

GOD'S LOVE IN ACTION**The Rise and Fall of Earthly Kings****Daniel 11:2–45**

“The king will do as he pleases. He will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will say unheard-of things against the God of gods. He will be successful until the time of wrath is completed, for what has been determined must take place.” Daniel 11:36

Day 1: Skim Daniel 11:2–45.

1. Glance back at 10:1, 4–6, 14. What is the setting for this revelation to Daniel, and who brings it to him?
2. More Persian kings will follow the present king, Cyrus, and then Greece will rise to prominence. But what will happen to the Greek empire and its “mighty king” (vs. 3) Alexander the Great? (vs. 4)
3. This prophetic narrative focuses on two of the four parts (vs. 4) into which Alexander’s empire split: the northern (Seleucid) kingdom, based in Syria, and the southern (Ptolemaic) kingdom, based in Egypt. Why do you think the focus is on these two? (Hint: What land lies between the two? cf. 10:14; 11:16b; Jer. 3:19)

Day 2: Read Daniel 11:2–32.

4. Some commentators note the recurrence of similar words throughout this passage. What pattern of history is suggested by the repetition of such words as rise/arise/appear, power/strength/might, invade/attack/fight, doing as he pleases/pride/insolence, and fall/be defeated/be destroyed? (cf. 2:21a; Prov. 16:18)
5. Jot down some more examples from history that fit this pattern. What does this pattern teach us about how we are to view the world in which we live?
6. How is it comforting for us to know that the events of this fairly detailed narrative were not recorded as history, but revealed by God’s messenger as prophecy?
7. Another commentator points out that the word “but” also appears frequently throughout this passage (e.g., vss. 6, 9, 11, 18, 19, 25b, 27, 29). Look at a few of these occurrences of the word. What does this little conjunction convey about human plans? (cf. Prov. 19:21)

Day 3: Read Daniel 11:21–35.

8. These verses describe the reign of the northern king Antiochus IV, called Epiphanes. Against whom does he fight with special venom? (vss. 28, 30–33) In what ways will he “vent his fury” (vs. 30)?
9. What kinds of character traits come to the fore during the reign of this “contemptible person” (vs. 21)? (vss. 21, 23–25, 27, 32)
10. In contrast, what characterizes the Jewish believers who remain faithful to God at this time? (vss. 32b–33; cf. Prov. 9:10)
11. Antiochus found allies among those who were supposed to be God’s people (vss. 30, 32). What warning might this convey for the church, the present-day people of God? How are we to be on our guard? (See, for example, Prov. 2:12–15; Eph. 4:25–27; 5:1–7, 15–17.)

Day 4: Read Daniel 11:28–35.

12. What will faithful believers experience under Antiochus? (vss. 33–35)
13. What is ultimately in store for these believers once “the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ” (Rev. 11:15) is ushered in? (Rev. 7:9–10, 13–17)
14. What will ultimately become of the “Beautiful Land” (vs. 16) that was a battleground for so long? (Rev. 21:1–5, 22–27)

Day 5: Read Daniel 11:36–45.

15. The evil figure described here shares some of the qualities of Antiochus IV Epiphanes and seems to anticipate the antichrist of the end times, who exceeds all others in his opposition to God and his kingdom. What is the fundamental trait of this king? (vs. 36; cf. 2 Thess. 2:3–4)
16. What fate awaits this evil king—and those who are like him (cf. 1 Jn. 2:18)? (vs. 45; cf. 2 Thess. 2:8)
17. Verses 40–45 are often taken as a description of the end times, the period leading up to the return of Christ and the beginning of his glorious reign. What will these end times be like? How are believers to view these events? (Lk. 21:25–28)

18. Read Psalm 73, and consider the way it reflects the experiences of believers of both Old Testament and modern times.