DANIEL 11

History Written in Advance

Daniel 11 — A Deep Dive

> *"By smooth words he will turn to godlessness those who act wickedly toward the covenant, but the people who know their God will display strength and take action.*
> DANIEL 11:32

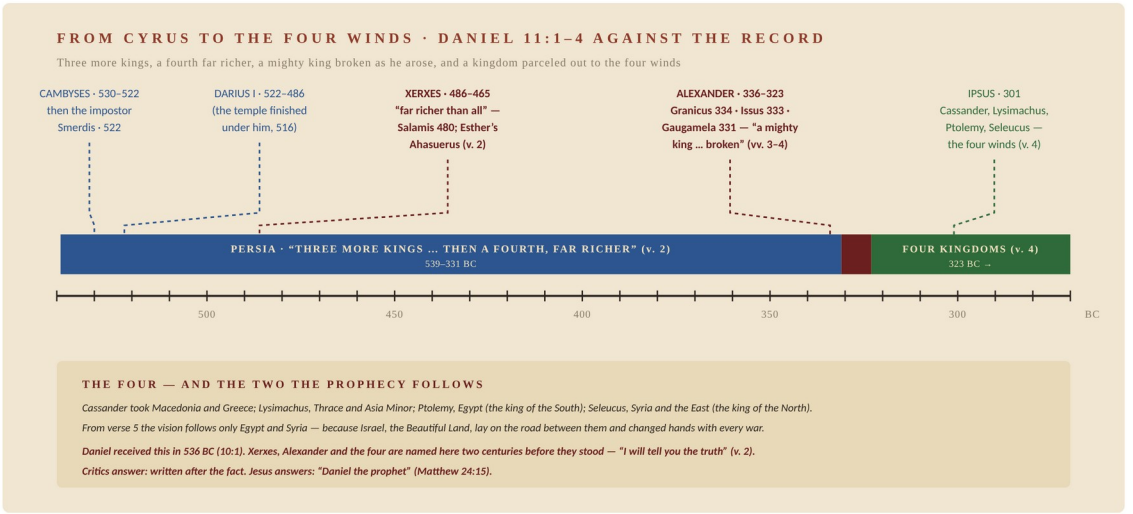
A SMITH FOR CHRIST STUDY · THREE VOICES: TSARFATI · MACARTHUR · GUZIK

Where the story stands

1. Daniel 11 is the most detailed prophecy in the Bible.

2. In forty-five verses it covers some 375 years, from the Persia of Daniel's own day through Alexander, through a century and a half of war between the Ptolemies of Egypt and the Seleucids of Syria…

3. It is the content of the vision chapter 10 introduced: "what is inscribed in the writing of truth," read out by the messenger who was withstood twenty-one days to bring it.



Persia, Alexander, and the Two Kings

DANIEL 11:1

In the first year of Darius the Mede, I arose to be an encouragement and a protection for him.

AMIR TSARFATI

Tsarfati sets the chapter in the writing of truth: the messenger is not predicting, he is reading. He walks Persia's four kings to Xerxes and the Greek war he started, then Alexander and the four-way split,...

JOHN MACARTHUR

"Do as he pleases", Alexander in verse 3, the final king in verse 36. MacArthur notes that the phrase is the Bible's description of a man who answers to no one, and that it is always followed by the same thing: broken, uprooted, "given to others."

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik names the Persian kings, Cambyses, Smerdis, Darius the First, then Xerxes the rich, and Salamis, and then Alexander: the Granicus, Issus, Gaugamela, Babylon, dead at thirty-two with no heir ready. He...

THE ORIGINAL **EMETH · "THE TRUTH"**

The Long War of North and South

DANIEL 11:9

Then the latter will enter the realm of the king of the South, but will return to his own land.

