

## The Bible Isn't Silent About the "400 Years of Silence" Daniel 10:1–11:35

### I. Overview

- a. Chapter 11 includes unusually detailed and specific predictions of future events.
  - i. Zoekler, who insisted that he did not doubt the ability of the Spirit to make such predictions, nonetheless concluded that Daniel 11 is the work of a 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC reviser because prophetic scripture "everywhere presents only ideal pictures of the future." [as quoted by Young, p. 235]
  - ii. Though unusual, there are other examples of detailed (rather than ideal) predictions in the OT.
    1. 1 Kings 13:2
    2. Isaiah 45:1ff
    3. Micah 5:2
- b. Chapter 10 is the introduction to chapter 11
  - i. 10:14 *"Now I have come to give you an understanding of what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision pertains to the days yet future."*
  - ii. That understanding is found in chapters 11 and 12.
- c. The problem for critics
  - i. Date given as 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Cyrus, or about 538/537 B.C.
  - ii. Chapter 11 details events of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries B.C.
    1. This is acknowledged even by critics
    2. See for example S.R. Driver's commentary on Daniel, pp. xxxviff, where Driver correlated the events following Alexander's death with Daniel 11.
    3. Although various reasons are given for assigning a late date to Daniel, Driver's comment on p. lxvi is telling: "the inexactness respecting the closing events of Antiochus' life renders it almost certain that these were still in the future when the author wrote." In other words, the precision with which the events from Alexander to Antiochus are related must indicate that they were past events, while the imprecision in the narration of events from the death of Antiochus on is presumed to indicate that these were events yet in the author's future.
  - iii. Skeptical critics conclude that chapter 11, if not all of Daniel, was written in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C.

## II. The Princes of Chapter 11

- a. Angels of Kingdoms
  - i. Daniel's interlocuter is a heavenly being (Daniel 10:5–6).
  - ii. Daniel's interlocuter was delayed by the opposition of "the prince of the kingdom of Persia" (10:13).
  - iii. Daniel's interlocuter was aided by Michael, "one of the chief princes." (10:13).
  - iv. "The prince of Greece is about to come" (10:20).
  - v. Michael is Israel's prince (10:21).
    1. In the phrase "your prince," the word "your" is plural.
      - a. NET Bible: "The pronoun is plural in Hebrew, suggesting that Michael is the angelic prince of Daniel and his people."
      - b. Actually, in Hebrew, there is no separate pronoun. It is more accurate to say the word מְרַקֵּם is "chief of you (plural)," having the 2nd person masculine plural pronominal suffix.
    2. Michael is not uniquely Daniel's prince, but Israel's prince. Cf. Dan. 12:1: "*Michael, the great prince, who stands guard over the sons of your people.*"
    3. That Michael comes to the assistance of the being described in Dan. 11:5-6, who caused such a reaction in Daniel as described in Dan. 11:7-9, points to Michael being an angelic (non-human) being, presumably Michael the Archangel of Jude 9.
    4. So then Daniel 11 describes a heavenly being associated with and looking out for the interests of Israel.
  - vi. Persia's prince (10:20) would then be understood to be a heavenly being associated with and looking out for the interests of Persia.
  - vii. Greece's prince (10:20) would then be understood to be a heavenly being associated with and looking out for the interests of Greece.
    1. How do we account for conflict among these these princes (angels)?
      - a. Stuart offered an explanation: "But angels are not *omniscient*; and a good being, with limited faculties, who is set to watch over a particular king or country, may very naturally contract some partiality for the object of his attention, and may not always see clearly what his duty is.

In a case of this kind, it is easy to see, that something like an opposition to another good being may arise, who is commissioned to interfere with the object of guardianship.” [p. 324]

- b. I think we might do better to allow that some of these may not be faithful to God.

2. Cf. Mt. 25:41

- b. Angels of Churches

- i. Daniel 10 offers a backdrop against which to consider the angels of the churches in Revelation 7
- ii. There is evidence in Revelation 1–3 that the “angels” are heavenly beings.
  1. Note that the seven angels (one for each church) are represented by seven stars (Rev. 1:20).
  2. There are seven messages, that fit a pattern
    - a. each with seven sections (though the last two sections are reversed for Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea):
      - i. addressee
      - ii. identification of the speaker
      - iii. the "I know" section
      - iv. rebuke and warning
      - v. encouraging admonition
      - vi. "He that hath an ear..." (this is the 7<sup>th</sup> component in messages four through seven.)
      - vii. "He that overcometh..." (this is the 6<sup>th</sup> component in messages four through seven.)
    - b. Another part of the pattern seems to be that in each message (or at least in 6 of them), the Lord identifies himself in a manner uniquely related to what he will say to the angel of that church, as shown in the chart below:

