

Literal Prophetic Fulfillment

Though scoffers may disagree, prophecy is history written in advance. There is no greater example of this than the eleventh chapter of Daniel dealing with the power struggle between two of the successor kingdoms of Alexander.

THE SCOFFERS

You've heard the argument before: "*Text of the Bible can be twisted to fit any event you choose. There is no such thing as Bible prophecy.*" Is this an accurate statement? In some ways, yes; for many prophecies have been taken out of their context to promote a personal or congregational agenda. But some passages are more literal and specific than others and thereby not as easy to twist.

The Bible is a threat to those who do not hold to its moral principles. Prophecy is proof that the content was written, not by man, but by an Author outside of our time domain. Because of this, it is understandable why scoffers should try to nullify prophetic evidence. Their argument falls in defeat when confronted with the eleventh chapter of Daniel.

The book of Daniel was written during the third year reign of Cyrus the Mead; or 536 B.C. The first portion of prophecy given in Daniel 11 takes place only 15 years after it was recorded. Daniel died three years after writing the book, so he did not see the eventual fulfillment. The prophecies given in chapter 11 are so detailed and literal, that some liberal scholars have a hard time swallowing its content.

In the third century A.D. a heathen philosopher by the name of Pophiri attacked the notion that the book of Daniel was an accurate book of literal prophecy. After reading chapter eleven and seeing how it was almost a blow by blow account of the struggle between the Ptolomeic and Seleucid dynasties; he scoffed that Daniel was actually a forgery and cited that the prophetic episodes *must* have been written *after* the events occurred (meaning after 32 B.C.)

This argument has no base in light of the fact that in 284 B.C. a project was begun by Ptolemy Philadelphus to translate the entire Old Testament scriptures into Greek.¹ It was completed in 247 B.C. by seventy Hebrew scholars and thus named the Septuagint (or "seventy"). This translation contained the book of Daniel.

Forty years after the completion of the Septuagint, the priestly Essene community hid many Old Testament scrolls in clay jars within caves bordering the Dead Sea. One of these scrolls included the book of Daniel. In 1948 A.D. a young shepherd boy discovered these treasures. The Dead Sea Scrolls prove, once again, that scholarly repudiation of scripture is folly.

HISTORIC PROOF

The next pages will walk you, step by step, through the prophetic scriptures of Daniel 11:2-35 and the annals of secular history. After your own personal research to confirm the given historic fulfillment, it would be difficult to scoff prophecy as Bible text manipulation.

¹ This was commissioned by Ptolemy II so that a copy could be stored in the new Alexandrian library.

FOUR MORE KINGS

The vision, given to Daniel by an angel, took place during the reign of Cyrus the Great² in 536 B.C. The angel started the prophecy with the next four kings of Babylon to reign after the death of Cyrus.

Behold, three more kings will arise in Persia, and the fourth shall be far richer than them all; by his strength, through his riches, he shall stir up all against the realm of Greece. Daniel chapter 11 vs. 2 written 536 BC

Sixteen years after the prophecy was given to Daniel, the first verse was fulfilled:

From 529 – 486 B.C. Cambyses, Smerdes³ and Darius arose as successor kings in Persia. King Xerxes became richer than the previous three. By Xerxes strength and through his wealth, he mobilized over *three hundred thousand* troops against Greece in 481 B.C.

It should be noted that at the time of this prophecy (536 B.C.) Greece was an unknown dominion. When Xerxes came to power, he sought to triumph over the newly expanded Grecian influence. Xerxes was not successful; even with such an enormous army at his command.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT

The next two verses deal with a condensed foretelling of the peerless conqueror, Alexander the Great.

Then a mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. And when he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken up and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not among his posterity nor according to his dominion with which he ruled; for his kingdom shall be uprooted, even for others besides these. vss. 3-4 written 536 BC

Fulfillment:

From 336 to 323 B.C. Alexander the Great arose and ruled with great dominance. When he ascended to his highest acquisition in 323 B.C., he died of pneumonia. His death resulted in the vanquished kingdoms being divided into four environs. These four quarters were not divided among his family or his countrymen; but were taken by his four generals.

Again, scripture displays acute accuracy. After the death of Alexander, general Cassander appropriated the kingdoms of Macedonia and Greece, Lysimachus took charge of Thrace and Asia Minor, Seleucus assumed command over Syria and Persia, and Ptolemy took Egypt, Israel, Arabia and Cyprus.

