

Notes for the Ones Called-Out to Meet

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Amazingly Detailed Prophecy of Great Conflicts

by Dan Trygg

“In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar; and the message was true and one of great conflict, but he understood the message and had an understanding of the vision.” Daniel 10:1

The final vision in the book of Daniel actually encompasses the last three chapters of the book. It is an amazingly detailed breakdown of future events, ...events that would take place hundreds of years after Daniel would die, ...and events that may spill over into the events taking place at the end of the age.

Daniel tells us clearly when he saw this vision. It was “in the third year of Cyrus the Persian”. **The date was April 23rd, 536 B.C.** He likely was about 87 years old. This would have been the 70th year since he had been taken captive, and brought to Babylon. **He had been “mourning” for three weeks, ...including a partial fast** from “tasty foods” and meat. He did not drink wine, nor did he use any ointments to refresh and sooth his skin, during that time.

Chapter ten tells us about the vision he saw of an angel who was sent to him to give him understanding of what would happen to his people in the latter days (‘the *after days*’) (vss. 12,14). **We get a glimpse of what it was like to encounter an angel**, consistent with the experience of others in the scriptures. Daniel became weak, and the angel touched him to strengthen him. **We also get a tiny glimpse into the conflict going on in the spiritual realm, ...this angel was actually delayed for 21 days by spiritual opposition** (vs. 13). It was only when another angel, Michael, came to help him, that he was able to complete his mission. **That is an amazing insight into why answers might be delayed, or how other contingencies may affect the outworking of spiritual dynamics.** This was an angel sent directly from God Himself to bring this information to Daniel, yet he was obstructed for three weeks! **It is important to pray through!**

The actual revelation itself begins in chapter 11. The angel tells Daniel that **“there will be three more kings that will come to power in Persia”** (vs. 2). Since Cyrus was the current king, **these would be Cambyses** (r. 530-522), **Smerdis** (r. 522), and **Darius the Great** (r. 522-486). **“Then a fourth king would arise, who would gain more riches than all of them. He will arouse his whole empire against the realm of Greece.” This would correspond to Xerxes** (r. 485-465), *known as Ahasuerus in the book of Esther*. He did try to conquer Greece, but was defeated and withdrew. **Then, “a mighty king will arise and do what he pleases. But as soon as he has arisen, his kingdom will be broken up and parceled out to the four points of the compass, though not to his descendants...”** (vss. 3,4). **This clearly refers to Alexander the Great.** He died suddenly (323 B.C.), and his empire was divided up among his four generals.

The next section, describe the struggles between “the king of the north” and “the king of the south”. These would refer to the dynasties of Seleucus I Nicator and Ptolemy I Soter, respectively. **“Then the king of the South will grow strong, and one of his (Alexander’s) princes will gain ascendancy over him and obtain dominion”** (vs. 5). The kingdom of Ptolemy, which included Egypt, Lybia, Cyrene, Ethiopia, Arabia, Phoenicia, the coast of Syria, Cyprus and other islands in the Mediterranean was a very powerful kingdom, ...but the kingdom of Seleucus, which included Syria, Lebanon, and the remnant of the Persian empire eastward as far as India was much greater and more powerful than Ptolemy’s.

“And after some years they will form an alliance, and the daughter of the king of the South will come to the king of the North to carry out a peaceful arrangement. But she will not retain her position of power...” (vs. 6). This took place between the grandchildren of the original kings. **Berenice, the granddaughter of Ptolemy I, was offered in a marriage alliance by her father to Antiochus II Theos, the grandson of Seleucus Nicator.** To honor this covenant, he had to dismiss his current wife, Laodice. When Berenice’s father died, however, Antiochus dismissed her from his bed and took Laodice back. Due to this rivalry between these women, their children (potential heirs to the throne), and the fickleness of Antiochus, **Laodice plotted to poison Antiochus, and had Berenice and her son killed** (246).

“But one of the descendants of her line will arise in his place, and he will come against their army and enter the fortress of the king of the North, and he will deal with them...” (vs. 7). **Bernice’s brother, Ptolemy III Euergetes, led an army to avenge the death of his sister. He managed to conquer nearly all of the Seleucid empire.** Due to unrest back in Egypt, however, he was forced to return home. He did manage to take their idols and precious vessels of gold and silver to Egypt when he left.

Verses 9-16 delineate the ongoing conflict between these two kingdoms. The Seleucid kings will attack Egypt, then the king of the South will retaliate. Then, the Seleucids will raise a great army, but they will be defeated. After some years they will raise an even larger army, and make their way southward even through Judea.

