the Aegean Sea.

Once Antigonus was defeated in 301, Seleucus ruled from the boundary of Asia Minor all the way to the border of India. After more war, he ruled Asia Minor as well. Ptolemy is the King of the South who becomes strong, but Seleucus, who served under him, became even stronger (though he was assassinated in 281).

Daniel 11:6

“After some years, they will become allies. The daughter of the king of the South will go to the king of the North to make an alliance, but she will not retain her power, and he and his power will not last. In those days she will be betrayed, together with her royal escort and her father and the one who supported her.”

Some time passes by before anything significant happened between the two Kingdoms. In 250 BC, a treaty was made between Antiochus II and Ptolemy II. As a part of this arrangement, Antiochus left his first wife Laodice and married Ptolemy’s daughter Bernice. In 246, Antiochus changed his mind and returned to Laodice, leaving behind Bernice and their infant son.

Laodice poisoned Antiochus II and proclaimed her son Seleucus II king. As foretold, the alliance did not work. Bernice did not retain her power. Not only did Antiochus perish, but Bernice, her son, and even her father (Ptolemy II) died.

Daniel 11:7-8a

⁷“One from her family line will arise to take her place. He will attack the forces of the king of the North and enter his fortress; he will fight against them and be victorious. ⁸He will also seize their gods, their metal images and their valuable articles of silver and gold and carry them off to Egypt.

Bernice's brother, Ptolemy III, came to the rule of the Egyptian Kingdom. He immediately invaded the Seleucid kingdom and conquered portions of Mesopotamia on the East, including parts of modern-day Syria and Iran. On the west, His fleets conquered the coasts of Asia Minor.

According to archeological findings, Ptolemy III brought back to Egypt 40,000 talents of silver and 2,500 statues of the gods. This earned him the titled Euergetes, which means "well-doer."

At this time, Seleucus II only ruled the interior of Asia Minor. After Ptolemy withdrew his armies to Egypt, Seleucus II reconquered most of the eastern provinces he originally lost.

Daniel 11:8b-9

For some years he will leave the king of the North alone. ⁹Then the king of the North will invade the realm of the king of the South but will retreat to his own country.

Ptolemy III reached a peace with Seleucus II. From this point, Ptolemy did not actively engage Seleucus in a war. There were some minor skirmishes. In 223, Antiochus III then came to power in the Kingdom of the North. Early on in his reign (223/222 BC), he was convinced by one of his ministers to try and re-take Palestine. This was a foolish decision, and Antiochus was soundly defeated and forced to retreat.

Daniel 11:10-12

¹⁰His sons will prepare for war and assemble a great army, which will sweep on like an irresistible flood and carry the battle as far as his fortress. ¹¹"Then the king of the South will march out in a rage and fight against the king of the North, who will raise a large army, but it will be defeated. ¹²When the army is carried off, the king of the South will be filled with pride and will slaughter many thousands, yet he will not remain triumphant.

In 219, Antiochus III launched another attack to retake Palestine. He conquered to near the borders of Egypt, but he was defeated

by Ptolemy IV at Raphia in 217. Once again, Antiochus was forced to withdraw back to the north of Lebanon. Once again, he was unable to re-take Palestine or defeat Egypt completely.

Verse 12 may have multiple meanings. The first meaning has to do with the Jewish people. After the victory, Ptolemy IV decided that he would enter into the Temple of God in Jerusalem. He became stunned the moment he tried to do so, and thus was enraged. He returned to Egypt and sought to put thousands of Jewish people in Alexandria and Egypt to death. It is believed that many if not all of these Jewish people escaped his grasp. He thus was not triumphant in his efforts.

Secondly, Ptolemy IV had to deal with uprisings and rebellions over his operations in the war of 219-217. He heavily armed the Egyptian people, which was met with stiff resistance. He dealt with rebellions for the next thirty years.

Daniel 11:13-16

¹³ For the king of the North will muster another army, larger than the first; and after several years, he will advance with a huge army fully equipped. ¹⁴“In those times many will rise against the king of the South. Those who are violent among your own people will rebel in fulfillment of the vision, but without success. ¹⁵ Then the king of the North will come and build up siege ramps and will capture a fortified city. The forces of the South will be powerless to resist; even their best troops will not have the strength to stand. ¹⁶ The invader will do as he pleases; no one will be able to stand against him. He will establish himself in the Beautiful Land and will have the power to destroy it.

