

Allan MacRae: The Prophecies of Daniel: Lecture 9

Now here's a question I was given at the end of the last hour that I think is very important. Someone asked, "Dr. MacRae, why do you call the fourth king Xerxes I, when verse 1 talks about Darius, and then verse 2 says, 'now I will show you the truth: there will stand yet three kings and the fourth.' It seems that the fourth would point to further kings away from Darius, and not the next king, Xerxes I." Now this is a very important question, because there is a matter that I have mentioned but not stressed, that if you don't have clearly in mind could easily cause you confusion. You might say that there are two elements that enter into my saying this. The first is that we have noticed chapters ten to twelve form sort of a unit composed of those three chapters. The first verse in chapter 11 belongs to what precedes rather than what follows. But the second point is this: this "Darius the Mede" is a different person than "Darius the king of Persia." Darius the Mede seems to have been the man whom Cyrus put in charge of the kingdom of Babylon after he conquered it. Most interpreters think it was a man named Gobryath who was mentioned in one of Cyrus' inscriptions. One recent writer thinks it was another name for Cyrus himself. But this "Darius the Mede" is different from the Persian king Darius who was mentioned on the sheet of facts of ancient history that I gave to you. So it is very good to have that clearly in mind, and I appreciated greatly having this question. Now, the answers to the test that I gave you two weeks ago, I wasn't able to discuss last week because I was away quite a bit of the time between the test and our meeting last week. But now they have been carefully gone over. Some of them were very good and some of them were quite disappointing. I believe that it would be helpful to take the time to look at these questions, so we'll take a few minutes and look at the different questions together.

I think I'll start with the questions that were given to people with odd-numbered seats. The first of those was, "Briefly state the critical theory regarding

the meaning of Daniel's predictions." And this can be briefly stated in about two sentences, but it is quite important at various points of our interpretation of Daniel's prophecies. Our purpose in this class is not to discuss the critical theory. We believe that this is a book that God inspired, but the various critical theories postulate that it was not written by Daniel but written two centuries later. We could spend a good deal of time on the evidences, but I believe that the evidences are not sufficient to raise great doubt about Daniel's having written it. But there are many commentaries written from the critical viewpoint, and it affects their interpretation at many points, so it is vital that we have a clear understanding what the critical theory is.

And the critical theory which was advanced at least as early as the 2nd century A.D.,--and which was answered by St. Jerome in the 4th century A.D.--is that the book of Daniel was written at about 160 B.C. That it was written in order to encourage the Jews at the time when Antiochus Epiphanies, a Seleucid king was persecuting them. The theory claims Daniel was passed off as written by a man three centuries earlier as predictions which the writer knew had already happened. And so the writer of Daniel gives past history as if it were a future prediction. When it comes to Antiochus Epiphanies, the writer gives a true account of him and his reign up to a certain point. And then beyond that, he just gives the guesses of the writer, his hopes as to what might occur after 165 BC. This critical view affects a great many commentaries on the book of Daniel. For instance, F. W. Farrar, whose book "The Life Of Christ" is very highly regarded by many, has written a commentary on Daniel which was written from this critical viewpoint: that the book was written in the time of Antiochus Epiphanies. And so it should not take long to briefly state the theory, but it is very important to have it in mind.

Then the second question was to discuss the meaning of the word, "You are this head of gold." There were a few students who gave some interesting words about the importance of words and the high, great importance of Nebuchadnezzar, and that sort of thing, which is rather obvious but not what we discussed in class

under the discussion of this verse. I pointed out at that time, as shown on the sheets of facts of ancient history I gave you, that Nebuchadnezzar was succeeded by Evil-Merodach who was succeeded by Neriglissar who was succeeded Labashi-Marduk who was succeeded by Nabonidus. And so if the head of gold means Nebuchadnezzar himself personally, then there are three kings after him before the next kingdom comes. You can't say the next kingdom is his son who reigned only about three months, and the third kingdom the next king who reigned for 4 years, and then a fourth kingdom his son who reigned about three months. That of course would be absurd. So it is clear that either there is a break between Nebuchadnezzar, an unmentioned interval between him and the second kingdom, which it says "will come after you," or as I think much more likely, when he says, "You are this head of gold," he does not mean Nebuchadnezzar personally, but he means Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom. And that could mean the period of the Neo-Babylonian Empire, these five kings together. Or I think still more likely the whole period of the Assyrian and Babylonian Empire together. Now we discussed that some time ago, but I wish you would review it because it is very important for the understanding of the prophecy.