“And he will set his face to come with the power of his whole kingdom, bringing with him a proposal of

peace which he will put into effect; he will also give him the daughter of women to ruin it. But she will not take a stand for him or be on his side” (vs. 17). **This was Antiochus III (‘the Great’), who attempted to broker a peace by offering his daughter, Cleopatra, as a bride to Ptolemy V** in 193 B.C. Antiochus had planned to use Cleopatra to either pass along information to him, or possibly even poison her husband, but **she refused to go along with her father’s plot.**

“**Then he will turn his face to the coastlands and capture many. But a commander will put a stop to his scorn against him; moreover, he will turn his taunts back upon him.** ¹⁹ **So he will turn his face toward the fortresses of his own land, but he will stumble and fall and be found no more”** (vss. 18,19). When Antiochus’ plot failed, he turned his attention to capture coastlands and islands along the Mediterranean Sea, going up into Asia, and even Greece. These were Roman territories, so **they took up arms against him, and a Roman general defeated him. He was required to pay the expenses for the war, as part of the terms for peace. He was also required to give hostages to ensure his cooperation, including his son, named Antiochus IV.** Failing in his attempts to take territory in the west, and having these new liabilities to pay for, he turned to the eastern part of his empire. He intended to rob the temple of Bel in Babylon, to obtain the resources to pay his tribute. When the locals discovered his plan, they rose up and killed him.

“**Then in his place one will arise who will send an oppressor through the Jewel of his kingdom; yet within a few days he will be shattered, though neither in anger nor in battle”** (vs. 20). This was Antiochus the Great’s eldest son, Seleucus IV Philopator. He was oppressive in that he exacted heavy taxes from his subjects, to pay the tribute required by Rome. He only reigned about 12 years (187-175 B.C.). **His son, Demetrius, was required as a hostage, in place of Antiochus IV.** Seleucus IV Philopator died suddenly, either by sickness or possibly poison.

“**And 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 tranquility and seize the kingdom by intrigue”** (vs. 21). **When Antiochus IV heard of his brother’s death, he hurried from Athens to take the throne** (175 B.C.).

Verses 22-35 describe the back and forth hostilities between Antiochus IV and Ptolemy VI and VIII. There will be false and deceptive negotiations and various schemes. **During this time, he will also sweep away the “prince of the covenant”.** Although Seleucus IV had been favorable to the Jews, **Antiochus removed Onias from being high priest.** Onias was a traditionalist, and sympathetic to the Egyptians. **He replaced him with his brother, Jason, a Hellenistic sympathizer. Upon the death of Onias, a Benjaminite, Menelaus, obtained the high priesthood by offering a bribe to Antiochus IV** (172 B.C.). His first act as high priest was to plunder the Temple in order to pay his promised bribe. Antiochus would defeat Ptolemy VI, and imprison him, but later release him (170 B.C.). When Antiochus IV attempted to attack Egypt again in 168 B.C., he was stopped by Rome. **On his way home, he attacked Jerusalem, desecrated the Temple, put a stop to sacrifices to Yahweh, and set up an altar to Zeus.** “Through smooth words” (vs. 32), he convinced many to turn to pagan practices. Although “the people who know their God took action”, many were killed by sword, flame, or taken captive and plundered for many days. Although the Maccabean revolt (167-160 B.C.) offered some hope and help, people came to them for the wrong reasons. They wanted protection and food, but were not really loyal to their cause. **God would use this time of great suffering to refine, purge and purify His people “until the end time; because it is still to come at the appointed time”** (vs. 35). Antiochus himself left Judea about 166 B.C, to address a revolt in Parthia, where he died in 164 B.C.

“**Then the king will do as he pleases, and he will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will speak monstrous things against the God of gods; and he will prosper until the indignation is finished, for that which is decreed will be done.** ³⁷ **He will show no regard for the gods of his fathers or for ...any other god; for he will magnify himself above all.** ³⁸ **But instead he will honor a god of fortresses, a god whom his fathers did not know.** ³⁹ **...he will give great honor to those who acknowledge him and will cause them to rule over the many, and will parcel out land for a price.”** Now we seem to be moving past Antiochus IV. We saw that the Romans stopped him. He was *not* able to “do as he pleases”. We also see that this person has no regard for the god of his fathers. Antiochus obviously did, for he tried establishing the gods of his ancestors in Jerusalem. **Whoever this is, he is all about power, might and defeating all who oppose him. Those who join him do so for a share in the spoils.**

“**At the end time the king of the South will collide with him, and the king of the North will storm against him...; and he will enter countries, overflow them and pass through.** ⁴¹ **He will also enter the Beautiful Land, and many countries will fall... ⁴⁵ He will pitch the tents of his royal pavilion between the seas and the beautiful Holy Mountain; yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him”** (vss. 40-41,45). This information has not clearly been fulfilled in history. It certainly does not fit with the end of Antiochus.

“**...at that time Michael, the great prince standing over... your people, will arise (‘stand-up’). And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be saved”** (12:1). Michael appeared in 10:13,21. A chief angel. He stands over the “sons of your people”. Jews? People of faith? **Here we have another key idea introduced. There will be a great tribulation, worse than any before. But those who are written in the book of God will be saved.**