² Also known as Darius the Mede

³ Smerdes, brother of Cambyses, was murdered by one wishing to rule as an imposter. His reign was short lived.

FROM GENERALS TO KINGS

The next set of verses deal with the initial power surges among the various generals; specifically, Alexander's former general, Ptolemy Soter (now ruling over Egypt) and Seleucus Nicator (now ruling Syria and Asia). Take note that the use of *Northern* and *Southern* kings is in reference to Jerusalem as the focal center. Egypt would be to the South and Syria to the North.

Then the king of the South shall become strong, as well as one of his princes; and he shall gain power over him and have dominion. His dominion shall be a great dominion.. 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. vss. 5-6
written 536 BC

Fulfillment:

Ptolemy Philadelphus became strong in 312 B.C. as ruler over Egypt. But Seleucus Nicator; eventually gained power and dominion (above that of Ptolemy) as ruler over Asia, Persia and Lower Syria. To secure relations between the powers (and pressure Seleucus), a political marriage was arranged between Antiochus Theos (ruler over northern Syria) and Berenice, the daughter of Ptolemy. In order to marry Berenice, Antiochus had to put away his present wife Laodicea. It was hoped the offspring from the union would become a catalyst for the uniting of Egypt and Syria. Antiochus gained nothing from this arrangement; so when Ptolemy died, he took back his original wife and abandoned Berenice.

Angered by her mistreatment, Laodicea eventually poisoned both Antiochus and Berenice. Later, this would move the son of Ptolemy to seek revenge.

SPOILS RETURNED TO EGYPT

The sons of the original rulers now begin to wrestle one another.

But from a branch of her roots one shall arise in his place, who shall come with an army, enter the fortress of the king of the North, and deal with them and prevail. And he shall also carry their gods captive to Egypt, with their princes and their precious articles of silver and gold; and he shall continue more years than the king of the North. vss. 7-8 written 536 BC

Fulfillment:

In 230 B.C. Ptolemy III Eurgetes (a son of Berenice) arose in place of his father. In revenge against the murderous Laodicea, Ptolemy's forces entered the citadel of the present king of Syria, Seleucus II Callinicus, and was victorious. Ptolemy rescued 2,500 idols and 40,000 talents of silver (taken from Egypt earlier by Cambyses) and returned them to their former Egyptian temples.

SPOILS UNRETRIEVED

Not willing to allow Syria to be robbed of her treasures, Seleucus worked to gain dominance over Ptolemy.

Then the king of the North shall come to the kingdom of the king of the South, but shall return to his own land. However his sons shall stir up strife, and assemble a multitude of great forces; and one shall certainly come and overwhelm and pass through; then he shall return to his fortress and stir up strife. vss 9- 10 written 536 BC

Fulfillment:

Seleucus Callinicus attempted to win back the spoil taken by Ptolemy Eurgetes, but was not victorious. However in 220 B.C. his sons: Seleucus Ceraunus and Antiachus III the Great were able to gather a large army and move south to capture an Egyptian fortress in Gaza.

Though the treasures and idols were not rescued, the sons of Seleucus did not leave empty handed; the captured fortress in Gaza left an entry point into Egypt vulnerable for future access.

THE RAGE OF EGYPT

Though pleased with the victory over the brothers of Seleucus, Ptolemy was angered at the taking of the Gaza fortress.

And the king of the South shall be moved with rage, and go out and fight with him, with the king of the North, who shall muster a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into the hand of his enemy. When he has taken away the multitude, his heart will be lifted up; and he will cast down tens of thousands, but he will not prevail. vss. 11-12 written 536 BC

Fulfillment:

The enraged king of Egypt, Ptolemy IV Philopater, clustered an even greater army against Seleucus and Antiachus consisting of an army of 73,000 troops, 5,000 cavalry and 73 elephants. In 210 B.C. he was victorious over Syria causing a great loss of 10,000 enemy troops, 300 cavalry, 5 elephants and the taking of 4,000 prisoners. Ptolemy did not press his victory and thus returned to Egypt.

So, for the time being, Egypt maintained its dominance as a military power. However, a coming coalition of nations would soon dwarf the confident king of Egypt.

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

The coming century had to be played with a team and not individual powers. Antiochus the Great, knowing his limitations, sought to bring together the surrounding nations to keep Egypt from having delusions of grandeur.