The next question was, "Discuss the meaning of Daniel 7:12", and someone came up to me and said "Didn't you mean Daniel 7:13?" Well we discussed Daniel 7:13 at length; we spoke briefly about Daniel 7:12. And Daniel 7:12 says, well we might look at the precise words of it, it is a verse which if not carefully interpreted could be rather baffling. Because after telling about the destruction of the great beast, it says as for the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time. Does this mean that when the great beast, the fourth beast was killed and his body burned, the other beasts continued on? That wouldn't make sense, would it? So it was clearly Daniel's looking back on his vision and remembering the fact that the other beasts--when their dominion was taken away--they lived on. In other words, their qualities remained on embedded in the succeeding rule, so all four beasts make

one continuous history of human sin and human wickedness ruling over the earth. The governing qualities of all four beasts are destroyed when the last, when the great beast, is destroyed. That, of course, is clearly brought out in chapter two, when it says, the stone hit the statue of gold, silver, bronze and iron, and iron mixed with clay. They were shattered and all dissolved and were blown away. And so that was a difficult point with this verse the way it stands, and we took a little time to explain it, and I'm sorry that some of you did not remember it.

Then number four was, "Briefly tell what is designated by the term 'Ancient of Days' in each occurrence in Daniel 7." Of course, when I say in each occurrence, I meant that to mean that you show the difference between the occurrences. It is quite obvious that "Ancient of Days" means one who has existed way, way back: the "Ancient of Days." That, of course, is obvious. In the context we learned that the "Ancient of Days" is one with tremendous power, a thousand times greater, a million times greater than any human being has ever had. But in this chapter as we noticed, this "Ancient of Days" is mentioned three times. And in the first occurrence it is very obviously describing the triune God. Now, of course, someone may say this is not the triune God; this is God the Father. I would not count that 100% wrong, but I certainly do not think that Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are so inferior to God the Father that a picture of God as the great powerful one controlling the universe means only God the Father. And in the Old Testament great stress is laid on the fact there is only one God which is constantly stressed in the Old Testament and certainly never denied in the New Testament. There is one God. And so it would seem to me that the "Ancient of Days" in verse 9 must be the triune God. I believe in the Old Testament, wherever it says "God," it means the Triune God unless there is something in the context that clearly shows that it indicates one of the persons of the God head. And we find that this term "Ancient of Days" again where it says, one like a Son of Man had come to the "Ancient of Days" or had been brought here before him and been given dominion, glory and the kingdom. And that very obviously refers to our Lord Jesus Christ. And so the

"Ancient of Days" there cannot mean the triune God, and must mean God the Father in this reference. And then the third reference is in verse 22 where it says that the Little Horn made war with the saints and prevailed against them until the "Ancient of Days" came. And that obviously is a reference to the Son of Man coming on the clouds of Heaven. And so there the "Ancient of Days" is one person of the Godhead, the second person of the Godhead, the Lord Jesus Christ. So when I said in each occurrence, I was happy if you told about all three and very unhappy if you only made a general statement.

Oh, yes, yes; the Ancient of Days--the first one--is a mention of the great, glorious, triumphant God who is in control of all things, and that is certainly the triune God, not one person of the Godhead. Well, it's pretty hard to say. Some might say the fact that it says thrones and there's nobody else represented as sitting suggests the idea of Trinity, but I wouldn't want to build too much on that. But unless you do, it's pretty hard to explain why it does say thrones because there's no mention there of anybody sitting. But certainly it is the triune God, whether you have one throne or three. It is figurative, of course; it's not a literal thing. And the second one shows the Son of Man brought before the Ancient of Days and given authority. That must be Christ who sits at the right hand of God the Father. And the third one is the coming of the Ancient of Days to establish the kingdom on earth, and that certainly must be the second person in the Trinity, Jesus Christ, yes.