Towards the end of his reign, Antiochus III formed a treaty with Philip V of Macedonia to conquer and divide up the Kingdom of the South between them. Philip V launched an attack against the overseas possessions of the Greek-Egyptian Kingdom. He was able to take a few territories. Meanwhile, Antiochus launched an attack against the Ptolemies in the Promised Land.

In 198, Palestine was once again invaded by Antiochus. This King of the North was determined to take the Promised Land for his own purposes. He took possession of this special land by defeating Egyptian forces at the battle of Panium. He also re-took coastal lands in Asia minor that were previously lost. No one stood in the way of his conquests.

In Jerusalem, there were some who favored Greek-Egyptian rule over the rule of the Syrian Greeks. Those who favored the Egyptian, Southern Kingdom, were called Tobiads. Over the years, they opposed Antiochus.

After Antiochus' stunning victory, he entered Jerusalem as the victor. Most of the city then threw their support to him and helped him overthrow the pro-Egyptian forces, which fortified themselves in the citadel of the city. As God foretold, "Those who are violent among your own people will rebel in fulfillment of the vision, but without success." It was pre-determined by God that the forces of Antiochus III would gain control of the Promised Land. The efforts of some in Jerusalem to oppose him were futile.

Antiochus then had the power to destroy the Promised Land, but some historical sources note that he was very kind to the Jewish people, even lending them the resources to make sacrifices to the one True God.

Daniel 11:17

¹⁷ He will determine to come with the might of his entire kingdom and will make an alliance with the king of the South. And he will give him a daughter in marriage in order to overthrow the kingdom, but his plans will not succeed or help him.

At the conclusion of his conquest, Antiochus III formed a treaty of peace with Ptolemy V. Along with this treaty, Antiochus gave his daughter Cleopatra as his wife (193 BC). He wanted to use this alliance for either a future conquest of Egypt or to gain an

ally in future wars. Neither strategy worked. Antiochus would later fight against the Romans, but the Greek-Egyptian forces sided with Rome.

Daniel 11:18-19

¹⁸Then he will turn his attention to the coastlands and will take many of them, but a commander will put an end to his insolence and will turn his insolence back on him. ¹⁹After this, he will turn back toward the fortresses of his own country but will stumble and fall, to be seen no more.

At the conclusion of the peace treaty with Ptolemy V, Antiochus III strengthened his position in mainland Greece. He invaded Greece and took several territories. However, he was routed by the Roman General Manius Acilius Glabrio.

Antiochus was forced to flee back to Asia Minor. The Romans then invaded and drove back Antiochus into Syria. In the peace of 188 BC, Antiochus ceded most of Asia Minor to the Romans. Antiochus died in 187 looting a temple while on a new expedition.

Daniel 11:20

“His successor will send out a tax collector to maintain the royal splendor. In a few years, however, he will be destroyed, yet not in anger or in battle.”

The kingdom of the north then fell upon Seleucus IV Philopator (187-176). He controlled from Syria down to the end of Palestine and all the way over to the Western part of Iran. He was not able to accomplish much because the Romans exacted a heavy tribute upon them for the previous war fought against Antiochus III. Heliodorus was the treasurer for Seleucus IV.

