**DANIEL CHAPTER 11 – Part 1**

[Cover slide] As we left off in Chapter 10 the heavenly messenger was about to detail a series of future events that would have a direct impact on God’s people, Daniel’s people, the Jews. We noticed that there is invisible spiritual warfare going on behind the scenes – God’s angels against Satan and the forces of evil. The events prophesied about in Chapter 11 closely parallel the visions that Daniel saw in Chapters 7 and 8. This prophecy will give Daniel some additional insight.

I hope you like history. To truly appreciate Chapter 11 you need to have some understanding of the events from history. From our vantage point in time looking back we can clearly see that most of the events prophesied in the last half of the book of Daniel have already taken place. In Daniel’s day they were yet future. For us many of these events have become a part of our history books. We get to fill in the various names and details. The historic events noted in Chapter 11 took place between Malachi and Matthew. This is what we call the “Inter-Testament Period.” As you will see in today’s lesson, event after event occurs just as God revealed that they would to Daniel.

So accurately were the prophecies of Chapter 11 fulfilled that some liberal theologians have suggested that Daniel could not have written this book in 537 B.C. as is traditionally held. They suggest that it must have been written in the 2nd Century B.C. or even later by some other author. They claim that no person could predict so precisely all of these events. And they’re right. No man could. Absent from their argument is the fact that the prophecies of Daniel were NOT concocted by some man but revealed by God Himself.

[New slide] Daniel Chapter 11 is divided into five distinct periods of history.

READ Daniel 11:1.

[Q1] The answer can be either Darius or Michael.

READ Daniel 11:2. After Cyrus the next three Persian kings were Cambyses, Pseudo-Smerdis and Darius I. A fourth king, Xerxes, followed them. Xerxes is the King Ahaseurus who is mentioned in the book of Esther. The angel tells Daniel that this fourth king will stir up everyone in Greece. History bears this out. King Xerxes assembles an army of three million men and invades Greece. That invasion proves to be his downfall and he is defeated at Salamis in 480 B.C. From that point on, the power shifts away from Persia and to Greece. This brings us to Alexander the Great…

READ Daniel 11:3. [Q2]

[next slide] We discussed Alexander the Great back in Chapter 8. His kingdom is short-lived. Alexander dies very young while at the zenith of his career. He reigns 12 years, but only one year after he finished his military exploits. After his death, his vast kingdom is divided into north, south, east and west among four of his generals.

READ Daniel 11:4. It says here that “his kingdom shall be divided, but not to his posterity.” None of Alexander’s vast kingdom gets passed to his descendants. Alexander’s wife and his illegitimate teenage son are both murdered 13 years after Alexander’s death. In addition, his half-brother Philip who succeeded him to power is killed, as are two of Alexander’s other wives, his sister and his mother. Fifteen years after Alexander’s death he is without any direct descendants. The word of God is fulfilled.

Beginning in verse 5 the prophecy shifts to Alexander the Great’s successors.

READ Daniel 11:5. This verse refers to Egypt and the strong “king of the south” is Ptolemy Soter (Ptolemy I). The family of the Ptolemies ruled Egypt for centuries. One of Ptolemy Soter’s generals is Seleucus Nicator (Seleucus I). Seleucus becomes the “king of the north.” North refers to Syria but his kingdom stretches from Palestine to India. The main point to remember from all of this is found in the next questions.

[Q3] [Q4]

READ Daniel 11:6. “After some years” (50 to be exact) the daughter of Ptolemy II, Berenice, marries Antiochus II of Syria, a Seleucid. This is an arranged marriage by two leaders hoping to bring peace between their warring kingdoms. However, when Ptolemy II of Egypt dies (“he who fathered her”), Antiochus divorces his Egyptian wife Berenice. Later, Antiochus’s own family including his opportunistic son Seleucus II Callinicus from a previous marriage murders Antiochus in a coup. Berenice is assassinated along with “her attendants.” “He who supported her in those times” refers to Berenice’s son, the legal heir to the throne, who is also murdered.

READ Daniel 11:7. Berenice’s brother, Ptolemy III Euergetes, who ascended to the Egyptian throne after his father’s death, is outraged at the treatment of his sister at the hands of Seleucus II Callinicus, the new Syrian ruler, the king of the north. Ptolemy III, king of the south forms an army and marches north and attacks Syria. As Scripture suggests he marched right in and captured Seleucus II and most of his empire. His armies take Babylon and advance all the way to the boundaries of India.

READ Daniel 11:8. Egypt’s Ptolemy III Euergetes wreaks havoc against Syria. He brings back to Egypt 4K talents of gold, 40K talents of silver, 2,500 molten idols and their sacred vessels including many that had been captured and taken from Egypt some 300 years before. It says that “he shall refrain from attacking the king of the north.” Ptolemy III ceases his attacks and returns Seleucus II to the throne. The two nations sign a truce, which lasts 10 years.

READ Daniel 11:9. Eventually the king of the north, Seleucus II, rebuilds his military strength and makes a foolish attempt to invade Egypt. His naval fleet gets lost in a storm and his army forces are routed and driven back to Syria by the forces of Ptolemy IV Philopator in humiliating defeat. Thus begins a back and forth struggle between the two nations that will continue on for centuries.