And then number five was, "Briefly mention various possibilities as to what is indicated in Daniel 2 by the stone and its effects." And we noticed various possibilities which might be mentioned. One of them was Islam, the Islamic Empire. One of them was the papacy. And then, one of course, is the idea of the Christian church as the stone that comes and gradually grows until it fills the whole earth. And another is that the stone that comes and hits the statue on its feet refers to the second coming of Christ, utterly destroying all the evil that is involved in human government and substituting a righteous government of the

saints. There were those four various possibilities which could be briefly mentioned. But then I said, "As far as time permits, discuss the two most probable." And as we noticed the first two--Islam and the Christian Church--have been proven impossible by the fact that neither of them carry true. And so it is very obviously one of the last two, and to my mind it takes a great deal of the twisting of the statements to represent the stone as the Christian Church, and of course, it is very intriguing to suggest that the stone cut without hands represents the Virgin Birth. If so, there is a long break between that and its hitting the image because the Virgin Birth happened at the very beginning time of the Roman Empire when the Christian church began. No one can say humanly that it is impossible that the Christian church may so grow and so many people can be converted that the whole world would be won to Christ and thus the kingdom of glory and happiness and peace established, but it certainly doesn't look that way, and there is no promise I know of in the Bible anywhere that such a thing is going to happen. And so it fits the imagery far better to say that it represents the coming of the Son of Man on the clouds of heaven putting an end to all that was represented by the four beasts and establishing the kingdom of the saints.

Now, those were the questions given to the people with odd numbers. Now with even numbers the first was "Discuss the meaning and purpose of Daniel 7:4." There in connection with Daniel 7:4, we discussed here in class that the first beast was "like a lion and had eagles wings; I beheld till its wings were plucked and it was lifted up from the earth." You could say right away, "Well, here's the destruction of the Babylonian Kingdom." Its wings are plucked and it was lifted up from the earth; it's the destruction of the Babylonian Kingdom. But as we pointed out, there is nothing said about the destruction of any of the first three beasts. Nothing said about such a thing. So we won't take it as the destruction of the Babylonian Kingdom unless we're sure. And so we looked further. And we find he was lifted up from the earth and made to stand on his feet as a man and a man's heart given to him. But that's no way to destroy something--to give it a

man's heart--to give a beast a man's heart. But when we as I pointed out when we looked back to the fourth chapter of Daniel, we find there the story of how Nebuchadnezzar was given a period of insanity in which he groveled on the earth like an animal and ate grass, and then God gave him his sanity back, and he stood up again, and God gave a man's heart to him and he had his kingdom back again. This we pointed out would seem not be of a picture of the destruction of the Babylonian Empire, but a reference to an event that had occurred in the course of the history of the first kingdom which Daniel had seen and been connected with and knew that it would give him further assurance that the rest of the dream, or the vision, would also be carried out.

Then the second question was, "What past time would best fit the description of the second phase of the fourth kingdom. Give reasons for and against." Now if this was a course in history, and I asked you to discuss the history of the Roman Empire, but you gave me a very beautiful description of the Hellenistic Empire, I might say, "Well, you just misread the question, it's a good account of what you thought the question meant because you looked at it carelessly, and we won't take off for it." But this is a course in exegesis. And if you go to exegete the Bible you should be able to exegete a question on a test. And so when I ask what past time should fit the description of the second phase of the fourth kingdom, if I got an answer which mentioned the various interpretations of the meaning of the stone, why I couldn't give any credit for that, naturally, because that's about as bad an exegesis of a question as you can possibly make. We saw how chapter 2 had the static thing, the four parts of the statue, then there's the second phase of the last kingdom (the feet of the statue), and we saw how the dynamic events occurred with the coming of the stone. And so those who had the even numbered questions and gave an answer to question five of the odd numbered questions could hardly get credit for that particular question. But the past time that would best fit the description is very obviously, as I think I stated several times in class, the period from A.D. 400 to 600. At that time the Roman

