

“daughter of women,” as the King James renders verse 17, refers to his affair with Queen Cleopatra of Egypt, who was given into the care of Rome with her young brother Ptolemy Epiphanes. Cleopatra later joined herself to Caesar’s enemy, Antony, fulfilling the prophecy that she would “neither be for him” (verse 17, KJV).

Julius Caesar returned to Rome and attempted in “his insolence” to form a dictatorship. “His ‘insolent’ attempt to replace the Roman republican form of government with a personal dictatorship led directly to his death—which was predicted twice for emphasis in verses 18 and 19” (*God Cares*, vol. 1, p. 293).

### Caesar Augustus

“Then shall stand up in his estate a raiser of taxes in the glory of the kingdom: but within few days he shall be destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle” (Daniel 11:20).

The next successor to Julius Caesar was Augustus (Gaius Octavius). He is known as the founder of the Roman Empire and of the Roman Emperors. Hence every succeeding leader took the title *Augustus*, meaning *Emperor*.

It is to this very emperor that we may trace the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ, for recorded in the second chapter of Luke is the “decree” issued by Augustus that “all the world should be taxed” (Luke 2:1).

Augustus Caesar was a successful ruler of the Roman Empire and died a quiet death, “not in anger or in battle.”

### Tiberius Caesar

“And in his estate shall stand up a vile person, to whom they shall not give the honor of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries. And with the arms of a flood shall they be overflowed from before him, and shall be broken; yea, also the prince of the covenant” (Daniel 11:21-22).

Augustus was followed by Tiberius, who was given to tyranny, hypocrisy, debauchery and uninterrupted intoxication. He never gained the respect of the people as had Augustus. He died a shameful death at the hands of his own men.

It was during the reign of Tiberius that we find the fulfillment of a significant prophecy pointing to the death of “the prince of the covenant,” Jesus Christ. As the birth of Christ dates to the reign of Augustus Caesar, so the death of Christ some thirty-three years later dates to the reign of Tiberius, who is said to have died in 37 A.D., some six years after the crucifixion.

### The Papacy Emerges

Daniel 11:23-28 give additional details concerning the history of the pagan Roman Empire as it begins to fade away and give birth to the papal Roman Church-state. The transition from the one empire to the next is specifically brought to view in verse 29: “At the time appointed, he shall return, and come toward the south; but it shall not be as the former, or as the latter” (Daniel 11:29). In other words, in its papal phase, Rome would no longer be as it was formerly, nor as it would eventually become some time later in the future. The pagan Roman Empire was primarily a civil or political kingdom. But the papal Roman Empire would be unlike that previous government as a primarily religious kingdom professing itself to be the Christian church. At the end of time, the Papal Church will again assume a form different from that which it had during its historical rule during the Dark Ages. This latter-time manifestation of the papal church will be considered with detail in our next study of this series.

### The Holy Covenant Under Attack

“For the ships of Chittim shall come against him: therefore he shall be grieved, and

return, and have indignation against the holy covenant: so shall he do; he shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant” (Daniel 11:30).

This verse speaks to the barbarian tribes who invaded mostly by ship and broke up the Western Roman Empire, bringing in its wake the rise of Papal Rome. It is in the form of the Papacy that the power of Rome returns and has “indignation against the holy covenant.”

This *covenant* is clearly defined in the book of Hebrews chapters 8 and 10: “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put *My laws* in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds,’ He also adds, ‘I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more.’ Where there is forgiveness of these, *there is no longer any offering* for sin” (Hebrews 10:16-18, NRSV).

God’s covenant with His people through Christ involves both the law and the gospel: complete forgiveness through Christ alone, and the law of God written in our hearts. The Papal Roman Church, as introduced in chapters 7 and 8 of Daniel, attacked both the law of God and the priestly intercession of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary. It sought to “change times and laws” and take away the continual intercession of Christ by setting up a counterfeit mediation for the forgiveness of sins, thus attempting to cast the sanctuary of strength to the ground (see Daniel 7:25; 8:11-14).

