

# Daniel 11 (NKJV) With Explanation

by Tom Robinson

The chapter has been divided into boxed sections for clarity. Events within the same general time frame are grouped together. A new box indicates a new time frame or, in some cases, a change of rulers. An underline indicates that a new individual is fulfilling a particular office. Strikethroughs denote mistranslations. A timeline and regional map appear at the end.

**1:** “Also in the first year [539 BC] of Darius the Mede [a.k.a. Gubaru, governor of Babylon under Persian Emperor Cyrus the Great], I, *even* I [God’s angel], stood up to confirm and strengthen him [Darius the Mede].)

**2:** “And now [in the third year of Cyrus (10:1), i.e. 536/5 BC] I [God’s angel] will tell you [Daniel] the truth: Behold, [after Cyrus] three more kings will arise in Persia [1) Cambyses (530-522 BC); 2) Pseudo-Smerdis or Gaumata (522 BC); 3) Darius I (522-486 BC)] and the fourth [Xerxes (486-465 BC), husband to Esther] shall be far richer than *them* all; by his strength, through his riches, he shall stir up all against the realm of Greece. [In one of the largest assaults of ancient history, he sent a vast force of hundreds of ships and a million troops against the Greeks.]

**3:** “Then [129 years later] a mighty king [Alexander the Great (336-323 BC)] shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion [as he was the next ruler in history with greater dominion than Xerxes], and do according to his will. [He was unstoppable until his sudden death at age 33.]

**4:** “And when he [Alexander] has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken up [at his death in 323 BC at the height of his achievements] and divided toward the four winds of heaven [ultimately—see end of verse], but not among his posterity nor according to his dominion with which he ruled [an initial attempt to hold his empire together by a joint regency in the name of his nephew and his unborn son failed, and one of his generals, Antigonus, made a bid for power]; for his kingdom shall be uprooted, even for others besides these. [Within a few years, the empire ended up split among four of Alexander’s *other* generals: 1) Ptolemy Soter; 2) Seleucus Nicator; 3) Cassander; and 4) Lysimachus.]

**5:** “Also the king of the South [now Ptolemy (I) Soter over Egypt, south of the Holy Land] shall become strong [ruled 323-285 BC], as well as *one* of his princes [Seleucus (I) Nicator, who was originally a general under Ptolemy]; and he [Seleucus I] shall gain power over him [Ptolemy I] and have dominion. [Seleucus I eventually gained rule over Greater Syria, 311-280 BC]. His [Seleucus I’s] dominion *shall be* a great dominion [over most of what had earlier been the Persian Empire, stretching from Syria to India, the largest part of Alexander’s empire].

[From this point the angel focuses on two of the four divisions of Alexander’s empire—the kingdom to the south of the Holy Land now being Egypt under the Ptolemies and the kingdom to the north now being Greater Syria under the Seleucids.]

**6:** “And at the end of *some* years [252 BC, 28 years after Seleucus I’s death] they [North and South] shall join forces, for the daughter [Berenice] of the king of the South [now Ptolemy (II) Philadelphus (285-246 BC)] shall go to the king of the North [now Antiochus (II) Theos (261-246 BC)] to make an agreement [or “peaceful arrangement” (New American Standard Bible), i.e. a marriage to seal an alliance—requiring Antiochus II to put away his former wife Laodice]; but she [Berenice] shall not retain the power of her authority [or “her position of power” (NASB)], and neither he [Antiochus II] nor his authority shall stand; but she [Berenice] shall be given up [in death], with those who brought her [her attendants], and with him who begot her [her father Ptolemy II], and with him who strengthened her in *those* times [her husband Antiochus II]. [Berenice, her father and her husband were all removed from power by death in 246 BC. When Berenice’s father Ptolemy II died that year, her husband Antiochus II repudiated her and took Laodice back as his wife. But later that year, Laodice, doubting Antiochus’s faithfulness and anxious to secure the throne for his and her son Seleucus (II) Callinicus, murdered her husband and had Berenice put to death as well.]