Empire was in rapid decline, when there was a great mixture of Germanic peoples marching through the Roman Empire, back and forth, pillaging and destroying, setting up kingdoms and then destroying each other's kingdoms. This would exactly fit the situation, except that it says that "there shall be in it some of the strength of the iron," but there was no strength in the Roman Empire as we can see in that 200 year period. And the statement, "They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men" could fit any time at all, or else must mean some very unusual thing; and if so, we don't know what it would be in connection with. But most important against it, of this period's being the 2nd phase of the fourth kingdom, is the fact that it specifically says that the stone strikes the image on its feet of iron and clay. And right at the end of that, the only things that could be said to be the stone would be the coming of Islam, which did not carry through "covering the whole earth." Or shortly afterwards, four centuries afterwards, the development of the power of the papacy, which also has not carried through till the end of time. So it would look as if what is meant by this second phase must be something still future. Now that was question two.

The second half of the Roman Empire, the second phase of it rather, is a period described by the iron and the clay being mixed. And that could well fit the condition from A.D. 400-600. So that would be what the second phase would represent. The question wasn't about the stone; it was about the second phase. But then I gave reasons for and against this view: the reason for it was that this period fit the descriptions given in Daniel very well in general. The reason against it was that it does not completely fit because there was no strength in the Roman Empire at that time, and because that peculiar phrase, "mingling themselves with the seed of man," does not represent anything different than what has been present in all periods. But more importantly, this A.D. 400-600 period was not followed by the coming of the stone. So, in discussing the second phase as to what it is, we don't think it's this period because nothing came immediately after that could be seen as the coming of the stone. So what I just referred to would be the simple answer to

the question, but there were two additional things that might have been said, but were not required but might have been good if said. One was this: that the critics say the second phase of the fourth kingdom fits the latter part of the time of the Seleucids, the time of Antiochus Epiphanies, and it would in many ways fit that. But of course the fact is that the Selucids fit the 3rd kingdom rather than the fourth, so that is not a satisfactory answer but very good if you happen to think of it and mention it as a possibility after you mention the main possibility of A.D. 400 to 600. The other thing you could say is that the second phase--if it isn't just 400 to 600--it's either something future, or you might say it starts at 400 and reaches right on to the very end. Either way would be perfectly all right.

Now the next question, number three, "Briefly state whether the statue represents four kingdoms or five." As you look at chapter two, you cannot tell whether it represents four kingdoms or five. That is to say, there is a difference between the last two parts of the statue as described in chapter two. So it could be five kingdoms. And yet the last two parts both have iron in them so it could be four kingdoms. So as far as chapter two is concerned, you couldn't tell whether it is four kingdoms or five. But when you take chapter seven into account, there you have only four beasts and not five. And the fourth beast is destroyed just as the fifth part of the statue in chapter 2 is destroyed. So it would be reasonable to say because of the parallel in the two chapters that the statue represents four kingdoms and not five.

And then the fourth question for the even numbers was, "In the time that remains point out the relation of known facts of history to the predictions of Daniel 2 and 7." Now in relation to that, most of the facts that would have helped are on the sheet that I gave out, but I did not mean that I wanted you to memorize all those dates or all the names on it. But the main features of the relevant history are on it. For instance, Alexander the Great founded the Hellenistic Empire. He had no connection with the Roman Empire, which came centuries later. But all I wanted were just the main historical facts. Some did very well, and some didn't at

all. Now of course, if you had ancient history in college, it should be easy to do well. If you didn't, it would be worth a little extra time looking at this sheet, and if that wasn't clear perhaps looking at an encyclopedia or a history book and getting a little clearer idea of what happened at this time. Well, we better move on or we won't get to finish with the prophecies of Daniel this year.