The younger of two sons of Seleucus II of Syria is Antiochus III. Seleucus is killed when he sustains injuries from falling off his horse. His oldest son, Seleucus III, initially becomes king, but dies just three years later. At that point Antiochus III assumes the throne and proclaims himself to be Antiochus the Great.

READ Daniel 11:10-11. Determined to restore the glory of Syria, Antiochus III amasses a great army of 70K infantry and 5K cavalry. He enjoys a series of victories at the Egyptian border. But then Antiochus III comes up against the fortress of Raphia. There he suffers an unexpected defeat. So the Egyptian army of the king of the south, Ptolemy IV Philopator is victorious.

[Q5]

READ Daniel 11:12. After Egypt’s victory against the forces of Syria, Ptolemy IV Philopator, king of the south, makes two moves that prove costly. First, he annexes Palestine and profanes the temple of the Jews in Jerusalem. This deeply angers the Jewish people. Back in Egypt, Ptolemy IV launches a wholesale persecution of the Jews. Some 40K Egyptian Jews are martyred because they refuse to embrace the idolatrous Egyptian religion. His second mistake is not taking advantage of the Syrian’s weakened military strength and invading them while they are vulnerable. Instead, Ptolemy IV, the king of the south makes a peace treaty with Antiochus III, the king of the north. Thus, as the scripture says, the king of the south “did not prevail.”

READ Daniel 11:13-14. Thirteen years after their defeat at the battle of Raphia, Syria recovers fully, both militarily and economically. Antiochus III the Great raises a vast army and equips them well from the coffers of his kingdom’s treasury. When civil unrest breaks out throughout Egypt, many Jews rebel and join ranks with Antiochus and the Syrians. “The violent among your own people” refers to those Jews who choose to fight with Antiochus against Egypt. They hope to secure their national independence by an alliance with Syria. But this proves to be a miscalculation on their part.

READ Daniel 11:15-16. Antiochus III the Great defeats the Egyptian army at Sidon. Although the Jews are free from Egypt, they are in no way an independent nation. For years Antiochus the Great established a primary military base in the “glorious land.”

[Q6] Present day Israel was known back then as Palestine. It was a strategic location where Antiochus and the Syrians could keep a close eye on their enemies in Egypt. During this time his troops plunder Palestine unmercifully. The Jews end up being harshly treated by both sides!

READ Daniel 11:17. After a while Antiochus III the Great decides to invade Egypt. But by this time Egypt has appealed for protection to another rising world power, the Romans. Knowing that if he invades Egypt there will be Roman intervention, Antiochus backs off and resorts to diplomacy. He proposes that his infant daughter marry the 7-year old Egyptian boy king. His plan is to have his daughter betray her husband’s interests and instead serve her father’s political ambitions. But his plan falls apart when his daughter grows up and falls in love with her young Egyptian husband. She remains loyally by his side rather than her father’s.

READ Daniel 11:18-19. Antiochus turns his aggressions away from Egypt and toward Greece to the west. He puts together a fleet of 300 ships and attacks the coastlands of Asia Minor and Greece. The Romans send ambassadors to confront Antiochus’ invasion but he refuses to listen to them. Basically he tells the powerful Romans to mind their own business. Bad move! The Romans under Acilius intercept Antiochus forces at the pass of Thermopylae. They defeated him there and drive him out of Greece. Antiochus suffers further defeat at the hands of the Romans at sea. The decisive battle comes at Magnesia, near Smyrna. There Antiochus’s forces of 80K men are defeated with terrible loss of life at the hands of the Romans.

The Romans force Antiochus the Great to renounce all claims to any part of Europe or Asia Minor. He is forced to accept a humiliating peace treaty. His younger son, Antiochus, the future Antiochus IV Epiphanes, is carried off to Rome along with other hostages to ensure his father’s good conduct. Antiochus IV will remain a prisoner in Rome for 14 years. The Romans fine Antiochus III 2,550 talents to pay for the expenses of war that he had caused. They also levied an annual tribute of 1K talents to Rome for the next 12 years. While he is trying to raise money to pay this tribute in his eastern provinces, angry local inhabitants kill Antiochus the Great.

READ Daniel 11:20. The son of Antiochus the Great, Seleucus IV Philopator succeeds his father to the throne. Desiring only to be at peace with the Romans, Seleucus IV spends most of his time trying to raise the quota of money to pay the tribute required by Rome. To do so, he heavily taxes his own people. He sends his treasurer, “an exactor of tribute” to Jerusalem. He plunders the temple and strips it of its wealth. However, he is not successful. Seleucus IV, who is disliked immensely by everyone, is eventually poisoned and dies. This fulfills the prophecy about him that says, “he shall be broken, neither in anger nor in battle.”

So what is the point of studying all of this history? It shows us that God knows what is going to happen and that nothing takes him by surprise. All the prophecies revealed to Daniel ended up being played out detail by detail exactly as God said they would. If that was the case with all those prophecies back then, it will be the case with all the prophecies that are still to be fulfilled in our day! Sovereign God is in complete control of history!!