**7:** “But from a branch of her roots [offspring of Berenice’s parents, i.e. a sibling] *one* [her brother Ptolemy (III) Euergetes (246-221 BC)] shall arise in his [Ptolemy II’s] place, who shall come with an army [in 245 BC], enter the fortress [Seleucia, the port of Syria’s capital Antioch] of the king of the North [now Seleucus (II) Callinicus (246-226 BC)], and deal with them [this was to avenge his sister’s death] and prevail.

**8a:** “And he [Ptolemy III] shall also carry their gods captive to Egypt, with their princes *and* their precious articles of silver and gold;... [Ptolemy III carried immense wealth back to Egypt, including around 2,500 molten images and idolatrous vessels that Persian Emperor Cambyses had taken from Egypt in 526 BC.]

**8b:** “...and he [Ptolemy III] shall continue *more* years than the king of the North [Seleucus II]. [Ptolemy III ruled until his death in 221 BC, nearly six years after the death of Seleucus II of Syria in 226 BC.]

**9:** “Also *the king of the North* [actually just “he”—Seleucus II] shall come [in an attempted attack] to the kingdom [Egypt] of the king of the South [Ptolemy III], but shall return to his own land [of Syria after failing to accomplish his purpose].

**10:** “However his [Seleucus II’s] sons [Seleucus (III) Ceraunus (227-223 BC) and Antiochus (III) the Great (223-186 BC)] shall stir up strife, and assemble a multitude of great forces [both assembled immense forces to fight Egypt, avenge their father and recover their port and fortress, Seleucia]; and *one* [of them, Antiochus III] shall certainly come and overwhelm and pass through [Antiochus III recovered his fortress, Seleucia, after 27 years, and also conquered south into what was currently Egyptian territory as far as Gaza, including Judea]; then he [Antiochus III] shall return to his fortress and stir up strife [or “be stirred up again,” King James Version margin].

**11:** “And the king of the South [now Ptolemy (IV) Philopater (221-204 BC), son of Ptolemy III] shall be moved with rage [in 217 BC], and go out [with an army of 20,000 at

**Raphia**] and fight with him, **[that is,]** with the king of the North **[Antiochus III]**, who shall muster a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into the hand of his **[Antiochus III's]** enemy **[Ptolemy IV]**. **12a:** When he **[Ptolemy IV]** has taken away the multitude **[Ptolemy IV won the battle]**, his heart will be lifted up; and he will cast down tens of thousands... **[Ptolemy IV's army killed tens of thousands of Syrian troops and he re-annexed Judea to Egypt.]**

**12b:** "...but he **[Ptolemy IV]** will not prevail. **[In making a rash and hasty peace with Antiochus III and returning to indulgent living, Ptolemy IV did not secure Egypt's victory.]**

**13:** For the king of the North **[Antiochus III]** 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. **[After Ptolemy IV died in 204 BC and left his throne to his infant son, Ptolemy (V) Epiphanes, Antiochus III assembled a great army and attacked Egypt in 201 BC.]**

**14:** "Now in those times many **[Antiochus III having made an alliance with Philip V of Macedonia and others]** shall rise up against the king of the South **[now Ptolemy (V) Epiphanes (203-181 BC)]**. Also, violent men of your **[Daniel's]** people **[Jews attempting to help Antiochus III]** shall exalt themselves in fulfillment of the vision, but they shall fall.

**15:** "So the king of the North **[Antiochus III]** shall come and build a siege mound, and take a fortified city **[defeating Sidon in 198 BC]**; and the forces of the South **[Egypt under the boy king Ptolemy V]** shall not withstand *him*. Even his **[Ptolemy V's]** choice troops *shall have* no strength to resist.