I always say it is better to have a thorough knowledge of Greek than to have a smattering of Greek and Hebrew both. I think that is absolutely certain. I hope you'll all know both well, but a smattering of both won't do anybody any good. Now here I would say to get a good understanding of chapters two and seven and know nothing about the rest of Daniel would be much more valuable than to have a slight smattering of chapters two, seven, eight, nine and eleven. So I hope those of you who had difficulty with some of these questions will review them and get your knowledge more thoroughly in line with the questions. But we were discussing at our last meeting Daniel chapter eleven. And in chapter 11, we had noticed how it begins with the Persian attack on Greece. Greece is only named three times in Daniel and only once in the rest of the Old Testament, but here Greece is specifically named in this eleventh chapter, and it mentions how Darius and Xerxes made a great attack on Greece in order to protect the parts of Asia Minor they had conquered, and then in verse three we read, "A mighty king rose up and ruled with great dominion and did according to his will." All agree that that is a reference to Alexander the Great.

And then number three of the outline: "The dividing up of Alexander's Empire." I had given you a statement last time about the breakup of his empire and how it occurred. And a little bit about the subsequent history, so we won't take time to go into that now, but I hope you have it in front of you because we want to go on to look at capital C in our outline: "The Seleucids and Ptolemies," and I'm not going to make subheadings under them because we will simply look at the verses. And so we find the beginning of the descriptions of the Seleucids and the Ptolemies in chapter 11, verse five, where it says, "The king of the south shall

be strong." No one need have any question what is meant by "the king of the south." When you have a division of Alexander's Empire, Egypt was much further south than anything else, and the general who took control of Egypt, who's named Ptolemy, was certainly one of the most powerful of the successors of Alexander. "So the king of the south shall be strong and [as will] one of his princes." These prophetic statements all through this are quite clear when you look back at what happened. By contrast, seldom could you tell in advance from the statements exactly what was going to happen. It's like many of the prophecies of Christ. It would be very hard to write a life of Christ simply from the Old Testament prophecies. But after the events occurred you see how exactly they fit with so many of those prophecies. That gives the assurance to us that this was indeed what the Lord had predicted. And so here the statement that "one of his princes will be strong and he shall be strong above him," obviously does not mean that Ptolemy will be stronger than one of his princes; it must mean that one of his princes will be stronger than he. And we know historically that Seleucius after working for Ptolemy for a time saw his opportunity and went back to Babylon where he had previously been in charge. And in 312 B.C. Seleucius established himself in Babylon, and after establishing himself there in 312, his successors continued to rule for centuries. The dates seem so important because it's the first time in history that we know of that people have measured dates many generations beyond one king's reign. In ancient Egypt we read that in the 25th year in the reign of Ramses II something happens, and then we read in the fifth year of Merneptah something else happened, but we don't know how many years are in Merneptah's reign after a date in his father's reign unless we know how long his father lives. So in this very simple thing it might seem to us, simply to number years right along as we do year after year, but that never seemed to have occurred to anybody in ancient times. It was probably more or less by accident that Seleucius measured from the time when he went to Babylon 312 B.C., and when his son Antiochus became king, instead of saying in such a year of Antiochus, they

continued the numbering right straight along as was used by Seleucius. And that numbering was continued by some as late as 1600 A.D. It is the longest continued system of chronology that the world has ever seen. And some Hebrew manuscripts of the Bible are dated, as they say, in the year 2612, which means 2612 years after Seleucius went to Babylon in 312 B.C. And the unfortunate thing is that sometimes the Hebrew manuscripts don't bother to give the thousands of the date, so they would just say 612, or they might just say the year 12, just like we sometimes just give the last two digits of the year. And so sometimes you know the exact year a Hebrew manuscript was written, but you don't know which century it was. But it starts in when in 312 B.C. Seleucius went to Babylon. So this prophecy of Daniel was very exactly fulfilled, "he shall be strong above him," stronger than Ptolemy, because he had power. Ptolemy had Egypt but Seleucius had all the territory reaching way over to India. He had everything from Asia Minor there and further east to India. So he had a tremendous area that he held, large as all the rest of Alexander's Empire put together was the area which Seleucius held. So this statement, "He shall be strong above him," was very remarkably fulfilled, along with "And his dominion shall be a great dominion."