Ephesus	Smyrna	Pergamum	Thyatira	Sardis	Philadelphia	Laodicea
he that walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks:	who was dead, and lived [again]	he that hath the sharp two-edged sword	hath his eyes like a flame of fire	the seven stars	he that hath the key of David, he that openeth and none shall shut	
I KNOW thy works	I KNOW thy tribulation	I KNOW where thou dwellest	I KNOW thy works	I KNOW thy works	I KNOW thy works (behold, I have set before thee a door opened, which none can shut)	I KNOW thy works
will move thy candlestick out of its place		I will make war against them with the sword of my mouth.	I am he that searcheth the reins and hearts:			
	Be thou faithful unto death					
HE THAT HATH AN EAR	HE THAT HATH AN EAR	HE THAT HATH AN EAR	AND HE THAT OVERCOMETH	HE THAT OVERCOMETH ... before his angels	HE THAT OVERCOMETH	HE THAT OVERCOMETH
TO HIM THAT OVERCOMETH	HE THAT OVERCOMETH	TO HIM THAT OVERCOMETH	HE THAT HATH AN EAR	HE THAT HATH AN EAR	HE THAT HATH AN EAR	HE THAT HATH AN EAR

3. In the case of the church at Sardis, the connection between the Lord’s self-identification (*These things saith he that hath the Seven Spirits of God, and **the seven stars***) and the message (*I will confess his name before my Father, and before **his angels***) can be made based on Rev. 1:20 (*the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches*).
  - a. That is not to say that the 7 angels are necessarily the specific or only angels before whom Jesus will confess the names of those who did not defile their garments.
  - b. It is rather to note that in a message where the Lord speaks of angels, he identifies himself in connection with angels.
4. But the angels of Rev. 3:5, before whom Jesus says, “I will confess his name” are surely heavenly angels, given the similar statement in Luke 12:8 (“him shall the Son of man confess before the angels of God.”)

5. But if Rev. 3:5 refers to heavenly angels, then it is heavenly angels that are connected with the seven stars, which are the angels of the seven churches.
  6. So then may we suppose there are heavenly counterparts to churches on earth, just as there were heavenly counterparts to earthly nations in Daniel 10?
- c. Significance for Us
- i. There is a real spiritual battle behind the earthly conflicts we experience, a real Satan, real angels working against us, and real angels working on our behalf (Heb 1:14).
  - ii. OT illustrations include...
    1. 2 Kings 6, the horses and chariots of fire
    2. 1 Kings 22, the lying spirit
    3. Numbers 22, the angel in the way of Balaam's donkey
  - iii. NT illustrations include...
    1. Revelation 12:7ff, the heavenly war which corresponds to the earthly events described in Revelation 12:4-5
    2. We ought to view difficulties and trials in this light, as spiritual confrontations, and thus considering God's angels working on our behalf, we ought to do our part in standing against evil.

### III. Correlating Daniel 11 with ancient, mostly non-Biblical, sources

- a. You will find correlations in the secondary sources (commentaries such as those by E. J. Young, Moses Stuart, S. R. Driver, etc.) that more thoroughly explain the historical events as they pertain to the Biblical text. Those are readily available in libraries, and in the case of Stuart and Driver, online at [www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org)
- b. What I have tried to do here, so far as I was able, is to provide access to the ancient histories from which the modern writings draw their information. My preference was to cite secular authors where ever possible in order to eliminate the possibility of citing historical accounts that were influenced by Daniel 11. But I have included some excerpts from Jerome's Commentary on Daniel (ca. 407 AD).