In opposition to what Hebrews 10:18 clearly states, Papal Rome introduced *another offering for sin*. Through the mass it claimed that the literal body and blood of Christ are repeatedly offered by the priest anew.

### The Abomination of Desolation

“And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate” (Daniel 11:31).

When delineating the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world, Christ makes a specific reference to the abomination of desolation spoken of in the book of Daniel (see Matthew 24:15). When this power attacked the covenant, it attacked the priestly intercession of Christ for the forgiveness of sin, which takes place in the heavenly sanctuary. To replace Christ’s intercession with the intercession of human priests in an earthly temple or church is to place an abomination in the place of God’s true sanctuary. Thus the “continual” intercession of our only true Mediator was taken away from the people, making men and women spiritually desolate (see 1 Timothy 2:5).

“And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations *will come one who makes desolate*, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate” (Daniel 9:27, NAS).

Notice this text takes in not only the pagan Roman power, which brought abomination into the literal Jewish temple and destroyed it in 70 A.D., but it also refers to another power, the papal Roman Church, which would follow on its wing and make desolate. The destroying influence of the papacy would continue until its own complete destruction is fulfilled by the powers of heaven (see Daniel 7:11-14).

The rise of Papal Rome set the stage for what historians call the “Dark Ages.” This was a time of spiritual darkness throughout most of Europe. The Bible was a banned book and death was the penalty suffered by millions for reading it or following its teachings. As we continue to consider Daniel 11 in our next study, we will find a prophetic sketch of this period in history.

# The Unsealing of Daniel

Study Number 13



As we consider Daniel’s last vision, there is one truth that will ring out loud and clear above all others—God rules!

Behind the scenes of earthly events, God maintains a sovereign rule over all human affairs. His ultimate plan will be achieved when all is said and done. He is a God of omnipotent power, and the core principle of that power is His unconquerable love. Eventually, ultimately, finally, it will be seen that the law of life for the universe is the principle of self-sacrificing love. When the great controversy between good and evil reaches its climactic resolve, every self-exalting and despotic human empire will have been conquered by a God who showed what He is made of when He “made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Philippians 2:7-8).

When we see the beauty of God’s character in Christ, a spontaneous loyalty to His kingdom will spring up in our hearts and make Him Lord of our individual lives in preparation for that day when He shall be Lord of all heaven and earth.

### Repeat and Enlarge

Daniel 11 is an enlargement of previous prophetic visions in the book, giving greater detail, but not introducing entirely new powers or historical time frames. The basic structure of the book of Daniel is to “repeat and enlarge.” Each successive prophecy focuses with greater clarity on the same subject matter until, in the final vision, the detail becomes truly astounding.

In addition to the added historical detail, the closing prophecy of chapters 11 and 12 opens a detailed view of Earth’s final scenario.

### Media-Persia

Like chapter 8, Daniel 11 opens with the Media-Persian kingdom, since Babylon is no longer a contending power in the world at the time of Daniel’s vision.

“Also I in the first year of Darius the Mede, even I, stood to confirm and to strengthen him. And now will I shew thee the truth. Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia” (Daniel 11:1-2).

## God Rules!

These verses bring to view the four kings that followed King Cyrus (see Daniel 1:21; 10:1). They were Cambyses (530-522 B.C.), a usurper called the False Smerdis or Bardiya (522 B.C.), and Darius I (522-486 B.C.) (see *God Cares*, vol. 1, p. 283, C. Mervyn Maxwell). After the reign of Darius came Xerxes (486-465 B.C.), known in the Bible as *Ahasuerus*. This ruler spent four full years stockpiling supplies and assembling manpower for a military expedition against Greece, as the prophecy predicts in Daniel 11:2 (“He shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia.”), only to meet with total defeat in the end.

### Alexander the Great

“And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will” (Daniel 11:3).