And then verse 6 of chapter 11 jumps forward; there is an unmentioned interval between verse five and verse six. And I hope you all have the little chart before you. Look at the left side of the chart where I have the kings listed. And it shows how Ptolemy I died in 283 and Seleucius I died in 281, just two years later. So Ptolemy II reigned during the last part of Seleucius' reign, during all of Antiochus I's reign and during most of Antiochus II's reign. We find here the statement, "At the end of years." Does that mean the end of the world, the end of years? There are people who would interpret such a phrase that way sometimes. But certainly it doesn't mean that here because here it means after a while, after quite a while later, because it skips ahead from Seleucius, who went to Babylon in 312 B.C., clear down to the latter part of the reign of his grandson Antiochus II. Now you couldn't tell that from the prediction. But we know that what happened

historically fits with what is stated here. "At the end of years they shall join themselves together for the king's daughter of the South shall come to the king of the North to make an agreement." And there was clashing between these two, Ptolemy II and Antichus II, each of them wanting to get a little more of the territory the other had. But the time came when Seleucius' grandson, Antiochus II, and the now very elderly Ptolemy II, who was known as Ptolemy Philadelphus, decided not to keep fighting, but to make a friendly alliance. And so they came together and the king's daughter of the South, Ptolemy II's daughter, came to the king of the North to make an agreement. And we find that Antiochus II agreed that in order to cement this alliance that he would marry the daughter, Bernice, the daughter of Ptolemy II.

This Bernice, the daughter of Ptolemy II, came up there to marry Antiochus II and they, the verse goes on to say, "But she shall not retain the power of the arm neither shall he stand nor his arm, but she shall be given up and they that brought her and he that begot her and he that strengthened her in these times." We'd never know what that means is going to happen ahead of time. But as you look back, you find that when she came up there that she married the king and he already had a wife, and his wife had grown sons, and the wife didn't like it a bit, that her husband married this daughter of the king of Egypt. And so she left Antioch where he was living, and she went to Asia Minor, which also belonged to Antiochus II, and she lived up there in Asia Minor with her grown son, also called Antiochus, while Antiochus II, his father, was with Bernice. And Bernice had a child, but Leodice, his first wife, was afraid that he would make this child of his second wife king after him. And so she did not like that at all, and a great many of the people felt that she had been mistreated. And the result was that after a while he got tired of Bernice and he went up there to Asia Minor to be with Leodice. But then she was still afraid that he might make his child by the daughter of the king of Egypt king, and so it was generally believed that she poisoned him. At any rate, he died. And when he died, she managed to have some of her people get a hold of Bernice

and kill her, too. And so we read here that, “She shall not retain the power of the arm, neither shall he stand nor his arm, but she shall be given up and they that brought her and he that begot her,” and that means that her father died at about this time.

And so, verse seven says, “Out of a branch of her roots shall one stand up in his estate,” and what would be "a branch of her roots?" Well, her roots would be her father, King Ptolemy. And a branch of her roots would be her brother, Ptolemy III. And so Ptolemy III came with an army and attacked the king of the North and prevailed. And verse 8, “And also carried captives into Egypt, their gods, their princes, their precious vessels of silver and gold, and continued more years than the king of the North.” And so it looked as if Seleucius was losing out on his plan which was intended to make friendships between the kingdoms, but it produced enmity in the end. You could never have told what was going to happen, but looking back you can see how exactly it fit.