**16:** "But he **[Antiochus III]** who comes against him **[Ptolemy V]** shall do according to his **[Antiochus III's]** own will, and no one shall stand against him **[Antiochus III]**. He **[Antiochus III]** shall stand in the Glorious Land **[Holy Land]** with destruction in his power. **[Following the Battle of Panium in 198 BC, Antiochus III wrested control of Judea from Egypt yet again.]**

**17:** "He **[Antiochus III]** shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and ~~upright ones~~ **[literally "equitable things"—"a proposal of peace" (NASB), i.e. a marriage to seal an alliance]** with him; thus shall he **[Antiochus III]** do. And he **[Antiochus III in 198 BC]** shall give him **[the young Ptolemy V]** the daughter of women **[Antiochus III's daughter Cleopatra]** to destroy it **[that is, to destroy or undermine Egypt so as to eventually take possession of it]**; but she **[Cleopatra]** shall not stand *with him* **[her father Antiochus III]**, or be for him **[as she sided instead with her husband]**. **[That the whole thing was a trick can be seen in the fact that Antiochus III promised southern Syria and Judea as a dowry but did not deliver them.]**

**18:** "After this **[in 197-196 BC]** he **[Antiochus III]** shall turn his face to the coastlands **[beginning a vigorous campaign against the coastlands and islands of Asia Minor and the Aegean]**, and shall take many. **[At this point, in 195 BC, Antiochus III provides asylum for Hannibal of Carthage, whom the Romans had defeated in the Second Punic War—and Hannibal assists Antiochus in landing in Greece in 192 BC. Antiochus is thus brought into conflict with Rome.]** But a ruler **[Roman General Lucius Cornelius Scipio Asiaticus]** shall bring the reproach **[of defeat that's]** against them **[Asia Minor and the Aegean coasts]** to an end; and with the reproach removed, he **[Scipio]** shall turn **[it—the reproach of defeat]** back on

him [Antiochus III]. [Scipio utterly defeated Antiochus III at the Battle of Magnesia in 190 BC.]

**19:** “Then he [Antiochus III] shall turn his face toward the fortress of his own land; but he shall stumble and fall, and not be found. [Having lost all he had gained, Antiochus III tried in 186 BC to recoup his losses by plundering the Temple of Belus in Elymais, within his own kingdom, whereupon he was defeated by local forces and killed.]

**20:** “There shall arise in his [Antiochus III’s] place one [his son Seleucus (IV) Philopater (187-176 BC)] who imposes taxes *on* the glorious kingdom [sending the tax collector Heliodorus through Judea in an effort to raise money for his financially distressed empire]; but within a few days he [Seleucus IV] shall be destroyed [he ruled only 11 years in contrast to his father’s rule of 37 years], but not in anger or in battle [he was poisoned by Heliodorus, who took control with the backing of other Syrian officials tired of the excesses of the Seleucid rulers].

**21:** “And in his [Seleucus IV’s] place shall arise a vile person [Antiochus (IV) Epiphanes, Seleucus IV’s brother, a younger son of Antiochus III], to whom they [Syrian officials supporting Heliodorus] will not give the honor of royalty; but he [Antiochus IV] shall come in peaceably, and seize the kingdom by intrigue. [By a show of “Roman manners” and a great deal of flattery, he was able to enlist the aid of neighboring King Eumenes II of Pergamum and officials at home in forcing out Heliodorus and obtaining the throne (ruled 175-164 BC)]. **22:** With the force of a flood they [those who opposed him, including Heliodorus] shall be swept away from before him [Antiochus IV] and be broken, and also the prince of the covenant [a Hellenistic Jew who changed his name to the Greek form Jason, appointed by Antiochus IV as replacement high priest of the Jewish worship system (ca. 175-172 BC)—he was dropped from that position only three years later in favor of another Hellenizing apostate, Menelaus (ca. 172-162 BC)]. **23:** And after the league [treaty or agreement] *is made* [by the Jews] with him [Antiochus IV] he [Antiochus IV] shall act deceitfully, for he shall come up and become strong with [at first only] a small *number of* people. **24:** He shall enter peaceably, even into the richest places of the province [invading Galilee]; 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 [Antiochus IV took from the rich and gave to the poor as a temporary ploy to gain fanatical support among the masses].