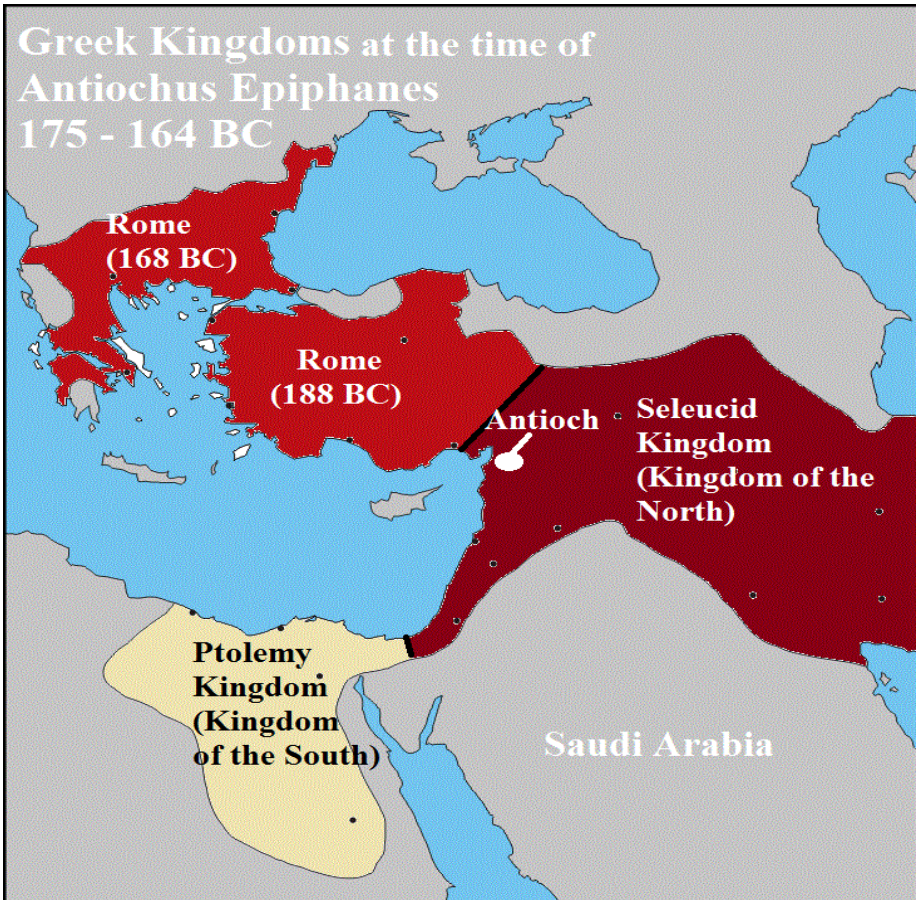
He was sent out to raise money to help offset the heavy tribute owed to the Romans. He went so far as to even try and take money from the Temple in Jerusalem. He was unsuccessful. Seleucus IV was eventually assassinated by Heliodorus.

Daniel 11:21

“He will be succeeded by a contemptible person who has not been given the honor of royalty. He will invade the kingdom when its people feel secure, and he will seize it through intrigue.

Just before his death, Seleucus IV had sent his son Demetrius to Rome as a hostage in exchange for Antiochus IV (younger brother of Seleucus IV). After Seleucus IV was murdered, his son Demetrius was heir to the throne. Instead of negotiating with Rome for the rightful heir, Antiochus (Epiphanes) seized the throne for himself. I have a map below showing the two Greek

Map 4: 2 Greek Kingdoms at the time of Antiochus IV



Kingdoms at the time Antiochus becomes King of the North.

Daniel 11:22-28

²² Then an overwhelming army will be swept away before him; both it and a prince of the covenant will be destroyed. ²³ After coming to an agreement with him, he will act deceitfully, and with only a few people he will rise to power.

²⁴ When the richest provinces feel secure, he will invade them and will achieve what neither his fathers nor his forefathers did. He will distribute plunder, loot and wealth among his followers. He will plot the overthrow of fortresses—but only for a time.

²⁵ “With a large army he will stir up his strength and courage against the king of the South. The king of the South will wage war with a large and very powerful army, but he will not be able to stand because of the plots devised against him. ²⁶ Those who eat from the king’s provisions will try to destroy him; his army will be swept away, and many will fall in battle.

²⁷ The two kings, with their hearts bent on evil, will sit at the same table and lie to each other, but to no avail, because an end will still come at the appointed time. ²⁸ The king of the North will return to his own country with great wealth, but his heart will be set against the holy covenant. He will take action against it and then return to his own country.

These next few verses deserve some attention from the history of the priesthood in Jerusalem. Onias III was the high priest at the time Antiochus IV became king. The Tobiads, who had originally supported Egypt, now supported Antiochus. In 173, the Tobiads caused Onias III to be deposed from the priesthood. Their choice for that position was Jason. Jason bribed Antiochus for his favor in this endeavor. Jason was pro-Greek and tried to Hellenize the Jewish people. To Hellenize means to influence someone to apply the principles of Greek thought, culture, and even religious observations. Jason built a gymnasium in Jerusalem. He also sent

money to have sacrifices made to Hercules at the Greek Olympic games.

In 171 BC, Jason was overthrown by Menelaus, who paid even more to receive the position of high priest. Menelaus even went as far as to take vessels from the Temple of God and give them to Syrian nobles in return for their support. Onias III exposed this betrayal, but was compelled to go into hiding. He was subsequently killed. This was the prince of the Covenant who was killed as discussed in Daniel 11:22.