AMIR TSARFATI

Tsarfati reads the back-and-forth as the nations doing what nations do, armies, pride, a victory thrown away, a bigger army, and the land of Israel changing hands with every campaign. He notes the phrase “his…

JOHN MACARTHUR

“Yet he will not prevail.” MacArthur draws the thread: Ptolemy wins at Raphia and cannot keep what he won, because the text had already said he would not.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik dates the campaigns: Raphia, 217 B.C., a Ptolemaic victory with tens of thousands fallen; the years of recovery; Antiochus the Third’s return around 200 B.C. with “a great army and much equipment.”

THE ORIGINAL **HAMON RAV · “A GREAT MULTITUDE”**

The Long War of North and South

THE KING OF THE SOUTH AND THE KING OF THE NORTH · DANIEL 11:5–20 BESIDE HISTORY

Ptolemies of Egypt against Seleucids of Syria for a century and a half — and the Beautiful Land on the road between them

VV.	THE PROPHECY SAYS	THE RECORD SHOWS
5	**Ptolemy I Soter (South) · Seleucus I Nicator (North)**	*a general outgrows his master, 312–281*
6	**Berenice given to Antiochus II; alliance fails**	*she, her son and her attendants murdered, 246*
7–8	**Ptolemy III Euergetes invades Syria in revenge**	*carries home Syria's gods and treasure, 246–241*
9–10	**Seleucus II retaliates; his sons mobilize**	*Seleucus III, then Antiochus III the Great*
11–12	**Ptolemy IV wins at Raphia — and wastes it**	*217 BC; "his heart will be lifted up"*
13–16	**Antiochus III returns; Panium; the Beautiful Land taken**	*c. 200 BC — Israel passes from Egypt to Syria*
17	**His daughter Cleopatra I given to Ptolemy V**	*she sides with Egypt; "will not take a stand"*
18–19	**He turns to the coastlands; a Roman commander stops him**	*Magnesia, 190; killed plundering a temple, 187*
20	**Seleucus IV sends a tax collector through the Jewel**	*Heliodorus; the king poisoned "not in battle," 175*

Israel is not named once in vv. 5–15 and is the reason the verses exist. "The Beautiful Land" first appears in v. 16 — as it falls to Syria, and to the line that will produce Antiochus.

The Despicable Person

DANIEL 11:21

In his place a despicable person will arise, on whom the honor of kingship has not been conferred, but he will come in a time of tranquility and seize the kingdom by intrigue.

AMIR TSARFATI

Tsarfati introduces the man the whole chapter has been walking toward: Antiochus the Fourth, the little horn of chapter 8, the sketch of the Antichrist. He notes how he came, not by right, not by war, but by…

