

## When Kingdoms are Shaken, Part 2 *Daniel 11:13–20<sup>1</sup>*

### Introduction

Routine is something that is so important when it comes to raising children. They need a schedule; they need familiar surroundings. Routine translates to adulthood, too. Some might have more need of a routine than others. Nevertheless we all have some sort of routine we keep.

Routine produces a sense of familiarity and comfort. We get a sense of stability. Such can be the attitude of people concerning their life circumstances. When we live in a land of peace it can seem as though we are stable; there is no need for fear of concern about the future. As Pastor Dickson has shared in previous messages, we can tend to trust in our land of peace. However, when kingdoms shake, what do we do? Does our peace rest in the changing landscape of human kingdoms?

When Scriptural history connects with the history that we learn in our school or college classes it instantly makes the Bible come alive. Daniel chapter 11 is filled with prophetic references which we know from historical correspondence did in fact take place. This further bolsters our confidence in God's inerrant and inspired Word.

**Truth:** *Our righteous God eternally rules over the shaken kingdoms of evil men.*

**Daniel 11:13–20** <sup>13</sup> For the king of the north [*Antiochus III, the Great*] shall return, and shall set forth a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come after certain years with a great army and with much riches. <sup>14</sup> And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south [*Ptolemy V*]: also the robbers of thy people [*Jewish Revolutionaries*] shall exalt themselves to establish the vision; but they shall fall. <sup>15</sup> So the king of the north [*Antiochus III*] shall come, and cast up a mount, and take the most fenced cities: and the arms of the south [*Egyptians*] shall not withstand, neither his chosen people [*i.e. the Egyptian's finest soldiers*], neither shall there be any strength to withstand. <sup>16</sup> But he [*Antiochus III*] that cometh against him [*Egypt*] shall do according to his own will, and none shall stand before him: and he shall stand in the glorious land [*Judah/Palestine*], which by his hand shall be consumed. <sup>17</sup> He [*Antiochus III*] shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and upright ones with him; thus shall he do: and he [*Antiochus III*] shall give him [*Ptolemy V*] the daughter of women [*Antiochus III's daughter, Cleopatra I*], corrupting her [*i.e. he wants her to influence Ptolemy V in order to weaken his kingdom*]: but she [*Cleopatra I*] shall not stand on his side, neither be for him [*Antiochus III*]. <sup>18</sup> After this shall he [*Antiochus III*] turn his face unto the isles, and shall take many: but a prince [*a Roman general named Manius Acilius Scipio*] for his own behalf shall cause the reproach offered by him to cease; without his own reproach he shall cause it to turn upon him. <sup>19</sup> Then he [*Antiochus III*] shall turn his face toward the fort of his own land: but he shall stumble and fall, and not be found. <sup>20</sup> Then shall stand up [*Seleucus IV Philopater*] in his estate a raiser of taxes in the glory of the kingdom: but within few days he [*Seleucus IV*] shall be destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle.

Once again, because of the historical nature of the text in Daniel, we will look at the historical correspondence to the prophetic text at hand. Then we will draw out some theological implications that hopefully will drive home some principles/implications we can take away from the text.

### A Historical Prophecy Concerning Antiochus III “the Great” (222–187 B.C.)

The main character in the verses we are looking at is a ruler named Antiochus III the Great. After Alexander the Great died in 323 B.C. his kingdom was divided amongst his four generals. Two of his generals, Ptolemy I Soter and Seleucus I Nicator, ended up feuding over the land of Judah because it lay in-between the northern Syria and the southern Egypt. As a result there was a long struggle that lasted years between the Seleucids and Ptolemies. It is concerning this conflict that the God of heaven reveals to Daniel in prophetic vision.

<sup>1</sup>Unless otherwise noted all Scripture quotations taken from the Holy Bible King James Version.

The vision in vv. 13–20 primarily concern the struggle between Antiochus III “the Great” and Ptolemy V. Here is a brief overview of the history corresponding to the prophecy the Lord gave to Daniel:

- Antiochus III reigned from 222–187 B.C. as ruler of the Seleucid (i.e. northern) empire.
- In the year 202 B.C., following the death of Ptolemy IV, Antiochus III invaded territories controlled by the Ptolemies with an immense army. His massive military assault was seemingly unstoppable.
- During the course of his endeavors Antiochus received the support of Jewish Revolutionaries who aided him in his conquest. These Jewish mercenaries hated the Ptolemies and wanted to see Seleucid power in control.
- In 200 B.C. Antiochus launched an offensive culminating in a battle at Panion where he defeated the Ptolemaic general Skopas. Skopas retreated to a fortified Sidon only to surrender to Antiochus when facing starvation.
- The result of Antiochus’ victory was unhindered control over Palestine. No one was able to withstand him. That is, until the up-and-coming power of Rome stepped in. In 196 B.C. Rome sought to pressure Antiochus into reconciling with the Ptolemaic kingdom. Antiochus, a crafty general, decided to form an “alliance” with the Ptolemies via a political marriage—Antiochus’ daughter Cleopatra I to the teenage king of Egypt, Ptolemy V Epiphanes. Antiochus’ hoped that his daughter would influence Ptolemy V into making foolish decisions that would hurt the Ptolemaic empire. Instead, his plan backfired because Cleopatra consistently sided and helped her Egyptian husband whom she genuinely loved.
- This was the beginning of the end of Antiochus’ reign. He eventually invaded Greece hoping to expand his territories but ran into the “brick wall” of Rome who decisively defeated him. Because of his defeat Antiochus was forced sign the Treaty of Apamea in 188 B.C.
- Along with the humiliation of the treaty Antiochus came the requirement of Rome that he pay a tribute to them. This culminated in his desperate attempt in 187 B.C. to plunder a temple to the god Bel during which enraged adherents in the temple killed him and his soldiers.
- After Antiochus’ death Seleucus IV Philopater rose to prominence as the next ruler of the Seleucid empire. His reign lasted a little over 10 years before he was assassinated by one of his own officials, Heliodorus.

As you can see, these nations rise and fall like every other nation has throughout the course of history. Though the prophecies in this section may seem grim, there are some theological implications that I think will bless our hearts.

1. Our God reigns (cf. Dan. 4:17, 25). Though men may rise and fall in history, there is only one Sovereign whose reign will persist for eternity.
2. We know that it is the wicked, depraved heart that leads men away from the righteous rule of our God. There are none who seek after God (Rom. 3:10–12).
3. These wicked rulers will not succeed in overthrowing the rule of King Jesus. Rebels will try to resist Christ’s righteous rule but none will succeed (Rev. 20:7–10). God’s kingdom will never be shaken (cf. Heb. 12:27–28).

**THE DIVISION OF ALEXANDER'S EMPIRE ABOUT 325 B.C.**

- Modern city
- City
- ▲ Mountain peak
- ⚔ Battle
- █ Seleucid Kingdom
- █ Antigonid Kingdom
- █ Ptolemaic Kingdom
- █ Hellenistic province