For the king of the North will return and muster a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come at the end of some years with a great army and much equipment. And in those times many shall rise up against the king of the South; also certain violent men of your people shall exalt themselves in fulfillment of the vision, but they shall fall. vss. 13-14 written 536 BC

Fulfillment:

Antiochus the Great could not muster a large enough army within his own country, so he made a league with Phillip III of Macedon and others. It is hoped this would secure his borders against future Egyptian invasion. It was successful, for many aligned themselves against Philopater's son Ptolemy V Epiphanes, causing a weakening of Egypt in 200 B.C. Even a certain number of Jews aligned themselves with the new order with Antiochus; however, it did not work to the Jews advantage years later.

With the coalition in force, the new army under Antiochus marched on an Egyptian stronghold at Sidon. The Jews in Jerusalem helped the army by giving food and water to both troop and animals.

So the king of the North shall come and build a siege mound, and take a fortified city; and the forces of the South shall not withstand him. Even his choice troops shall have no strength to resist. But he who comes against him shall do according to his own will, and no one shall stand against him. He shall stand in the Glorious Land with destruction in his power. vss. 15-16 written 536 BC

Fulfillment:

Antiochus the Great used the new alliance to come up against the Egyptian fortress in Sidon. An elite Egyptian army, led by general Scopus, was not successful in vanquishing it. Antiochus entered into Jerusalem but treated the Jews well because they aided him in the league against Egypt.

Because of the aid given by the Jews in Jerusalem, Antiochus wished to thank them by lowering taxes that had been levied upon them. This allowed them to revitalize their war-ravaged city and to renovate the holy temple.

Antiochus was not satisfied with just one victory over Egypt; he sought the complete destruction of Egypt. To this end, he would need to place a collaborator within their chief ranks.

A POLITICAL MARRIAGE

Hoping to quell hostility between Egypt and the new league of nations, Ptolemy Epiphanes would seek to marry Cleopatra,⁴ the daughter of Antiachus. The marriage pleased Antiachus, who sought to gain influence over Ptolemy through the loyalty of his daughter.

He 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 shall give him the daughter of women to destroy it; but she shall not stand with him, or be for him. vs. 17 536 BC

Fulfillment:

Antiochus was determined to destroy Egypt. To this end, he contracted a political marriage between Ptolemy Epiphanes and his daughter Cleopatra in 193 B.C. He assumed that his daughter would be more faithful to her father than her husband. This plan did not work.

So the faithfulness of Cleopatra to her husband over her father kept Egypt safe from the waiting nations. Instead of a collaborator to gain access, his daughter became a buffer of temporary peace between the titans.

REDIRECTED HOSTILITY

The next prophetic passage marked the eventual end of the Seleucid power base in Asia and Syria by Antiochus challenging the rising Roman government.

After this he shall turn his face to the coastlands, and shall take many. But a ruler shall bring the reproach against them to an end; and with the reproach removed, he shall turn back on him. Then he shall turn his face toward the fortress of his own land; but he shall stumble and fall, and not be found. vss. 18-19 written 536 BC

Fulfillment:

Seeing that Egypt was now out of his grasp, Antiochus turned his aggression toward India. This vitriolic campaign brought the Seleucid power into hostile relations with the rising Roman power. His defeat at Magnesia in 190 B.C. forced him to cede all Seleucid dominion to Rome and pay heavy tribute.

The Seleucid dynasty spun downward in their greed for conquest. The impending debt from this disastrous campaign forced the coming leader to look for sources of revenue. Unfortunately, this means pressing the only nation that could not be threatened the weakened Seleucid power.

⁴ Note: This is not the "famous" Cleopatra who married Mark Antony against the will of Rome.

PRELUDE TO EVIL

The reign of the ensuing king after Antiochus the Great was short lived.

There shall arise in his place one who imposes taxes on the glorious kingdom; but within a few days he shall be destroyed, but not in anger or in battle. And in his place shall arise a vile person, to whom they will not give the honor of royalty; but he shall come in peaceably, and seize the kingdom by intrigue. vss. 20-21 536 BC

Fulfillment:

In 187 B.C. Seleucus IV Philopater took the place of Antiochus the Great and exacted taxes out of the Jews. His reign lasted only 12 years until he was murdered by one of his courtiers, Heliodorus. After his death in 175 B.C., the evil Antiochus IV Epiphanes took the throne via crafty maneuvering (having no legal claim to it).