About this same time, in 170 BC, the regents for Ptolemy VI (Philometer) tried to re-conquer the Promised Land for their Kingdom. They were defeated by Antiochus IV. Antiochus went even farther by invading Egypt and subduing nearly the entirety of it (the exception being the northern part, including Alexandria). He proclaimed himself the king of Egypt, now controlling two kingdoms.

Ptomoley Philometer fled and was captured. The people then installed Ptolomey Philometer's brother, Ptolemy Eurgetes as the king in Alexandria. As Antiochus left, he made a secret agreement with Ptolomey Philometer that they would be joint kings with Cleopatra as the queen. However, Antiochus lied as he never intended to allow Philometer to rule on his own. He would later try to invade. Likewise, Philometer lied to Antiochus as he appealed to Rome in assistance to break free from the Seleucid yoke. This will become apparent in a few paragraphs.

Antiochus IV tried to conquer the city of Alexandria, but was unable to do so. The Romans pressured him to leave.

Meanwhile, in Jerusalem, false tidings came that Antiochus had been slain in battle. The people pushed Meneluas out of office and the Tobiad party fled down to Egypt. Upon his return back from Egypt, Antiochus stopped at Jerusalem to reinstate Menelaus. This evil king entered the Temple precincts. He plundered the treasury and carried away the holy temple furniture, including

the golden table of showbread.
Double check this!

The people were enraged at this, and they firmly resisted any policies of hellenization by the Tobiads. After defiling the temple, Antiochus returned back to his capital, Antioch.

Daniel 11:29-31

²⁹ “At the appointed time he will invade the South again, but this time the outcome will be different from what it was before. ³⁰ Ships of the western coastlands will oppose him, and he will lose heart. Then he will turn back and vent his fury against the holy covenant. He will return and show favor to those who forsake the holy covenant. ³¹ “His armed forces will rise up to desecrate the temple fortress and will abolish the daily sacrifice. Then they will set up the abomination that causes desolation.

In 168 BC, Antiochus tried to invade Egypt again. Upon entering Egypt, he was confronted by an envoy from Rome. The Romans forbade him from continuing in Egypt. Outraged, he left Egypt and embarked on a journey towards the Promised Land.

In Judea, he immediately sent one of his generals, Apollonius into the country side to kill and pillage. As he arrived in Jerusalem, he presented himself in a peaceable and friendly manner. After gaining access into the city, his forces quickly turned on the Jewish people. They killed many of the men and sold women into slavery.

He entered into the Temple precincts and sacrificed a pig on the altar of sacrifice. He spread this pig's blood into the Holy Place and Most Holy Place. He ordered a statue of Zeus erected in the Temple courtyards and had his own likeness carved into it. Jerusalem was turned into a Greek colony. The city was fortified to fend off any invaders.

Antiochus IV then underwent a policy to stamp out the spiritual

practices of the Holy Bible. He outlawed Sabbath-keeping, celebrating the festivals of Leviticus 23, circumcision, reading of the Torah, and other Jewish practices. Anyone caught honoring these practices were put to death.

Daniel 11:32-35

³² With flattery he will corrupt those who have violated the covenant, but the people who know their God will firmly resist him. ³³ “Those who are wise will instruct many, though for a time they will fall by the sword or be burned or captured or plundered. ³⁴ When they fall, they will receive a little help, and many who are not sincere will join them. ³⁵ Some of the wise will stumble, so that they may be refined, purified and made spotless until the time of the end, for it will still come at the appointed time.”

Antiochus IV sent his officers with troops out into the country side to compel all the natives to sacrifice to idols and eat swine’s flesh. Those who would agree to betray their faith were promised positions of authority with the king and even riches. The Jewish people suffered martyrdom by the hundreds and even thousands.

There were those that refused to bow down to the Greek gods and stood firm for their God. A priest named Mattathias Maccabeus lived in Modien. The king’s soldiers under their officer Apelles erected an altar to their heathen god. Because Mattathias was an influential person in the city, they compelled him to sacrifice to the Greek gods.

The officer said to Mattathias: “You are a leader, honored and great in this city, and supported by sons and brothers. Now be the first to come and do what the king commands, as all the Gentiles and the men of Judah and those that are left in Jerusalem have done. Then you and your sons will be numbered among the friends of the king and you and your sons will be honored with silver, gold, and many gifts.”

