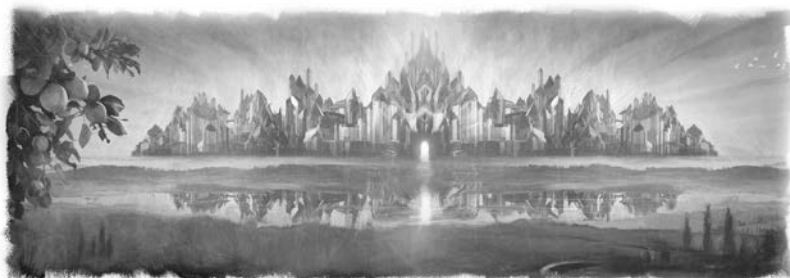


From North and South to the Beautiful Land



SABBATH—MARCH 14

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON: Daniel 11:1–14; Daniel 8:3–8, 20–22; Isaiah 46:9, 10; Daniel 11:16–39.

MEMORY VERSE: “ ‘Some of the wise people will stumble [fall] and make mistakes. But the persecution [hard times] must come so that they can be made stronger and purer [clean and holy] until the time of the end. Then, at the right time, that time of the end will come’ ” (Daniel 11:35, ERV).

DANIEL 11 is not easy to understand. So, we need to be clear about some things from the start. Then we will understand the chapter better. First, Daniel 11 shows us the same message that we already saw in Daniel 2; Daniel 7; Daniel 8; and Daniel 9. The message in all these chapters starts in the days of Daniel and continues to the end of time. Second, we see different kingdoms rise to power. These kingdoms often hurt God's people. Third, each chapter shows us a happy ending. In Daniel 2, the Son of Man gets the kingdom. In Daniel 8 and Daniel 9, Jesus makes heaven's temple clean.

Daniel 11 has three basic parts. First, it starts with the Persian kings and what will happen to them. Then the chapter tells us about the end of time when the king of the North fights against God's holy mountain. Second, the king of the North and the king of the South fight each other many times. Daniel 11 shows us how these wars hurt God's people. Third, Daniel 11 shows a happy ending: God's mountain destroys the king of the North. We see that evil ends forever. Then God sets up His everlasting kingdom.



The king of the North and the king of the South fight each other many times.

**SPECIAL MESSAGES ABOUT PERSIA AND GREECE
(Daniel 11:1–4)**

Read Daniel 11:1–4. What happens in these verses? How do these things help us remember the other future happenings we have studied in Daniel?

The angel Gabriel tells Daniel that three more kings will control Persia. A 4th king will rise after them. This king will be the richest king Persia ever had. He will make the Greeks angry. History shows us that after King Cyrus, three more kings rise to power in Persia. They are Cambyses (530–522 B.C.), the False Smerdis (522 B.C.), and Darius the First (522–486 B.C.). The fourth king is Xerxes. He is named Ahasuerus in the book of Esther. Ahasuerus is very rich (Esther 1:1–7). King Xerxes forms a very big army. Then he marches into Greece just as Gabriel says he will. King Xerxes is very powerful. His army is much larger than the Greek army. But the Greek soldiers push Xerxes out of their country.

Then in Daniel 11:3, a mighty Greek king rises up. It is easy to see that this king is Alexander. Alexander becomes the leader of the whole earth. He dies when he is only 32 years old. He has no son to take control of his kingdom. So, Alexander's four generals divide his kingdom. Each of them takes a part of it. Seleucus takes over Syria and Mesopotamia. Ptolemy takes over Egypt. Lysimachus takes over Thrace and parts of Asia Minor, or modern Turkey. And Cassander takes over Macedonia and Greece.

Compare Daniel 11:2–4 with Daniel 8:3–8, 20–22. How do we know that Alexander is the king that these verses talk about?

What can we learn from the names, dates, places, and happenings in these verses? First, we learn that the special message about the future happens exactly as the angel says. God's messages to us never fail. Second, God controls history. He controls everything that happens. So, we can trust that He will destroy evil forever and set up His everlasting kingdom.



God controls history. He controls everything that happens.

**SPECIAL MESSAGES ABOUT SYRIA AND EGYPT
(Daniel 11:5–14)**

Read Daniel 11:5–14. What happens in these verses?

Alexander dies. Then his four generals divide his kingdom. Each general takes a piece of the kingdom. Two of the generals are Seleucus in Syria (the North) and Ptolemy in Egypt (the South). The future children of these two generals fight each other for control over the land.

Daniel 11:5–14 shows the wars between the king of the North and the king of the South. Most Bible students believe these wars show the many fights between Seleucus's future children and Ptolemy's future children. The special message in Daniel 11 shows us that the daughter of the northern king will marry the southern king. But the agreement will not last long (Daniel 11:6). History shows us that Antiochus the Second Theos (261–246 B.C.) marries Berenice. Antiochus the Second Theos is a grandson of Seleucus the First. Berenice is a daughter of Ptolemy the Second Philadelphus. But their marriage does not bring peace for very long. Soon, the two kingdoms start fighting each other again. God's people get hurt in the many fights.