<b>Daniel 11</b>		<b>Sampling of ancient writings relating the 3<sup>rd</sup> &amp; 2<sup>nd</sup> century events foretold in Daniel</b>	
11:4	Shortly after his rise to power, his kingdom will be broken up and distributed toward the four winds of the sky – but not to his posterity or with the authority he exercised, for his kingdom will be uprooted and distributed to others besides these.		
11:5	Then the king of the south and one of his subordinates will grow strong. His subordinate will resist him and will rule a kingdom greater than his.	<i>Arrian, Anabasis of Alexander 7.22</i> “He [Seleucus], indeed, of all those who succeeded Alexander, not only received the largest share of sovereignty but had the most capacious soul, and was possessed of a greater part of the royal treasures than any of the rest.”	<b>Ptolemy I Soter (323-285)</b>  <b>Seleucus I Nicator (311-280)</b>
11:6a	After some years have passed, they will form an alliance. Then the daughter of the king of the south will come to the king of the north to make an agreement	<i>Appian, The Syrian Wars, 11.65</i> Antiochus II (Theos) “had two wives, Laodice and Berenice, the former a love-match, the latter a daughter pledged to him by Ptolemy Philadelphus.”	<b>Antiochus II Theos forms an alliance with Ptolemy II Philadelphus by marrying his daughter Berenice</b>
11:6b	but she will not retain her power, nor will he continue in his strength. She, together with the one who brought her, her child, and her benefactor will all be delivered over at that time.	<i>Appian, The Syrian Wars, 11.65</i> “This Theos [Antiochus II] was poisoned by his wife....Laodice assassinated him and afterward Berenice and her child.”	<b>Ptolemy II Philadelphus died (246), and Antiochus II left Berenice for Laodice, his previous wife. But Laodice killed him and also Berenice and her son</b>
11:7	There will arise in his place one from her family line who will come against their army and will enter the stronghold of the king of the north and will move against them	<i>Appian, The Syrian Wars, 11.65</i> Ptolemy, the son of Philadelphus, avenged these crimes by killing Laodice. He invaded Syria and advanced as far as Babylon.  <i>Jerome, Commentary on Daniel</i> After the murder of Berenice and the death of her father, Ptolemy Philadelphus, in Egypt, her brother, who was also named Ptolemy and	<b>Ptolemy III Euergetes, brother of Berenice, took revenge for his sister, attacking and taking possession of Syria, and</b>

	successfully.	<p>surnamed Euergetes, succeeded to the throne as the third of his dynasty, being in fact an offshoot of the same plant and a bud of the same root as she was, inasmuch as he was her brother. He came up with a great army and advanced into the province of the king of the North, that is Seleucus Callinicus, who together with his mother Laodice was ruling in Syria, and abused them, and not only did he seize Syria but also took Cilicia and the remoter regions beyond the Euphrates and nearly all of Asia as well.</p>	<b>killing Laodice</b>
11:8	<p>He will also take their gods into captivity to Egypt, along with their cast images and prized utensils of silver and gold. Then he will withdraw for some years from the king of the north.</p>	<p><i>Jerome, Commentary on Daniel</i>  And then, when he [Ptolemy Philadelphus] heard that a rebellion was afoot in Egypt, he ravaged the kingdom of Seleucus and carried off as booty forty thousand talents of silver, and also precious vessels and images of the gods to the amount of two and a half thousand. Among them were the same images which Cambyses had brought to Persia at the time when he conquered Egypt. The Egyptian people were indeed devoted to idolatry, for when he had brought back their gods to them after so many years, they called him Euergetes (Benefactor).</p>	
11:9	<p>Then the king of the north will advance against the empire of the king of the south, but will withdraw to his own land.</p>	<p><i>Appian, The Syrian Wars, 1.1</i>  Elated by his successes, and by the title which he had derived from them, he [Antiochus the Great] invaded Coele-Syria and took them away from Ptolemy Philopator,<sup>1</sup> king of Egypt, who was still a boy.</p>	<b>Seleucus II Callinicus regained some territory</b>
11:10	<p>His sons will wage war, mustering a large army which will advance like an overflowing river and carrying the battle all the way to the enemy's fortress.</p>		<b>The sons of Seleucus Callinicus fought against Egypt, then Antiochus III the Great came to power</b>
11:11	<p>Then the king of the south will be enraged and will march out to fight against the king of the north, who will also muster a large army, but that army will be delivered into his hand.</p>	<p><i>Polybius, Histories 5.80–5.85</i>  On the fifth day's march he [Ptolemy] reached his destination, and pitched his camp a distance of fifty stades from Raphia, which is the first city of Coele-Syria towards Egypt. While Ptolemy was effecting this movement Antiochus arrived with his army at Gaza, where he was joined by some reinforcements, and once</p>	<b>Battle of Raphia 217 BC</b>