**25a:** “He [Antiochus IV] shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the South [now Ptolemy (VI) Philometer (181-145 BC), son of Ptolemy V and Cleopatra, and nephew of Antiochus IV] with a great army. And the king of the South [Ptolemy VI] shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army;... [Egypt threatened war to claim the dowry that had been promised by Antiochus III for Cleopatra, the now-deceased mother of Ptolemy V and sister of Antiochus IV. Therefore, Antiochus IV marched south in 171 BC with an immense Syrian army yet met his nephew Ptolemy VI leading another immense army from Egypt.]

**25b:** “...but he [Ptolemy VI] shall not stand, for they [see next verse] shall devise plans

against him. **26:** Yes, those who eat of the portion of his delicacies [**Ptolemy VI's own trusted officers**] shall destroy him [**his chance at victory by plotting against him**]; his army shall be swept away, and many shall fall down slain. [**Antiochus IV was victorious at Pelusium, took his nephew Ptolemy VI captive and, marching to Memphis, proceeded to use him as a tool to reduce the overall strength of Egypt.**] **27:** Both these kings' [**Antiochus IV's and Ptolemy VI's**] hearts *shall be* bent on evil, and they shall speak lies at the same table [**perhaps describing the occasion, in 174 BC, when Antiochus IV and Ptolemy VI both sat at a banquet together—with Antiochus pretending to ally himself with the young Ptolemy against his brother Euergetes II, but with each actually trying to deceive the other**]; but it [**this lying to get ahead of the other**] shall not prosper, for the end *will still be* at the appointed time [**as God had predetermined it**].

**28:** “[**Antiochus IV in 168 BC**] While returning to his land [**Syria**] with great riches [**plunder from Egypt**], his heart shall be *moved* against the holy covenant [**Jewish worship system**]; so he shall do *damage* [**looting the temple of many golden vessels and massacring Jews upon coming back from Egypt**] and [**then**] return to his own land [**Syria**].

**29a:** “At the appointed time [**later in 168 BC**] he [**Antiochus IV**] shall return and go toward the south [**upon learning of Ptolemy VI and Ptolemy VII forming a union against him**];...

**29b:** “...but it [**the outcome**] shall not be [**successful**] like the former or the latter. **30a:** For ships from Cyprus [**literally Kittim, Hebrew for “Western Lands” and here meaning Rome**] shall come against him;... [**Forced to accept surrender terms from Popillius, commander of the Roman fleet, Antiochus IV had to cease from his campaign against Egypt and restore the island of Cyprus to Egyptian rule.**]

**30b:** “...therefore he [**Antiochus IV**] shall be grieved, and return in rage against the holy covenant [**Jewish worship system**], and do *damage*. So he shall return and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant. [**Returning home through Judea, Antiochus IV vented his fury on the Jews, yet accorded special favor to those among them who rejected their religion and adopted the pagan Greek (Hellenistic) culture.**]

**31:** “And [**still in 168 BC**] forces shall be mustered by him [**Antiochus IV**], and they [**his forces**] shall defile the sanctuary fortress [**the temple—by sacrificing a pig on the temple altar**]; then they [**Antiochus IV's forces**] shall take away the daily *sacrifices* [**making them and other Mosaic ceremonies illegal**], and place *there* the abomination of desolation [**an image of the Greek god Zeus**].