Why does God show ahead of time all this information about kingdoms and wars? The reason is simple: these wars hurt God's people. So, the Lord announces what will happen in the future. Then His people will know about the trouble that lies in the years ahead. Remember, God controls history. When we compare the Bible with history, we see that everything happens exactly as God says. That shows us something important about God. He knows the future. So, He is worthy of our trust and faith. Our God is a big God. He is not a false statue made by humans. Yes, God is in charge of history. But He also will control our lives if we allow Him to do so.

Read Isaiah 46:9, 10. What Bible truths do these verses teach us? What hope does this truth give you? Isaiah 46:10 would be very scary if God was mean and full of hate, right?



When we compare the Bible with history, we see that everything happens exactly as God says.

ROME AND THE PRINCE OF THE AGREEMENT (Daniel 11:16–28)

Read Daniel 11:16–28. For sure, these verses are not easy to understand. What word pictures, or symbols, can you see in these verses? Where else do you read about these same symbols in the book of Daniel?

In Daniel 11:16, we see a change in power from the Greek kings to the kingdom of Rome. First, the king of the North is a word picture for Greece. But now it becomes a word picture for Rome: “ ‘The northern king will do whatever he wants. No one will be able to stop him. He will gain power and control in the Beautiful Land, and he will have the power to destroy it’ ” (Daniel 11:16, ERV). The Beautiful Land is Jerusalem. The northern king that takes control of that area is the kingdom of Rome. We see the same thing happen in Daniel 8 when the little horn makes its kingdom bigger. The little horn stretches its kingdom into Jerusalem (Daniel 8:9). So, it is clear that the power in charge of the earth at this time is the kingdom of Rome.

Chapter 11 gives us some more hints that support this view. We read about something that one of the future kings of the North, or the kingdom of Rome, does: “ ‘the next king of the North will send out a tax collector’ ” (Daniel 11:20, ICB). This verse shows us Caesar Augustus. Jesus is born when Augustus is king. Mary and Joseph travel to Bethlehem during this time. Also, Daniel 11 shows us that Augustus will be followed by a very mean king (Daniel 11:21). History shows us that Tiberius became the leader of the kingdom of Rome after Augustus. Augustus adopted Tiberius as his son. Tiberius is known as a tricky and evil man.

Daniel 11 shows us that “ ‘a prince of the covenant [agreement] will be destroyed’ ” (Daniel 11:22, Nlrv) during the time that Tiberius is king. What does that show us? It shows us that Jesus will die on the cross. Jesus also is named “Messiah [Chosen One] the Prince” (Daniel 9:25, KJV; also read Matthew 27:33–50). So, we see that Jesus dies during the time that Tiberius is king. This verse about Jesus is powerful proof that God knows the future.



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THE NEXT KINGDOM (Daniel 11:29–39)

Read Daniel 11:29–39. As these verses show us, what kingdom rises to power after the kingdom of Rome?

Daniel 11:29–39 shows us a new kingdom on the earth. This kingdom is part of the old kingdom of Rome. It does many of the same things that the kingdom of Rome does. But this new power also is different (Daniel 11:29). The Bible says, “ ‘But this time things will turn out differently [not the same as before]’ ” (Daniel 11:29, NIV). We also see that this new kingdom behaves the same as a religious power. It makes an attack against God and His people. Let us look at some of the things that this new power does.

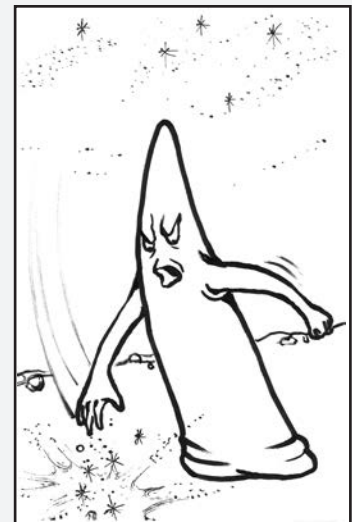
First, this power will “ ‘take out his anger on the holy agreement’ ” (Daniel 11:30, ERV). The agreement is God’s plan to save us. This new power hates God’s plan.

Second, this new power “ ‘will send his army to do terrible [awful] things to the Temple in Jerusalem. They will stop the people from offering the daily sacrifice [burnt gifts]’ ” (Daniel 11:31, ERV). We saw in Daniel 8 that the little horn “ ‘took away the burnt gifts which were given to Him [God] each day, and destroyed His holy place’ ” (Daniel 8:11, NLV). So, the new power in Daniel 11 will make a spiritual attack against Jesus’ work in heaven’s temple.

