

1. In chapter 10 the fourth vision was introduced; now its contents are revealed—a history of key events leading up to the end.
2. Gabriel begins with the Persian period, the time in which Daniel was living, then refers to four of its kings (v. 2).
3. He describes the Greek Empire under Alexander and its subsequent division into four sections after the great conqueror's death. (vv. 3-4).
4. Two of these divisions, the Ptolemaic and the Seleucid, receive special attention because of their important relationship to Israel (vv. 5-20).
5. Palestine was located between them and was controlled first by the Ptolemies and then the Seleucids.
6. The historical material in 11:2-20, however, is in reality an introduction to the exceptionally wicked persecutor of the Jews - Antiochus IV Epiphanes (vv. 21-35).
7. Following Antiochus, Gabriel provides a description of the most wicked and evil one that Israel (and the world) will ever encounter, the Antichrist (vv. 36-45).
8. The vision concludes with a characterization of Antichrist's reign of terror as the worst period in human history and a promise of deliverance and blessing for the saints (12:1-3).
9. In vv. 5-12 the period of Ptolemaic dominance is given. The "king of the South" (v. 5) is a reference to Ptolemy I Soter (323-285 B.C.), the ruler of Egypt who had been a highly capable general under Alexander.
10. Then "one of his princes/commanders" alludes to Seleucus I Nicator (312/311-280 B.C.), who had been a lesser general under Alexander. He was appointed prince of Babylonia in 321 B.C., but when another general, Antigonus, seized Babylonia, Seleucus fled (in 316 B.C.) to Ptolemy Soter in Egypt to serve under him, thus becoming "one of his commanders."
11. Antigonus was defeated in 312 B.C. at Gaza, and Seleucus returned to his former position; there he greatly increased his power, eventually controlling more territory than Ptolemy. With the inception of Seleucus's rule, the "Seleucid era" was inaugurated. Seleucus's kingdom included Babylonia, Syria, and Media. According to Arrian, it was the largest of all the divisions of the Greek Empire.
12. From the beginning, conflicts arose between the kingdoms of the Ptolemies (Egypt) and the Seleucids (Syria). Ptolemy I died in 285 B.C. and these clashes continued under his son Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285-246 B.C.), who according to tradition instigated the translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek called the Septuagint.
13. Finally, Ptolemy II made a treaty of peace with the Seleucid ruler, Antiochus II Theos (261-246 B.C., grandson of Seleucus), about 250 B.C., and it is to this alliance that v. 6 refers.

14. Under the terms of the agreement, Berenice, Ptolemy's daughter ("the daughter of the king of the South"), was to marry Antiochus ("the king of the North") to seal the "alliance" between the two kingdoms. Her son was then to become heir to the Seleucid throne. However, Antiochus was already married to a powerful and influential woman named Laodice who succeeded in murdering Antiochus, Berenice, and their child. Thus their "power" did "not last." Laodice then ruled as queen regent during the minority of her son, Seleucus II Callinicus (246-226 B.C.).
15. Then "one from her [Berenice's] family line" points to Berenice's brother, Ptolemy III Euergetes (246-221 B.C.), who succeeded his father, Philadelphus, to the throne of Egypt.
16. In retaliation for his sister's murder, Ptolemy III attacked Syria ("the king of the North") with a great army. This war lasted from 246 to 241 B.C. during the course of which Ptolemy even captured and looted the Seleucid capital of Antioch. The Egyptian king soundly defeated the Syrian forces and evidently put the evil Laodice to death.
17. Ptolemy seized Syria's "gods" and other valuables. He also returned to Egypt treasures, including sacred idols, taken by the Persian monarch Cambyses in 524 B.C.; for this feat the native Egyptians bestowed upon Ptolemy III the title "Euergetes [Benefactor]." Ptolemy made a peace treaty with Seleucus II in 240 B.C. in order to pursue his Aegean conquests.
18. Antiochus III was an extremely important personality, for during his reign Palestine fell under Seleucid control. His conflicts with Egypt recounted here provide an explanation of how this came about. (verses 10-19)
19. Verses 21-35 serve as the climax of this section. The historical preview in vv. 2-20 was furnished in order to set the stage for the prediction of an eighth Seleucid-Greek ruler, Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-163 B.C.) - the "little horn" of chap. 8.
20. The amazing detailed prophecies in the first 35 verses - containing 135 prophetic statements all now fulfilled - provide an intense introduction to the events that are yet future seen in verse 36-45.
21. Beginning with verse 36 - a sharp break in the prophecy may be observed - introduced by the expression "the time of the end" in verse 35.
22. Up to this point, the prophecy dealing with the Persian and Grecian Empires has been fulfilled with amazing precision.
23. Beginning in verse 36 the events that are described have not been fulfilled. These events will not take place until the coming of the Antichrist.
24. Taken as a whole chapter 11 verses 36-45 is a description of the closing days of the times of the Gentiles. The last world ruler will come to his end and none will help him.
25. Summary: (1) a world ruler, (2) a world religion, (3) a world war, (4) a time of great tribulation, (5) deliverance for the people of God at the end of the 70 weeks, (6) resurrection and judgment, (7) reward for the righteous.