

Discipleship with distinction
Spiritual warfare
Daniel 10:1–11:20

1. An overwhelming vision (10:1–9)

- its context
- its contents
- its effect

2. A heaven-sent explanation (10:10–11:1)

- why the delay?
- why the battle?

3. A revelation of the truth (11:2–20)

- amazing historical detail
- significant spiritual purpose

(John 13:18–19, 14:28–29)

Daniel 11:2–20 “And now I will show you the truth” (v2)

How the prophecies became history

The date of the vision is 536 BC (10:1)

- v2 “three more kings” Cambyses (530–522)
Gaumata (522)
Darius (522–486)
“and a fourth...far richer” Xerxes (486–465)
Xerxes married Esther—see Esther 1:4 for his wealth.
Their son was Artaxerxes, who had a cupbearer called Nehemiah (see Nehemiah 1:11–2:1)
- v3 “a mighty king” (from Greece)—Alexander the Great (reigned 336–323), the “goat” of Daniel 8. Conquered Persia and died trying to rebuild Babylon.
- v4 Alexander’s empire (Italy to India) was divided between four generals—of whom the strongest two formed kingdoms (of the north and south), which fought one another for 150 years.
- v5 “King of the south” is Ptolemy, based in Egypt. The “prince” is Seleucus, who became “king of the north”.
- v6 “After some years” – around 250 BC. The daughter of the king of the south is Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy II given to Antiochus II (“the king of the north”), whose rule was based in Syria. Berenice displaced Laodice as wife of Antiochus II. She was exiled to Ephesus. The new marriage ended in divorce. Antiochus returned to Laodice who poisoned him and murdered Berenice and her infant son.
- v7 Berenice’s brother (Ptolemy III) attacked the northern (Seleucid) kingdom and overcame Laodice’s son, Seleucus II.
- v9 refers to a failed counter-attack from the Seleucid kingdom.
- v10 “His sons” are Seleucus III (reigned 227–223) and Antiochus III, the Great (reigned 223–187). The war lasted 36 years.
- v11 refers to the battle Raphia (217) in south Palestine. Ptolemy III won the battle.
- v12 The victory was short lived.
- v13 Antiochus regrouped and recovered land that he had previously lost (212–205) and by 200 Palestine was back under Seleucid control.
- v14 Probably some Jewish activists supported Antiochus to win their freedom from Egypt, but they were not free from the Seleucids.
- v15 The decisive battle was at Gaza. Egypt was defeated and Antiochus occupied Israel without resistance (v16).
- v16 “The glorious land” is Israel.
- v17 Antiochus decided to opt for diplomacy, setting up a dynastic marriage between his daughter, Cleopatra, and Ptolemy V of Egypt. This was designed to undermine Egypt’s autonomy, but Cleopatra seems to have sided with her husband, rather than her father.
- v18 Antiochus started annexing Greek islands and parts of Asia Minor (“the coastlands”) but was met with resistance by Rome (“the legs of iron” of the image in Dan 2:33). The “commander” is the Roman general, Scipio, who defeated Antiochus III at Thermopylae in 191 BC. He was forced to retreat, to pay tribute and 20 hostages were taken to Rome including his younger brother, also Antiochus (to be Antiochus Epiphanes).
- v19 Antiochus III was reduced to robbing temples, which is why he was killed.
- v20 “In his place” came Seleucus IV (reigned 187–176) who tried to regain the kingdom’s wealth by taxation, but was murdered by one of his own officials.