**32a:** “Those who do wickedly against the covenant [**apostate Jews**] he [**Antiochus IV**] shall corrupt with flattery [**and many Jews did succumb to Antiochus IV's persecution against the faithful and reward for apostasy and forsook their religion**];

**32b:** “...but the people who know their God [**the Maccabees, patriotic followers of Judas Maccabeus of the Hasmonean priestly dynasty who wanted to continue in God's law, and later the Christians**] shall be strong, and carry out *great exploits*. [**Due in large part to the efforts of the Maccabees, Syrian forces were gradually driven out and Jewish independence**]

was reestablished.]

[The time frame now changes. Verse 32 is apparently dual in application, “the people who know their God” referring to both the Maccabees and also to true Christians. This dual meaning serves to advance the story flow to the time of New Testament Christians.]

**33:** “And those of the people who understand [**Christians**] shall instruct many; yet *for many* days they shall fall [**in death**] by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering [**Christians have been martyred since the days of Christ and the apostles**]. **34:** Now when they fall, they shall be aided with a little help [**even a little of God’s Spirit providing the tremendous ability to remain steadfast in the face of martyrdom**]; but many shall join with them by intrigue [**false prophets coming among them (Acts 20:29-30; 2 Peter 2:1-3)**]. **35:** And *some* of those of understanding shall fall, to refine them, purify *them*, and make *them* white, *until* the time of the end; because *it is* still for the appointed time. [**This process that began in Christ’s day will continue until the time of His return to refine the character of Christians and make them spiritually white or pure (Revelation 6:9-11; compare 7:14).**]

**36:** “Then [**in New Testament times**] the king [**of the North—now the Roman emperor, as Rome took possession of Syria in 65 BC and thus became the kingdom of the North**] shall do according to his own will: he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god [**establishing emperor worship**], shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods [**the true God**], and shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished [**Roman rule will, in some form, powerfully persist until the end-time wrath of God is complete**]; for what has been determined [**by God’s pronouncement**] shall be done. **37:** He [**the Roman emperor**] shall regard neither the God [**Hebrew *elohim*, should here be “gods”**] of his fathers [**that is, the old Roman gods**] nor the desire of women [**indicating either being homosexual, as 14 out of the first 15 Roman emperors were, or exalting himself above Tammuz—the Babylonian messiah for whom women wept (compare Ezekiel 8:14), who also had other names under the various mystery cults of different nations**], nor regard any god; for he shall exalt himself above *them* all [**for again, as noted on verse 36, the Roman emperors instituted emperor worship**].

**38a:** “But in their place he [**the Roman emperor**] shall honor a god of fortresses [**or “forces” (KJV)**];... [**The Roman emperors demanded worship of the strength of empire. Standards were idolatrous emblems of empire/emperor worship. Also, extravagant defense spending made Rome the strongest military power the world had ever seen.**]

**38b:** “...and a god [**the pope**] which his [**the Roman emperor’s**] fathers did not know he [**the Roman emperor, beginning with Constantine the Great in AD 313**] shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and pleasant things. **39:** Thus he [**later Roman emperors and rulers of successor Roman kingdoms**] shall act against the strongest fortresses [**enemy states and other religious institutions**] with a foreign [**Babylonian**] god [**the papacy**], which he [**successive Roman rulers**] shall acknowledge, *and* advance *its* glory; and he [**successive Roman rulers**] shall cause them [**the popes**] to rule over many, and divide the land for gain [**for both church and state**].

[The previous section spanned the centuries from the beginning of Christianity in the early Roman Empire to the inception of the Catholic-dominated Holy Roman Empire system and its subsequent development up to modern times. The next verse clearly advances the time frame of the chapter to the end of this age.]

**40a:** “At the time of the end the king of the South [now probably an end-time Muslim leader] shall attack him [the king of the North, now the final end-time Roman ruler, an individual also known as ‘the Beast,’ Revelation 17:12-17];...