It was in the wake of the Grecian victory over the great king of Persia that we find the rise of a “mighty king.” This was none other than Alexander the Great. He succeeded in uniting most of the Greeks and conquering the empire of Media-Persia.

“And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those” (Daniel 11:4).

Alexander’s leadership did not last long. He suffered an early death at the age of 32. Having no real successor, his kingdom was finally divided among four of his squabbling generals.

### Two Kings

“And the king of the south shall be strong, and one of his princes; and he shall be strong above him, and have dominion; his dominion shall be a great dominion” (Daniel 11:5).

Now we begin to encounter the terms for which Daniel 11 is so well known: the “king of the north” and the “king of the south.” Early in Daniel 11, these kings designate the persons who controlled Syria and Egypt, countries lying north and south of Jerusalem. As the prophecy expands and the literal nation of Israel gives way to spiritual Israel, these kings expand to symbolize worldwide forces whose history greatly impacts the church of Christ.

The “king of the south” spoken of in verse 5 applies to the first person who controlled Egypt and the outlying areas. This king was Ptolemy (TOL-uh-mee) I Soter (323-285), who was strong right from the start, because Egypt was rather easy to protect as well as immensely wealthy. “The ‘prince’ who became ‘stronger than he’ was Seleucus I Nicator, the general who originally won the eastern part of Alexander’s empire” (*God Cares*, vol. 1, p. 284).

Seleucus I Nicator, after a false start and with the help of Ptolemy I Soter, pushed his way back into possession of most of Alexander’s empire, thus making himself “king of the north.”

“And at the end of some years they shall join forces, for the daughter of the king of the South shall go to the king of the North to make an agreement; but she shall not retain the power of her authority, and neither he nor his authority shall stand; but she shall be given up, with those who brought her, and with him who begot her, and with him who strengthened her in those times” (Daniel 11:6, NKJV).

“At the end of some years” or “after some years” (NAS) brings us to the next great rulers of the north and the south, Antiochus II Theos (261-246) and Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285-246). In an attempt to guarantee peace between their countries, Antiochus II divorced his wife Laodice in order to marry Berenice, daughter

of Ptolemy II. But when Ptolemy II died, Antiochus took Laodice back. She then had Antiochus, Berenice, Berenice’s baby and attendants all killed (see *God Cares*, vol. 1, pp. 277-286).

“But one of the descendants of her line will arise in his place, and he will come against their army and enter the fortress of the king of the North, and he will deal with them and display great strength” (Daniel 11:7, NAS).

Another Bible version translates the first part of verse 7 as “one from her family line” (NIV). The next king of Egypt, Ptolemy III (246-222), was a brother of Berenice. Determined to avenge the death of his sister, he took his army all the way to Babylon and beyond, before voluntarily pulling back. Through his navy, Egyptian shipping dominated the eastern Mediterranean.

“Also their gods with their metal images and their precious vessels of silver and gold he will take into captivity to Egypt, and he on his part will refrain from attacking the king of the North for some years” (Daniel 11:8, NAS).

During this military campaign, Ptolemy III also took back to Egypt some 2,500 gold and silver images, many of which were gods stolen from Egyptians during previous centuries of conquest. Being quite content with his conquest, Ptolemy III did not attack Syria again while he ruled.



“Then the latter will enter the realm of the king of the South, but will return to his own land” (Daniel 11:9, NAS).

“In the year 242 Seleucus II Callinicus attempted to avenge himself for Egypt’s deep penetration of his ancestral lands, but his army was vanquished and his navy blown away” (*God Cares*, vol. 1, p. 287).

“But his sons shall be stirred up, and shall assemble a multitude of great forces: and one shall certainly come, and overflow, and pass through: then shall he return, and be stirred up, even to his fortress” (Daniel 11:10).

“His sons” are the two sons of Seleucus II, namely Seleucus III, who was assassinated after a short reign (225-223) and Antiochus III the Great (223-187).