<sup>1</sup> an error for Epiphanes

		<p>more commenced his advance, proceeding at a leisurely pace. He passed Rhaphia and encamped about ten stades from the enemy...But after some few days...Antiochus pushed forward his camp so much nearer Ptolemy, that the palisades of the two camps were not more than five stades from each other; and while in this position, there were frequent struggles at the watering-places and on forays, as well as infantry and cavalry skirmishes in the space between the camps.</p> <p>After being encamped opposite each other for five days, the two kings resolved to bring matters to the decision of battle. ...Of the elephants [in Ptolemy's army] forty were on the left wing, where Ptolemy was to be in person during the battle; the other thirty-three had been stationed in front of the right wing opposite the mercenary cavalry. Antiochus also placed sixty of his elephants commanded by his foster-brother Philip in front of his right wing, on which he was to be present personally, to fight opposite Ptolemy ....The remainder of the elephants he placed in front of his left wing....they gave the signal for the battle, and opened the fight by a charge of elephants....The way in which elephants fight is this: they get their tusks entangled and jammed, and then push against one another with all their might...until one of them proving superior in strength has pushed aside the other's trunk; and when once he can get a side blow at his enemy, he pierces him with his tusks as a bull would with his horns. Now, most of Ptolemy's animals, as is the way with Libyan elephants, were afraid to face the fight: for they cannot stand the smell or the trumpeting of the Indian elephants, but ...run away from them at once without waiting to come near them....This is exactly what happened on this occasion: and upon their being thrown into confusion and being driven back upon their own lines, Ptolemy's guard gave way before the rush of the animals...Antiochus presuming, in his youthful inexperience, from the success of his own division, that he would be equally victorious all along the line, was pressing on the pursuit; but</p>	
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		<p>upon one of the older officers at length giving him warning, and pointing out that the cloud of dust raised by the phalanx was moving towards their own camp, he understood too late what was happening; and endeavoured to gallop back with the squadron of royal cavalry on to the field. But finding his whole line in full retreat he was forced to retire to Rhapsia: comforting himself with the belief that, as far as he was personally concerned, he had won a victory, but had been defeated in the whole battle by the want of spirit and courage shown by the rest.</p> <p>Having secured the final victory by his phalanx, and killed large numbers of the enemy in the pursuit by means of his cavalry and mercenaries on his right wing, Ptolemy retired to his own camp and there spent the night. But next day...he advanced towards Rhapsia. Antiochus...led out the relics of his army and made the best of his way to Gaza....His loss amounted to nearly ten thousand infantry and three hundred cavalry killed, and four thousand taken prisoners. Three elephants were killed on the field, and two died afterwards of their wounds. On Ptolemy's side the losses were fifteen hundred infantry killed and seven hundred cavalry: sixteen of his elephants were killed, and most of the others captured.</p> <p>Such was the result of the battle of Rhapsia between kings Ptolemy and Antiochus for the possession of Coele-Syria.</p> <p>After picking up his dead Antiochus retired with his army to his own country: while Ptolemy took over Rhapsia and the other towns without difficulty.</p>	
11:15	<p>Then the king of the north will advance and will build siege mounds and capture a well-fortified city. The forces of the south will not prevail, not even his finest contingents. They will have no strength to</p>		<p><b>Battle of Panium 200 BC</b></p>

	prevail.		
11:16	The one advancing against him will do as he pleases, and no one will be able to stand before him. He will prevail in the beautiful land, and its annihilation will be within his power.		
11:17	His intention will be to come with the strength of his entire kingdom, and he will form alliances. He will give the king of the south a daughter in marriage in order to destroy the kingdom, but it will not turn out to his advantage.	<p><i>Polybius 18.51.10</i> As for Ptolemy, he [Antiochus III, “the Great’] was about to settle matters amicably with him: for it was his intention to confirm their friendship by a matrimonial alliance.”</p> <p><i>Appian, The Syrian Wars, 1.5</i> Now, determining no longer to conceal his intended war with the Romans, he [Antiochus III, “the Great’] formed alliances by marriage with the neighboring kings. To Ptolemy in Egypt he sent his daughter Cleopatra, surnamed Syra, giving with her Coele-Syria as a dowry, which he had taken away from Ptolemy himself, thus flattering the young king in order to keep him quiet during the war with the Romans.</p>	
11:20	There will arise after him one who will send out an exactor of tribute to enhance the splendor of the kingdom, but after a few days he will be destroyed, though not in anger or battle.	<p><i>2 Maccabees 3:4-8</i> <sup>4</sup> But a man named Simon....went to Apollonius of Tarsus, who at that time was governor of Coelesyria and Phoenicia. <sup>6</sup> He reported to him that the treasury in Jerusalem was full of untold sums of money.... <sup>7</sup> When Apollonius met the king, he told him of the money about which he had been informed. The king chose Heliodorus, who was in charge of his affairs, and sent him with commands to effect the removal of the aforesaid money. <sup>8</sup> Heliodorus at once set out on his journey, ostensibly to make a tour of inspection of the cities of Coelesyria and Phoenicia, but in fact to carry out the king’s purpose.</p>	
	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	<p><i>Appian, The Syrian Wars 8 (Loeb p. 191–193)</i> Afterward, on the death of Antiochus the Great, his son Seleucus succeeded him. He gave his son Demetrius as a hostage in place of his brother Antiochus. When the latter arrived at Athens on his way home, Seleucus was</p>	