JOHN MACARTHUR

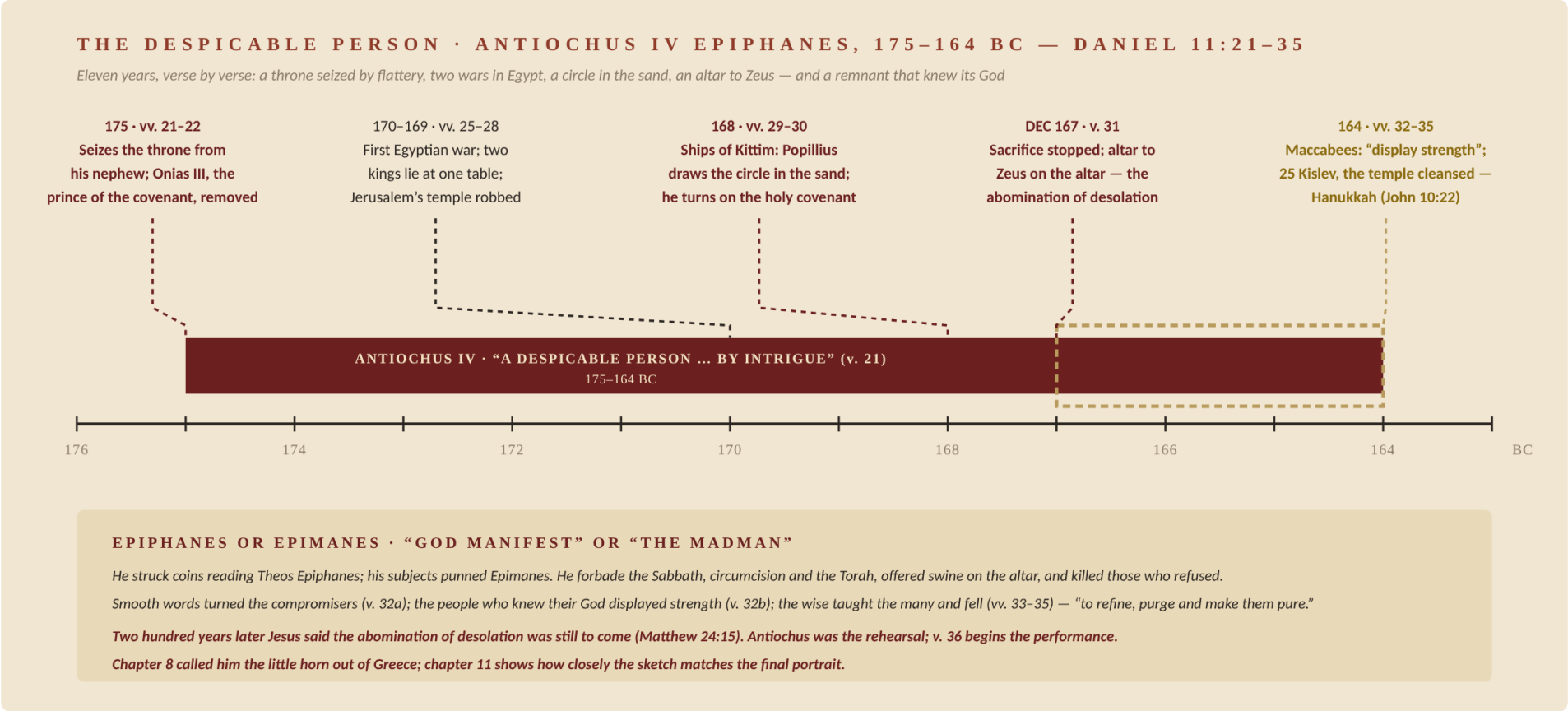
“They will speak lies to each other at the same table; but it will not succeed, for the end is still to come at the appointed time.” MacArthur reads verse 27 as the chapter’s theology in one line: two kings…

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik tells the history: Antiochus the Fourth’s seizure of the throne from his nephew, Onias III, the alliance with Egypt and its betrayal, the first invasion, the two kings at Memphis lying to each other, and…

THE ORIGINAL **NIVZEH · “A DESPICABLE PERSON”**

The Despicable Person



The King Who Does As He Pleases

DANIEL 11:36

Then the king will do as he pleases, and he will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will speak monstrous things against the God of gods; and he will prosper until the indignation is finished, for that which is decreed will be done.

AMIR TSARFATI

Tsarfati reads verse 36 as the Antichrist stepping onto the page: the willful king, the self-exalting blasphemer, the one Paul and John describe. He notes what the Antichrist rejects, the gods of his fathers,…

JOHN MACARTHUR

“For that which is decreed will be done.” MacArthur refuses to let the willful king be the subject of his own verse.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik marks the shift carefully, Antiochus did not do these things, and the text says the end time, and gives the picture: Antiochus is the trailer, the Antichrist the feature. He surveys the readings of “the…

THE ORIGINAL **VE-ASAH KHIRTSONO HA-MELEKH · “THE KING WILL DO AS HE PLEASES”**

The King Who Does As He Pleases

THE TRAILER AND THE FEATURE · WHY VERSE 36 STEPS PAST ANTIOCHUS

Antiochus never exalted himself above every god; vv. 40–45 do not match his death; the angel says "the end time." Paul and John read the willful king as the Antichrist.