Matthathias replied, “Even if all the nations that live under the rule

of the king obey him, and have chosen to do his commandments, departing each one from the religion of his fathers, yet I and my sons and my brothers will live according to the covenant of our fathers. Far be it from us to desert the law and the ordinances.” (2 Maccabees 2:16-21)

One Jewish man stepped forward to fulfill the command. Mattathias, full of holy zeal like that of Phineas, ran up to the man and killed him. He destroyed the altar and killed the Greek officer compelling them to sacrifice. He and his family abandoned all that they owned and fled into the mountains and deserts. Others joined them, including those who had already hidden themselves.

One of the issues that occurred is that some of the Jewish people refused to fight on the Sabbath. The Greeks took advantage of this and slaughtered many. Mattathias commanded his men to fight rather than be killed on the Sabbath.

Many were instructed in this time in how to fight, but also how to obey God without compromise. As aforementioned, Mattathias taught his men to fight on the Sabbath. It is also believed that the *haftarah* portion developed at this time. The Jewish people were banned from reading the Torah, so they resorted to reading from the prophets instead.

From their isolated places, the Maccabees engaged the Greeks in guerilla warfare. They would attack small bands of Greeks on the outskirts of Judea and even punish Jewish traitors who turned against them.

Mattathias died in 166 BC and his son Judas, continued the fight. Antiochus himself was busy fighting the Parthians to try and intervene in the matter personally. He sent his generals to quell the uprising, which engaged the Maccabees in more traditional field battles. One battle after another saw the Jewish people defeat the larger, well-trained and better equipped armies of Antiochus. The Jewish people were often outnumbered as much as 15 to 1!

In 165 BC, the forces of Antiochus were defeated and retreated out of the area. The Jewish people then entered into Jerusalem and re-took the Temple Mount. The first act of the Jewish people was to rededicate the Temple of God.

They broke down the old altar of sacrifice and had a new one built with stones that had never been defiled with a human tool, just as God commanded (Ex. 20:24-26). They cleansed the inner courts from uncleanness. They began to burn incense once again on the altar of incense and placed bread on the table of shewbread.

Before they could rekindle the menorah, they needed oil. After searching the Temple, most of the oil they found was unclean. They did find one small jar with the high priest's seal that was unopened and also clean. Though it was only enough oil for one day, they lit the menorah on faith. They started the Temple rededication on the 25th of Kislev, which was the exact same day three years before it had been defiled by Antiochus.

They celebrated for eight days, patterning this celebration after Tabernacles, which they had not been allowed to celebrate the previous three years. Amazingly enough, the menorah oil lasted the entire eight days! In 164 BC, Antiochus died of a mental illness.

From that time forth, the Hanukkah celebration was established as an eight day celebration starting on the 25th of Kislev. In the time of Josephus, this festival was called the festivals of lights. Great emphasis was placed upon every individual to light a lamp in honor of this great victory.

Hanukkah today is to remind us of the miraculous working of God in our lives. Recall how God has empowered you to overcome; how he delivered you from situations that were impossible by human standards. It is a reminder that we are never to allow the plans of man or of *hasatan* to interfere in letting our light shine.

Chart 3
Ptolemy Dynasty
(Through 164 BC)

Ptolemaic Empire
(Kingdom of the South)

Ptolemy I Soter Lagi (305-285 BC)

Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285 – 247 BC) gave daughter
Bernice to Antiochus II

Ptolemy III Euergetes (247-222 BC)

Ptolemy IV Philopator – (222-205 BC)

Ptolemy V Epiphanes (205-182 BC) – married Antiochus III daughter Cleopatra

Ptolemy VI (sometimes called Ptolemy VII) Philometer
(182-146 BC)

Chart 4
Seleucid Dynasty
(Through 164 BC)

Seleucid Empire
(Kingdom of the North)

Seleucus I Nicator (312-281)

Antiochus I Soter (281-261)

Antiochus II theos (261-246) married Ptolemy II daughter Bernice

Seleucus II Callinicus (246-226)

Seleucus III Ceraunus (226-224)

Antiochus III the Great (224-187) gave his daughter Cleopatra to Ptolemy V as a wife

Seleucus IV Philopater (187-175)

Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-164)

Chapter 3

Future Fulfillment of Daniel 11

While Daniel 11:1-35 has already come to pass, they foreshadow events that have yet to happen! On top of this, Daniel 11:36-45 have never come to pass! In this chapter, we will review the future fulfillment of Daniel 11.

