

### The lengthy prophetic outline of Israel's history continued

• Antiochus III unsuccessful attack against Ptolemy IV of Egypt predicted

• Antiochus' return to the conflict predicted

• Forbidden failed alliance with paganism predicted

• Further predictions – Antiochus successful siege against the Egyptian general Scopas

• Ptolemaic power ends – Seleucid regime begins

The angel continues the lengthy prophetic outline of Israel's history. Antiochus III attacked Egypt, and reached the fortress of Ptolemy IV<sup>10</sup>. *'But the southern king will be provoked and will go out to fight with the king of the north.'* The provoked southern king was Ptolemy IV Philopater (221–204 BC). When Antiochus reached his fortress (Raphia, on the border of Israel), Ptolemy was roused to fight back and was present himself among the armies that came to resist Antiochus III.<sup>11</sup> *'He will raise a large multitude but that multitude will be given into the power of the southern king.'* Antiochus III gathered 70,000 soldiers, but thousands were lost in battle, being defeated by the forces of Ptolemy IV.<sup>12</sup> *'When the multitude is swept away, his heart will be lifted up in pride, and he shall cause thousands to fall but he will not be victorious.'* The 'multitude swept away' are the armies of Antiochus III. The one whose heart is lifted up in pride is Ptolemy IV. Ptolemy was successful in defeating Antiochus but he made no use of his success and gained no territory. So there was no lasting gain for him.

<sup>13</sup>*'And the king of the north shall again raise a multitude, greater than the first. At the end of some years he will certainly come with a large army and with abundant supplies.'* We must remember that all of these claims to be predictive prophecy (as is specially emphasized in 10:14, 21; 11:2). About thirteen years after the incidents of Daniel 11:12, the 'king of the north', Antiochus, returned to the conflict. Ptolemy IV had died and his son (Ptolemy V Epiphanes) was only a child.

<sup>14</sup>*'In those times many will stand against the king of the south, and law-breakers among your people shall lift themselves up in pride to cause the vision to stand, but they will fail.'* The words 'Many will stand...' refer to the way in which Antiochus III got help from Philip V of Macedon. A large number went to war against the Egyptian forces. Some of the people of Israel ('law-breakers among your people') joined in with Antiochus<sup>a</sup> (and so broke the Mosaic law by close alliance to paganism). They were thinking that they would fulfil prophecies concerning Israel's prestigious future, but nothing good came of it.

*'The king of the north will come and will set up siege-works, and so will capture a fortified city.'* What happened was that the Egyptian general Scopas was thoroughly defeated by the northern forces. He withdrew to the fortress at Sidon to the north of Israel, but then Antiochus III laid siege to the city, and the starving soldiers within were forced to surrender (in 198 BC). The angelic prediction said: <sup>15</sup>*'The forces of the south will not survive. Even his specially chosen soldiers will not be strong enough. They will not have the power to stand firm.'* The angel went on to make predictions: <sup>16</sup>*'So the one who attacks him will do whatever he wants, and there will be no one to oppose him. He will occupy the Beautiful Land and will have the power to destroy anything he wants.'*

'The attacker' is Antiochus III; the one who is attacked was Ptolemy V (although he was young and so was not personally involved). After his defeat of the Egyptians, Ptolemaic power in Israel came to an end and the regime of the Seleucids began. They became an aggressive occupying force in Israel.

• Prediction - a failed scheme involving Cleopatra - predicted

• Prediction - Antiochus humiliated and defeated

**The Purpose of the Prediction**

• Advance knowledge would enable Israel to be patient and submissive for many centuries



<sup>17</sup>'He – the king of the north – will make plans to come with the might of his entire kingdom. Some regulations will come with him, and he will bring an agreement into being. He will give him the daughter of women to destroy it, but she will not stand with him, neither act for his advantage.' Antiochus the Great intended to totally take over Egypt. His way of doing it was to try to make an alliance with Egypt. 'Upright things will come with him', says the text, 'and he will do it'. This seems to refer to terms of peace between the two kingdoms. Some terms of peace were set up between the two nations. Antiochus the Great gave his daughter Cleopatra to be a wife for Ptolemy V. The idea was that she would undermine the Egyptian kingdom and support her father, Antiochus. But the scheme did not work. She supported her Egyptian husband instead.

<sup>18</sup>'After this he shall turn his attention to the islands of the Mediterranean Sea and will capture many people. But a commander will put an end to his pride, and cause him to retreat in shame.' Antiochus began to attack Egyptian colonies around the coastlands of the Mediterranean Sea, but the Roman commander Lucius Scipio Asiaticus defeated him in 190/189 BC. It was the end of the successes of Antiochus the Great, and greatly humiliated him. <sup>19</sup>'He will turn his attention to the fortresses of his own land, but will stumble and fall, and he will be seen no more.' Antiochus had to concentrate on defending Syria, but he was entirely defeated by the Romans. His career as a conqueror was finished. His son (who became Antiochus IV) was sent to Rome as a hostage.

All of this is predicted in outline-form by the angel. The advance knowledge of what would happen would enable Israel to be patient and submissive for many centuries. It would let them know that the kingdom was coming as predicted. It would rouse them to greater and greater expectation as the end of the predictions drew near. This is what prophecy is intended to do. It rouses faith and expectation.

Note

a. See Josephus, *Antiquities* 12:3:3-4.

	<p>Dr Michael Eaton is highly respected internationally as a theologian, author, preacher and teacher. He lives in Kenya where he is one of the leaders of the Chrisco Fellowship. His <i>Preaching Through The Bible (PTTB)</i> books are highly popular worldwide. Michael Eaton puts the theological and practical meaning of the Bible in a clear and down-to-earth way so that what is written can be easily understood by the reader.</p> 	
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