

Lesson 11: Chapter 11 – A Tale of Two Kings

Finally, Daniel's vision is revealed. In a structure that parallels the visions of chapters 7 and 8, we are introduced to two different kingdoms. While both kingdoms at the time of Daniel's writing were future, they represented events separated by thousands of years.

Day 1: Daniel 11:1-35 retells the story of the rise of the little horn, that now-historical king and destructor of the Jewish temple, Antiochus IV Epiphanes, this time in incredible detail.

1. Read Daniel 11:1-4. Historical records preserve the names of the four Persian kings that succeed Cyrus: Cambyses (530-522 B.C.), Smerdis (522 B.C.) and Darius I Hystaspes (522-486 B.C.). These three kings would be succeeded by a fourth great Persian king, Xerxes I, most notable for his military campaign against Greece. This expedition provoked retaliation by Alexander the Great of Greece, signifying the beginning of the end of the Medo-Persian empire (v. 2).
 - a. Who is the mighty king who appears in v. 3 (hint- see Lesson 8, Day 3's notes)?
 - b. In v. 4, the angel tells Daniel that the mighty king of v. 3's empire will be broken up into four parts. Where have we encountered a four-part division of a formerly unified empire before (hint- see Lesson 8, Day 3 and 4 notes)?
2. The vision the angel continues describing relates the historical background of the struggle for power between two of the divisions of the partitioned Grecian empire, the Ptolemaic (or Egyptian) and the Seleucid (or Syrian) kingdoms. As you read Daniel 11:5-20, try to map out the progression of the two kingdoms (the South representing the Ptolemaic division and the North representing the Seleucid division).
3. From this background of back-and-forth struggle between the South and North kingdoms, a "contemptible person" enters the scene in v. 21. This is none other than Antiochus IV Epiphanes, the "little horn" of chapter 8. In light of what you have already learned about Antiochus during your study of chapter 8, why do you think that he is called "contemptible"?

Day 2: Read Daniel 11:21-30

1. The exploits of Antiochus and his duplicitous alliances and treaties are revealed with, what we can now recognize, incredible accuracy. In the middle of the tale, an interesting interruption is noted in v. 27. It promises that, "an end will still come at the appointed time". In keeping with the themes of Daniel we have encountered so far, why do you think that the angel might

include this little reminder for Daniel and for Daniel's audience (hint- see Daniel 4:25, 35; 5:22-23)?

2. In v. 30 we see Antiochus's attention turn back to Israel as he retreats in the face of defeat and disgrace from his military excursions against the southern kingdom. Who does it tell us he will "vent his fury against"?

Day 3: As we come to the close of the section of Daniel's revelation relating to Antiochus IV Epiphanes, we once again face the specter of the terrible suffering that the Jewish people who remain faithful to the God of their fathers will endure. Read Daniel 11:31-35.

1. The short section contains both a warning and a promise. Identify the warning to Daniel's original audience and their Jewish descendants.
2. Identify the hope that Daniel's revelation affords in v. 32 and v. 35.

Day 4: Now we move to the second portion of the chapter. The scene shifts forward. Just as we could see similarities between the prophecies of the horn of Daniel 7 and the little horn of Daniel 8, we recognize that the king who is described in Daniel 11:36-45 shares many of the same attributes as Antiochus IV Epiphanes in vv. 21-35. But the careful reader will notice immediate differences that indicate that this revelation is about another king, one who will eclipse Antiochus in every way possible. Read Daniel 11:36-44.

1. Antiochus IV Epiphanes was a devotee of the many Roman gods of the day. We know this because history records his erection of an altar to Zeus right in the Jerusalem temple! Who does this king revere (v. 36-37)?
2. Read 2 Thessalonians 2:4. What does it tell us about the "man of lawlessness", also known as the Antichrist?

Day 5: As the first revelation concerning Antiochus IV Epiphanes comes to a close, Daniel's audience is given a hope that God is still sovereign and that the days of the tyrant are numbered. We see a repeat of that hope in the second revelation, this one concerning the Antichrist. Read Daniel 11:45.

1. What is the ultimate destiny of this second king?
2. What does Revelation 19:20 tell us about the destiny of the Antichrist who is also known as the beast?