And then verse 9, “And so the king of the north shall come into his kingdom and shall return into his own land.” Most interpreters consider that to mean he shall come into the kingdom of the king of the South. You can take it that way but the Hebrew could be translated either way, and if you take it the way it stands it could be simply a recapitulation of verses seven and eight. Bernice was the daughter of Ptolemy II. Ptolemy III was her brother. And so verse 9 is generally taken as meaning an attempt of the Seleucids to attack Egypt again, which failed, but it could be simply a summary of the previous verse, so either translation would fit with facts there.

But verse 10, “His son shall be stirred up and shall assemble a multitude of great forces, and one shall certainly come and overflow and pass through and return, and be stirred up even to his fortress.” This describes the attempt of king Ptolemy to get vengeance, and the fact that eventually there came a king of the North who was very strong. You have on your list Seleucius III here who reigned for only four years, one of the sons of Leodice. He reigned for only four years

when there was a rebellion in the army and he was killed and his brother Antiochus III became king. And Antiochus III is called "the Great," because he would have been one of the greatest figures in ancient history perhaps not one of the top ones, but very important in the second tier, if it were not for an unfortunate thing that happened at the end his reign. This Antiochus III who is called "the Great" is described here in the course of verse 13 right on up to verse 19. We have a long description here of the reign of one of the most powerful conquerors in ancient history, but largely forgotten because of the failure at the end of his reign. Now, it describes here how the king of the North comes in verse 13 with a great army and with riches and he attacks the king of the South. Now at this point we need to remind ourselves of the situation there between the Seleucids and the Ptolemies. The Ptolemies held Egypt, but they also held Palestine and Southern Syria. They held that for 100 years. And the Seleucids had been trying to get possession of Syria and Palestine to get it away from the Ptolemies. And Antiochus III succeeded in doing so, and when he did so, this is of great interest to the Hebrews because Palestine was very prosperous under the Ptolemies and was getting along well under them. But there were some who were dissatisfied, there were some Israelites who were unhappy, and they tried to get their area freed from Ptolemy which would bring them under the Seleucids. And if they did that, they thought that would give them more freedom, but actually it led to the terrible crisis that is described in this chapter under Antiochus IV also called "Epiphanes."

And so we read here in verse 14, "In those days there shall many stand up against the king of the South." Well, Antiochus III was making a series of campaigns against the Ptolemies, and this verse may suggest people helping him. It is generally thought that this refers to the time when the king of Macedonia, for a brief period, joined with Antiochus against the Ptolemies. I think though it could equally well refer to many in Israel who joined Antiochus thinking they would be better off under the Seleucids than under the Ptolemies. You cannot say which, because it merely says "many."

But the next phrase says, “The robbers of your people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision but they shall fall.” Now what does that mean, “the robbers of your people”? “Your people” certainly is speaking about Israelites. And this is considered by all interpreters, I believe, to mean that there were Jews who revolted against Ptolemy thinking they’d be better off under the Seleucids, under Antiochus III. And so they had a vision: they had an idea that they’d be much better off under the Seleucids, free from the Ptolemies. But “they shall fall,” and actually they were much worse off as we find out in the latter part of the chapter. “So the king of the North shall come and cast up a siege mound and come and take the fortified cities and the arms of the South shall not withstand, neither his chosen people, neither shall there be strength to withstand. But he that comes against him shall do according to his own will and none shall stand before him, and he shall stand in the glorious land which by his hand shall be consumed.” So from this time on, Palestine--or Israel and Southern Syria--are joined with the rest of the Seleucid territory and taken away from the Ptolemies.

And then verse 17 says, “He shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom and upright ones with him; thus shall he do and he shall give them the daughter of women, corrupting her, but she shall not stand on his side, neither before him.” And Antiochus III gave his daughter, Cleopatra, in marriage to the son of Ptolemy IV, thinking that that would cement friendship between the two countries. But actually Cleopatra, this is the first Egyptian queen, this daughter of Antiochus III, through her whole influence with her husband and against her father, made it so that did not work out.

Well for today, you looked at verses 21 which had to deal with Antiochus IV. If we hadn’t had to take time to review the test I would have gotten over that today, but we’ll plan to do that next time. So I guess we’ll stop at this point.

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