	tranquility and seize the kingdom by intrigue.	assassinated as the result of a conspiracy of a certain Heliodorus, one of the court officers. When Heliodorus sought to possess himself of the government he was driven out by Eumenes and Attalus, who installed Antiochus therein in order to secure his good-will; for, by reason of certain bickerings, they had already grown suspicious of the Romans. Thus Antiochus, the son of Antiochus the Great, ascended the throne of Syria. He was called Epiphanes...	
	<p><sup>22</sup> The overflowing forces will be flooded away before him and shattered, and also the prince of the covenant.</p> <p><sup>23</sup> After an alliance is made with him he will practice deception, and he will go up and gain power with a small force of people. <sup>24</sup> In a time of tranquility he will enter the richest parts of the realm, and he will accomplish what his fathers never did, nor his ancestors; he will distribute plunder, booty and possessions among them, and he will devise his schemes against strongholds, but only for a time.</p>		
11:29	29 "At the appointed time he will return and come into the South, but this last time it will not turn out the way it did before. 30 For ships of Kittim will come against him; therefore he will be disheartened and will return and become enraged at the holy covenant and take action; so he will come back and show regard	<p><i>Livy 45.12.3-5</i></p> <p>"After crossing the river at Eleusis, about four miles from Alexandria, he was met by the Roman commissioners, to whom he gave a friendly greeting and held out his hand to Popilius. Popilius, however, placed in his hand the tablets on which was written the decree of the senate and told him first of all to read that. After reading it through he said he would call his friends into council and consider what he ought to do. Popilius, stern and imperious as ever, drew a circle round the king with the stick he was carrying and said, 'Before you step out of that circle give me a reply to lay before the</p>	

	for those who forsake the holy covenant.	senate.”	
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#### IV. Antiochus Ephiphanes

- a. Some critics claim Daniel was written during the time of Antiochus Epiphanes.
  - i. “there are considerations which make it highly probably that it was, in fact, composed during the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, between B.C. 168 and 265.” [Driver, xlvi]
  - ii. The accurate portrayal of events down to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes followed by “the inexactness respecting the closing events of Antiochus’ life renders it almost certain that these events were still in the future when the author wrote,” and lead Driver to the conclusion that Daniel was written as a reaction to events during the time of Antiochus Epiphanes.
- b. It is not my task to discuss the criticism of the Book of Daniel in general, but I will make this one observation: 1 Maccabees 2:51—60, thought to have been written around 135 BC by some, or as late as 90 BC by others, speaks of “the deeds of the fathers,” mentioning Abraham, Joseph, Phinehas, Joshua, Caleb, David, Elijah, “Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael” who were “saved from the flame,” and “Daniel” who “was delivered from the mouth of the lions.”
  - i. The author of 1 Maccabees, living near the same time as the author of the book of Daniel (according to skeptics), alludes to the stories in the book of Daniel and reckons Daniel, Hananiah, Azariah and Mishael among the “fathers” whose deeds were recorded in scripture.
  - ii. According to the author of 1 Maccabees, it was Mattathias who spoke of these “fathers,” and who did so in 166 BC, before Judas Maccabeus took command of the rebellion.
  - iii. This places the mention of Daniel, Hananiah, Azariah and Mishael in 166 BC.
  - iv. So if the critics are right, we have Daniel the man, the story of his surviving the lions’ den, and also Hananiah, Azariah and Mishael and the story of their surviving the fiery furnace, already well-known before the book of Daniel was written, and not only well known, but reckoned among the great men and stories of the scriptures.
  - v. Driver argued that there was a Daniel in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC, and that “confused and inaccurate” traditions were later attached to this man, and

were put in writing as the book of Daniel in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC. [Driver, lxviii, lxix]

- vi. But this would mean Mattathias and the writer of 1 Maccabees included men unknown in the holy writings in a list that was otherwise made up entirely of names found in scripture.

**V. The Purpose of the Revelation in Chapters 11 and 12**

- a. The purpose is explicitly stated in Daniel 10:14: *“Now I have come to give you an understanding of what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision pertains to the days yet future.”*
- b. Set against the backdrop of the overall message of Daniel (*“He does according to His will in the host of heaven, and among the inhabitants of earth”*), the message of Daniel 11–12 would be an assurance that the God who is in control of everything (and whose early revelations to Daniel had by now been partially borne out) could be trusted in regard to Israel’s future, even if difficult times lay ahead.

**Modern (19<sup>th</sup> century or later) Works Cited**

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