**40b:** “...and the king of the North [the Beast] shall come against him [the king of the South, probably a Muslim leader] like a whirlwind, with chariots, horsemen, and with many ships [modern war vehicles of air, land and sea]; and he [the Beast] shall enter the countries [of the Middle East], overwhelm *them*, and pass through. **41:** He [the Beast] shall also enter the Glorious Land [the Holy Land—the modern state of Israel], and many *countries* shall be overthrown; but these [areas that follow] shall escape from his hand: Edom, Moab, and the prominent people of Ammon [these three territories constitute the modern country of Jordan, and the descendants of these people may be found among the Palestinians, Turks and other Middle Eastern peoples]. **42:** He [the Beast] shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape. **43:** He shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; also the Libyans [Phutites, including the inhabitants of modern Libya but perhaps meaning all of North and West Africa] and Ethiopians [Cushites, including the people of modern Ethiopia and probably Sudan but perhaps meaning all of East and Southern Africa] *shall follow* at his heels.

**44:** “But news from the east and the north [of opposing nations or forces in these directions near or far] shall trouble him [the Beast]; therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many.

**45a:** “And he [the Beast] shall plant the tents of his palace between the [Dead and Mediterranean] seas and [should be “in” (KJV)] the glorious holy mountain [Jerusalem];...

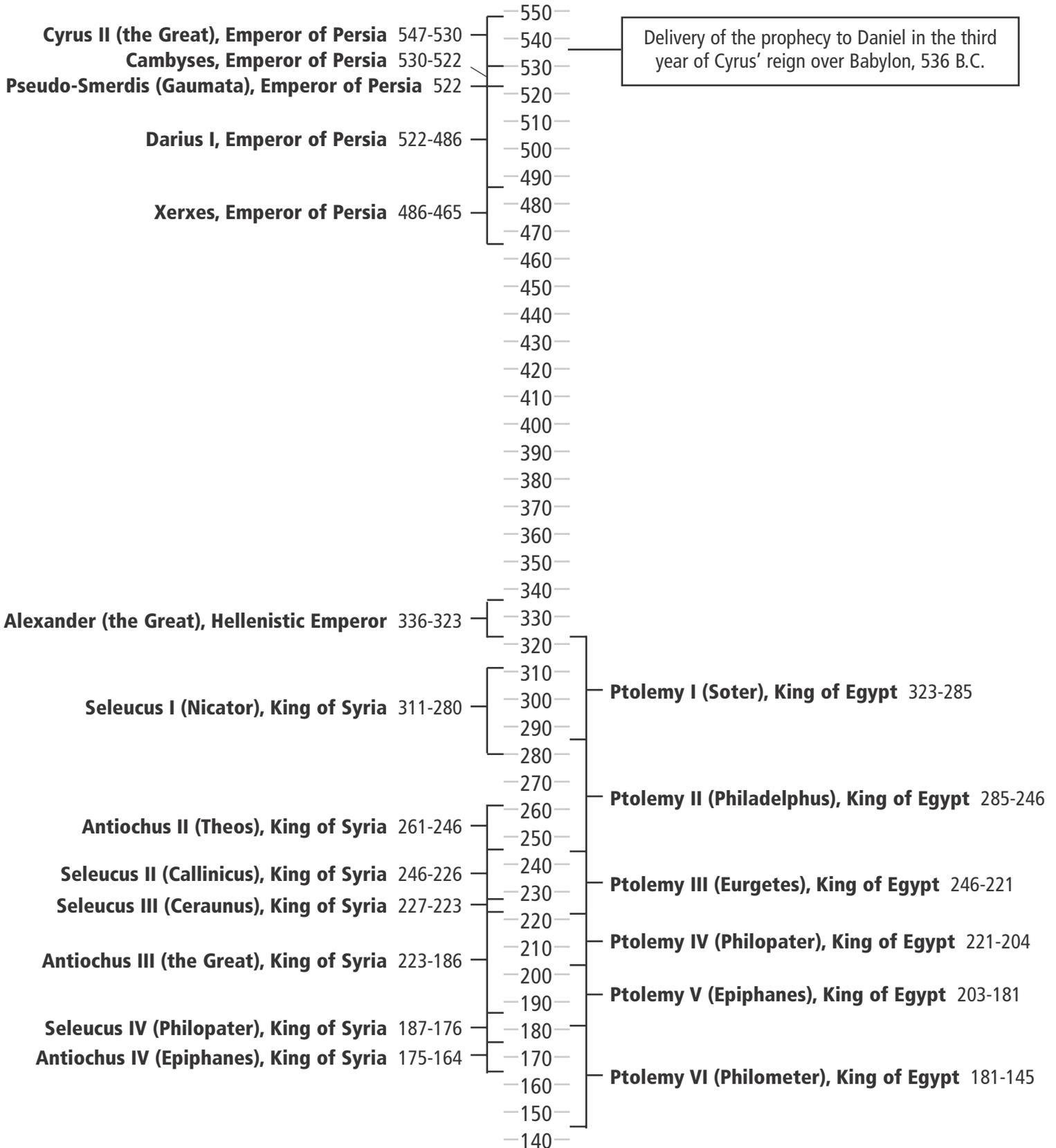
**45b:** “...yet he [the Beast] shall come to his end [at Christ’s return (Revelation 19:20)], and no one will help him.

