

Predictions of Future Kings

Daniel 11:36-45

Daniel 11:36-45 - *“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.” 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. ³⁷ 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. ⁴⁰ “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.”*

Background Notes

In the first 35 verses of this chapter we saw that a very detailed prophecy was given of what was to come in the future -- from Daniel's time under Cyrus the Persian all the way through inter-testamental times. The prophetic details were all fulfilled exactly as predicted and are so specific that liberal critics of the Bible try to explain them away by saying that this chapter of Daniel was written up after the events took place, and the chapter was just made to appear as if it was prophecy! But all the evidence, including the Dead Sea Scrolls, points to a 6th century BC date (the time of Daniel) for the entire Book of Daniel.

In verse 32 the phrase “the people who know their god” refers to the movement of the Hasidim, or “godly ones.” The Maccabean Revolt against Antiochus Epiphanes for his persecution of the Jews came from the Hasidim group.

After much struggle, both external and internal, the Jewish people were able to gain a measure of independence and cleanse the Temple. That cleansing and rededication of the Temple took place in 165BC. It is an event that is still remembered each year by the Jewish people with the celebration of Hanukkah.

Verse 35 tells us that this prophecy carries right on to the time of the end and prepares us for the future prophetic details to come in the verses that follow (verse 36 to the end of the chapter).

Notice what verse 35 says in reference to God's dealings with the Jewish people, even now, at the present time. He is refining and purging and purifying the Jewish people until the end times. The persecutions and struggles of the Jewish people over the years have not just "happened by chance." God has allowed these things to take place as part of His sovereign will, to purge sin and purify His people.

Doctrinal Points

1. Daniel's final vision revealed the future "godless king" of the Tribulation Period.

When we come to these final verses of Daniel 11, we find that there are considerable differences of interpretation held by conservative evangelical scholars of Scripture. Some scholars say that verses 36-39 are still talking about Antiochus Epiphanes of the intertestamental period of history. However, others say that verses 36 to the end of the chapter are all about the future, and primarily about the one future leader whom they call the "Anti-Christ" – the first beast of Revelation 13, who is head of the revived Roman Empire and whose number is 666.

Others scholars say there are two future end time leaders featured in these verses: one in verses 36-39 and one in verses 40-45. But who are these two future godless leaders (if indeed there are two)? Some say that the king of verses 36-39 is the first beast of Revelation 13, and the second godless leader in verses 40-45 is the future King of the North. Others (myself included) feel that the "willful king" of verses 36-39 is the false messiah of the Jews, also known as the "False Prophet." He is the "beast" in the second half of Revelation 13. The second godless leader (Daniel 11:40-45) is the future King of the North (as we will see under doctrinal point 2). So in this view, the "willful king" (v36-39) is an apostate Jew, posing falsely as the Messiah, and in this view, **he** is the Anti-Christ of the last days – not the Roman beast of 666 notoriety.

We see in verse 36 that this end time false messiah magnifies himself and speaks blasphemous words: *"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."* In verse 37 we see that he shows no regard for the one true God of his Jewish heritage, but he deifies himself. In this view he has no regard for "the desire of women," that is, no regard for the true Messiah, because the desire of all godly Jewish women of Old Testament times was to be chosen as the mother of the Messiah. Let's read verse 37, once again, *"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."*

In verse 38 we see that this false Messiah honors "the god of fortresses," who is a god that is foreign to the faith of the fathers: *"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.” In this view, the false “god of fortresses” would be the 666 Roman beast, the first beast of Revelation 13, who will be a world leader during the time of the Tribulation period.

The gold, silver, and precious stones (v38) may be tied in with the image that this false messiah will erect for the Roman beast, according to Revelation 13. This strange or foreign god (v39) whom the false messiah honors and glorifies is probably the Roman beast for whom he has built the image: *“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.”* At the end of verse 39 we see that this godless king wrongly divides up the Holy Land.

Of course all the details will become clear during the Tribulation period. Daniel’s final vision revealed the future godless king of the Tribulation Period.

2. Daniel’s final vision revealed the future “King of the North” of the Tribulation Period.

In our interpretation of this fourth and final vision of Daniel, we are taking a position that Daniel 11:40-45 brings another key end time figure into the prophetic picture: the “King of the North.” Remember, this King of the North was typified (or pictured) by the wicked Seleucid king Antiochus Epiphanes, as we saw back in Daniel 8. Admittedly, the he’s and the him’s in these last few verse of Daniel 11 get a little confusing, but one scenario is as follows:

The King of the South is Egypt. The King of the North comes with overwhelming land and sea forces against Egypt, the King of the South, and against other countries as well. Only Edom, Moab, and Ammon (which make up modern Jordan), escape his fury. In the process, of course, Israel will be caught in the middle and suffer great loss, as she did when Antiochus Epiphanes came against Israel in the inter-testamental period.

This invasion of Israel from the north may well be the invasion of Israel that is predicted in Joel 2. It is probably not the invasion of Gog, mentioned in Ezekiel 38 and 39, which we believe will come later.

In verse 43 we see that Libya and Ethiopia will be allies of the King of the North. His invasion will take place during the Tribulation period. For Israel, this is all part of “the time of Jacob’s trouble,” referred to in Jeremiah 30:7. The disturbing news from the north and the east (v44) may be about the Roman beast and/or the Kings of the East coming into the north of Israel, using the Plain of Armageddon (or the Jezreel Valley) to gather their forces together for battle.

In any case, the King of the North will meet his end in the heart of Israel -- probably in or near Jerusalem -- with the return of the Lord. We know from Revelation 19 that the false prophet (that is the false messiah of Daniel 11:36-39) will also be judged directly by the Lord Himself at this time.

Again, the details will become clear during the Tribulation period. Daniel’s final vision revealed the future King of the North of the Tribulation Period.

Practical Application

Don't let distractions keep you from studying Bible prophecy!

Where do we get this practical application from Daniel 11? We don't! But I'm preparing this talk on a plane next to a screaming baby! I'm sitting in an aisle seat next to a terribly upset mother and her screaming baby. I had hoped for a quiet flight with an empty seat next to me, but no such scenario!

However, I'm determined to continue to study the Scripture and my notes and get this talk prepared -- even though the screaming baby is also now trying to grab my pencil!!

There are all kinds of distractions that can keep us from studying God's Word! So our practical application for this chapter is: **Don't let distractions keep you from studying Bible prophecy!**