Daniel 11:36-39

³⁶“The king will do as he pleases. He will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will say unheard-of things against the God of gods. He will be successful until the time of wrath is completed, for what has been determined must take place. ³⁷He will show no regard for the gods of his ancestors or for the one desired by women, nor will he regard any god, but will exalt himself above them all. ³⁸Instead of them, he will honor a god of fortresses; a god unknown to his ancestors he will honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly gifts. ³⁹He will attack the mightiest fortresses with the help of a foreign god and will greatly honor those who acknowledge him. He will make them rulers over many people and will distribute the land at a price.

In Daniel 11:36-39, we learn the character of the final anti-Christ. He will exalt himself over every god, just like Antiochus Epiphanes. Zeus was considered the “highest” among the Greek gods, and Antiochus put himself even higher. The mightiest fortresses in verse 39 refer to the United States of America and British Nations (chiefly, UK, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada). These nations are the chief among the nations in the last days (for more information on this subject, download our booklet “The United States in Bible Prophecy). For these nations to be brought down would be the greatest prize in history. They are each full of natural resources, and what is left of them will be distributed at a price among the countries that participate in the fighting.

Daniel 11:40-45

⁴⁰“At the time of the end the king of the South will engage him in battle, and the king of the North will storm out against him with

chariots and cavalry and a great fleet of ships. He will invade many countries and sweep through them like a flood. ⁴¹ He will also invade the Beautiful Land. Many countries will fall, but Edom, Moab and the leaders of Ammon will be delivered from his hand. ⁴² He will extend his power over many countries; Egypt will not escape. ⁴³ He will gain control of the treasures of gold and silver and all the riches of Egypt, with the Libyans and Cushites in submission. ⁴⁴ But reports from the east and the north will alarm him, and he will set out in a great rage to destroy and annihilate many. ⁴⁵ He will pitch his royal tents between the seas at the beautiful holy mountain. Yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him.

Daniel 11:40-45 describe a future battle between the King of the North to the King of the South. Who are these nations today? How will we identify them? Daniel chapter 8 has the key.

In Daniel 8:1-14, Daniel receives a vision very similar in detail to Daniel 11. Daniel 8 reveals a vision a ram with horns, which represented Persia. Persia is the modern nation of Iran. In Daniel 8:4, this ram pushed westward, northward, and southward. The Aramaic word translated as “push” (NIV) or “pushing” (KJV) is *nagakh*, and it means to butt with horns. In ancient times, the Medo-Persian Empire took over many nations. In the next part of the vision, a he-goat appeared, which destroyed the ram. This he-goat represents Greece. Alexander the Great led the Greeks on a conquest of the Medo-Persian Empire.

This goat had one great horn, which was broken off. Four horns replaced it. God showed Daniel that the Greek empire would be broken up into four separate kingdoms. We have already reviewed this as the division of Alexander the Great’s Empire into four divisions roughly 22 years after his death. One of these four kingdoms would have a king who would invade the Holy Land (Israel), take away the daily sacrifice, and exalt himself to be like God. This of course was Antiochus Epiphanes.

However, we learn from Daniel 8:17-20 that the vision of this

chapter refers to the last days!

17 So he came near where I stood: and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision. 18 Now as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep on my face toward the ground: but he touched me, and set me upright. 19 And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end shall be. 20 The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia. And the rough goat is the king of Grecia:..”

How will these prophecies be repeated in the last days? The Bible says in Daniel 11:40 that “...**And at the time of the end** shall the king of the south **push** at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.” The Aramaic word translated as “push” is *nagakh*, which is the same one used in Daniel 8:4! There is clearly a connection here!

Today, we see the Iranians supporting the Muslim brotherhood in countries that to the west, such as Libya and Egypt. To the north, the Iranians are causing problems in Turkey. To the south, they are vying for influence in Saudi Arabia, Oman, and Yemen. They are butting against other countries, and these countries are having a hard time suppressing it from spreading. A combination of Islamic countries will unify and form one country, likely led by their leader which they will call the Mahdi. He will not be the anti-Christ, but a strong Muslim leader.

This Muslim coalition of nations will push against the revived Roman Empire. This has already played out multiple times in history through the crusades. Often, a Muslim group would harass or attack Europeans and the Europeans would respond by invading the Middle East, which was focused on conquering Jerusalem. We learn from Daniel 11 that this will be the same focus.