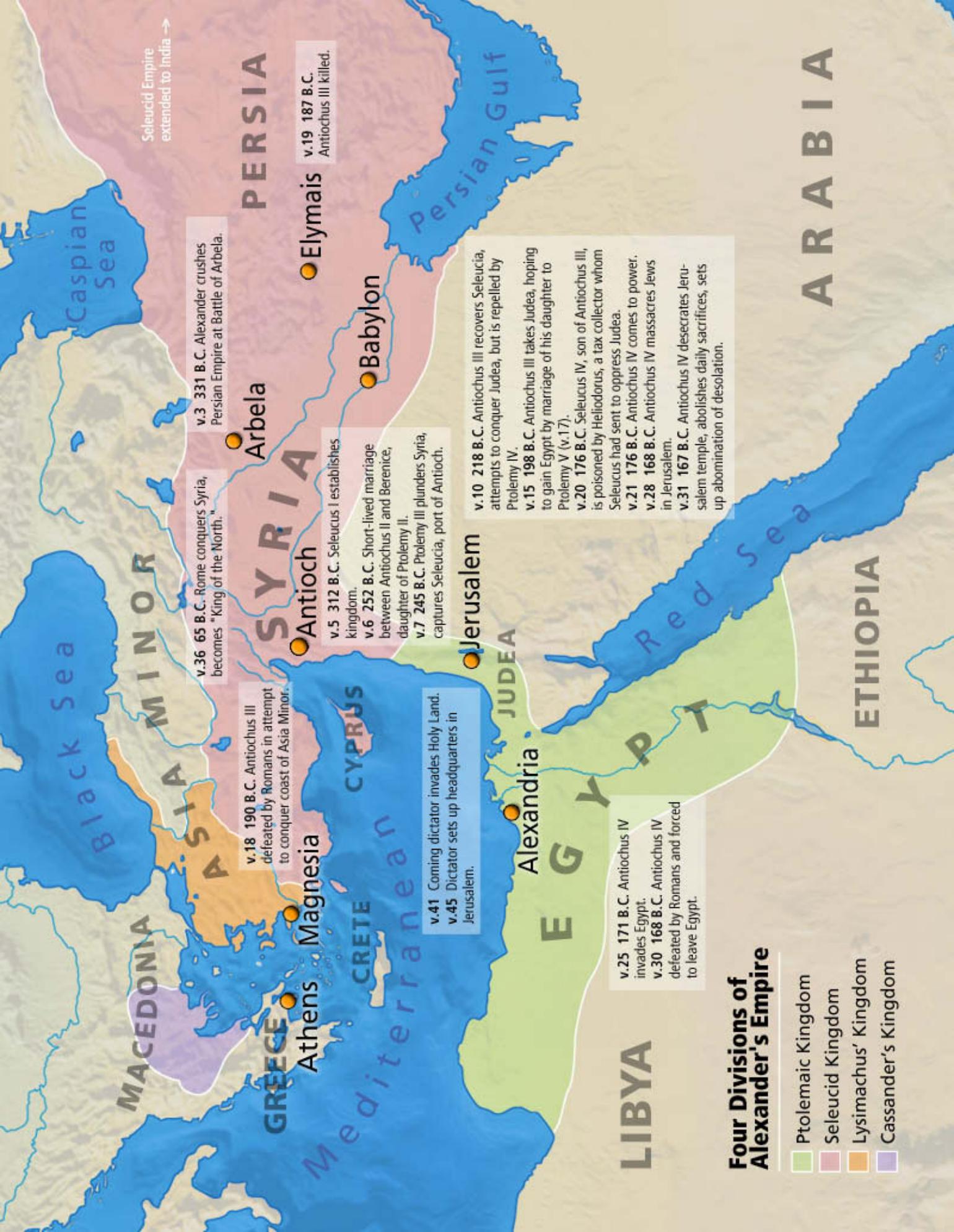
# Daniel 11 Rulers

All dates are B.C. and show duration of kings' reigns.  
Gaps exist where the prophecy skips over some rulers.

## KINGS OF THE NORTH

## KINGS OF THE SOUTH





Seleucid Empire  
extended to India →

**PERSIA**

v.19 187 B.C.  
Antiochus III killed.

● Elymais

● Babylon

● Arbela

v.3 331 B.C. Alexander crushes  
Persian Empire at Battle of Arbela.

v.36 65 B.C. Rome conquers Syria,  
becomes "King of the North."

v.18 190 B.C. Antiochus III  
defeated by Romans in attempt  
to conquer coast of Asia Minor.

● Athens ● Magnesia

**GREECE**

v.5 312 B.C. Seleucus I establishes  
kingdom.

v.6 252 B.C. Short-lived marriage  
between Antiochus II and Berenice,  
daughter of Ptolemy II.

v.7 245 B.C. Ptolemy III plunders Syria,  
captures Seleucia, port of Antioch.

● Antioch

● Jerusalem

**JUDEA**

v.41 Coming dictator invades Holy Land.  
v.45 Dictator sets up headquarters in  
Jerusalem.

● Alexandria

**E G Y P T**

v.25 171 B.C. Antiochus IV  