“And the king of the South [Ptolemy IV] shall be moved with anger, and shall come forth and fight with him, even with the king of the North: [Antiochus III] and he shall set forth a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into his [Ptolemy’s] hand. And when he hath taken away the multitude, his heart shall be lifted up; and he shall cast down many ten thousands: but he shall not be strengthened by it” (Daniel 11:11-12).

Daniel 11:10-12 apply mostly to the battle of Raphia, June 22, 217 B.C. In his defeat, Antiochus III lost 10,000 men and had 4,000 taken prisoner. Despite the loss, Antiochus was ready for a rematch.

“For the king of the North will again raise a greater multitude than the former, and after an interval of some years he will press on with a great army and much equipment” (Daniel 11:13, NAS).

Antiochus III took this defeat in stride, and after leading his army to successful campaigns in India and Aegean, he prepared for a second attack on Egypt. By this time Ptolemy V Epiphanes, a boy of six, was on the throne. There was also much unrest taking place between the Egyptians and their Greek overlords.

“And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south: also

the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision; but they shall fall” (Daniel 11:14).

The many rising up against the king of the South includes the Egyptians who were rebelling against the Greeks. In addition, Antiochus III formed an alliance with one Philip of Macedon, the successor to Cassander in the west. These two made plans to take the kingdom of the South and divide it among themselves while it was weak and its ruler young.

### The Rise of Rome

This last verse introduces another new power described as “the robbers of thy people.” Who is described here?

“The underlying Hebrew means, literally, ‘the breakers of your people,’ and the R.S.V. interprets this phrase to refer to violent people among the Jews. Obviously the Hebrew can just as well refer to outsiders who come in to rob or break the Jews.

“So who are the ‘robbers’ or ‘breakers’ of God’s people? In the vision of Daniel 7 the fourth beast ‘devoured and *broke in pieces*, and stamped the residue’ [Daniel 7:7]. In Daniel 8:13 the little horn ‘trampled’ the sanctuary underfoot. The fourth beast and the little horn are Rome; so the angel’s real meaning in Daniel 11:14 is that the Romans would enter the story at this point in fulfillment of the visions of Daniel 7 and 8” (*God Cares*, vol. 1, pp. 290-291).

The rising power of Rome perceived the threat of Antiochus and Philip of Macedon and warned them to stay out of Egypt. They even helped the boy ruler by sending him a guardian who also dispatched Scopas, a famous general of Aetolia, to raise reinforcements for the army. Yet this initial aid from the Romans would “fail” (Daniel 11:14; NRSV).

“So the king of the North shall come, and cast up a mount, and take the most fenced cities: and the arms of the South shall not withstand, neither his chosen people, neither shall there be any strength to withstand” (Daniel 11:15).

Antiochus did go forward with his assault against the territory belonging to Egypt, and he was successful. He beat Scopas and his well-trained army, who finally surrendered themselves after a long siege in Tyre. Yet the victory would be short-lived.

“But he that cometh against him shall do according to his own will, and none shall stand before him: and he shall stand in the glorious land, which by his hand shall be consumed” (Daniel 11:16).

The prophecy now turns wholly to Rome. In one short verse we find this new empire conquering the territory of the king of the North and the glorious land of God’s people.

### Julius Caesar

“But he [Julius Caesar] who comes against him [Antiochus] shall take the actions he pleases, and no one shall withstand him. He shall take a position in the beautiful land, and all of it shall be in his power. He shall set his mind to come with the strength of his whole kingdom, and he shall bring terms of peace and perform them. In order to destroy the kingdom, he shall give him a woman in marriage; but it shall not succeed or be to his advantage. Afterward he shall turn to the coastlands, and shall capture many. But a commander shall put an end to his insolence; indeed, he shall turn his insolence back upon him. Then he shall turn back toward the fortresses of his own land, but he shall stumble and fall, and shall not be found.” (Daniel 11:16-19; NRSV).

These verses speak primarily of Julius Caesar, who eventually took the whole kingdom once belonging to Alexander and the Greeks. The “corrupting” of the