



“A Purely Prophetic Passage” (Daniel 10:20-11:35)

Danny Hodges – OT3449

10:21a This “Book of Truth” probably refers to God’s record of truth in general.

10:21b Michael is the prince of Israel. No other angelic power supported this angel in his battles against the forces of Persia and Greece except Michael.

11:1 Took a stand to support and protect WHO? (Michael or Darius)

11:2 Cambyses (Cyrus’ son; 530 B.C.), Pseudo-Smerdis (522 B.C.), Darius I Hystaspes (521 to 486 B.C.), Xerxes (known in the book of Esther as Ahasuerus; 485 to 465 B.C.). Xerxes was the most powerful, influential, and wealthy of the four. During his reign he fought several wars against Greece.

11:3-4 Alexander the Great’s empire was parceled out to his generals:

- * Cassander – Macedonia and Greece
- * Lysimachus – Thrace and parts of Asia Minor
- * Ptolemy – Egypt and Palestine
- * Seleucas – Northern Syria and Mesopotamia

Alexander’s sons were murdered. None of his relatives were appointed to rule over his empire after his death.

11:5 This king of the South was Ptolemy, one of Alexander’s generals. Ptolemy was given authority over Egypt in 323 B.C. and proclaimed king of Egypt in 304 B.C.

Seleucas was given authority of his northern territory in 321 B.C. But in 316 B.C. he came under attack by another general named Antigonus. He sought help from Ptolemy, and after defeating Antigonus, gained more territory and became even more powerful than Ptolemy.

11:6 Ptolemy I died in 285 B.C., succeeded by his son, Ptolemy II Philadelphus. Meanwhile, Seleucas was murdered in 281 B.C. and his son, Antiochus I Soter ruled until 262 B.C. Then Seleucas’ grandson Antiochus II Theos took the throne. Ptolemy II and Antiochus were bitter enemies for years. But about 250 B.C. they entered an alliance, sealed by the marriage of Ptolemy’s daughter Berenice to Antiochus...

BUT, Berenice did not retain her power. You see, in order to marry Berenice, Antiochus was forced by Ptolemy to divorce his present wife, Laodice. The marriage between Berenice and Antiochus did not last. He took back Laodice, who was so upset over the divorce that she contacted some mob friends and had Berenice “snuffed out.” She also killed Berenice’s baby, as well as all those who had accompanied Berenice from Egypt.

11:7-8 Berenice’s brother, Ptolemy III Euergetes, succeeded his father and set out to avenge the death of Berenice. He defeated Seleucas’ army, put Laodice to death, and returned home with 40,000 talents of silver and 2500 Egyptian idols.

11:9 Seleucas sought to invade Egypt in retaliation for this humiliating defeat, but he was unsuccessful.

11:10-13 Seleucas’ sons (Seleucas III and Antiochus III) sought to restore Syria’s lost prestige by military conquest, and they were very successful. Antiochus III drove Egypt back all the way to the southern borders of Israel. Ptolemy had been sitting idly by living a life of ease and luxury. But finally angry over Antiochus’ advances, he amassed an army of 70,000 infantry, 5,000 cavalry, and 73 elephants. Antiochus had an army of 72,000 infantry, 6,000 cavalry, and 102 elephants. Despite the odds, Egypt won a great victory. Antiochus lost 10,000 infantry, 300 cavalry, and five elephants...

Soon after this Ptolemy died, and his son Ptolemy V Epiphanes became king at the age of four. Antiochus saw this as a great opportunity, so he returned with a larger and more fully equipped army than the first.

11:14-16 Many Jews joined Antiochus against Egypt. Antiochus captured Sidon (a fortified city), and gained complete control of the Middle East.

11:17 Years later Antiochus made a treaty with Egypt by sending his daughter Cleopatra (not the famous one) to marry Ptolemy V Epiphanes. The scheme does not work. Cleopatra defected by siding with Egypt (She must have really liked Ptolemy!).

11:18-19 Antiochus conquered land in Asia Minor and Greece, but his conquests were limited when a Roman commander named Cornelius Scipio was dispatched to turn him back. Antiochus returned to his own country and was killed about a year later (187 B.C.) while trying to rob a temple in Elam in order to replenish his exhausted treasury.

11:20 Antiochus III’s son Seleucas IV Philopater heavily taxed his people in order to both pay Rome and keep up his lavish Royal lifestyle. He was so desperate that he even sent his treasurer, Heliodorus, to Jerusalem to take the wealth of the temple treasury. He mysteriously died shortly after this. Some say he was poisoned by his treasurer!

11:21 The throne rightly belonged to Demetrius Soter, a son of Seleucas IV Philopater. But through sheer intrigue Antiochus Epiphanes IV came to power.

11:22 Early in Antiochus’ rule Egypt prepared an army to march against him. When he learned of this, Antiochus marched his army south to attack. He completely routed the Egyptian army,

then deposed the Jewish high priest Onias III (the “prince of the covenant”), replacing him with Onias’ brother Jason, who wanted Greek culture established in Israel.

11:25-27 After consolidating his kingdom, Antiochus moved against Egypt in 170 B.C. Antiochus “paid off” traitors that helped him gain victory over Egypt (v.26). But Antiochus was not able to conquer all of Egypt. He had captured Ptolemy, and some Egyptians subsequently crowned Ptolemy’s brother king of Egypt. So Antiochus deceitfully pretended to befriend captured Ptolemy in order to “use him” against the new king. Both leaders sat to talk, but both were seeking deceive the other (they both spoke with “forked tongue”). Antiochus’ deception failed to win him all of Egypt.

11:28 On Antiochus’ return back to Syria he passed through Israel. Partly due to his rage at not conquering all of Egypt, and partly because of a Jewish rebellion, Antiochus slaughtered many Jews, sold many into slavery, plundered the Temple of its valuable and sacred contents, carrying them back to Syria with him.

11:29-30 Two years later (161 B.C.) Antiochus again moved against Egypt. But the Romans had come to Egypt by ships from the west (Cyprus). As Antiochus moved into Egypt, he was met by a Roman senator named Popillius Laenas who delivered a letter from Caesar forbidding him to engage in war with Egypt. When Antiochus asked for time to consider his decision, Popillius drew a circle in the sand around Antiochus and demanded that he give an answer before he stepped out of the circle. Antiochus consented, but was enraged. He vented his fury against Israel once again.

11:31-35 This is when Antiochus did his worst! He sent his general, Apollonius, to occupy Jerusalem with the intention of stamping out every trace of Judaism and replacing it with Hellenism. An edict was made that all nationalities in Antiochus’ kingdom were to be fused into one people. All were to worship Greek deities. The regular Temple sacrifices were stopped. Heathen rituals were performed in the Temple. Pigs were sacrificed to Greek gods in the Temple. Jews who attempted to sacrifice to God, practice circumcision, or observe the Sabbath were killed. The Scriptures were ordered destroyed. A pagan altar was erected over the altar of God, and the Temple rededicated to Zeus.

A faithful priest named Matthias lived during this time. He had five sons, and his family led a revolt against the pagan policies and atrocities of Antiochus. They fled to the mountains and over time gained a substantial following. One of Matthias’ sons became the key leader of this rebel band. His name was Judas Maccabeus (the Hammerer”), and he ultimately led his band of followers to victory. In 164 B.C. Judas Maccabeus led the refurbishing and restoration of the temple that had been so desecrated.

CONCLUSION

- Matthew 24:6
- I Peter 1:3-7; 5:8-11