The bloodline of the monarchy was broken as Antiochus Epiphanes took hold of the Syrian throne.

ACCESS VIA RIVALS

A rivalry began between two Ptolemaic brothers for the throne of Egypt. Antiochus increased his power base by building an alliance with one and pitting him against the other.

With the force of a flood they shall be swept away from before him and be broken, and also the prince of the covenant. And after the league is made with him he shall act deceitfully, for he shall come up and become strong with a small number of people. He shall enter peaceably, even into the richest places of the province; and he shall do what his fathers have not done, nor his forefathers: he shall disperse among them the plunder, spoil, and riches; and he shall devise his plans against the strongholds, but only for a time. vss. 22-24 written 536 BC

Fulfillment:

In 170 B.C. Antiochus Epiphanes increased his strength by aligning himself with Egypt by supposedly helping Ptolemy Philometer regain the crown back from his rival brother, Ptolemy Euergetes. In Israel, he deposed and murdered Onias the high priest and placed his brother Jason in his position.⁵ Though in league with Egypt, he gained favor by not keeping plunder, but distributed it to the surrounding nations. And with this increase of strength, he kept a garrison of troops at Pelusium as a stronghold to keep the border of Egypt open for future exploitation.

As long as Philometer and Euergetes struggle for the crown of Egypt, Antiochus has a deceptive advantage over the surrounding nations. This proved so effective; he sought to increase the sibling hostility.

⁵ Through Jason he sought to introduce the Hellenist culture.

THE RIFT WIDENS

Antiochus sought to increase the animosity between the two brothers, Philometer and Euergetes by poking a Syrian nose into Egypt.

He shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the South with a great army. And the king of the South shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army; but he shall not stand, for they shall devise plans against him. Yes, those who eat of the portion of his delicacies shall destroy him; his army shall be swept away, and many shall fall down slain. vss. 25-26 written 536 BC

Fulfillment:

Antiochus Epiphanes began a campaign against Ptolemy VII Euergetes. The bought "friends" of Antiochus joined to depose the brother of Ptolemy Philometer. Ptolemy Euergetes is not successful in protecting Egypt from this advance. By the consent of his own brother, Egypt is placed in peril and many troops are killed.

THE TEMPLE PLUNDERED

To keep his strengthened army going, funds were required. Taxing Israel was not enough, Antiochus needed a quick-fix.

Both these kings' hearts shall be bent on evil, and they shall speak lies at the same table; but it shall not prosper, for the end will still be at the appointed time. While returning to his land with great riches, his heart shall be moved against the holy covenant; so he shall do damage and return to his own land. vss. 27-28 written 536 BC

Fulfillment:

Though Philometer and Antiochus were in league, there was no internal trust and each had plans to eventually succeed over the other. At this time, Jason was deposed of the illegitimate high priesthood by the brother of the slain Onias. Antiochus squelches an insurrection by Jason and makes peace with Israel. He uses this peace as an opportunity to betray the Jews, plunder the temple and take the spoils to Syria.

With stolen wealth taken back to Syria, Antiochus increases the longevity of his present army pressuring Egypt. The stress placed upon Egypt then increases the animosity between Philometer and Euergetes. The Ptolemaic house now totters and becomes vulnerable to complete Syrian take-over.

PLANS FOR EGYPT FOILED

Rome had not forgotten the Syrian tendency toward expansionism. There needed to be a severe humbling of Antiochus before he pounced upon weakened Egypt. Seeing the army of Antiochus moving toward the Egyptian border, Caesar sent a powerful threat.

At the appointed time he shall return and go toward the south; but it shall not be like the former or the latter. For ships from Cyprus shall come against him; therefore he shall be grieved, and return in rage against the holy covenant, and do damage. So he shall return and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant. And forces shall be mustered by him, and they shall defile the sanctuary fortress; then they shall take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the *abomination of desolation*. vss. 29-31 written 536 BC

Fulfillment:

With his new wealth, Antiochus gathered an army against Egypt in 168 B.C. Only now Philometer and Euergetes have mended their sibling rivalry. A Roman Embassy led by C. Popillius Laenas, came to Antiochus en route to Egypt and commanded him to stop his violent campaign.⁶ This intervention by Rome so enraged Antiochus Epiphanes, he entered the holy temple in Jerusalem, halted the daily sacrifice of clean animals, built an altar to Zeus in the Holy of Holies and slaughtered unclean pigs upon it.