Third, this power “ ‘will set up that terrible [evil] thing that causes destruction [ruin]’ ” (Daniel 11:31, ERV). That happens after his attack on Jesus’ work in heaven. This power’s behavior shows us he is at war against God. He acts the same as the little horn in Daniel 8:13.

Fourth, this power wars against God’s people (Daniel 11:35). This war helps us remember the little horn in Daniel 8:10. (See also Daniel 7:25.) The little horn throws some of the stars to the ground. You will remember that the stars are a word picture for God’s people. So, the little horn shows us that he will hurt and kill God’s people.

Fifth, this new power “ ‘will praise himself and think he is even better than a god. He will say things against the God of gods that no one has ever heard’ ” (Daniel 11:36, ICB). The little horn “ ‘also had a mouth that was bragging’ ” (Daniel 7:8, ERV). He says proud words against God (Daniel 7:25).



The little horn throws some of the stars to the ground. Stars are a word picture for God’s people. So, we see that the little horn will hurt and kill God’s people.

END-TIME HAPPENINGS (Daniel 11:40–45).

What happens in Daniel 11:40–45?

Let us look at some of the words in these verses. The words will help us understand the verses better:

“The time of the end” (Daniel 11:40, ERV). The book of Daniel shows us that “the time of the end” starts in 1798. It ends when Jesus wakes up the dead (Daniel 12:2).

“The king of the North” (Daniel 11:40, ICB). This name shows us different powers at different times in history. First, the king of the North shows us the Seleucid family that takes over part of Alexander’s kingdom. But later, the king of the North shows us the Roman Catholic Church. So, the king of the North is not a word picture for a place. It shows us the spiritual enemy of God’s people. In the Bible, the north is a word picture for God’s power (Isaiah 14:13). So, this king’s name shows us that he tries to replace God.

“The king of the South” (Daniel 11:40, ICB). At first, this name shows us the Ptolemaic family in Egypt. Egypt is south of the Holy Land. But later, the king of the South becomes a word picture for people who do not believe in God. Ellen G. White says, atheism is the teaching that there is no God. “Egypt is a word picture for atheism.”—*The Great Controversy*, page 269, adapted.

The Beautiful Land. In Old Testament times, the Beautiful Land is a word picture for Zion. Zion is another name for Jerusalem, the capital city of Israel, the land of the Jews. After the cross, God’s people include both Jews and non-Jews. So, the Beautiful Land shows us all God’s people.

What does this information tell us? Here is one possible explanation: (1) The king of the South fights the king of the North. Their war is a word picture for the French Revolution. The French Revolution tries to end religion and the Roman Catholic Church. But it fails. (2) The king of the North fights the king of the South and beats him. This war shows us that the Roman Catholic Church’s army and its friends will beat atheism. Then they will join with it! (3) Edom, Moab, and the people of Ammon will escape Rome’s power. Edom, Moab, and Ammon are word pictures for people who are not part of God’s church. But at the end of time, they will join God’s people. (4) The king of the North gets ready to attack the Beautiful Land. God destroys the king of the North and all evil powers. Then God starts His everlasting kingdom.



Atheism is the teaching that there is no God. In the Bible, “Egypt is a word picture for atheism.”

ADDITIONAL THOUGHT: Martin Luther believed that the “ ‘terrible [evil] thing that causes destruction [ruin]’ ” in Daniel 11:31 (ERV) showed the Roman Catholic Church and its teachings. So, we can see from Luther that there is a clear connection between Daniel 11 and Daniel 7 and Daniel 8. All of these chapters show us the work and teachings of the Roman Catholic Church in history. Ellen G. White says: “The Roman Catholic Church did not allow any church under its control to enjoy freedom. No church was allowed to decide what was right or wrong for itself. As soon as the Roman Catholic Church got power, she used her power to destroy anyone who did not accept her control. One after another, all the churches came under the church’s control and power.”—*The Great Controversy*, page 62, adapted.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

① We must show that we care about the feelings of other people who do not believe what we do. So, we always should be kind and gentle to people when we witness to them. How can we share in a loving way with people the truth about the part that the Roman Catholic Church will have in the end times?

② Daniel 11:33, ICB, says: “ ‘Those [God’s people] who are wise will help the others [people] understand what is happening. But some of them will be killed with swords. Some will be burned or taken captive [taken prisoner]. Some of them will have their homes and things taken away. These things will continue for many days.’ ” What does this verse tell us will happen to God’s people because of their faith? What are many of these people doing before they are killed? What lesson does that teach us today?

③ Daniel 11:36, ICB, says: “ ‘The king of the North will do whatever he wants. He will brag about himself. He will praise himself and think he is even better than a god. He will say things against the God of gods that no one has ever heard. He will be successful [have success] until all the bad things have happened. What God has planned to happen will happen.’ ” Who and what does this verse help you remember? (For a hint, read Isaiah 14:12–17; read also 2 Thessalonians 2:1–4.)



“ ‘Those [God’s people] who are wise will help the others [people] understand what is happening’ ”
(Daniel 11:33).