THE WILLFUL KING	DAN	THE NEW TESTAMENT
does as he pleases	11:36	*"the man of lawlessness … the son of destruction"* **2 Thess 2:3**
exalts and magnifies himself above every god	11:36	*"exalts himself above every so-called god"* **2 Thess 2:4**
speaks monstrous things against the God of gods	11:36	*"a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies"* **Rev 13:5**
prospers until the indignation is finished	11:36	*"authority to act for forty-two months"* **Rev 13:5**
no regard for the gods of his fathers	11:37	*"displaying himself as being God"* **2 Thess 2:4**
honors a god of fortresses	11:38	*"who is able to wage war with him?"* **Rev 13:4**
enters the Beautiful Land; many countries fall	11:41	*"he will set up the abomination of desolation"* **Matt 24:15; Dan 9:27**
comes to his end, and no one will help him	11:45	*"slain with the breath of His mouth"* **2 Thess 2:8; Rev 19:20**

Antiochus IV (vv. 21–35) is the trailer; the king of vv. 36–45 is the feature — the little horn of chapter 7, the prince who is to come of 9:27, the beast of Revelation 13.

The King Who Does As He Pleases

THE LAST CAMPAIGN · DANIEL 11:40–45 AND THE THREE ENDINGS OF THE SAME MAN

Attacked from south and north, sweeping the Middle East, troubled by news from the east, camped between the sea and the Holy Mountain — and finished with no one to help

THE COLLISION v. 40	THE SWEEP vv. 41–43	THE RUMORS v. 44	THE TENTS v. 45
"At the end time" the South collides with him; the North storms in with chariots, horsemen and many ships	He enters the Beautiful Land; Edom, Moab and Ammon escape; Egypt, Libya and Ethiopia fall — gold, silver, treasures	"Rumors from the East and from the North" disturb him — compare the kings from the east, Revelation 16:12	Royal pavilions pitched "between the seas and the beautiful Holy Mountain" — Zion. Then: his end.

THREE ENDINGS, ONE MAN

DANIEL 11:45 — "he will come to his end, and no one will help him." · 2 THESSALONIANS 2:8 — "the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth."

REVELATION 19:20 — "the beast was seized … thrown alive into the lake of fire." No battle described; no ally found; a verdict executed.

The man who magnified himself above every god is finished by the God he mocked — and "the people who know their God" (v. 32) are standing when he is not.

What to carry from this chapter

1

The most detailed prophecy in the Bible.

Some 375 years in 45 verses, Persia, Alexander, the Ptolemies and Seleucids, Antiochus, so exact that critics date it after the events.

2

Stand is the spine of the chapter.

Amad, kings arise, armies cannot stand, a daughter will not take a stand, the despicable person stands up; and the people who know their God display strength

3

The prophecy follows two of the four because Israel lay between them.

The king of the South (Egypt) and the king of the North (Syria) fought for a century and a half over the Beautiful Land.

4

Antiochus came by flattery in a time of ease.

Not by right, not by war, “intrigue” (verse 21).

More to carry

5

A Roman circle in the sand turned him on Jerusalem.

The ships of Kittim (verse 30), the humiliation at Alexandria, the altar to Zeus in December 167 B.C.

6

The people who know their God will display strength and take action.

Verse 32 is the heart of the chapter: in a chapter of kings who do as they please, only those who know God stand, and they are refined, not wasted (verse 35)

7

Verse 36 steps over the centuries.

Antiochus never exalted himself above every god; verses 40–45 do not match his death; the angel says “the end time.”

8

“He will come to his end, and no one will help him.”

The last page of the last tyrant, already written (verse 45), slain with the breath of Christ’s mouth, thrown alive into the lake of fire

Talk it through

1. What smooth words are working on you right now, and in what season of ease?

CLOSING

Four kings of Persia, one mighty king broken at the top, a century and a half of war over the Beautiful Land, a despicable man who took the throne by flattery and put an idol on the altar, and the people who knew their God stood. Then the last king, who does as he pleases until God is finished with him, and comes to his end with no one to help.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

Full Deep Dive, O·I·A study, reflection journal and film: see the Daniel study page.