invades Egypt.  
v.30 168 B.C. Antiochus IV  
defeated by Romans and forced  
to leave Egypt.

v.10 218 B.C. Antiochus III recovers Seleucia,  
attempts to conquer Judea, but is repelled by  
Ptolemy IV.

v.15 198 B.C. Antiochus III takes Judea, hoping  
to gain Egypt by marriage of his daughter to  
Ptolemy V (v.17).

v.20 176 B.C. Seleucus IV, son of Antiochus III,  
is poisoned by Heliodorus, a tax collector whom  
Seleucus had sent to oppress Judea.

v.21 176 B.C. Antiochus IV comes to power.

v.28 168 B.C. Antiochus IV massacres Jews  
in Jerusalem.  
v.31 167 B.C. Antiochus IV desecrates Jeru-  
salem temple, abolishes daily sacrifices, sets  
up abomination of desolation.

### Four Divisions of Alexander's Empire

- Ptolemaic Kingdom
- Seleucid Kingdom
- Lysimachus' Kingdom
- Cassander's Kingdom

**A R A B I A**

**ETHIOPIA**

**LIBYA**

**MACEDONIA**

**ASIA MINOR**

**SYRIA**

**Black Sea**

**Caspian Sea**

**Persian Gulf**

**Red Sea**

**Mediterranean**

**CYPRUS**

**CRETE**