Antiochus was defeated on several fronts. His deceptive tactics were realized by Philometer and the threat of his advance moved the two brothers together, thus sealing the rift. Rome pulls its ever increasing weight against Antiochus preventing his long-laid plans to fizzle. He could not punish Egypt, Rome would not let him; he could not even punish Rome for it was too powerful. So upon his withdrawal to Syria, he hurls his full anger upon the Jews.

Author's note:

This act of ultimate desecration becomes a model for a future event that will repeat the injurious act of Antiochus Epiphanese. It is given a label to separate it from all other acts of its nature. Setting up an idol in the temple holy of holies has been dubbed *The Abomination of Desolation*.

Verses 36 through 39 prophesy of this future event. However, because they speak of *future* events, these verses (along with the prophetic passages of Daniel 11:40–45) will not be covered in this treatise on literal prophetic fulfillment.

⁶ Popillius Laenas drew a circle in the sand around Antiochus and told him not to leave the circle until an answer was given to him. Not wanting the involvement of Rome, he reluctantly agreed to the Roman demand.

THE MACCABEAN REVOLT

Setting up the idol of Zeus within the Holy of Holies was the last straw for the Jewish people. Plundering the temple was the act of a bully. Desecrating the temple was the act of a demon.

Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits. And those of the people who understand shall instruct many; yet for many days they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering. vss. 32-33 written 536 BC

Fulfillment:

Antiochus sought to justify his actions and some Jews forsook the covenant heritage with Israel and joined him.⁷ But many Jews formed a calculated and successful revolt under Judas Maccabees in 166 B.C. After this revolt, Hasadian Jews instructed the masses through the coming decades of war and attempts at conquest.

The new Jewish liberty under the Maccabean order continued for a short time. Roman coinage was abandoned for newly minted temple coins and the order of the Pharisee and Sadducee emerged and grew in its political influence.

UNTO THE APPOINTED MESSIAH

Rome began its historic climb toward world domination. The Maccabean revolt proved to be but a mere annoyance. Soon, a puppet king would replace the short lived dynasty and demand for tribute would be enforced.

Now when they fall, they shall be aided with a little help; but many shall join with them by intrigue. And some of those of understanding shall fall, to refine them, purge them, and make them white, until the time of the end; because it is still for the appointed time. vss. 34-35 written 536 BC

Five hundred years after the prophecy was given to Daniel, verse 35 was fulfilled:

The Maccabean order continued until 37 B.C. when Herod the Great assumed power. The ensuing pressure from Rome and their new Idumean king was pre-designed to purge and prepare them for the Messiah who was to be born within the next few years at the appointed time.

Rome has its grip upon the world as the new governing authority. Roman roads and communication network, would be used as a conduit for the coming good news; the arrival and atonement of the prophesied Messiah.

⁷ In the town of Modein, an outraged priest by the name of Matathias killed the representative of Antiochus and the first Jew to submit to the pagan decrees. His sons fled into the Judean hills and formed the Maccabean band of guerrilla fighters.

WHY PROPHECY?

If you are honest with yourself, there is no way you could read through Daniel 11:2-35 and not be convinced that this was, indeed, history written before the events transpired. But why is it necessary to prove the existence of prophecy?

As I have stated earlier, prophecy is proof that the content was written, not by man, but by an Author outside of our time domain. God has chosen the written word of prophecy to validate the source of the message.

"Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, *declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done*, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure,'" Isaiah 46:9-10

But what of ancient books and writings of other religions that speak of the nature of God or enlightenment; are they not valid? No, without prophecy we have only but the poetic imaginations of man. Only God can write about His own vast nature, character and plan. God challenges the terrestrial writers to see if they can demonstrate the same proof of extraterrestrial origin.

"Let them bring forth and show us what will happen; let them show the former things, what they were, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare to us things to come. *Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that you are gods*; yes, do good or do evil, that we may be dismayed and see it together." Isaiah 41:22-23

Outside of the Bible, prophecy exists in no other book. I have seen predictions, which is an interpretation of present patterns; but not prophecy which is history written in advance— that is the signature of God alone.

"Behold, the former things have come to pass, and new things I [God] declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them." Isaiah 42:9

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