

Daniel 11 – A Prophecy of Antiquity

An Analysis of Daniel 11:40-43
Demonstrating it's Fulfillment in 31 BC

And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.

Daniel 11:40 KJV

The prophecy of Daniel 11 clearly starts in Persia, with its kings, or in the 2nd kingdom of Daniel 2 & 7, as this is directly stated in the prophecy (Daniel 11:2). We know this to be prophecy, and Daniel to be a prophet, based on the words of Jesus in the Gospels (Matthew 24:15). The setting for this prophecy, largely, is in the formation and subsequent parcelization of the Grecian empire, or the 3rd kingdom. Therefore, various kings of the North and kings of the South are those of Rome and Egypt, respectfully. This placed Israel, and particularly Jerusalem, strategically in the center.

At the time of v40, much of the chapter has been discussing the various kings that had arisen, with much of the focus up to v35 dealing with Antiochus Epiphanes and dealing with the holy land. Discrepancy in interpretation revolves around vv36-45, but v40 begins describing the events leading to the Battle of Actium of 31 BC.

Octavius was the king of the North in this prophecy, and Mark Antony and his alliance with Cleopatra, the ruler of Egypt, was the South. The two rulers had been in alliance after the assassination of Julius Caesar in 44 BC. Herod in Judea also supported Mark Antony at the first, and sent supplies, but Mark Antony sent him and his troops to fight Malichus I. Mark Antony divorced his wife Octavia, the sister of Octavius. War was declared between the two, but Plutarch records that the first move in the war was done by Mark Antony and the prompting of Cleopatra. Additionally, at the insistence of Cleopatra, the major thrust of the battle was carried out with the large fleet of ships they had assembled, and not the large infantry. On September 2, 31 BC, the two sides fought, and the navy was severely routed after Cleopatra and her ships began to flee the combat, followed shortly by Mark Antony, in a move that is still looked at today by historians as puzzling. After the naval defeat, much of the infantry deserted, and was never engaged in the combat.

Herod then changed sides, and sought to support Octavius, and Octavius accepted his support and promised him continued rule of Judea.

He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon.

Daniel 11:41 KJV

Octavius' efforts after the battle of Actium reflect this course. He went through Syria, Judea,

and Egypt, however Edom, Moab, and Ammon were not invaded at this time.

He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape.

Daniel 11:42 KJV

The KJV "the land of Egypt shall not escape", although the YLT reads, "the land of Egypt is not for an escape;"

Mark Antony attempted to regroup and recover from his major defeat in Egypt. Cleopatra, apparently in an effort to secure her own throne and that of her sons pretended to have been killed, in a hope that Mark Antony might take his own life. Mark Antony did, indeed, kill himself with his own sword, although she was by his side at his death, despite the treachery. Not wanting to be publicly humiliated by Octavius, however, she committed suicide, apparently by allowing a poisonous snake to bite her.

But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps.

Daniel 11:43 KJV

Mark Antony, with his alliance with Cleopatra, had access to her vast wealth, accumulated during the years of the Ptolemy's rule. Octavius captured these riches of Egypt when he defeated Mark Antony and Cleopatra, and returned in triumph to Rome in 29 BC. He was the first Roman Emperor, entitled "Caesar Augustus".

Thus, The remainder of the verses of vv36-45 appear to deal, probably, with Herod, who ruled in Judea during this time. As the main focus of this chapter is how the political events would impact Daniel and his people, this short passage sets up the timing of the ending of this chapter, in preparation for Daniel 12, the standing up of Michael the great prince, and the time of great trouble that would come upon the people in 70 AD, in fulfillment of all that was written against Jerusalem.

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