As prophesied in Daniel 11:40, the Revived Roman Empire will storm against the Muslim nations with many ships. No Muslim nation has a navy worth speaking of, nor will they ever. The Europeans presently (and even historically) have naval forces which could allow them to decimate the Middle East. Today, naval carriers are even more dangerous militarily because fighter jets can be launched from them. In verse 41, we learn, “He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown.” This military force will rival the ancient military force of Alexander the Great, which was cat-like and fast. It will conquer North Africa and likely all the way to India as did Alexander the Great (as a side note, when Cush and Put are used together in the Bible, it can refer to India).

He will invade the Promised Land as well. Just as Antiochus, the Anti-Christ will enter Jerusalem appearing to be a peaceful conqueror. He then will turn on the Jewish people and violate the seven-year covenant of peace he made with them and other nations (discussed in Daniel 9:24-27)! This violation is described in Isaiah 33. In verses 1,7-8, we learn, “Woe to thee that spoilest, and thou wast not spoiled; and dealest treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee! when thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled; and when thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee...⁷ Behold, their valiant ones shall cry without: the ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly. The highways lie waste, the wayfaring man ceaseth: he **hath broken the covenant**, he hath despised the cities, he regardeth no man.” (KJV)

This is speaking of the treacherous ways of this future King of the North. He will back-stab the Jewish people after they have received him as a conquering hero. He will break the covenant and have regard for no man. He will then defile a re-build third Temple.

The Apostle Paul also speaks of this. In 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4, Paul wrote, “Don’t let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of law-

lessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God." These verses are word-for-word describing what Antiochus did in 168 BC, but what the anti-Christ will do in the last days. He will commit the same abomination that makes desolate, sacrificing a pig on the altar of sacrifice and putting a statute of himself as god in the Temple.

According to Daniel 11:31b, 33-34, he is going to hunt down and kill the children of God. He is going to use flattery to gain allies among those who call themselves Christians. Just as some of the priesthood in ancient times were deceived and seduced, in the same way, there will be spiritual priests deceived. In verses 9-10, Paul says that the anti-Christ will come with counterfeit miracles signs and wonders. This is why Jesus started the Mount Olivet end-times prophecy by saying, "Take heed that no man deceive you" (Matthew 24:4).

There will be many martyred for the name of Christ during the Tribulation. Jesus spoke of this in Matthew 24:9, "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake." As Revelation 7:9-14 depicts, many people will be slain because they refused to take the mark of the beast.

After the anti-Christ has broken his covenant of peace and committed the abomination that makes desolate, the wrath of God begins. God will literally judge the nations of the world with the 7 Trumpet blasts and the 7 bowls of His wrath. As we learned from Daniel 11:36, "He will be successful until the time of wrath is completed..." As the seven bowls of God's Wrath enter their final stages, all the nations of the world march on Jerusalem to destroy it. This is called the battle of Armageddon.

At this very moment, Jesus splits the sky and returns with power and great glory!! In Zechariah 9:13-14, we learn about the final battle of Armageddon and the return of the Lord: "13 When I

have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee as the sword of a mighty man. 14 And the LORD shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning: and the Lord GOD shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south.” God is going to empower His people to fight just as in the days of the Maccabees! We see that God strengthens the people of Zion to fight against the Greeks once again!

This is proof positive that no Muslim coalition of nations will be controlling Jerusalem at this time. It will be a Greco-Roman force. Remember that Antiochus was a Greek. Recall that the final, fourth beast of Daniel 7 had iron teeth (Roman influence), but claws of bronze (Greek influence) [Daniel 7:7, 19]. Western culture is also called Greco-Roman culture! This is the beast defeated at Christ’s return (Daniel 7:7-12, Rev. 19:20)! The people of God will defeat them just as the Maccabees did in the days of old.

It was during the Hanukkah celebration in John 10 that Jesus said, “My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish: no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand. I and the Father are one” (John 10:27-30). We must know Him, His Word, and His Ways so that we are not swayed by what we see, but what we know to be True.

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Daniel chapter 11 is considered the most detailed prophecy in the entire Bible. God gave Daniel prophecies so detailed that they prove the Bible's validity and existence. In it, we learn of events from Daniel's time up until the return of Jesus Christ. We also learn from it the historical events surrounding the Hanukkah story; these details help us to understand end-time events unfurling before our very eyes!



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